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**The Works of  
Jonathan Edwards,  
Volume Two**

**Jonathan Edwards**





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## The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume Two

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**Author(s):** Edwards, Jonathan (1703-1758)

**Publisher:**

**Description:** Jonathan Edwards dedicated his time to the service of God, spending the majority of his life as a preacher, theologian, and missionary. Edwards' brilliance as a theologian and scholar is undeniable in this extensive collection of his works. This volume includes the "Life and Diary of the Rev. David Brainerd," a biography written by Edwards about his contemporary, David Brainerd, who served as a missionary to the Native Americans. This volume also contains a wide array of Edwards' professional works, ranging from theological discourses and biblical exegesis, to impassioned spiritual treatises and sermons. Throughout this volume, Edwards addresses several fundamental issues, including salvation, original sin, marriage, free will, hell, angels, and God's sovereignty. Edwards' visionary success as a pastor and his clarity as a writer shine abundantly throughout this impressive collection of his works.

Emmalon Davis  
CCEL Staff Writer

**Subjects:** Christian Denominations  
Protestantism  
Post-Reformation  
Other Protestant denominations  
Congregationalism

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**T H E W O R K S O F  
J O N A T H A N E D W A R D S**

**WITH A MEMOIR BY  
SERENO E. DWIGHT**

*REVISED AND CORRECTED BY*

**EDWARD HICKMAN**

**VOLUME TWO**

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**ADVERTISEMENT**

THE present Edition of the WORKS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS will be found more complete than any other previously submitted to the Public.

1. It contains all the matter included in the first collected American edition that which was published at Worcester, and is regarded in the United States as the only one entitled to confidence.

2. The various original extracts from the diary and papers of Edwards, first published in America, by his descendant Sereno E. Dwight, in the year 1830, are here incorporated.

3. Several smaller pieces, printed originally in a separate form, and not hitherto included in any collection of the Works, are here introduced.

4. The valuable notes of Dr. Williams have been added.

5. The whole has been carefully revised by collation of all the previous editions  
Bungay, January 1834.

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**GOD GLORIFIED IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION, BY THE GREATNESS  
OF MAN'S DEPENDENCE UPON HIM IN THE WHOLE OF IT.**



**II.**

**SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD**

[Judges vii. 2.](#)

Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

**ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER,**

*RESPECTING THE FIRST SERMON.*

It was with no small difficulty that the author's youth and modesty were prevailed on to let him appear a preacher in our public lecture, and afterwards to give us a copy of his discourse, at the desire of divers ministers and others who heard it. But as we quickly found him a workman that needs not to be ashamed before his brethren, our satisfaction was the greater to see him pitching upon so noble a subject, and treating it with so much strength and clearness, as the judicious reader will perceive in the following composure: a subject which secures to God his great design in the work of fallen man's redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, which is evidently so laid out, as that the glory of the whole should return to him, the blessed ordainer, purchaser, and applier; a subject which enters deep into practical religion; without the belief of which, that must soon die in the hearts and lives of men.

For in proportion to the sense we have of our dependence on the sovereign God for all the good we want, will be our value for him, our trust in him, our fear to offend him, and our care to please him; as likewise our gratitude and love, our delight and praise, upon our sensible experience of his free benefits.

In short, it is the very soul of piety, to apprehend and own that all our springs are in him; the springs of our present grace and comfort, and of our future glory and blessedness; and that they all entirely flow through Christ, by the efficacious influence of the Holy Spirit. By these things saints live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits.

Such doctrines as these, which, by humbling the minds of men, prepare them for the exaltations of God, he has signally owned and prospered in the reformed world, and in our land especially, in the days of our forefathers; and we hope they will never grow unfashionable among us; for, we are well assured, if those which we call the doctrines of grace ever come to be contemned or disrelished, vital piety will proportionably languish and wear away; as these doctrines always sink in the esteem of men upon the decay of serious religion.

We cannot therefore but express our joy and thankfulness, that the great Head of the church is pleased still to raise up from among the children of his people, for the supply of his churches, those who assert and maintain these evangelical principles; and that our churches (notwithstanding all their degeneracies) have still a high value for such principles, and for those who publicly own and teach them.

And as we cannot but wish and pray that the college in the neighboring colony (as well as our own) may be a fruitful mother of many such sons as the author, by the blessing of Heaven on the care of their present worthy rector; so we heartily rejoice in the special favor of Providence in bestowing such a rich gift on the happy church of Northampton, which has for so many lustres of years flourished under the influence of such pious doctrines, taught them in the excellent ministry of their late venerable pastor, whose gift and spirit,



we hope, will long live and shine in this his grandson, to the end that they may abound yet more in all the lovely fruits of evangelical humility and thankfulness, to the glory of God.

To his blessing we commit them all, with this discourse, and every one that reads it; and are

Your servants in the gospel,

T. Prince

*Boston, August 17, 1731.*

W. Cooper

S E R M O N I . <sup>1</sup>

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I PREACHED ON THE PUBLIC LECTURE IN BOSTON, JULY 8, 1731; AND PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF SEVERAL MINISTERS AND OTHERS IN BOSTON WHO HEARD IT.—THIS WAS THE FIRST PIECE PUBLISHED BY MR. EDWARDS.

## GOD GLORIFIED IN MAN'S DEPENDENCE.

1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31

*That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

Those Christians to whom the apostle directed this epistle, dwelt in a part of the world where human wisdom was in great repute; as the apostle observes in the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse of this chapter, "The Greeks seek after wisdom." Corinth was not far from Athens, that had been for many ages the most famous seat of philosophy and learning in the world. The apostle therefore observes to them, how God by the gospel destroyed, and brought to naught, their wisdom. The learned Grecians, and their great philosophers, by all their wisdom did not know God, they were not able to find out the truth in divine things. But, after they had done their utmost to no effect, it pleased God at length to reveal himself by the gospel, which they accounted foolishness. He "chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are." And the apostle informs them in the text why he thus did, *That no flesh should glory in his presence, &c.*—In which words may be observed,

1. What God aims at in the disposition of things in the affair of redemption, *viz.* that man should not glory in himself, but alone in God; 1 Cor. i. 29, 31. *That no flesh should glory in his presence,—that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

2. How this end is attained in the work of redemption, *viz.* by that absolute and immediate dependence which men have upon God in that work, for all their good. Inasmuch as,

*First*, all the good that they have is in and through Christ; *He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*<sup>2</sup> All the good of the fallen and redeemed creature is concerned in these four things, and cannot be better distributed than into them; but Christ is each of them to us, and we have none of them any otherwise than in him. *He is made of God unto us wisdom:* in him are all the proper good and true excellency of the understanding. Wisdom was a thing that the Greeks admired; but Christ is the true light of the world; it is through him alone that true wisdom is imparted to the mind. It is in and by Christ that we have *righteousness:* it is by being in him that we are justified, have our sins pardoned, and are received as righteous into God's favor. It is by Christ that we have *sanctification:* we have in him true excellency of heart as well as of understanding; and he is made unto us inherent as well as imputed righteousness. It is by Christ that we have *redemption*, or the actual deliverance from all misery, and the bestowment of all happiness and glory. Thus we have all our good by Christ, who is God.

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 30.

*Secondly*, another instance wherein our dependence on God for all our good appears, is this, that it is God that has given us Christ, that we might have these benefits through him; he *of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, &c.*

*Thirdly*, it is of him that we are in Christ Jesus, and come to have an interest in him, and so do receive those blessings which he is made unto us. It is God that gives us faith whereby we close with Christ.

So that in this verse is shown our dependence on each person in the Trinity for all our good. We are dependent on Christ the Son of God, as he is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We are dependent on the Father, who has given us Christ, and made him to be these things to us. We are dependent on the Holy Ghost, for it is *of him that we are in Christ Jesus*; it is the Spirit of God that gives faith in him, whereby we receive him, and close with him.

### DOCTRINE

“God is glorified in the work of redemption in this, that there appears in it so absolute and universal a dependence of the redeemed on him.”—Here I propose to show, *1st*, that there is an absolute and universal dependence of the redeemed on God for all their good. And, *2dly*, that God hereby is exalted and glorified in the work of redemption.

I. There is an absolute and universal dependence of the redeemed on God. The nature and contrivance of our redemption is such, that the redeemed are in every thing directly, immediately, and entirely dependent on God: they are dependent on him for all, and are dependent on him every way.

The several ways wherein the dependence of one being may be upon another for its good, and wherein the redeemed of Jesus Christ depend on God for all their good, are these, *viz.*, that they have all their good of him, and that they have all through him, and that they have all in him: That he is the *cause* and original whence all their good comes, therein it is *of him*; and that he is the *medium* by which it is obtained and conveyed, therein they have it *through him*; and that he is the *good itself* given and conveyed, therein it is *in him*. Now those that are redeemed by Jesus Christ do, in all these respects, very directly and entirely depend on God for their all.

*First*, the redeemed have all their good *of God*. God is the great *author* of it. He is the *first* cause of it; and not only so, but he is the *only* proper cause. It is of God that we have our Redeemer. It is God that has provided a Savior for us. Jesus Christ is not only of God in his person, as he is the only-begotten Son of God, but he is from God, as we are concerned in him, and in his office of Mediator. He is the gift of God to us: God chose and anointed him, appointed him his work, and sent him into the world. And as it is God that *gives*, so it is God that *accepts* the Savior. He gives the purchaser, and he affords the thing purchased.

It is of God that Christ becomes ours, that we are brought to him, and are united to him. It is of God that we receive faith to close with him, that we may have an interest in him. [Eph. ii. 8](#), “For by grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” It is of God that we actually receive all the benefits that Christ has purchased. It is God that pardons and justifies, and delivers from going down to hell; and into his favor the redeemed are received, when they are justified. So it is God that delivers from the dominion of sin, cleanses us from our filthiness, and changes us from our deformity. It is of God that the redeemed receive all their true excellency, wisdom, and holiness; and that two ways, *viz.* as the Holy Ghost by whom these things are immediately wrought is from God, proceeds from him, and is sent by him; and also as the Holy Ghost himself is God, by whose operation and indwelling the knowledge of God and divine things, a holy disposition and all grace, are conferred and upheld. And though means are made use of in conferring grace on men’s souls, yet it is of God that we have these means of grace, and it is he that makes them effectual. It is of God that we have the Holy Scriptures; they are his word. It is of God that we have ordinances, and their efficacy depends on the immediate influence of his Spirit. The ministers of the gospel are sent of God, and all their sufficiency is of him.—[2 Cor. iv. 7](#), “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” Their success depends entirely and absolutely on the immediate blessing and influence of God.

1. The redeemed have all from the *grace* of God. It was of mere grace that God gave us his only-begotten Son. The grace is great in proportion to the excellency of what is given. The gift was infinitely precious, because it was of a person infinitely worthy, a person of infinite glory; and also because it was of a person infinitely near and dear to God. The grace is great in proportion to the benefit we have given us in him. The benefit is doubly infinite, in that in him we have deliverance from an infinite, because an eternal, misery, and do also receive eternal joy and glory. The grace in bestowing this gift is great in proportion to our unworthiness to whom it is given; instead of deserving such a gift, we merited infinitely ill of God’s hands. The grace is great according to the manner of giving, or in proportion to the humiliation and expense of the method and means by which a way is made for our having the gift. He gave him to dwell amongst us; he gave him to us incarnate, or in our nature; and in the like though sinless infirmities. He gave him to us in a low and afflicted state; and not only so, but as slain, that he might be a feast for our souls.

The grace of God in bestowing this gift is most free. It was what God was under no obligation to bestow. He might have rejected fallen man, as he did the fallen angels. It was what we never did any thing to merit; it was given while we were yet enemies, and before we had so much as repented. It was from the love of God who saw no excellency in us to attract it; and it was without expectation of ever being requited for it. And it is from mere grace that the benefits of Christ are applied to such and such particular persons. Those that



are called and sanctified are to attribute it alone to the good pleasure of God's goodness, by which they are distinguished. He is sovereign, and hath mercy on whom he will have mercy.

Man hath now a greater dependence on the grace of God than he had before the fall. He depends on the free goodness of God for much more than he did then. Then he depended on God's goodness for conferring the reward of perfect obedience; for God was not obliged to promise and bestow that reward. But now we are dependent on the grace of God for much more; we stand in need of grace, not only to bestow glory upon us, but to deliver us from hell and eternal wrath. Under the first covenant we depended on God's goodness to give us the reward of righteousness; and so we do now: but we stand in need of God's free and sovereign grace to give us that righteousness; to pardon our sin, and release us from the guilt and infinite demerit of it.

And as we are dependent on the goodness of God for more now than under the first covenant, so we are dependent on a much greater, more free and wonderful goodness. We are now more dependent on God's arbitrary and sovereign good pleasure. We were in our first estate dependent on God for holiness. We had our original righteousness from him; but then holiness was not bestowed in such a way of sovereign good pleasure as it is now. Man was created holy, for it became God to create holy all his reasonable creatures. It would have been a disparagement to the holiness of God's nature, if he had made an intelligent creature unholy. But now when fallen man is made holy, it is from mere and arbitrary grace; God may for ever deny holiness to the fallen creature if he pleases, without any disparagement to any of his perfections.

And we are not only indeed more dependent on the grace of God, but our dependence is much more conspicuous, because our own insufficiency and helplessness in ourselves is much more apparent in our fallen and undone state, than it was before we were either sinful or miserable. We are more apparently dependent on God for holiness, because we are first sinful, and utterly polluted, and afterward holy. So the production of the effect is sensible, and its derivation from God more obvious. If man was ever holy and always was so, it would not be so apparent, that he had not holiness necessarily, as an inseparable qualification of human nature. So we are more apparently dependent on free grace for the favor of God, for we are first justly the objects of his displeasure, and afterwards are received into favor. We are more apparently dependent on God for happiness, being first miserable, and afterwards happy. It is more apparently free and without merit in us, because we are actually without any kind of excellency to merit, if there could be any such thing as merit in creature excellency. And we are not only without any true excellency, but are full of, and wholly defiled with, that which is infinitely odious. All our good is more apparently from God, because we are first naked and wholly without any good, and afterwards enriched with all good.

2. We receive all from the *power* of God. Man's redemption is often spoken of as a work of wonderful power as well as grace. The great power of God appears in bringing a sinner

from his low state, from the depths of sin and misery, to such an exalted state of holiness and happiness. [Eph. i. 19](#). “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”—

We are dependent on God's power through every step of our redemption. We are dependent on the power of God to convert us, and give faith in Jesus Christ, and the new nature. It is a work of creation: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,” [2 Cor. v. 17](#). “We are created in Christ Jesus,” [Eph. ii. 10](#). The fallen creature cannot attain to true holiness, but by being created again. [Eph. v. 24](#), “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” It is a raising from the dead. [Colos. ii. 12, 13](#). “Wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” Yea, it is a more glorious work of power than mere creation, or raising a dead body to life, in that the effect attained is greater and more excellent. That holy and happy being, and spiritual life, which is produced in the work of conversion, is a far greater and more glorious effect, than mere being and life. And the state from whence the change is made—a death in sin, a total corruption of nature, and depth of misery—is far more remote from the state attained, than mere death or non-entity.

It is by God's power also that we are preserved in a state of grace. [1 Pet. i. 5](#). “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” As grace is at first from God, so it is continually from him, and is maintained by him, as much as light in the atmosphere is all day long from the sun, as well as at first dawning, or sun-rising.—Men are dependent on the power of God for every exercise of grace, and for carrying on that work in the heart, for subduing sin and corruption, increasing holy principles, and enabling to bring forth fruit in good works. Man is dependent on divine power in bringing grace to its perfection, in making the soul completely amiable in Christ's glorious likeness, and filling of it with a satisfying joy and blessedness; and for the raising of the body to life, and to such a perfect state, that it shall be suitable for a habitation and organ for a soul so perfected and blessed. These are the most glorious effects of the power of God, that are seen in the series of God's acts with respect to the creatures.

Man was dependent on the power of God in his first estate, but he is more dependent on his power now; he needs God's power to do more things for him, and depends on a more wonderful exercise of his power. It was an effect of the power of God to make man holy at the first: but more remarkably so now, because there is a great deal of opposition and difficulty in the way. It is a more glorious effect of power to make that holy that was so depraved, and under the dominion of sin, than to confer holiness on that which before had nothing of the contrary. It is a more glorious work of power to rescue a soul out of the hands of the devil, and from the powers of darkness, and to bring it into a state of salvation, than to confer holiness where there was no prepossession or opposition. [Luke xi. 21-22](#). “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he



shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor, wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." So it is a more glorious work of power to uphold a soul in a state of grace and holiness, and to carry it on till it is brought to glory, when there is so much sin remaining in the heart resisting, and Satan with all his might opposing, than it would have been to have kept man from falling at first, when Satan had nothing in man.—Thus we have shown how the redeemed are dependent on God for all their good, as they have all of him.

*Secondly*, they are also dependent on God for all, as they have all *through* him. God is the medium of it, as well as the author and fountain of it. All we have, wisdom, the pardon of sin, deliverance from hell, acceptance into God's favor, grace and holiness, true comfort and happiness, eternal life and glory, is from God by a Mediator; and this Mediator is God; which Mediator we have an absolute dependence upon, as he through whom we receive all. So that here is another way wherein we have our dependence on God for all good. God not only gives us the Mediator, and accepts his mediation, and of his power and grace bestows the things purchased by the Mediator; but he the Mediator is God.

Our blessings are what we have by purchase; and the purchase is made of God, the blessings are purchased of him, and God gives the purchaser; and not only so, but God is the purchaser. Yea God is both the purchaser and the price; for Christ, who is God, purchased these blessings for us, by offering up himself as the price of our salvation. He purchased eternal life by the sacrifice of himself. [Heb. vii. 27.](#) "He offered up himself." And [ix. 26.](#) "He hath appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Indeed it was the human nature that was offered; but it was the same person with the divine, and therefore was an infinite price.

As we thus have our good through God, we have a dependence on him in a respect that man in his first estate had not. Man was to have eternal life then through his own righteousness; so that he had partly a dependence upon what was in himself; for we have a dependence upon that through which we have our good, as well as that from which we have it; and though man's righteousness that he then depended on was indeed from God, yet it was his own, it was inherent in himself; so that his dependence was not so *immediately* on God. But now the righteousness that we are dependent on is not in ourselves, but in God. We are saved through the righteousness of Christ: He *is made unto us righteousness*; and therefore is prophesied of, [Jer. xxiii. 6.](#) under that name, "the Lord our righteousness." In that the righteousness we are justified by is the righteousness of Christ, it is the righteousness of God. [2 Cor. v. 21.](#) "That we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—Thus in redemption we have not only all things of God, but by and through him, [1 Cor. viii. 6.](#) "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

*Thirdly*, the redeemed have all their good *in God*. We not only have it of him, and through him, but it consists in him; he is all our good.—The good of the redeemed is either objective or inherent. By their objective good, I mean that extrinsic object, in the possession and enjoyment of which they are happy. Their inherent good is that excellency or pleasure which is in the soul itself. With respect to both of which the redeemed have all their good in God, or which is the same thing, God himself is all their good.

1. The redeemed have all their *objective* good in God. God himself is the great good which they are brought to the possession and enjoyment of by redemption. He is the highest good, and the sum of all that good which Christ purchased. God is the inheritance of the saints; he is the portion of their souls. God is their wealth and treasure, their food, their life, their dwelling-place, their ornament and diadem, and their everlasting honour and glory. They have none in heaven but God; he is the great good which the redeemed are received to at death, and which they are to rise to at the end of the world. The Lord God is the light of the heavenly Jerusalem; and is the “river of the water of life” that runs, and “the tree of life that grows, in the midst of the paradise of God.” The glorious excellencies and beauty of God will be what will forever entertain the minds of the saints, and the love of God will be their everlasting feast. The redeemed will indeed enjoy other things; they will enjoy the angels, and will enjoy one another; but that which they shall enjoy in the angels, or each other, or in any thing else whatsoever that will yield them delight and happiness, will be what shall be seen of God in them.

2. The redeemed have all their *inherent* good in God. Inherent good is twofold; it is either excellency or pleasure. These the redeemed not only derive from God, as caused by him, but have them in him. They have spiritual excellency and joy by a kind of participation of God. They are made excellent by a communication of God’s excellency. God puts his own beauty, *i.e.* his beautiful likeness, upon their souls. They are made partakers of the divine nature, or moral image of God, [2 Pet. i. 4](#). They are holy by being made partakers of God’s holiness, [Heb. xii. 10](#). The saints are beautiful and blessed by a communication of God’s holiness and joy, as the moon and planets are bright by the sun’s light. The saint hath spiritual joy and pleasure by a kind of effusion of God on the soul. In these things the redeemed have communion with God; that is, they partake with him and of him.

The saints have both their spiritual excellency and blessedness by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and his dwelling in them. They are not only caused by the Holy Ghost, but are in him as their principle. The Holy Spirit becoming an inhabitant, is a vital principle in the soul. He, acting in, upon, and with the soul, becomes a fountain of true holiness and joy, as a spring is of water, by the exertion and diffusion of itself. [John iv. 14](#). “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Compared with [chap. vii. 38, 39](#). “He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow



rivers of living water; but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.” The sum of what Christ has purchased for us, is that spring of water spoken of in the former of those places, and those rivers of living water spoken of in the latter. And the sum of the blessings, which the redeemed shall receive in heaven, is that river of water of life that proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb, [Rev. xxii. 1](#). Which doubtless signifies the same with those rivers of living water, explained, [John vii. 38, 39](#). which is elsewhere called the “river of God’s pleasures.” Herein consists the fullness of good, which the saints receive of Christ. It is by partaking of the Holy Spirit, that they have communion with Christ in his fullness. God hath given the Spirit, not by measure unto him; and they do receive of his fullness, and grace for grace. This is the sum of the saints’ inheritance; and therefore that little of the Holy Ghost which believers have in this world, is said to be the earnest of their inheritance, [2 Cor. i. 22](#). “Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” And [chap v. 5](#). “Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing, is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.” And “Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.”<sup>3</sup>”

The Holy Spirit and good things are spoken of in Scripture as the same; as if the Spirit of God communicated to the soul, comprised all good things, “How much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?”<sup>4</sup> In Luke it is, [verse xi. 13](#). “How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” This is the sum of the blessings that Christ died to procure, and the subject of gospel-promises. [Gal. iii. 13-14](#). “He was made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” The Spirit of God is the great promise of the Father, [Luke xxiv. 49](#). “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you.” The Spirit of God therefore is called “the Spirit of promise,” [Eph. i. 33](#). This promised thing Christ received, and had given into his hand, as soon as he had finished the work of our redemption, to bestow on all that he had redeemed; “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye both see and hear.”<sup>5</sup> So that all the holiness and happiness of the redeemed is in God. It is in the communications, indwelling, and acting of the Spirit of God. Holiness and happiness is in the fruit, here and hereafter, because God dwells in them, and they in God.

Thus God has given us the Redeemer, and it is by him that our good is purchased. So God is the Redeemer and the price; and he also is the good purchased. So that all that we have is of God, and through him, and in him. “For of him, and through him, and *to him*,

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3 [Eph. i. 13-14](#).

4 [Matt. vii. 11](#).

5 [Acts ii. 13](#).

or *in him*, are all things. <sup>6</sup>” The same in the Greek that is here rendered *to him*, is rendered *in him*, 1 Cor. viii. 6.

II. God is glorified in the work of redemption by this means, *viz.* by there being so great and universal a dependence of the redeemed on him.

1. Man hath so much the greater occasion and obligation to notice and acknowledge God's perfections and all-sufficiency. The greater the creature's dependence is on God's perfections, and the greater concern he has with them, so much the greater occasion has he to take notice of them. So much the greater concern any one has with and dependence upon the power and grace of God, so much the greater occasion has he to take notice of that power and grace. So much the greater and more immediate dependence there is on the divine holiness, so much the greater occasion to take notice of and acknowledge that. So much the greater and more absolute dependence we have on the divine perfections, as belonging to the several persons of the Trinity, so much the greater occasion have we to observe and own the divine glory of each of them. That which we are most concerned with, is surely most in the way of our observation and notice; and this kind of concern with any thing, *viz.* dependence, does especially tend to command and oblige the attention and observation. Those things that we are not much dependent upon, it is easy to neglect; but we can scarce do any other than mind that which we have a great dependence on. By reason of our so great dependence on God, and his perfections, and in so many respects, he and his glory are the more directly set in our view, which way soever we turn our eyes.

We have the greater occasion to take notice of God's all-sufficiency, when all our sufficiency is thus every way of him. We have the more occasion to contemplate him as an infinite good, and as the fountain of all good. Such a dependence on God demonstrates his all-sufficiency. So much as the dependence of the creature is on God, so much the greater does the creature's emptiness in himself appear; and so much the greater the creature's emptiness, so much the greater must the fullness of the Being be who supplies him. Our having all *of* God, shows the fullness of his power and grace; our having all *through* him, shows the fullness of his merit and worthiness; and our having all *in* him, demonstrates his fullness of beauty, love, and happiness. And the redeemed, by reason of the greatness of their dependence on God, have not only so much the greater occasion, but obligation to contemplate and acknowledge the glory and fullness of God. How unreasonable and ungrateful should we be, if we did not acknowledge that sufficiency and glory which we absolutely, immediately, and universally depend upon!

2. Hereby is demonstrated how great God's glory is considered comparatively, or as compared with the creature's.—By the creature being thus wholly and universally dependent on God, it appears that the creature is nothing, and that God is all. Hereby it appears that

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6 Rom. xii. 36.

God is infinitely above us; that God's strength, and wisdom, and holiness, are infinitely greater than ours. However great and glorious the creature apprehends God to be, yet if he be not sensible of the difference between God and him, so as to see that God's glory is great, compared with his own, he will not be disposed to give God the glory due to his name. If the creature in any respects sets himself upon a level with God, or exalts himself to any competition with him, however he may apprehend that great honor and profound respect may belong to God from those that are at a greater distance, he will not be so sensible of its being due from him. So much the more men exalt themselves, so much the less will they surely be disposed to exalt God. It is certainly what God aims at in the disposition of things in redemption (if we allow the Scriptures to be a Rev. of God's mind,) that God should appear full, and man in himself empty, that God should appear all, and man nothing. It is God's declared design that others should not "glory in his presence," which implies that it is his design to advance his own comparative glory. So much the more man "glories in God's presence," so much the less glory is ascribed to God.

3. By its being thus ordered, that the creature should have so absolute and universal a dependence on God, provision is made that God should have our whole souls, and should be the object of our undivided respect. If we had our dependence partly on God, and partly on something else, man's respect would be divided to those different things on which he had dependence. Thus it would be if we depended on God only for a part of our good, and on ourselves, or some other being, for another part: or if we had our good only from God, and through another that was not God, and in something else distinct from both, our hearts would be divided between the good itself, and him from whom, and him through whom, we received it. But now there is no occasion for this, God being not only he from or of whom we have all good, but also through whom, and is that good itself, that we have from him and through him. So that whatsoever there is to attract our respect, the tendency is still directly towards God; all unites in him as the center.

### USE

1. We may here observe the marvelous wisdom of God, in the work of redemption. God hath made man's emptiness and misery, his low, lost, and ruined state, into which he sunk by the fall, an occasion of the greater advancement of his own glory, as in other ways, so particularly in this, that there is now much more universal and apparent dependence of man on God. Though God be pleased to lift man out of that dismal abyss of sin and woe into which he was fallen, and exceedingly to exalt him in excellency and honor, and to a high pitch of glory and blessedness, yet the creature hath nothing in any respect to glory of; all the glory evidently belongs to God, all is in a mere, and most absolute, and divine dependence on the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And each person of the Trinity is equally glorified in this work: there is an absolute dependence of the creature on every one for all: all is of

the Father, all through the Son, and all in the Holy Ghost. Thus God appears in the work of redemption as all in all. It is fit that he who is, and there is none else, should be the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the all and the only, in this work.

2. Hence those doctrines and schemes of divinity that are in any respect opposite to such an absolute and universal dependence on God, derogate from his glory, and thwart the design of our redemption. And such are those schemes that put the creature in God's stead, in any of the mentioned respects, that exalt man into the place of either Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, in any thing pertaining to our redemption. However they may allow of a dependence of the redeemed on God, yet they deny a dependence that is so *absolute* and universal. They own an entire dependence on God for *some* things, but not for others; they own that we depend on God for the gift and acceptance of a Redeemer, but deny so absolute a dependence on him for the obtaining of an *interest* in the Redeemer. They own an absolute dependence on the Father for giving his Son, and on the Son for working out redemption, but not so entire a dependence on the Holy Ghost for *conversion*, and a being in Christ, and so coming to a title to his benefits. They own a dependence on God for *means* of grace, but not absolutely for the benefit and success of those means; a partial dependence on the power of God, for obtaining and exercising holiness, but not a mere dependence on the arbitrary and sovereign grace of God. They own a dependence on the free grace of God for a reception into his favor, so far that it is without any proper merit, but not as it is without being attracted, or moved with any excellency. They own a partial dependence on Christ, as he through whom we have life, as having purchased new terms of life, but still hold that the righteousness through which we have life is inherent in ourselves, as it was under the first covenant. Now whatever scheme is inconsistent with our *entire* dependence on God for all, and of having all of him, through him, and in him, it is repugnant to the design and tenor of the gospel, and robs it of that which God accounts its luster and glory.

3. Hence we may learn a reason why faith is that by which we come to have an interest in this redemption; for there is included in the nature of faith, a sensible acknowledgment of *absolute dependence* on God in this affair. It is very fit that it should be required of all, in order to their having the benefit of this redemption, that they should be sensible of, and acknowledge, their dependence on God for it. It is by this means that God hath contrived to glorify himself in redemption; and it is fit that he should at least have this glory of those that are the subjects of this redemption, and have the benefit of it.—Faith is a sensibleness of what is real in the work of redemption; and the soul that believes doth entirely depend on God for all salvation, in its own sense and act. Faith abases men, and exalts God; it gives all the glory of redemption to him alone. It is necessary in order to saving faith, that man should be emptied of himself, be sensible that he is “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Humility is a great ingredient of true faith: he that truly receives redemption, receives it as a little child, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a



little child, he shall not enter therein. <sup>7</sup> ” It is the delight of a believing soul to abase itself and exalt God alone: that is the language of it, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory. <sup>8</sup> ”

4. Let us be exhorted to exalt God alone, and ascribe to him all the glory of redemption. Let us endeavor to obtain, and increase in, a sensibleness of our great dependence on God, to have our eye to him alone, to mortify a self-dependent and self-righteous disposition. Man is naturally exceeding prone to exalt himself, and depend on his own power or goodness; as though from himself he must expect happiness. He is prone to have respect to enjoyments alien from God and his Spirit, as those in which happiness is to be found.—But this doctrine should teach us to exalt God *alone*: as by trust and reliance, so by praise. *Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord.* Hath any man hope that he is converted, and sanctified, and that his mind is endowed with true excellency and spiritual beauty? That his sins are forgiven, and he received into God's favor, and exalted to the honor and blessedness of being his child, and an heir of eternal life? Let him give God all the glory; who alone makes him to differ from the worst of men in this world, or the most miserable of the damned in hell. Hath any man much comfort and strong hope of eternal life, let not his hope lift him up, but dispose him the more to abase himself, to reflect on his own exceeding unworthiness of such a favor, and to exalt God alone. Is any man eminent in holiness, and abundant in good works, let him take nothing of the glory of it to himself, but ascribe it to him whose “workmanship we are, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”

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7 [Mark x. 15.](#)

8 [Psalm cxv. 1.](#)

S E R M O N   I I . <sup>9</sup>

SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD.

Deut. xxxii. 35.

—*Their foot shall slide in due time.*—

In this verse is threatened the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, who were God's visible people, and who lived under the means of grace; but who, notwithstanding all God's wonderful works towards them, remained (as [verse 28.](#)) void of counsel, having no understanding in them. Under all the cultivations of heaven, they brought forth bitter and poisonous fruit; as in the two verses next preceding the text.—The expression I have chosen for my text, *their foot shall slide in due time*, seems to imply the following things, relating to the punishment and destruction to which these wicked Israelites were exposed.

1. That they were always exposed to *destruction*; as one that stands or walks in slippery places is always exposed to fall. This is implied in the manner of their destruction coming upon them, being represented by their foot sliding. The same is expressed, "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction." <sup>10</sup> »

2. It implies, that they were always exposed to sudden unexpected destruction. As he that walks in slippery places is every moment liable to fall, he cannot foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall the next; and when he does fall, he falls at once without warning: Which is also expressed in "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction: How are they brought into desolation as in a moment?" <sup>11</sup> »

3. Another thing implied is, that they are liable to fall *of themselves*, without being thrown down by the hand of another; as he that stands or walks on slippery ground needs nothing but his own weight to throw him down.

4. That the reason why they are not fallen already and do not fall now is only that God's appointed time is not come. For it is said, that when that due time, or appointed time comes, *their foot shall slide*. Then they shall be left to fall, as they are inclined by their own weight. God will not hold them up in these slippery places any longer, but will let them go; and then, at that very instant, they shall fall into destruction; as he that stands on such slippery declining

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9    P R E A C H E D   A T   E N F I E L D ,   J U L Y   8 T H ,   1 7 4 1 ,   A T   A  
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R E M A R K A B L E   I M P R E S S I O N S   O N   M A N Y   O F   T H E  
H E A R E R S .

10    [Psalm lxiii. 18.](#)

11    [Psalm lxxiii. 18-19.](#)

ground, on the edge of a pit, he cannot stand alone, when he is let go he immediately falls and is lost.

The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this.—“There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God.”—By the *mere* pleasure of God, I mean his *sovereign* pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God’s mere will had in the least degree, or in any respect whatsoever, any hand in the preservation of wicked men one moment.—The truth of this observation may appear by the following considerations.

1. There is no want of *power* in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Men’s hands cannot be strong when God rises up. The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands.—He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it. Sometimes an earthly prince meets with a great deal of difficulty to subdue a rebel, who has found means to fortify himself, and has made himself strong by the numbers of his followers. But it is not so with God. There is no fortress that is any defense from the power of God. Though hand join in hand, and vast multitudes of God’s enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces. They are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind; or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so it is easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that any thing hangs by: thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we, that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down?

2. They *deserve* to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God’s using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom, “Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?” [Luke xiii. 7](#). The sword of divine justice is every moment brandished over their heads, and it is nothing but the hand of arbitrary mercy, and God’s mere will, that holds it back.

3. They are already under a sentence of *condemnation* to hell. They do not only justly deserve to be cast down thither, but the sentence of the law of God, that eternal and immutable rule of righteousness that God has fixed between him and mankind, is gone out against them, and stands against them; so that they are bound over already to hell. “He that believeth not is condemned already.”<sup>12</sup> So that every unconverted man properly belongs to hell; that is his place; from thence he is, [John viii. 23](#). “Ye are from beneath,” and thither he is bound; it is the place that justice, and God’s word, and the sentence of his unchangeable law, assign to him.

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12 [John iii. 18](#).



4. They are now the objects of that very same *anger* and wrath of God, that is expressed in the torments of hell. And the reason why they do not go down to hell at each moment, is not because God, in whose power they are, is not then very angry with them; as he is with many miserable creatures now tormented in hell, who there feel and bear the fierceness of his wrath. Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth; yea, doubtless, with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell.—So that it is not because God is unmindful of their wickedness, and does not resent it, that he does not let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such an one as themselves, though they may imagine him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them.

5. The *devil* stands ready to fall upon them, and seize them as his own, at what moment God shall permit him. They belong to him; he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. The scripture represents them as his goods, [Luke xi. 12](#). The devils watch them; they are ever by them at their right hand; they stand waiting for them, like greedy hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back. If God should withdraw his hand, by which they are restrained, they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls. The old serpent is gaping for them; hell opens its mouth wide to receive them; and if God should permit it, they would be hastily swallowed up and lost.

6. There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish *principles* reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hell-fire, if it were not for God's restraints. There is laid in the very nature of carnal men, a foundation for the torments of hell. There are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell-fire. These principles are active and powerful, exceeding violent in their nature, and if it were not for the restraining hand of God upon them, they would soon break out, they would flame out after the same manner as the same corruptions, the same enmity does in the hearts of damned souls, and would beget the same torments as they do in them. The souls of the wicked are in Scripture compared to the troubled sea, [Isa. lvii. 20](#). For the present, God restrains their wickedness by his mighty power, as he does the raging waves of the troubled sea, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," but if God should withdraw that restraining power, it would soon carry all before it. Sin is the ruin and misery of the soul; it is destructive in its nature; and if God should leave it without restraint, there would need nothing else to make the soul perfectly miserable. The corruption of the heart of man is immoderate and boundless in its fury; and while wicked men live here, it is like fire pent up by God's restraints, whereas if it were let loose, it would set on fire the course of nature;



and as the heart is now a sink of sin, so, if sin was not restrained, it would immediately turn the soul into fiery oven, or a furnace of fire and brimstone.

7. It is no security to wicked men for one moment, that there are no visible means of death at hand. It is no security to a natural man, that he is now in health, and that he does not see which way he should now immediately go out of the world by any accident, and that there is no visible danger in any respect in his circumstances. The manifold and continual experience of the world in all ages, shows this is no evidence, that a man is not on the very brink of eternity, and that the next step will not be into another world. The unseen, unthought of ways and means of persons going suddenly out of the world are innumerable and inconceivable. Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight cannot discern them. God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending them to hell, that there is nothing to make it appear, that God had need to be at the expense of a miracle, or go out of the ordinary course of his providence, to destroy any wicked man, at any moment. All the means that there are of sinners going out of the world, are so in God's hands, and so universally and absolutely subject to his power and determination, that it does not depend at all the less on the mere will of God, whether sinners shall at any moment go to hell, than if means were never made use of, or at all concerned in the case.

8. Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives, or the care of others to preserve them, do not secure them a moment. To this, divine providence and universal experience do also bear testimony. There is this clear evidence that men's own wisdom is no security to them from death; that if it were otherwise we should see some difference between the wise and politic men of the world, and others, with regard to their liableness to early and unexpected death: but how is it in fact? "How dieth the wise man? even as the fool."<sup>13</sup>

9. All wicked men's pains and *contrivance* which they use to escape hell, while they continue to reject Christ, and so remain wicked men, do not secure them from hell one moment. Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done. He does not intend to

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13 Eccl. ii. 16.

come to that place of torment; he says within himself, that he intends to take effectual care, and to order matters so for himself as not to fail.

But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow. The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, and are now dead, are undoubtedly gone to hell; and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive: it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. If we could speak with them, and inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected, when alive, and when they used to hear about hell, ever to be the subjects of misery: we doubtless, should hear one and another reply, "No, I never intended to come here: I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive well for myself: I thought my scheme good. I intended to take effectual care; but it came upon me unexpected; I did not look for it at that time, and in that manner; it came as a thief: Death outwitted me: God's wrath was too quick for me. Oh, my cursed foolishness! I was flattering myself, and pleasing myself with vain dreams of what I would do hereafter; and when I was saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction came upon me."

10. God has laid himself under no *obligation*, by any promise to keep any natural man out of hell one moment. God certainly has made no promises either of eternal life, or of any deliverance or preservation from eternal death, but what are contained in the covenant of grace, the promises that are given in Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. But surely they have no interest in the promises of the covenant of grace who are not the children of the covenant, who do not believe in any of the promises, and have no interest in the Mediator of the covenant.

So that, whatever some have imagined and pretended about promises made to natural men's earnest seeking and knocking, it is plain and manifest, that whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ, God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction.

So that, thus it is that natural men are held in the hand of God, over the pit of hell; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to those that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell, and they have done nothing in the least to appease or abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment; the devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire pent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out: and they have no interest in any Mediator, there are no means within reach that can be any security to them. In short, they have no refuge, nothing to take hold of; all that preserves them every moment is the mere arbitrary will, and uncovenanted, unobliged forbearance of an incensed God.



## APPLICATION

The use of this awful subject may be for awakening unconverted persons in this congregation. This that you have heard is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ.—That world of misery, that lake of burning brimstone, is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of; there is nothing between you and hell but the air; it is only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.

You probably are not sensible of this; you find you are kept out of hell, but do not see the hand of God in it; but look at other things, as the good state of your bodily constitution, your care of your own life, and the means you use for your own preservation. But indeed these things are nothing; if God should withdraw his hand, they would avail no more to keep you from falling, than the thin air to hold up a person that is suspended in it.

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell, than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock. Were it not for the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment; for you are a burden to it; the creation groans with you; the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun does not willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth does not willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air does not willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and do not willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that

judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. Thus all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all you that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced light and life, are in the hands of an angry God. However you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, it is nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction. However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you, see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them; when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see, that those things on which they depended for peace and safety, were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you were suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of at-



tending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.—And consider here more particularly,

1. *Whose* wrath it is: it is the wrath of the infinite God. If it were only the wrath of man, though it were of the most potent prince, it would be comparatively little to be regarded. The wrath of kings is very much dreaded, especially of absolute monarchs, who have the possessions and lives of their subjects wholly in their power, to be disposed of at their mere will. “The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: Whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul.<sup>14</sup>” The subject that very much enrages an arbitrary prince, is liable to suffer the most extreme torments that human art can invent, or human power can inflict. But the greatest earthly potentates in their greatest majesty and strength, and when clothed in their greatest terrors, are but feeble, despicable worms of the dust, in comparison of the great and almighty Creator and King of heaven and earth. It is but little that they can do, when most enraged, and when they have exerted the utmost of their fury. All the kings of the earth, before God, are as grasshoppers; they are nothing, and less than nothing: both their love and their hatred is to be despised. The wrath of the great King of kings, is as much more terrible than theirs, as his majesty is greater. “And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him.<sup>15</sup>”

2. It is the *fierceness* of his wrath that you are exposed to. We often read of the fury of God; as in “According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries.<sup>16</sup>” So “For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.<sup>17</sup>” And in many other places. So, we read of “the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.<sup>18</sup>” The words are

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14 [Prov. xx. 2.](#)

15 [Luke xii. 4-5.](#)

16 [Isa. lix. 18.](#)

17 [Isa. lxvi. 15.](#)

18 [Rev. xix. 15.](#)

exceeding terrible. If it had only been said, “the wrath of God,” the words would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful: but it is “the fierceness and wrath of God.” The fury of God! The fierceness of Jehovah! Oh, how dreadful that must be! Who can utter or conceive what such expressions carry in them! But it is also “the fierceness and wrath of *Almighty* God.” As though there would be a very great manifestation of his almighty power in what the fierceness of his wrath should inflict, as though omnipotence should be as it were enraged, and exerted, as men are wont to exert their strength in the fierceness of their wrath. Oh! then, what will be the consequence! What will become of the poor worm that shall suffer it! Whose hands can be strong? And whose heart can endure? To what a dreadful, inexpressible, inconceivable depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk who shall be the subject of this!

Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies, that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom; he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall *not suffer beyond what strict justice requires*. Nothing shall be withheld, because it is so hard for you to bear. “Therefore will I also deal in fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them.”<sup>19</sup> Now God stands ready to pity you; this is a day of mercy; you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy. But when once the day of mercy is past, your most lamentable and dolorous cries and shrieks will be in vain; you will be wholly lost and thrown away of God, as to any regard to your welfare. God will have no other use to put you to, but to suffer misery; you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel, but to be filled full of wrath. God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that it is said he will only “laugh and mock,” *Prov. i. 25, 26. &c.*

How awful are those words, which are the words of the great God. “I will tread them in mine anger, and will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.”<sup>20</sup> It is perhaps impossible to conceive of words that carry in them greater manifestations of these three things, *viz.* contempt, and hatred, and fierceness of indignation. If you cry to God to pity you, he will be so far from pitying

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19 *Ezek. viii. 18.*

20 *Isa. lxiii. 3.*

you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favor, that instead of that, he will only tread you under foot. And though he will know that you cannot bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet he will not regard that, but he will crush you under his feet without mercy; he will crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on his garments, so as to stain all his raiment. He will not only hate you, but he will have you in the utmost contempt: no place shall be thought fit for you, but under his feet to be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

3. The misery you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might show what that wrath of Jehovah is. God hath had it on his heart to show to angels and men, both how excellent his love is, and also how terrible his wrath is. Sometimes earthly kings have a mind to show how terrible their wrath is, by the extreme punishments they would execute on those that would provoke them. Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty and haughty monarch of the Chaldean empire, was willing to show his wrath when enraged with Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; and accordingly gave orders that the burning fiery furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was before; doubtless, it was raised to the utmost degree of fierceness that human art could raise it. But the great God is also willing to show his wrath, and magnify his awful majesty and mighty power in the extreme sufferings of his enemies. “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? <sup>21</sup>” And seeing this is his design, and what he has determined, even to show how terrible the unrestrained wrath, the fury and fierceness of Jehovah is, he will do it to effect. There will be something accomplished and brought to pass that will be dreadful with a witness. When the great and angry God hath risen up and executed his awful vengeance on the poor sinner, and the wretch is actually suffering the infinite weight and power of his indignation, then will God call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. “And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, <sup>22</sup>” &c.

Thus it will be with you that are in an unconverted state, if you continue in it; the infinite might, and majesty, and terribleness of the omnipotent God shall be magnified upon you, in the ineffable strength of your torments. You shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is; and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. “And it shall come to pass, that from

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21 [Rom. ix. 22.](#)

22 [Isa. xxxii. 12-14.](#)

one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.<sup>23</sup>”

4. It is *everlasting* wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it, gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it; it is inexpressible and inconceivable: for “who knows the power of God’s anger?”

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in the danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh that you would consider it, whether you be young or old! There is reason to think, that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But, alas! Instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell? And it would be a wonder, if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, even before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons, that now sit here, in some seats of this meeting-house, in health, quiet and secure, should be there before tomorrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest will be there in a little time! Your damnation does not slumber; it will come swiftly, and, in all probability, very suddenly upon many of you. You have reason to wonder that you are not already in hell. It is doubtless the case of some whom

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23 Isa. lxvi. 23, 24.



you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you, and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you. Their case is past all hope; they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair; but here you are in the land of the living and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those poor damned hopeless souls give for one day's opportunity such as you now enjoy!

And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him who has loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit! How can you rest one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at Suffield, where they are flocking from day to day to Christ?

Are there not many here who have lived long in the world, and are not to this day born again? And so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case, in an especial manner, is extremely dangerous. Your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Do you not see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left, in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider yourselves, and awake thoroughly out of sleep. You cannot bear the fierceness and wrath of the infinite God.—And you, young men, and young women, will you neglect this precious season which you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities, and flocking to Christ? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as with those persons who spent all the precious days of youth in sin, and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness.—And you, children, who are unconverted, do not you know that you are going down to hell, to bear the dreadful wrath of that God, who is now angry with you every day and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted, and are become the holy and happy children of the King of kings?

And let every one that is yet out of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they be old men and women, or middle aged, or young people, or little children, now hearken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord, a day of such great favor to some, will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden, and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls;

and never was there so great danger of such persons being given up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land; and probably the greater part of adult persons that ever shall be saved, will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on the great out-pouring of the Spirit upon the Jews in the apostles' days; the election will obtain, and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this day, and will curse the day that ever you was born, to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit, and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is, as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the axe is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree which brings not forth good fruit, may be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Therefore, let every one that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation. Let every one fly out of Sodom: "Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed."

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**FIVE SERMONS**

ON

**DIFFERENT OCCASIONS,**

*SEPARATELY PUBLISHED, IN MR. EDWARDS'S LIFE TIME*

SERMON I. <sup>24</sup>

A DIVINE AND SUPERNATURAL LIGHT, IMMEDIATELY IMPARTED

TO THE SOUL BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, SHOWN TO BE

BOTH A SCRIPTURAL AND RATIONAL DOCTRINE.

Matt. xvi. 17.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

CHRIST addresses these words to Peter upon occasion of his professing his faith in him as the Son of God. Our Lord was inquiring of his disciples, whom men said that he was; not that he needed to be informed, but only to introduce and give occasion to what follows. They answer, that some said he was John the Baptist, and some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. When they had thus given an account whom others said that he was, Christ asks them, whom they said that he was? Simon Peter, whom we find always zealous and forward, was the first to answer: he readily replied to the question, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.*

Upon this occasion, Christ says as he does *to* him and *of* him in the text: in which we may observe,

1. That Peter is pronounced blessed on this account.—*Blessed art thou*—“Thou art a happy man, that thou art not ignorant of this, that I am *Christ, the Son of the living God.* Thou art distinguishingly happy. Others are blinded, and have dark and deluded apprehensions, as you have now given an account, some thinking that I am Elias, and some that I am Jeremias, and some one thing, and some another; but none of them thinking right, all of them misled. Happy art thou, that art so distinguished as to know the truth in this matter.”

2. The evidence of this his happiness declared; *viz.* that God, and he *only*, had *revealed it* to him. This is an evidence of his being *blessed*,

*First*, as it shows how peculiarly favored he was of God above others: *q. d.* “How highly favored art thou, that others, wise and great men, the scribes, Pharisees, and Rulers, and the nation in general, are left in darkness, to follow their own misguided apprehensions; and that thou shouldst be singled out, as it were, by name, that my heavenly Father should thus set his love on *thee, Simon Bar-jona.* This argues thee *blessed*, that thou shouldst thus be the object of God’s distinguishing love.”

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24 PREACHED AT NORTHAMPTON, AND PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF SOME OF THE HEARERS, IN THE YEAR 1734.

Secondly, it evidences his blessedness also, as it intimates that this knowledge is above any that *flesh and blood* can reveal. “This is such knowledge as only my *Father which is in heaven* can give: it is too high and excellent to be communicated by such means as other knowledge is. Thou art *blessed*, that thou knowest what God alone can teach thee.”

The original of this knowledge is here declared, both negatively and positively. *Positively*, as God is here declared the author of it. *Negatively*, as it is declared, that *flesh and blood* had *not revealed it*. God is the author of all knowledge and understanding whatsoever. He is the author of all moral prudence, and of the skill that men have in their secular business. Thus it is said of all in Israel that were *wise-hearted*, and skilled in embroidering, that God had *filled them with the spirit of wisdom*. [Exod. xxviii. 3.](#)

God is the author of such knowledge; yet so that *flesh and blood reveals it*. Mortal men are capable of imparting the knowledge of human arts and sciences, and skill in temporal affairs. God is the author of such knowledge by those means: *flesh and blood* is employed as the *mediate* or *second* cause of it: he conveys it by the power and influence of natural means. But this spiritual knowledge spoken of in the text, is what God is the author of, and none else: he *reveals it*, and *flesh and blood reveals it not*. He imparts this knowledge immediately, not making use of any intermediate natural causes, as he does in other knowledge.

What had passed in the preceding discourse naturally occasioned Christ to observe this; because the disciples had been telling how others did not know him, but were generally mistaken about him, divided and confounded in their opinions of him: but Peter had declared his assured faith, that he was the *Son of God*. Now it was natural to observe, how it was not *flesh and blood* that had *revealed it to him*, but God; for if this knowledge were dependent on natural causes or means, how came it to pass that they, a company of poor fishermen, illiterate men, and persons of low education, attained to the knowledge of the truth; while the scribes and Pharisees, men of vastly higher advantages, and greater knowledge and sagacity in other matters, remained in ignorance? This could be owing only to the gracious distinguishing influence and revelation of the Spirit of God. Hence, what I would make the subject of my present discourse from these words, is this

### DOCTRINE

That there is such a thing as a spiritual and divine light, immediately imparted to the soul by God, of a different nature from any that is obtained by natural means.—And on this subject I would,

- I. Show what this divine light is.
- II. How it is given immediately by God, and not obtained by natural means.
- III. Show the truth of the doctrine.

And then conclude with a brief improvement.

- I. would show what this spiritual and divine light is. And in order to it, would show,

*First*, in a few things what it is not. And here,

1. Those convictions that natural men may have of their sin and misery, is not this spiritual and divine light. Men in a natural condition may have convictions of the guilt that lies upon them, and of the anger of God, and their danger of divine vengeance. Such convictions are from the light of truth. That some sinners have a greater conviction of their guilt and misery than others, is because some have more light, or more of an apprehension of truth, than others. And this light and conviction may be from the Spirit of God; the Spirit convinces men of sin: but yet nature is much more concerned in it than in the communication of that spiritual and divine light that is spoken of in the doctrine; it is from the Spirit of God only as assisting natural principles, and not as infusing any new principles. Common grace differs from special, in that it influences only by assisting of nature; and not by imparting grace, or bestowing any thing above nature. The light that is obtained is wholly natural, or of no superior kind to what mere nature attains to, though more of that kind be obtained than would be obtained if men were left wholly to themselves: or in other words, common grace only assists the faculties of the soul to do that more fully which they do by nature, as natural conscience or reason will by mere nature make a man sensible of guilt, and will accuse and condemn him when he has done amiss. Conscience is a principle natural to men; and the work that it doth naturally, or of itself, is to give an apprehension of right and wrong, and to suggest to the mind the relation that there is between right and wrong and a retribution. The Spirit of God, in those convictions which unregenerate men sometimes have, assists conscience to do this work in a further degree than it would do if they were left to themselves. He helps it against those things that tend to stupify it, and obstruct its exercise. But in the renewing and sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, those things are wrought in the soul that are above nature, and of which there is nothing of the like kind in the soul by nature; and they are caused to exist in the soul habitually, and according to such a stated constitution or law that lays such a foundation for exercises in a continued course as is called a principle of nature. Not only are remaining principles assisted to do their work more freely and fully, but those principles are restored that were utterly destroyed by the fall; and the mind thenceforward habitually exerts those acts that the dominion of sin had made it as wholly destitute of as a dead body is of vital acts.

The Spirit of God acts in a very different manner in the one case, from what he doth in the other. He may indeed act upon the mind of a natural man, but he acts in the mind of a saint as an indwelling vital principle. He acts upon the mind of an unregenerate person as an extrinsic occasional agent; for in acting upon them, he doth not unite himself to them; for notwithstanding all his influences that they may possess, they are still sensual, having not the Spirit. [Jude 19](#). But he unites himself with the mind of a saint, takes him for his temple, actuates and influences him as a new supernatural principle of life and action. There is this difference, that the Spirit of God, in acting in the soul of a godly man, exerts and

communicates himself there in his own proper nature. Holiness is the proper nature of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit operates in the minds of the godly, by uniting himself to them, and living in them, exerting his own nature in the exercise of their faculties. The Spirit of God may act upon a creature, and yet not in acting communicate himself. The Spirit of God may act upon inanimate creatures; as, *the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters*, in the beginning of creation; so the Spirit of God may act upon the minds of men many ways, and communicate himself no more than when he acts upon an inanimate creature. For instance, he may excite thoughts in them, may assist their natural reason and understanding, or may assist other natural principles, and this without any union with the soul, but may act, as it were, upon an external object. But as he acts in his holy influences and spiritual operations, he acts in a way of peculiar communication of himself; so that the subject is thence denominated spiritual.

2. This spiritual and divine light does not consist in any impression made upon the imagination. It is no impression upon the mind, as though one saw anything with the bodily eyes. It is no imagination or idea of an outward light or glory, or any beauty of form or countenance, or a visible luster or brightness of any object. The imagination may be strongly impressed with such things; but this is not spiritual light. Indeed when the mind has a lively discovery of spiritual things, and is greatly affected by the power of divine light, it may, and probably very commonly doth, much affect the imagination; so that impressions of an outward beauty or brightness may *accompany* those spiritual discoveries. But spiritual light is not that impression upon the imagination, but an exceedingly different thing. Natural men may have lively impressions on their imaginations; and we cannot determine but that the devil, who transforms himself into an angel of light, may cause imaginations of an outward beauty, or visible glory, and of sounds and speeches, and other such things; but these are things of a vastly inferior nature to spiritual light.

3. This spiritual light is not the suggesting of any new truths or propositions not contained in the word of God. This suggesting of new truths or doctrines to the mind, independent of any antecedent revelation of those propositions, either in word or writing, is inspiration; such as the prophets and apostles had, and such as some enthusiasts pretend to. But this spiritual light that I am speaking of, is quite a different thing than inspiration. It reveals no new doctrine, it suggests no new proposition to the mind, it teaches no new thing of God, or Christ, or another world, not taught in the Bible, but only gives a due apprehension of those things that are taught in the word of God.

4. It is not every affecting view that men have of religious things that is this spiritual and divine light. Men by mere principles of nature are capable of being affected with things that have a special relation to religion as well as other things. A person by mere nature, for instance, may be liable to be affected with the story of Jesus Christ, and the sufferings he underwent, as well as by any other tragic story. He may be the more affected with it from

the interest he conceives mankind to have in it. Yea, he may be affected with it without believing it; as well as a man may be affected with what he reads in a romance, or sees acted in a stage-play. He may be affected with a lively and eloquent description of many pleasant things that attend the state of the blessed in heaven, as well as his imagination be entertained by romantic description of the pleasantness of fairy land, or the like. And a common belief of the truth of such things, from education or otherwise, may help forward their affection. We read in Scripture of many that were greatly affected with things of a religious nature, who yet are there represented as wholly graceless, and many of them very ill men. A person therefore may have affecting views of the things of religion, and yet be very destitute of spiritual light. Flesh and blood may be the author of this: one man may give another an affecting view of divine things with but common assistance; but God alone can give a spiritual discovery of them.

But I proceed to show,

*Secondly*, positively what this spiritual and divine light is.

And it may be thus described: A true sense of the divine excellency of the things revealed in the word of God, and a conviction of the truth and reality of them thence arising. This spiritual light primarily consists in the former of these, *viz.* a real sense and apprehension of the divine excellency of things revealed in the word of God. A spiritual and saving conviction of the truth and reality of these things, arises from such a sight of their divine excellency and glory; so that this conviction of their truth is an effect and natural consequence of this sight of their divine glory. There is therefore in the spiritual light,

1. A true sense of the divine and superlative excellency of the things of religion; a real sense of the excellency of God and Jesus Christ, and of the work of redemption, and the ways and works of God revealed in the gospel. There is a divine and superlative glory in these things; an excellency that is of a vastly higher kind, and more sublime nature, than in other things; a glory greatly distinguishing them from all that is earthly and temporal. He that is spiritually enlightened truly apprehends and sees it, or has a sense of it. He does not merely rationally believe that God is glorious, but he has a sense of the gloriousness of God in his heart. There is not only a rational belief that God is holy, and that holiness is a good thing, but there is a sense of the loveliness of God's holiness. There is not only a speculatively judging that God is gracious, but a sense how amiable God is on account of the beauty of this divine attribute.

There is a twofold knowledge of good of which God has mad the mind of man capable. The first, that which is merely notional; as when a person only speculatively judges that any thing is, which, by the agreement of mankind, is called good or excellent, *viz.* that which is most to general advantage, and between which and a reward there is a suitableness,—and the like. And the other thing is, that which consists in the sense of the heart; as when the heart is sensible of pleasure and delight in the presence of the idea of it. In the former is





exercised merely the speculative faculty, or the understanding, in distinction from the will or the disposition of the soul. In the latter, the will, or inclination, or heart are mainly concerned.

Thus there is a difference between having an *opinion*, that God is holy and gracious, and having a *sense* of the loveliness and beauty of that holiness and grace. There is a difference between having a rational judgment that honey is sweet, and having a sense of its sweetness. A man may have the former that knows not how honey tastes; but a man cannot have the latter unless he has an idea of the taste of honey in his mind. So there is a difference between believing that a person is beautiful, and having a sense of his beauty. The former may be obtained by hearsay, but the latter only by seeing the countenance. When the heart is sensible of the beauty and amiableness of a thing, it necessarily feels pleasure in the apprehension. It is implied in a person's being heartily sensible of the loveliness of a thing, that the idea of it is pleasant to his soul; which is a far different thing from having a rational opinion that it is excellent.

2. There arises from this sense of the divine excellency of things contained in the word of God, a conviction of the truth and reality of them; and that either indirectly or directly.

*First*, indirectly, and that two ways.

1. As the prejudices of the heart, against the truth of divine things, are hereby removed; so that the mind becomes susceptible of the due force of rational arguments for their truth. The mind of man is naturally full of prejudices against divine truth. It is full of enmity against the doctrines of the gospel; which is a disadvantage to those arguments that prove their truth, and causes them to lose their force upon the mind. But when a person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian doctrines, this destroys the enmity, removes those prejudices, sanctifies the reason, and causes it to lie open to the force of arguments for their truth.

Hence was the different effect that Christ's miracles had to convince the disciples, from what they had to convince the scribes and Pharisees. Not that they had a stronger reason, or had their reason more improved; but their reason was sanctified, and those blinding prejudices, that the scribes and Pharisees were under, were removed by the sense they had of the excellency of Christ, and his doctrine.

2. It not only removes the hindrances of reason, but positively helps reason. It makes even the speculative notions more likely. It engages the attention of the mind, with more fixedness and intenseness to that kind of objects; which causes it to have a clearer view of them, and enables it more clearly to see their mutual relations, and occasions it to take more notice of them. The ideas themselves that otherwise are dim and obscure, are by this means impressed with the greater strength, and have a light cast upon them; so that the mind can better judge of them. As he that beholds objects on the face of the earth, when the light of

the sun is cast upon them, is under greater advantage to discern them in their true forms and natural relations, than he that sees them in a dim twilight.

The mind being sensible of the excellency of divine objects, dwells upon them with delight; and the powers of the soul are more awakened and enlivened to employ themselves in the contemplation of them, and exert themselves more fully and much more to purpose. The beauty of the objects draws on the faculties, and draws forth their exercises; so that reason itself is under far greater advantages for its proper and free exercises, and to attain its proper end, free of the darkness and delusion.—But,

*Secondly*, a true sense of the divine excellency of the things of God's word doth more directly and immediately convince us of their truth; and that because the excellency of these things is so superlative. There is a beauty in them so divine and God-like, that it greatly and evidently distinguishes them from things merely human, or that of which men are the inventors and authors; a glory so high and great, that when clearly seen, commands assent to their divine reality. When there is an actual and lively discovery of this beauty and excellency, it will not allow of any such thought as that it is the fruit of men's invention. This is a kind of intuitive and immediate evidence. They believe the doctrines of God's word to be divine, because they see a divine, and transcendent, and most evidently distinguishing glory in them; such a glory as, if clearly seen, does not leave room to doubt of their being of God, and not of men.

Such a conviction of the truths of religion as this, arising from a sense of their divine excellency, is included in saving faith. And this original of it, is that by which it is most essentially distinguished from that common assent, of which unregenerate men are capable.

II. I proceed now to the *second* thing proposed, *viz.* to show how this light is immediately given by God, and not obtained by natural means<sup>25</sup>. And here,

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25 In the preceding statement and the following explanation, our author might have rendered the subject of "divine light immediately imparted to the soul" more perspicuous, by a fuller use of that analogy which the scripture holds forth, between the common theory of vision and the doctrine he defends. Let the remarks which follow be candidly considered. 1. In the sacred scriptures, God is represented as "the Father of lights," and Christ as "the Sun of righteousness." Yea, it is asserted, that "God is LIGHT," and that he "shines into the heart." These and similar expressions, with which the Old and New Testament abound, show that there is a strong analogy between the light of the natural world, and something spiritual that is expressed by the same term. 2. As the light of day proceeds from the natural sun, and shines into the eye; so the spiritual or supernatural light proceeds from God, and shines into the heart, or mind. Thus the analogy holds, not only as to the things intended—in their sources, and their emanations—but also as to the organs of reception. 3. The existence of light in the eye depends neither on the perception of it, nor on any external object. Our perception of illuminated objects is the effect of light's existence in the organ of vision. Without light both in the eye, and on the object to be seen, there can be no perception of that object. In like manner, the existence of that light which emanates from God, and shines into the mind, is there (that is, in the mind) prior to, and independent of the knowledge of objects to be

1. It is not intended that the natural faculties are not used in it. They are the subject of this light; and in such a manner, that they are not merely passive, but active in it. God, in letting in this light into the soul, deals with man according to his nature, and makes use of his rational faculties. But yet this light is not the less immediately from God for that; the faculties are made use of as the subject, and not as the cause. As the use we make of our eyes in beholding various objects, when the sun arises, is not the cause of the light that discovers those objects to us.

2. It is not intended that outward means have no concern in this affair. It is not in this affair, as in inspiration, where new truths are suggested: for by this light is given only a due apprehension of the same truths that are revealed in the word of God; and therefore it is not given without the word. The gospel is employed in this affair. This light is the “light of the glorious gospel of Christ,” [2 Cor. iv. 4](#). The gospel is as a glass, by which this light is conveyed to us. [1 Cor. xiii. 12](#). “Now we see through a glass.”—But,

3. When it is said that this light is given immediately by God, and not obtained by natural means, hereby is intended, that it is given by God without making use of any means that operate by their own power or natural force. God makes use of means; but it is not as mediate causes to produce this effect. There are not truly any second causes of it; but it is produced by God immediately. The word of God is no proper cause of this effect; but is made use of only to convey to the mind the subject-matter of this saving instruction: and this indeed it doth convey to us by natural force or influence. It conveys to our minds these doctrines; it is the cause of a notion of them in our heads, but not of the sense of their divine

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known by it.—Therefore, 4. Knowledge can be called “light,” only in a secondary sense, both naturally and spiritually; that is, by a metonymy, because it is the effect of light. We know a visible object, because we see it; and we see it, because light shines both on the object, and into the eye. It is by divine light shining into the mind that we have a spiritual knowledge of God, of Christ, or of any other object; in other words, a holy emanation or influence from God, called light, is the cause why any person or thing is known in a spiritual manner. 5. When any identify this divine light, these rays of the Sun of righteousness, with knowledge, however spiritual and excellent, because the latter is metonymically called “light,” they are chargeable with identifying cause and effect, and therefore of confounding things which essentially differ. For spiritual light, in the primary and proper sense, emanates immediately from God, as rays from the sun; but this cannot be said of knowledge, because the perception of an object, which is our act, must intervene. Knowledge presupposes the primary light, and is also dependent on the objective truths perceived. All knowledge, whether natural or spiritual, stands essentially related to objects known; so that without those objects it can have no existence. The knowledge of objects to be seen, therefore, is the effect of two causes concurring, the object itself and light; whereas the “divine light which is immediately imparted to the soul,” has but one cause, even the sovereign will of God. 6. Coroll. The theological notion which makes all spiritual light in man to consist in knowledge, and which is become too fashionable in the present day, is contrary to Scripture, and to rational analogy.—W.

excellency in our hearts. Indeed a person cannot have spiritual light without the word. But that does not argue, that the word properly causes that light. The mind cannot see the excellency of any doctrine, unless that doctrine be first in the mind; but seeing the excellency of the doctrine may be immediately from the Spirit of God; though the conveying of the doctrine or proposition itself may be by the word. So that the notions which are the subject-matter of this light, are conveyed to the mind by the word of God; but that due sense of the heart, wherein this light formally consists, is immediately by the Spirit of God. As for instance, the notion that there is a Christ, and that Christ is holy and gracious, is conveyed to the mind by the word of God; but the sense of the excellency of Christ by reason of that holiness and grace, is nevertheless immediately the work of the Holy Spirit.—I come now,

III. To show the truth of the doctrine; that is, to show that there is such a thing as that spiritual light that has been described, thus immediately let into the mind by God. And here I would show briefly, that this doctrine is both *scriptural* and *rational*.

*First*, it is scriptural. My text is not only full to the purpose, but it is a doctrine with which the Scripture abounds. We are there abundantly taught, that the saints differ from the ungodly in this, that they have the knowledge of God, and a sight of God, and of Jesus Christ. I shall mention but few texts out of many: [1 John iii. 6](#). “Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, nor known him.” [3 John 11](#). “He that doth good, is of God: but he that doth evil, hath not seen God.” [John xiv. 19](#). “The world seeth me no more; but ye see me.” [John xvii. 3](#). “And this is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” This knowledge, or sight of God and Christ, cannot be a mere speculative knowledge; because it is spoken of as that wherein they differ from the ungodly. And b, these scriptures it must not only be a different knowledge in degree and circumstances, and different in its effects; but it must be entirely different in nature and kind.

And this light and knowledge is always spoken of as immediately given of God; [Matt. xi. 25-27](#). “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” Here this effect is ascribed exclusively to the arbitrary operation and gift of God bestowing this knowledge on whom he will, and distinguishing those with it who have the least natural advantage or means for knowledge, even babes, when it is denied to the wise and prudent. And imparting this knowledge is here appropriated to the Son of God, as his sole prerogative. And again, [2 Cor. iv. 6](#). “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” This plainly shows, that there is a discovery of the divine superlative glory and excellency of God and Christ, peculiar to the saints; and also, that it is as immediately from God, as light from the sun: and that it is the immediate

effect of his power and will. For it is compared to God's creating the light by his powerful word in the beginning of the creation; and is said to be by the Spirit of the Lord, in the 18th verse of the preceding chapter. God is spoken of as giving the knowledge of Christ in conversion, as of what before was hidden and unseen, [Gal. i. 15, 16](#). "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me."—The Scripture also speaks plainly of such a knowledge of the word of God, as has been described, as the immediate gift of God; [Ps. cxix. 18](#). "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." What could the psalmist mean, when he begged of God to open his eyes? Was he ever blind? Might he not have resort to the law and see every word and sentence in it when he pleased? And what could he mean by those wondrous things? Were they the wonderful stories of the creation, the deluge, and Israel's passing through the Red sea, and the like? Were not his eyes open to read these strange things when he would? Doubtless by wondrous things in God's law, he had respect to those distinguishing and wonderful excellencies, and marvelous manifestations of the divine perfections and glory, contained in the commands and doctrines of the word, and those works and counsels of God that were there revealed. So the Scripture speaks of a knowledge of God's dispensation and covenant of mercy and way of grace towards his people, as peculiar to the saints, and given only by God, [Ps. xxv. 14](#). "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."

And that a true and saving belief of the truth of religion is that which arises from such a discovery, is also what the Scripture teaches. As [John vi. 40](#). "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life," where it is plain that a true faith is what arises from a spiritual sight of Christ. And, [John xvii. 6, 7, 8](#). "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.—Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou has given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from the, and they have believed that thou didst send me," where Christ's manifesting God's name to the disciples, or giving them the knowledge of God, was that whereby they knew that Christ's doctrine was of God, and that Christ himself proceeded from him, and was sent by him. Again, [John xii. 44, 45, 46](#). "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness." There believing in Christ, and spiritually seeing him, are parallel.

Christ condemns the Jews, that they did not know that he was the Messiah, and that his doctrine was true, from an inward distinguishing taste and relish of what was divine, in [Luke xii. 56, 57](#). He having there blamed the Jews, that though they could discern the face of the sky and of the earth, and signs of the weather, that they could not discern those times—or as it is expressed in Matthew, the signs of those times—adds, “yea, and why even of your own selves, judge ye not what is right?” *i.e.* without extrinsic signs. Why have ye not that sense of true excellency, whereby ye may distinguish that which is holy and divine? Why have ye not that savour of the things of God, by which you may see the distinguishing glory, and evident divinity, of me and my doctrine?



The apostle Peter mentions it as what gave him and his companions good and well-grounded assurance of the truth of the gospel, that they had seen the divine glory of Christ.—[2 Pet. i. 16](#). “For we have now followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.” The apostle has respect to that visible glory of Christ which they saw in his transfiguration: that glory was so divine, having such an ineffable appearance and semblance of divine holiness, majesty, and grace, that it evidently denoted him to be a divine person. But if a sight of Christ’s outward glory might give a rational assurance of his divinity, why may not an apprehension of his spiritual glory do so too? Doubtless Christ’s spiritual glory is in itself as distinguishing, and as plainly shows his divinity, as his outward glory,—nay, a great deal more: for his spiritual glory of his transfiguration showed him to be divine, only as it was a remarkable image or representation of that spiritual glory. Doubtless, therefore, he that has had a clear sight of the spiritual glory of Christ, may say, I have not followed cunningly devised fables, but have been an eye-witness of his majesty, upon as good grounds as the apostle, when he had respect to the outward glory of Christ that he had seen. But this brings me to what was proposed next, *viz.* to show that,

*Secondly*, this doctrine is rational.

1. It is rational to suppose, that there is really such an excellency in divine things—so transcendent and exceedingly different from what is in other things—that, if it were seen, would most evidently distinguish them. We cannot rationally doubt but that things divine, which appertain to the Supreme Being, are vastly different from things that are human; that there is a high, glorious, and God-like excellency in them, that does most remarkably difference them from the things that are of men; insomuch that if the difference were but seen, it would have a convincing, satisfying influence upon any one, that they are divine. What reason can be offered against it? Unless we would argue, that God is not remarkably distinguished in glory from men.

If Christ should now appear to any one as he did on the mount at his transfiguration; or if he should appear to the world in his heavenly glory, as he will do at the day of judgment; without doubt, his glory and majesty would be such as would satisfy every one, that he was

a divine person, and that religion was true: and it would be a most reasonable and well-grounded conviction too. And why may there not be that stamp of divinity, or divine glory, on the word of God, on the scheme and doctrine of the gospel, that may be in like matter distinguishing and as rationally convincing, provided it be but seen? It is rational to suppose, that when God speaks to the world, there should be something in his word vastly different from men's word. Supposing that God never had spoken to the world, but we had notice that he was about to reveal himself from heaven, and speak to us immediately himself, or that he should give us a book of his own inditing; after what manner should we expect that he would speak? Would it not be rational to suppose, that his speech would be exceeding different from men's speech, that there should be such an excellency and sublimity in his word, such a stamp of wisdom, holiness, majesty, and other divine perfections, that the word of men, yea of the wisest of men, should appear mean and base in comparison of it? Doubtless it would be thought rational to expect this, and unreasonable to think otherwise. When a wise man speaks in the exercise of his wisdom, there is something in every thing he says, that is very distinguishable from the talk of a little child. So, without doubt, and much more, is the speech of God to be distinguished from that of the wisest of men; agreeable to [Jer. xxiii. 28, 29](#). God having there been reprovng the false prophets that prophesied in his name, and pretended that what they spake was his word, when indeed it was their own word, says, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully: 'what is the chaff to the wheat?' saith the Lord. 'Is not my word like as a fire?' saith the Lord: and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces."

2. If there be such a distinguishing excellency in divine things; it is rational to suppose that there may be such a thing as seeing it. What should hinder but that it may be seen? It is no argument, that there is no such distinguishing excellency, or that it cannot be seen, because some do not see it, though they may be discerning men in temporal matters. It is not rational to suppose, if there be any such excellency in divine things, that wicked men should see it. Is it rational to suppose, that those whose minds are full of spiritual pollution, and under the power of filthy lusts, should have any relish or sense of divine beauty or excellency; or that their minds should be susceptible of that light that is in its own nature so pure and heavenly? It need not seem at all strange, that sin should so blind the mind, seeing that men's particular natural tempers and dispositions will so much blind them in secular matters; as when men's natural temper is melancholy, jealous, fearful, proud, or the like.

3. It is rational to suppose, that this knowledge should be given immediately by God, and not be obtained by natural means. Upon what account should it seem unreasonable, that there should be any immediate communication between God and the creature? It is strange that men should make any matter of difficulty of it. Why should not he that made all things, still have something immediately to do with the things that he has made? Where lies the great difficulty, if we own the being of a God, and that he created all things out of

nothing, of allowing some immediate influence of God on the creation still? And if it be reasonable to suppose it with respect to any part of the creation, it is especially so with respect to reasonable intelligent creatures; who are next to God in the gradation of the different orders of beings, and whose business is most immediately with God; and reason teaches that man was made to serve and glorify his Creator. And if it be rational to suppose that God immediately communicates himself to man in any affair, it is in this. It is rational to suppose that God would reserve that knowledge and wisdom, which is of such a divine and excellent nature, to be bestowed immediately by himself; and that it should not be left in the power of second causes. Spiritual wisdom and grace is the highest and most excellent gift that ever God bestows on any creature: in this the highest excellency and perfection of a rational creature consists. It is also immensely the most important of all divine gifts: it is that wherein man's happiness consists, and on which his everlasting welfare depends. How rational is it to suppose that God, however he has left lower gifts to second causes, and in some sort in their power, yet should reserve this most excellent, divine, and important of all divine communications, in his own hands, to be bestowed immediately by himself, as a thing to great for second causes to be concerned in? It is rational to suppose, that this blessing should be immediately from God, for there is no gift or benefit that is in itself so nearly related to the divine nature. Nothing which the creature receives is so much a participation of the Deity: it is a kind of emanation of God's beauty, and is related to God as the light is to the sun. It is therefore congruous and fit, that when it is given of God, it should be immediately from himself, and by himself, according to his own sovereign will.

It is rational to suppose, that it should be beyond man's power to obtain this light by the mere strength of natural reason; for it is not a thing that belongs to reason, to see the beauty and loveliness of spiritual things; it is not a speculative thing, but depends on the sense of the heart. Reason indeed is necessary in order to it, as it is by reason only that we are become the subjects of the means of it; which means I have already shown to be necessary in order to it, though they have no proper causal influence in the affair. It is by reason that we become possessed of a notion of those doctrines that are the subject-matter of this divine light, or knowledge; and reason may many ways be indirectly and remotely an advantage to it. Reason has also to do in the acts that are immediately consequent on this discovery: for seeing the truth of religion from hence, is by reason; though it be but by one step, and the inference be immediate. So reason has to do in that accepting of and trusting in Christ, *that* is consequent on it. But if we take *reason* strictly—not for the faculty of mental perception in general, but for ratiocination, or a power of inferring by arguments—the perceiving of spiritual beauty and excellency no more belongs to reason, that it belongs to the sense of feeling to perceive colors, or to the power of seeing to perceive the sweetness of food. It is out of reason's province to perceive the beauty or loveliness of any thing: such a perception does not belong to that faculty. Reason's work is to perceive truth and not excellency. It is





not ratiocination that gives men the perception of the beauty and amiableness of a countenance, though it may be many ways indirectly an advantage to it; yet it is no more reason that immediately perceives it, than it is reason that perceives the sweetness of honey: it depends on the sense of the heart.—Reason may determine that a countenance is beautiful to others, it may determine that honey is sweet to others; but it will never give me a perception of its sweetness.

I will conclude with a very brief improvement of what has been said.

*First*, this doctrine may lead us to reflect on the goodness of God, that has so ordered it, that a saving evidence of the truth of the gospel is such, as it is attainable by persons of mean capacities and advantages, as well as those that are of the greatest parts and learning. If the evidence of the gospel depended only on history, and such reasonings as learned men only are capable of, it would be above the reach of far the greatest part of mankind. But persons with an ordinary degree of knowledge are capable, without a long and subtle train of reasoning, to see the divine excellency of the things of religion: they are capable of being taught by the Spirit of God, as well as learned men. The evidence that is this way obtained, is vastly better and more satisfying, than all that can be obtained by the arguings of those that are most learned, and greatest masters of reason. And babes are as capable of knowing these things, as the wise and prudent; and they are often hid from these when they are revealed to those. [1 Cor. i. 26, 27](#). “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world.”

*Secondly*, this doctrine may well put us upon examining ourselves, whether we have ever had this divine light let into our souls. If there be such a thing, doubtless it is of great importance whether we have thus been taught by the Spirit of God; whether the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, hath shined unto us, giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; whether we have seen the Son, and believed on him, or have that faith of gospel-doctrines which arises from a spiritual sight of Christ.

*Thirdly*, all may hence be exhorted, earnestly to seek this spiritual light. To influence and move to it, the following things may be considered.

1. This is the most excellent and divine wisdom that any creature is capable of. It is more excellent than any human learning; it is far more excellent than all the knowledge of the greatest philosophers or statesmen. Yea, the least glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Christ doth more exalt and ennoble the soul, than all the knowledge of those that have the greatest speculative understanding in divinity without grace. This knowledge has the most noble object that can be, *viz.* the divine glory and excellency of God and Christ. The knowledge of these objects is that wherein consists the most excellent knowledge of the angels, yea, of God himself.

2. This knowledge is that which is above all others sweet and joyful. Men have a great deal of pleasure in human knowledge, in studies of natural things; but this is nothing to that joy which arises from this divine light shining into the soul. This light gives a view of those things that are immensely the most exquisitely beautiful, and capable of delighting the eye of the understanding. This spiritual light is the dawning of the light of glory in the heart. There is nothing so powerful as this to support persons in affliction, and to give the mind peace and brightness in this stormy and dark world.

3. This light is such as effectually influences the inclination, and changes the nature of the soul. It assimilates our nature to the divine nature, and changes the soul into an image of the same glory that is beheld. [2 Cor. iii. 18.](#) "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This knowledge will wean from the world, and raise the inclination to heavenly things. It will turn the heart to God as the fountain of good, and to choose him for the only portion. This light, and this only, will bring the soul to a saving close with Christ. It conforms the heart to the gospel, mortifies its enmity and opposition against the scheme of salvation therein revealed: it causes the heart to embrace the joyful tidings, and entirely to adhere to, and acquiesce in the revelation of Christ as our Savior: it causes the whole soul to accord and symphonize with it, admitting it with entire credit and respect, cleaving to it with full inclination and affection; and it effectually disposes the soul to give up itself entirely to Christ.

4. This light, and this only, has its fruit in an universal holiness of life. No merely notional or speculative understanding of the doctrines of religion will ever bring to this. But this light, as it reaches the bottom of the heart, and changes the nature, so it will effectually dispose to an universal obedience. It shows God as worthy to be obeyed and served. It draws forth the heart in a sincere love to God, which is the only principle of a true, gracious, and universal obedience; and it convinces of the reality of those glorious rewards that God has promised to them that obey him.

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S E R M O N   I I .   2 6 .

THE CHURCH'S MARRIAGE TO HER SONS, AND TO HER GOD.

Isa. lxii. 4, 5.

*Thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*

In the midst of many blessed promises that God makes to his church—in this and the preceding and following chapters—of advancement to a state of great peace, comfort, honor, and joy, after long-continued affliction, we have the sum of all contained in these two verses. In the fourth verse God says to his church, “Thou shalt no more be termed, Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land, Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.<sup>27</sup>” When it is said, “Thy land shall be married,” we are to understand, “the body of thy people, thy whole race,” the land—by a metonymy, very usual in Scripture—being put for the people that inhabit the land.—The fifth verse explains how this should be accomplished in two things, *viz. in being married to her sons, and married to her God.*

1. It is promised that she should be *married to her sons*, or that her sons should marry her? “For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee.<sup>28</sup>” Or, as the words might have been more literally translated from the original: “As a young man is married to a virgin, so shall thy sons be married to thee.” Some by this understand a promise, that the posterity of the captivated Jews should return again from Babylon to the land of Canaan, and should be, as it were, married or wedded to their own land; *i.e.* they should be reunited to their own land, and should have great comfort and joy in it, as a young man in a virgin that he marries. But when it is said, “So shall thy sons marry thee,<sup>29</sup>” God does not direct his speech to the land itself, but to the church whose land it was; the pronoun *thee* being applied to the same mystical person in this former part of the verse, as in the words immediately following in the latter part of the same sentence, “And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.<sup>30</sup>” It is the church, and not the hills and valleys of the land of Canaan, that is God’s bride, or the Lamb’s wife. It is also



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S E P T E M B E R   1 9 ,   1 7 4 6 .

27   [Isa. lxii. 4.](#)

28   [Isa. lxii. 5.](#)

29   [Ibid.](#)

30   [Ibid.](#)

manifest, that when God says, "So shall thy sons marry thee," he continues to speak to her to whom he had spoken in the three preceding verses; but there it is not the land of Canaan, but the church, that he speaks to when he says,<sup>31</sup> "The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken," &c And to represent the land itself as a bride, and the subject of espousals and marriage, would be a figure of speech very unnatural, and not known in Scripture; but for the church of God to be thus represented is very usual from the beginning to the end of the Bible. And then it is manifest that the return of the Jews to the land of Canaan from the Babylonian captivity, is not the event mainly intended by the prophecy of which these words are a part. That was not the time fulfilled in the second verse of this chapter, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."<sup>32</sup> That was not the time spoken of in the preceding chapters, with which this chapter is one continued prophecy. That was not the time spoken of in the last words of the forgoing chapter, when the Lord would cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations: nor was it the time spoken of in the fifth, sixth, and ninth verses of that chapter, when "strangers should stand and feed the flocks of God's people, and the sons of the alien should be their ploughmen, and vine-dressers; but they should be named the priests of the Lord, and men should call them the ministers of God; when they should eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory boast themselves, and their seed should be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people; and all that should see them should acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."<sup>33</sup> Nor was that the time spoken of in the chapter preceding that "when the abundance of the sea should be converted unto the church; when the isles should wait for God, and the ships of Tarshish to bring her sons from far, and their silver and gold with them; when the forces of the Gentiles and their kings should be brought; when the church should suck the milk of the Gentiles, and suck the breast of kings; and when that nation and kingdom that would not serve her should perish and be utterly wasted: and when the sun should be no more her light by day, neither for brightness should the moon give light unto her, but the Lord should be unto her an everlasting light, and her God her glory; and her sun should no more go down, nor her moon withdraw itself, because the Lord should be her everlasting light, and the days of her mourning should be ended."<sup>34</sup> These things manifestly have respect to the

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31 [Isa. lxii. 2-4.](#)

32 [Isa. lxii. 2.](#)

33 [Isa. lxi 5, 6, 9.](#)

34 [Isa. lx. 5-20.](#)

Christian church in her most perfect and glorious state on earth in the last ages of the world; when the church should be so far from being confined to the land of Canaan, that she should fill the whole earth, and all lands should be alike holy.

These words in the text, “As a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee,<sup>35</sup>” I choose rather, with others, to understand as expressive of the church’s union with her faithful pastors, and the great benefits she should receive from them. God’s ministers, though they are set to be the instructors, guides, and fathers of God’s people, yet are also the sons of the church, [Amos ii. 11](#). “I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites.” Such as these, when faithful, are those precious sons of Zion comparable to fine gold spoken of, [Lam. iv. 2, 7](#). “Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk.” And as he that marries a young virgin becomes the guide of her youth; so these sons of Zion are represented as taking her by the hand as her guide, [Isa. li. 18](#). “There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.” That by these sons of the church is meant the ministers of the gospel, is confirmed by the next verse to the text, “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, oh Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup>”

That the sons of the church should be married to her as a young man to a virgin, is a mystery not unlike many others held forth in the word of God, concerning the relation between Christ and his people, and their relation to him and to one another. Christ is David’s Lord and yet his Son, and both the Root and Offspring of David. Christ is a Son born and a Child given, and yet the everlasting Father. The church is Christ’s mother, and yet his sister and brother. Ministers are the sons of the church, and yet are her fathers. The apostle speaks of himself, as the father of the members of the church of Corinth, and also the mother of the Gal., travelling in birth with them, [Gal. iv. 19](#).

2. The second and chief fulfillment of the promise consists in the church being married to Christ: “And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.<sup>37</sup>” Not that we are to understand that the church has many husbands, or that Christ is one husband, and ministers are here spoken of as being married to the church, yet it is not as his competitors, or as standing in a conjugal relation to his bride in any wise parallel with his. For the church properly has but one husband; she is not an adulteress, but a virgin, who is devoted wholly to the Lamb, and who follows him whithersoever he goes. But ministers espouse the church entirely as Christ’s ambassadors, as representing him and standing in his stead, being sent forth by him to be married to her in his name, that by this means she may be married to him. As when a prince marries a foreign lady by proxy, the prince’s am-

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35 [Isa. lxii. 5](#).

36 [Isa. lxii. 6](#).

37 [Isa. lxii. 5](#).

bassador marries her, but not in his own name, but in the name of his master, that he may be the instrument of bringing her into a true conjugal relation to him. This is agreeable to what the apostle says, [2 Cor. xi. 2](#). "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Here the apostle represents himself as being, as it were, the husband of the church of Corinth; for it is the husband that is jealous when the wife commits adultery; and yet he speaks of himself as having espoused them, not in his own name, but in that name of Christ, and for him, and him only, and as his ambassador, sent forth to bring them home a chaste virgin to him. Ministers are in the text represented as married to the church in the same sense that elsewhere they are represented as fathers of the church. The church has but one father, even God, and ministers are fathers as his ambassadors; so the church has but one shepherd, [John x. 16](#). "There shall be one fold and one shepherd," but yet ministers, as Christ's ambassadors, are often called the church's shepherds or pastors. The church has but one Savior, but yet

ministers, as his ambassadors and instruments, are called her saviors; [1 Timothy iv. 16](#) "In doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." [Obadiah 21](#). "And saviors shall come upon mount Zion." The church has but one Priest, but yet in [Isa. lxvi. 21](#). speaking of the ministers of the Gentile nations, it is said, "I will take of them for priests and Levites." The church has but one Judge, for the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son; yet Christ tells his apostles that they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

When the text speaks first of ministers marrying the church, and then of Christ's rejoicing over her as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride; the former is manifestly spoken of as being in order to the latter; even in order to the joy and happiness that the church shall have in her true bridegroom. The preaching of the gospel is in this context spoken of three times successively, as the great means of bringing about the prosperity and joy of the church; once, in the [first verse](#), "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," and then in the text; and lastly in the [two following verses](#), "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, oh Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, until he establish, and until he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

The text thus opened affords these two propositions proper for our consideration on the solemn occasion of this day.

I. The uniting of faithful ministers with Christ's people in the ministerial office, when done in a due manner, is like a young man's marrying a virgin.



II. This union of ministers with the people of Christ is in order to their being brought to the blessedness of a more glorious union, in which Christ shall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

I. Proposition: The uniting of faithful ministers with Christ's people in the ministerial office, when done in a due manner, is like a young man's marrying a virgin.

I say, the uniting of a faithful minister with Christ's people, and in a due manner: for we must suppose that the promise God makes to the church in the text, relates to such ministers, and such a manner of union with the church; because this is promised to the church as a part of her latter-day glory, and as a benefit that should be granted her by God, as the fruit of his great love to her, and an instance of her great spiritual prosperity and happiness in her purest and most excellent state on earth. But it would be no such instance of God's great favor and the church's happiness, to have unfaithful ministers entering into office in an undue and improper manner. They are evidently faithful ministers that are spoken of in the next verse, where the same are doubtless spoken of as in the text; "I have set watchmen on they walls, oh Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night.<sup>38</sup>" And they are those that shall be introduced into the ministry at a time of its extraordinary purity, order, and beauty, wherein (as is said in the [first](#), [second](#), and [third verses](#)) her "righteousness should go forth as brightness, and the Gentiles should see her righteousness, and all kings her glory, and she should be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of her God."

When I speak of the uniting of a faithful minister with Christ's people in a due manner, I do not mean a due manner only with regard to external order; but its being truly done in a holy manner, with sincere upright aims and intentions, with a right disposition, and proper frames of mind in those that are concerned; and particularly in the minister that takes office, and God's people to whom he is united, each exercising in this affair a proper regard to God and one another.—Such an uniting of a faithful minister with the people of God in the ministerial office, is in some respects like a young man marrying a virgin.

1. When a duly qualified person is properly invested with the ministerial character, and does in a due manner take upon him the sacred work and office of a minister of the gospel, he does, in some sense, espouse the church of Christ in general. For though he do not properly stand in a pastoral relation to the whole church of Christ through the earth, and is far from becoming an universal pastor; yet thenceforward he has a different concern with the church of Christ in general, and its interests and welfare, than other persons have that are laymen, and should be regarded otherwise by all the members of the Christian church. Wherever he is providentially called to preach the word of God, or minister in holy things, he ought to be received as a minister of Christ, and the messenger of the Lord of hosts to

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38 [Isa. lxii. 6.](#)

them. And every one that takes on him this office as he ought to do, espouses the church of Christ, as he espouses the interest of the church in a manner that is peculiar. He is under obligations, as a minister of the Christian church, beyond other men, to love the church, as Christ her true bridegroom hath loved her, and to prefer Jerusalem above his chief joy, and to imitate Christ, the great shepherd and bishop of souls and husband of the church, in his care and tender concern for her welfare, and earnest and constant labors to promote it, as he has opportunity. And as he, in taking office, devotes himself to the service of Christ in his church; so he gives himself to the church, to be hers, in that love, tender care, constant endeavor, and earnest labor for her provision, comfort, and welfare, that is proper to his office, as a minister of Providence, as long as he lives; as a young man gives himself to a virgin when he marries her. And the church of Christ in general, as constituted of true saints through the world (though they do not deliver up themselves to any one particular minister, as universal pastor, yet), cleave to and embrace the ministry of the church with endeared affection, high honor, and esteem, for Christ's sake. They joyfully commit and subject themselves to them; they resolve to honor and help them, to be guided by them and obey them so long as in the world; as the bride doth in marriage deliver up herself to her husband. And the ministry in general, or the whole number of faithful ministers, being all united in the same work as fellow-laborers, and conspiring to the same design as fellow-helpers, to the grace of God, may be considered as one mystical person, that espouses the church as a young man espouses a virgin: as the many elders of the church of Ephesus are represented as one mystical person, [Rev. 2:1](#), and all called the angel of the church of Ephesus: and as the faithful ministers of Christ in general, all over the world, seem to be represented as one mystical person, and called an angel, [Rev. xiv. 6](#). "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."—But,

2. More especially is the uniting of a faithful minister with a particular Christian people, as their pastor, when done in a due manner, like a young man marrying a virgin.—It is so with respect to the union itself, the concomitants of the union, and the fruits of it.

(1.) The *union itself* is in several respects like that which is between a young man and a virgin whom he marries.

It is so with respect to mutual regard and affection. A faithful minister, that is in a Christian manner united to a Christian people as their pastor, has his heart united to them in the most ardent and tender affection. And they, on the other hand, have their hearts united to him, esteeming him very highly in love for his work's sake, and receiving him with honor and reverence, and willingly subjecting themselves to him, and committing themselves to his care, as being, under Christ, their head and guide.

And such a pastor and people are like a young man and virgin united in marriage, with respect to the purity of their regard one to another. The young man gives himself to his



bride in purity, as undebauched by meretricious embraces; and she also presents herself to him a chaste virgin. So in such a union of a minister and people as we are speaking of, the parties united are pure and holy in their affection and regard one to another. The minister's heart is united to the people, not for filthy lucre, or any worldly advantage, but with a pure benevolence to them, and desire of their spiritual welfare and prosperity, and complacency in them as the children of God and followers of Christ Jesus. And, on the other hand, they love and honor him with a holy affection and esteem; and not merely as having their admiration raised, and their carnal affection moved, by having their curiosity, and other fleshly principles, gratified by a florid eloquence, and the excellency of speech and man's wisdom; but receiving him as the messenger of the Lord of hosts, coming to them on a divine and infinitely important errand, and with those holy qualifications that resemble the virtues of the Lamb of God.

And as the bridegroom and bride give themselves to each other in covenant; so it is in that union we are speaking of between a faithful pastor and a Christian people. The minister, by solemn vows, devotes himself to the people, to improve his time and strength, and spend and be spent for them, so long as God in his providence shall continue the union; and they, on the other hand, in a holy covenant commit the care of their souls, and subject themselves, to him.

(2.) The union between a faithful minister and a Christian people, is like that between a young man and a virgin in their marriage, with respect to the *concomitants* of it.

When such a minister and such a people are thus united, it is attended with great joy. The minister joyfully devoting himself to the service of his Lord in the work of the ministry, as a work that he delights in; and also joyfully uniting himself to the society of the saints that he is set over, as having complacency in them, for his dear Lord's sake, whose people they are; and willingly and joyfully, on Christ's call, undertaking the labors and difficulties of the service of their souls. And they, on the other hand; joyfully receiving him as a precious gift of their ascended Redeemer. Thus a faithful minister and a Christian people are each other's joy, [Rom. xv. 32](#). "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." [2 Cor. i. 14](#). "As you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye are ours."

Another concomitant of this union, wherein it resembles that which becomes a young man and virgin united in marriage, is mutual helpfulness, and a constant care and endeavor to promote each other's good and comfort. The minister earnestly and continually seeks the profit and comfort of the souls of his people, and to guard and defend them from every thing that might annoy them, and studies and labors to promote their spiritual peace and prosperity. They, on the other hand, make it their constant care to promote his comfort, to make the burden of his difficult work easy, to avoid those things that might add to the difficulty of it, and that might justly be grievous to his heart. They do what in them lies to en-



courage his heart, and strengthen his hands in his work; and are ready to say to him, when called to exert himself in the more difficult parts of his work, as the people of old to Ezra the priest, when they saw him bowed down under the burden of a difficult affair, [Ezra x. 4](#). “Arise, for this matter belongeth to thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.” They spare no pains nor cost to make their pastor’s outward circumstances easy and comfortable, and free from pinching necessities and distracting cares, and to put him under the best advantages to follow his great work fully and successfully.

Such a pastor and people, as it is between a couple happily united in a conjugal relation, have a mutual sympathy with each other, a fellow-feeling of each other’s burdens and calamities, and a communion in each other’s prosperity and joy. When the people suffer in their spiritual interests, the pastor suffers: he is afflicted when he sees their souls in trouble and darkness; he feels their wounds; and he looks on their prosperity and comfort as his own. [2 Cor. xi. 29](#). “We were comforted in your comfort.” And, on the other hand, the people feel their pastor’s burdens, and rejoice in his prosperity and consolations; see [Phil. v. 14](#). and [2 Cor. ii. 3](#).

(3.) This union is like that which is between a young man and a virgin in its *fruits*.

One fruit of it is mutual benefit: they become meet helps one for another. The people receive great benefit by the minister, as he is their teacher to communicate spiritual instructions and counsels to them, and is set to watch over them to defend them from those enemies and calamities they are liable to; and so is, under Christ, to be both their guide and guard, as the husband is of the wife. And as the husband provides the wife with food and clothing; so the pastor, as Christ’s steward, makes provision for his people, and brings forth out of his treasure things new and old, gives every one his portion of meat in due season, and is made the instrument of spiritually clothing and adorning their souls. And, on the other hand, the minister receives benefit from the people, as they minister greatly to his spiritual good by that holy converse to which their union to him as his flock leads them. The conjugal relation leads the persons united therein to the most intimate acquaintance and conversation with each other; so the union there is between a faithful pastor and a Christian people, leads them to intimate conversation about things of a spiritual nature. It leads the people most freely and fully to open the case of their souls to the pastor, and leads him to deal most freely, closely, and thoroughly with them in things pertaining thereto. And this conversation not only tends to *their* benefit, but also greatly to *his*. And the pastor receives benefit from the people outwardly, as they take care of and order his outward accommodations for his support and comfort, and do as it were spread and serve his table for him.

Another fruit of this union, wherein it resembles the conjugal, is a spiritual offspring. There is wont to arise from the union of such a pastor and people a spiritual race of children. These new-born children of God are in the Scripture represented both as the children of ministers, as those who have begotten them through the gospel, and also as the children of

the church, who is represented as their mother that hath brought them forth, and at whose breasts they are nourished; as in [Isa. liv. 1.](#) and [lxvi. 11.](#) [Gal. iv. 26.](#) [1 Peter ii. 2.](#) and many other places.

Having thus briefly shown how the uniting of faithful ministers with Christ's people in the ministerial office, when done in a due manner, is like a young man marrying a virgin, I proceed now to the

II. Proposition, *viz.*, that this union of ministers with the people of Christ, is in order to their being brought to the blessedness of a more glorious union, in which Christ shall rejoice over them as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

1. The saints are, and shall be, the subjects of this blessedness. Of all the various kinds of union of sensible and temporal things that are used in Scripture to represent the relation between bridegroom and bride, or husband and wife, is much the most frequently made use of both in the Old and New Testament. The Holy Ghost seems to take a peculiar delight in this, as a similitude fit to represent the strict, intimate, and blessed union that is between Christ and his saints. The apostle intimates, that one end why God appointed marriage, and established so near a relation as that between husband and wife, was, that it might be a type of the union that is between Christ and his church; in [Eph. v. 30-32.](#) "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh."—*For this cause, i.e.* because we are members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones, God appointed that man and wife should be so joined together as to be one flesh, to represent this high and blessed union between Christ and his church. The apostle explains himself in the next words, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."<sup>39</sup> This institution of marriage, making the man and his wife one flesh, is a great mystery; *i.e.* there is a great and glorious mystery hid in the design of it: and the apostle tells us what that glorious mystery is, "I speak concerning Christ and the church," as much as to say, the mystery I speak of, is that blessed union that is between Christ and his church, which I spoke of before.

This is a blessed union indeed; of which that between a faithful minister and a Christian people is but a shadow. Ministers are not the proper husbands of the church, though their union to God's people, as Christ's ambassadors, in several respects resembles the conjugal relation: but Christ is the true husband of the church, to whom the souls of the saints are espoused indeed, and to whom they are united as his flesh and his bones, yea and one spirit; to whom they have given themselves in an everlasting covenant, and whom alone they cleave to, love, honor, obey, and trust in, as their spiritual husband, whom alone they reserve themselves for as chaste virgins, and whom they follow withersoever he goeth. There are many ministers in the church of Christ, and there may be several pastors of one particular

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39 [Eph. v. 32.](#)

church: but the church has but one husband, and others are rejected and despised in comparison of him; he is among the sons as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood; they all are barren and worthless, eh only is the fruitful tree; and therefore, leaving all others, the church betakes herself to him alone, and sits under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to her taste; she takes up her full and entire rest in him, desiring no other.—The relation between a minister and people shall be dissolved, and may be dissolved before death; but the union between Christ and his church shall never be dissolved, neither before death nor by death, but shall endure through all eternity: “The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but Christ’s conjugal love and kindness shall not depart from his church; neither shall the covenant of his peace, the marriage-covenant, be removed,” [Isa. 54:1](#).—The union between a faithful minister and a Christian people is but a partial resemblance even of the marriage union, it is like marriage only in some particulars: but with respect to the union between Christ and his church, marriage is but a partial resemblance, yea, a faint shadow. Every thing desirable and excellent in the union between an earthly bridegroom and bride, is to be found in the union between Christ and his church; and that in an infinitely greater perfection and more glorious manner.—There is infinitely more to be found in it than ever was found between the happiest couple in a conjugal relation; or could be found if the bride and bridegroom had not only the innocence of Adam and Eve, but the perfection of angels.

Christ and his saints, standing in such a relation as this one to another, the saints must needs be unspeakable happy. Their mutual joy in each other is answerable to the nearness of their relation and strictness of their union. Christ rejoices over the church as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, and she rejoices in him as the bride rejoices over the bridegroom. My text has respect to the mutual joy that Christ and his church should have in each other: for though the joy of Christ over his church only is mentioned, yet it is evident that this is here spoken of and promised as the great happiness of the church, and therefore supposes her joy in him.

The mutual joy of Christ and his church is like that of bridegroom and bride, in that they rejoice in each other, as those whom they have chosen above others, for their nearest, most intimate, and everlasting friends and companions. The church is Christ’s chosen, [Isa. xli.9](#). “I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away,” [chap. xlviii. 10](#). “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” How often are God’s saints called his elect or chosen ones! He has chosen them, not to be mere servants, but friends; [John xv. 15](#). “I call you not servants;—but I have called you friends.” And though Christ be the Lord of glory, infinitely above men and angels, yet he has chosen the elect to be his companions; and has taken upon him their nature; and so in some respect, as it were, leveled himself with them, that he might be their brother and companion. Christ, as well as David, calls the saints his brethren and companions, [Psal. cxxii. 8](#). “For my brethren and companions’ sake I will now say, Peace be within

thee.” So in the book of Cant., he calls his church his sister and spouse. Christ hath loved and chosen his church as his peculiar friend, above others; [Psa. cxxxv. 4.](#) “The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.” As the bridegroom chooses the bride for his peculiar friend, above all others in the world; so Christ has chosen his church for a peculiar nearness to him, as his flesh and his bone, and the high honor and dignity of espousals above all others, rather than the fallen angels, yea, rather than the elect angels. For verily in this respect, “he taketh not hold of angels, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham,” as the words are in the original, [Heb. ii. 16.](#) He has chosen his church above the rest of mankind, above all the heathen nations, and those that are without the visible church, and above all other professing Christians; [Cant. vi. 9.](#) “My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice of her that bare her.” Thus Christ rejoices over his church, as obtaining in her that which he has chosen above all the rest of the creation, and as sweetly resting in his choice; [Psalms cxxxii. 13, 14.](#) “The Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it.—This is my rest for ever.”

On the other hand, the church chooses Christ above all others: he is in her eyes the chief among ten thousands, fairer than the sons of men: she rejects the suit of all his rivals, for his sake: her heart relinquishes the whole world: he is her pearl of great price, for which she parts with all; and rejoices in him, as the choice and rest of her soul.

Christ and his church, like the bridegroom and bride, rejoice in each other, as having a special propriety in each other. All things are Christ's; but he has a special propriety in his church. There is nothing in heaven or earth, among all the creatures, that is his, in that high and excellent manner that the church is his: they are often called his portion and inheritance; they are said, [Rev. xiv. 4.](#) to be “the first-fruits to God and the Lamb.” As of old, the first fruit was that part of the harvest that belonged to God, and was to be offered to him; so the saints are the first fruits of God's creatures, being that part which is in a peculiar manner Christ's portion, above all the rest of the creation, [James i. 18.](#) “Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.” And Christ rejoices in his church, as in that which is peculiarly his, [Isa. lxv. 19.](#) “I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people.” The church has also a peculiar propriety in Christ: though other things are hers, yet nothing is hers in that manner that her spiritual bridegroom is hers. Great and glorious as he is, yet he, with all his dignity and glory, is wholly given to her, to be fully possessed and enjoyed by her, to the utmost degree that she is capable of: therefore we have her so often saying in the language of exultation and triumph, “My beloved is mine, and I am his,” [Cant. ii. 16.](#) and [vi. 3.](#) and [vii. 10.](#)

Christ and his church, like the bridegroom and bride, rejoice in each other, as those that are the objects of each other's most tender and ardent love. The love of Christ to his church is altogether unparalleled: the height and depth and length and breadth of it pass knowledge: for he loved the church, and gave himself for it; and his love to her proved

stronger than death. And on the other hand, she loves him with a supreme affection; nothing stands in competition with him in her heart: she loves him with all her heart. Her whole soul is offered up to him in the flame of love. And Christ rejoices, and has sweet rest and delight in his love to the church; [Zeph. iii. 17.](#) “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.” So the church, in the exercises of her love to Christ, rejoices with unspeakable joy; [1 Peter i. 7, 8.](#) “Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.”

Christ and his church rejoice in each other's beauty. The church rejoices in Christ's divine beauty and glory. She, as it were, sweetly solaces herself in the light of the glory of the Sun of righteousness; and the saints say one to another, as in [Isa. ii. 5.](#) “Oh house of Jacob, come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord.” The perfections and virtues of Christ are as a perfumed ointment to the church, that make his very name to be to her as ointment poured forth; [Cant. i. 3.](#) “Because of the savour of they good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.” And Christ delights and rejoices in the beauty of the church, the beauty which he hath put upon her: her Christian graces are ointments of great price in his sight, [1 Peter iii. 4.](#) And he is spoken of as greatly desiring her beauty, [Psalms xlv. 11.](#) Yea, he himself speaks of his heart as ravished with her beauty, [Cant. iv. 9.](#) “Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou has ravished my heart with one of mine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.”

Christ and his church, as the bridegroom and bride, rejoice in each other's love. Wine is spoken of, [Psalms civ. 15.](#) as that which maketh glad man's heart: but the church of Christ is spoken of as rejoicing in the love of Christ, as that which is more pleasant and refreshing than wine, [Cant. i. 4.](#) “The king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine.” So on the other hand, Christ speaks of the church's love as far better to him than wine, [Cant. iv. 10.](#) “How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine!”

Christ and his church rejoice in communion with each other, as in being united in their happiness, and having fellowship and a joint participation in each other's good: as the bridegroom and bride rejoice together at the wedding-feast, and as thenceforward they are joint partakers of each other's comforts and joys: [Rev. iii. 20](#) “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” The church has fellowship with Christ in his own happiness, and his divine entertainments; his joy is fulfilled in her, [John xv. 11.](#) and [xvii. 13.](#) She sees light in his light; and she is made to drink at the river of his own pleasures, [Psalms xxxiv. 8, 9.](#) And Christ brings her to eat and drink at his own table, to take her fill of his own entertainments; [Cant. v. 1.](#) “Eat, oh friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, oh beloved.” And he, on the other hand, has fellowship with her; he feasts with her; her joys are his; and he rejoices in that entertainment that she provides for him.



So Christ is said to feed among the lilies, [Cant. ii. 16.](#) and [vii. 13.](#) she speaks of all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which she had laid up, and says to him, in [verse iv. 16,](#) “Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits,” and he makes answer in the [next verse,](#) “I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk.”

And lastly, Christ and his church, as the bridegroom and bride, rejoice in conversing with each other. The words of Christ by which he converses with his church, are most sweet to her; and therefore she says of him, [Cant. v. 6.](#) “His mouth is most sweet.” And on the other hand, he says of her, [verse 2:14,](#) “Let me hear thy voice: for sweet is thy voice.” And [verse iv. 11.,](#) “Thy lips, oh my spouse, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue.”

Christ rejoices over his saints as the bridegroom over the bride at all times: but there are some seasons wherein he doth so more especially. Such a season is the time of the soul’s conversion; when the good shepherd finds his lost sheep, then he brings it home rejoicing, and calls together his friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me. The day of a sinner’s conversion is the day of Christ’s espousals; and so is eminently the day of his rejoicing; [Sol. Song iii. 11.](#) “Go forth, oh ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.” And it is oftentimes remarkably the day of the saints’ rejoicing in Christ; for then God turns again the captivity of his elect people, and, as it were, fills their mouth with laughter, and their tongue with singing; as in [Psa. cxxvi.](#) at the beginning. We read of the jailer, that when he was converted, “he rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house,” [Acts xvi. 34.](#)—There are other seasons of special communion of the saints with Christ, wherein Christ doth in a special manner rejoice over his saints, and as their bridegroom brings them into his chambers, that they also may be glad and rejoice in him, [Cant. i. 4.](#)

But this mutual rejoicing of Christ and his saints will be in its perfection, at the time of the saints’ glorification with Christ in heaven; for that is the proper time of the saints’ entering in with the bridegroom into the marriage, [Matt. xxv. 10.](#) The saints’ conversion is rather like the betrothing of the intended bride to the bridegroom before they come together; but at the time of the saints’ glorification that shall be fulfilled in [Psalms xlv. 15.](#) “With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter into the king’s palace.” That is the time when those whom Christ loved, and for whom he gave himself—that he might sanctify and cleanse them, as with the washing of water by the word—shall be presented to him in glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Then the church shall be brought to the full enjoyment of her bridegroom, having all tears wiped away from her eyes; and there shall be no more distance or absence. She shall then be brought to the entertainments of an eternal wedding-feast, and to dwell forever with her bridegroom; yea, to dwell eternally in his em-

braces. Then Christ will give her his loves; and she shall drink her fill, yea, she shall swim in the ocean of his love.

And as there are various seasons wherein Christ and particular saints do more especially rejoice in each other; so there are also certain seasons wherein Christ doth more especially rejoice over his church collectively taken. Such a season is a time of remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God: it is a time of the espousals of many souls to Christ; and so of the joy of espousals. It is a time wherein Christ is wont more especially to visit his saints with his loving-kindness, and to bring them near to himself, and especially to refresh their hearts with divine communications: on which account, it becomes a time of great joy to the church of Christ. So when the Spirit of God was so wonderfully poured out on the city of Samaria, with the preaching of Philip, we read that “there was great joy in that city,” [Acts viii. 8](#). And the time of that wonderful effusion of the Spirit at Jerusalem, begun at the feast of Pentecost, was a time of holy feasting and rejoicing, a kind of a wedding-day to the church of Christ; wherein “they continuing daily, with one accord, in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of heart,” [Acts ii. 46](#).

But more especially is the time of that great outpouring of the Spirit of God in the latter days, so often foretold in the Scriptures, represented as the marriage of the Lamb, and the rejoicing of Christ and his church in each other, as the bridegroom and the bride. This is the time prophesied of in our text and context; and foretold in [Isa. lxv.19](#) “I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.” This is the time spoken of in [Rev. xix.:6-9](#). where the apostle John tells us, he “heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” And adds, “To her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb.”

But above all, the time of Christ's last coming, is that of the consummation of the church's marriage with the Lamb, and the complete and most perfect joy of the wedding. In that resurrection-morning, when the Sun of righteousness shall appear in our heavens, shining in all his brightness and glory, he will come forth as a bridegroom; he shall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels. And at that glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ, shall the whole elect church, complete as to every individual member, and each member with the whole man, both body and soul, and both in perfect glory, ascend up to meet the Lord in the air, to be thenceforth for ever with the Lord. That will be indeed a joyful meeting of this glorious bridegroom and bride. Then the bridegroom will appear in all his glory without any veil; and then the saints shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom



of their Father, and at the right hand of their Redeemer; and then the church will appear as the bride, the Lamb's wife. It is the state of the church after the resurrection, that is spoken of in [Rev. xxi. 2](#). "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." And [verse 9](#)., "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Then will come the time, when Christ will sweetly invite his spouse to enter in with him into the palace of his glory, which he had been preparing for her from the foundation of the world, and shall, as it were, take her by the hand, and lead her in with him: and this glorious bridegroom and bride shall, with all their shining ornaments, ascend up together into the heaven of heavens; the whole multitude of glorious angels waiting upon them: and this son and daughter of God shall, in their united glory and joy, present themselves together before the father; when Christ shall say, "Here am I, and the children which thou has given me." And they both shall in that relation and union, together receive the Father's blessing; and shall thenceforward rejoice together, in consummate, uninterrupted, immutable, and everlasting glory, in the love and embraces of each other, and joint enjoyment of the love of the Father.



2. That forementioned union of faithful ministers with the people of Christ, is in order to this blessedness.

1. It is only with reference to Christ, as the true bridegroom of his church, that there is any union between a faithful minister and a Christian people, that is like that of a bridegroom and a bride.

As I observed before, a faithful minister espouses a Christian people, not in his own name, but as Christ's ambassador: he espouses them, that therein they may be espoused to Christ. He loves her with a tender conjugal affection, as she is the spouse of Christ, and as he, as the minister of Christ, has his heart under the influence of the Spirit of Christ; as Abraham's faithful servant, that was sent to fetch a wife for his master's son, was captivated with Rebekah's beauty and virtue; but not with reference to a union with himself, but with his master Isaac. It was for his sake he loved her, and it was for him that he desired her. He set his heart upon her, that she might be Isaac's wife; and it was for this that he greatly rejoiced over her, for this he wooed her, and for this he obtained her, and she was for a season, in a sense, united to him; but it was as a fellow-traveler, that by him she might be brought to Isaac in the land of Canaan. For this he adorned her with ornaments of gold; it was to prepare her for Isaac's embraces. All that tender care which a faithful minister takes of his people as a kind of spiritual husband—to provide for them, to lead, and feed, and comfort them—is not as to his own bride, but his master's.

And on the other hand, the people receive him, unite themselves to him in covenant, honor him, subject themselves to him, and obey him, only for Christ's sake, and as one that represents him, and acts in his name towards them. All this love, and honor, and submission, is ultimately referred to Christ. Thus the apostle says, [Gal. iv. 14](#). "Ye received me as an angel,

or messenger of God, even as Christ Jesus.” And the children that are brought forth in consequence of the union of the pastor and people, are not properly the minister’s children, but the children of Christ; they are not born of man, but of God.

2. The things that appertain to that fore-mentioned union of a faithful minister and Christian people, are the principal appointed means of bringing the church to that blessedness that has been spoken of. Abraham’s servant, and the part he acted as Isaac’s agent towards Rebekah, were the principal means of his being brought to enjoy the benefits of her conjugal relation to Isaac. Ministers are sent to woo the souls of men for Christ, [2 Cor. v. 20](#). “We are then ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” We read in [Matthew 22](#) of a certain king, that made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to invite and bring in the guests: these servants are ministers. The labors of faithful ministers are the principal means God is wont to make use of for the conversion of the children of the church, and so of their espousals unto Christ. I have espoused you to one husband, says the apostle, [2 Cor. xi. 2](#). The preaching of the gospel by faithful ministers, is the principal means that God uses for exhibiting Christ, his love and benefits to his elect people, and the chief means of their being sanctified, and so fitted to enjoy their spiritual bridegroom. Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, as by the washing of water by the word (*i.e.* by the preaching of the gospel), and so might present it to himself, a glorious church. The labors of faithful ministers are ordinarily the principal means of the joy of the saints in Christ Jesus, in their fellowship with their spiritual bridegroom in this world; [2 Cor. i. 24](#). “We are helpers of your joy.” They are God’s instruments for bringing up the church, as it were, from her childhood, until she is fit for her marriage with the Lord of glory; as Mordecai brought up Hadassah, or Esther, whereby she was fitted to be queen in Ahasuerus’s court. God purifies the church under their hand, as Esther (to fit her for her marriage with the king) was committed to the custody of Hegai the keeper of the women, to be purified six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odors. They are made the instruments of clothing the church in her wedding-garments, that fine linen, clean and white, and adorning her for her husband; as Abraham’s servant adorned Rebekah with golden ear-rings and bracelets. Faithful ministers are made the instruments of leading the people of God in the way to heaven, conducting them to the glorious presence of the bridegroom, to the consummate joys of her marriage with the Lamb; as Abraham’s servant conducted Rebekah from Padan-Aram to Canaan, and presented her to Isaac, and delivered her into his embraces. For it is the office of ministers, not only to espouse the church to her husband, but to present her a chaste virgin to Christ.

I would now conclude this discourse with some exhortations, agreeable to what has been said. And,

1. The exhortation may be to all that are called to the work of the gospel-ministry.—Let us who are honored by the glorious bridegroom of the church, to be employed as his ministers, to so high a purpose, as has been represented, he engaged and induced by what has been observed, to faithfulness in our great work; that we may be and act towards Christ's people that are committed to our care, as those that are united to them in holy espousals, for Christ's sake, and in order to their being brought to the unspeakable blessedness of that more glorious union with the Lamb of God, in which he shall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride. Let us see to it that our hearts are united to them, as a young man to a virgin that he marries, in the most ardent and tender affection; and that our regard to them be pure and uncorrupt, that it may be a regard to them, and not to what they have, or any worldly advantages we hope to gain of them. And let us behave ourselves as those that are devoted to their good; being willing to spend and be spent for them; joyfully undertaking and enduring the labor and self-denial that is requisite in order to a thorough fulfilling the ministry that we have received. Let us continually and earnestly endeavor to promote the prosperity and salvation of the souls committed to our care, looking on their calamities and their prosperity as our own; feeling their spiritual wounds and griefs, and refreshed with their consolations; and spending our whole lives in diligent care and endeavor to provide for, nourish, and instruct our people, as the intended spouse of Christ, yet in her minority, that we may form her mind and behavior, and bring her up for him, and that we may cleanse her, as with the washing of water by the word, and purify her as with sweet odors, and clothed in such raiment as may become Christ's bride. Let us aim that when the appointed wedding-day comes, we may have done our work as Christ's messengers; and may then be ready to present Christ's spouse to him, a chaste virgin, properly educated and formed, and suitably adorned for her marriage with the Lamb; that ye may then present her to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and may receive her into his eternal embraces, in perfect purity, beauty, and glory.

Here I would mention three or four things tending to excite us to this fidelity.

1. We ought to consider how much Christ has done to obtain that joy, wherein he rejoices over his church, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

The creation of the world seems to have been especially for this end, that the eternal Son of God might obtain a spouse towards whom he might fully exercise the infinite benevolence of his nature, and to whom he might, as it were, open and pour forth all that immense fountain of condescension, love, and grace that was in his heart, and that in this way God might be glorified. Doubtless the work of creation is subordinate to the work of redemption: the creation of the new heavens and new earth, is represented as so much more excellent than the old, that, in comparison, it is not worthy to be mentioned, or come into mind.

Christ has done greater things than to create the world, in order to obtain his bride and the joy of his espousals with her: for he became man for this end; which was a greater thing

than his creating the world. For the Creator to *make* the creature was a great thing; but for him to *become* a creature was a greater thing. And he did a much greater thing still to obtain this joy; in that for this he laid down his life, and suffered even the death of the cross: for this he poured out his soul unto death; and he that is the Lord of the universe, God over all, blessed for evermore, offered up himself a sacrifice, in both body and soul, in the flames of divine wrath. Christ obtains his elect spouse by conquest: for she was captive in the hands of dreadful enemies; and her Redeemer came into the world to conquer these enemies, and rescue her out of their hands, that she might be his bride. And he came and encountered these enemies in the greatest battle that ever was beheld by men or angels: he fought with principalities and powers; he fought alone with the powers of darkness, and all the armies of hell; yea, he conflicted with the infinitely more dreadful wrath of God, and overcame in this great battle; and thus he obtained his spouse. Let us consider at how great a price Christ purchased this spouse: he did not redeem her with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood; yea, he gave himself for her. When he offered up himself to God in those extreme labors and sufferings, this was the joy that was set before him, that made him cheerfully to endure the cross, and despise the pain and shame in comparison of this joy; even that rejoicing over his church, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride that the Father has promised him, and that he expected when he should present her to himself in perfect beauty and blessedness.

The prospect of this was what supported him in the midst of the dismal prospect of his sufferings, at which his soul was troubled; [John xii. 27](#). “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” These words show the conflict and distress of Christ’s holy soul in the view of his approaching sufferings. But in the midst of his trouble, he was refreshed with the joyful prospect of the success of those sufferings, in bringing home his elect church to himself, signified by a voice from heaven, and promised by the Father: on which he says, in the language of triumph, [verses 31, 32](#), “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

And ministers of the gospel are appointed to be the instruments of bringing this to pass; the instruments of bringing home his elect spouse to him, and her becoming his bride; and the instruments of her sanctifying and cleansing by the word, that she might be meet to be presented to him on the future glorious wedding-day. How great a motive then is here to induce us who are called to be these instruments, to be faithful in our work, and most willingly labor and suffer, that Christ may see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied! Shall Christ do such great things, and go through such great labors and sufferings to obtain his joy, and then honor us sinful worms, so as to employ us as his ministers and instruments to bring this joy to pass; and shall we be loath to labor, and backward to deny ourselves for this end?

2. Let us consider how much the manner in which Christ employs us in this great business has to engage us to a faithful performance of it. We are sent forth as his servants; but it is as highly dignified servants, as stewards of his household, as Abraham's servant; and as his ambassadors, to stand in his stead, and in his name, and represent his person in so great an affair as that of his espousals with the eternally beloved of his soul. Christ employs us not as mere servants, but as friends of the bridegroom; agreeable to the style in which John the Baptist speaks of himself, [John iii. 29](#). in which he probably alludes to an ancient custom among the Jews an their nuptial solemnities, at which one of the guests that was most honored and next in dignity to the bridegroom, was styled *the friend of the bridegroom*.

There is not an angel in heaven, of how high an order soever, but what looks on himself honored by the Son of God and Lord of glory, in being employed by him as his minister in the high affair of his espousals with his blessed bride. But such honor has Christ put upon us, that his spouse should in some sort be ours; that we should marry, as a young man marries a virgin, the same mystical person that he himself will rejoice over as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride; that we should be his ministers to treat and transact for him with his dear spouse, that he might obtain this joy: and, in our treaty with her, to be married to her in his name, and sustain an image of his own endearing relation to her; and that she should receive us, in some sort, as himself, and her heart be united to us in esteem, honor, and affection, as those that represent him; and that Christ's and the church's children should be ours, and that the fruit of the travail of our souls; as the apostle speaks of himself as travailing in birth with his hearers, [Gal. iv. 19](#). The reason why Christ puts such honor on faithful ministers, even above the angels themselves, is because they are of his beloved church, they are select members of his dear spouse, and Christ esteems nothing too much, no honor too great, for her. Therefore Jesus Christ, the King of angels and men, does as it were cause it to be proclaimed concerning faithful ministers, as Ahasuerus did concerning him that brought up Esther, his beloved queen; "Thus shall it be done to the man that the king delights to honor."<sup>40</sup> »

And seeing Christ hath so honored us, that our relation to his people resembles his, surely our affection to them should imitate his, in seeking their salvation, spiritual peace, and happiness. Our tender care, labors, self-denial, and readiness to suffer for their happiness, should imitate what hath appeared in him, who hath purchased them with his own blood.

3. Let it be considered, that if we faithfully acquit ourselves in our office, in the manner that hath been represented, we shall surely hereafter be partakers of the joy, when the bridegroom and bride shall rejoice in each other in perfect and eternal glory.

God once gave forth a particular command, with special solemnity, that it should be written for the notice of all professing Christians through all ages, that they are happy and

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40 [Esth. vi. 8](#).

blessed indeed, who are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; [Rev. xix. 9](#). “And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” But if we are faithful in our work, we shall surely be the subjects of that blessedness; we shall be partakers of the joy of the bridegroom and bride, not merely as friends and neighbors that are invited to be occasional guests, but as members of the one and the other. We shall be partakers with the church, the blessed bride, in her joy in the bridegroom, not only as friends and ministers to the church, but as members of principal dignity; as the eye, the ear, the hand, are principal members of the body. Faithful ministers in the church will hereafter be a part of the church that shall receive distinguished glory at the resurrection of the just, which, above all other times, may be looked on as the church’s wedding-day; [Daniel xii. 2, 3](#). “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life. And that that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” They are elders who are represented as that part of the church triumphant that sit next to the throne of God, [Rev. iv. 4](#). “And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

And we shall also be partakers of the joy of the bridegroom in his rejoicing over his bride. We, as the special friends of the bridegroom, shall stand by, and hear him express his joy on that day, and rejoice greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice; as John the Baptist said of himself, [John iii. 29](#). “He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice.” Christ, in reward for our faithful service, in winning and espousing his bride to him, and bringing her up from her minority, and adorning her for him, will then call us to partake with him in the joy of his marriage. And she that will then be his joy, shall also be our crown of rejoicing; [1 Thessalonians ii. 19](#). “What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” What a joyful meeting had Christ and his disciples together, when the disciples returned to their Master, after the faithful and successful performance of their appointed service, when Christ sent them forth to preach the gospel; [Luke x. 17](#). “And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.” Here we see how they rejoice: **the next words** show how Christ also rejoiced on that occasion: “And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” And in the **next verse but two**, we are told, that “in that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.” So if we faithfully acquit ourselves, we shall another day return to him with joy; and we shall rejoice with him and he with us.—Then will be the day when Christ, who hath sown in tears and in blood, and we who have reaped the fruits of his labors and sufferings, shall rejoice together,

agreeable to [John iv. 35-37](#). And that will be a happy meeting indeed, when Christ and his lovely and blessed bride, and faithful ministers who have been the instruments of wooing and winning her heart to him, and adorning her for him, and presenting her to him, shall all rejoice together.

4. Further to stir us up to faithfulness in the great business that is appointed us, in order to the mutual joy of this bridegroom and bride, let us consider what reason we have to hope that the time is approaching when this joy shall be to a glorious degree fulfilled on earth, far beyond whatever yet has been; I mean the time of the church's latter-day glory. This is what the words of our text have a more direct respect to; and this is what is prophesied of in [Hosea ii. 19, 20](#). "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord." And this is what is especially intended by the marriage of the Lamb, in [Rev. xix](#).

We are sure this day will come: and we have many reasons to think that it is approaching; from the fulfillment of almost every thing that the prophecies speak of as preceding it, and their having been fulfilled now a long time; and from the general earnest expectations of the church of God, and the best of her ministers and members, and the late extraordinary things that have appeared in the church of God, and appertaining to the state of religion, and the present aspects of divine Providence, which the time will not allow me largely to insist upon.

As the happiness of that day will have a great resemblance of the glory and joy of the eternal wedding-day of the church after the resurrection of the just; so will the privileges of faithful ministers at that time much resemble those they shall enjoy with the bridegroom and bride, as to honor and happiness, in eternal glory. This is the time especially intended in the text, wherein it is said, "as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee.<sup>41</sup>" And it is after in the prophecies spoken of as a great part of the glory of that time, that then the church should be so well supplied with faithful ministers. So in the next verse to the text, "I have set watchmen on thy walls, oh Jerusalem, that shall never hold their peace, day nor night."<sup>42</sup> So, [Isa. xxx. 20, 21](#). "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." [Jer. iii. 15](#). "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." And [verse xxiii. 4](#)., "And I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them." And the great privilege and joy of faithful ministers at

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<sup>41</sup> [Isa. lxii. 5](#).

<sup>42</sup> [Isa. lxii. 6](#).

that day is foretold in [Isa. 52:8](#). “Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

And as that day must needs be approaching, and we ourselves have lately seen some things which we have reason to hope are forerunners of it; certainly it should strongly excite us to endeavor to be such pastors as God has promised to bless his church with at that time; that if any of us should live to see the dawning of that glorious day, we might share in the blessedness of it, and then be called, as the friends of the bridegroom, to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and partake of that joy in which heaven and earth, angels and saints, and Christ and his church, shall be united at that time.

But here I would apply to the exhortation in a few words to that minister of Christ, who above all others is concerned in the solemnity of this day, who is now to be united to and set over this people as their pastor.

You have now heard, Reverend Sir, the great importance and high ends of the office of an evangelical pastor, and the glorious privileges of such as are faithful in this office, imperfectly represented. May God grant that your union with this people, this day, as their pastor, may be such, that God's people here may have the great promise God makes to his church in the text, now fulfilled unto them. May you now, as one of the precious sons of Zion, take this part of Christ's church by the hand, in the name of your great Master the glorious bridegroom, with a heart devoted unto him with true adoration and supreme affection, and for his sake knit to this people, in a spiritual and pure love, and as it were a conjugal tenderness; ardently desiring that great happiness for them, which you have now heard Christ has chosen his church unto, and has shed his blood to obtain for her; being yourself ready to spend and be spent for them; remembering the great errand on which Christ sends you to them, *viz.* to woo and win their hearts, and espouse their souls to him, and to bring up his elect spouse, and to fit and adorn her for his embraces; that you may in due time present her a chaste virgin to him, for him to rejoice over, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride. How honorable is this business that Christ employs you in! And how joyfully should you perform it! When Abraham's faithful servant was sent to take a wife for his master's son, how engaged was he in the business; and how joyful was he when he succeeded! With what joy did he bow his head and worship, and bless the Lord God of his master, for his mercy and his truth in making his way prosperous! And what a joyful meeting may we conclude he had with Isaac, when he met him in the field, by the well of Laharoi, and there presented his beautiful Rebekah to him, and told him all things that he had done! But this was but a shadow of that joy that you shall have, if you imitate his fidelity, in the day when you shall meet your glorious Master, and present Christ's church in this place, as a chaste and beautiful virgin unto him.

We trust, dear Sir, that you will esteem it a most blessed employment, to spend your time and skill in adorning Christ's bride for her marriage with the Lamb, and that it is a



work which you will do with delight; and that you will take heed that the ornaments you put upon her are of the right sort, what shall be indeed beautiful and precious in the eyes of the bridegroom, that she may be all glorious within, and her clothing of wrought gold; that on the wedding-day she may stand on the king's right hand in gold of Ophir.

The joyful day is coming, when the spouse of Christ shall be led to the King in raiment of needle-work; and angels and faithful ministers will be the servants that shall lead her in. And you, Sir, if you are faithful in the charge now committed to you, shall be joined with glorious angels in that honorable and joyful service; but with this difference, that you shall be together in bringing in Christ's bride into his palace, and presenting her to him. But faithful ministers shall have a much higher participation of the joy of that occasion. They shall have a greater and more immediate participation with the bride in her joy; for they shall not only be ministers to the church as the angels are, but parts of the church, principal members of the bride. And as such, at the same time that angels do the part of ministering spirits to the bride, when they conduct her to the bridegroom, they shall also do the part of ministering spirits to faithful ministers. And they shall also have a higher participation with the bridegroom than the angels, in his rejoicing at that tie; for they shall be nearer to him than they. They are also his members, and are honored as the principal instruments of espousing the saints to him, and fitting them for his enjoyment; and therefore they will be more the crown of rejoicing of faithful ministers, than of the angels of heaven.

So great, dear Sir, is the honor and joy that is set before you, to engage you to faithfulness in your pastoral care of this people; so glorious is the prize that Christ has set up to engage you to run the race that is set before you.

I would now conclude with a few words to the people of this congregation, whose souls are now to be committed to the care of that minister of Christ, whom they have chosen as their pastor.

Let me take occasion, dear brethren, from what has been said, to exhort you—not forgetting the respect, honor, and reverence, that will ever be due from you to your former pastor, who has served you so long in that work, but by reason of age and growing infirmities, and the prospect of his place being so happily supplied by a successor, has seen meet to relinquish the burden of the pastoral charge over you—to perform the duties that belong to you, in your part of that relation and union now to be established between you and your elect pastor. Receive him as the messenger of the Lord of hosts, one that in his office represents the glorious bridegroom of the church; love and honor him, and willingly submit yourselves to him, as a virgin when married to a husband. Surely the feet of that messenger should be beautiful, that comes to you on such a blessed errand as that which you have heard, to espouse you to the eternal Son of God, and to fit you for and lead you to him as your bridegroom. Your chosen pastor comes to you on this errand, and he comes in the

name of the bridegroom, so empowered by him, and representing him, that in receiving him, you will receive Christ, and in rejecting him, you will reject Christ.

Be exhorted to treat your pastor as the beautiful and virtuous Rebekah treated Abraham's servant. She most charitably and hospitably entertained him, provide lodging and food for him and his company, and took care that he should be comfortably entertained and supplied in all respects, while he continued in his embassy; and that was the note or mark of distinction which God himself gave him, by which he should know the true spouse of Christ, by giving kind entertainment to your minister that comes to espouse you to the antetype of Isaac. Provide for his outward subsistence and comfort, with the like cheerfulness that Rebekah did for Abraham's servant. You have an account of her alacrity and liberality in supplying him, in [Gen. xxiv. 18.](#) &c Say, as her brother did, in [verse 31,](#) "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord."

Thus you should entertain your pastor. But this is not that wherein your duty towards him chiefly lies: the main thing is to comply with him in his great errand, and to yield to the suit that he makes to you in the name of Christ, to be his bride. In this you should be like Rebekah: she was, from what she heard of Isaac, and God's covenant with him, and blessing upon him, from God's covenant with him, and blessing upon him, from the mouth of Abraham's servant, willing forever to forsake her own country, and her father's house, to go into a country she had never seen, to be Isaac's wife, whom also she never saw. After she had heard what the servant had to say, and her old friends had a mind she should put off the affair for the present—and she was asked "whether she would go with this man," she said, "I will go,"<sup>43</sup> and she left her kindred, and followed the man through all that long journey, until he had brought her unto Isaac, and they three had that joyful meeting in Canaan. If you will this day receive your pastor in that union that is now to be established between him and you, it will be a joyful day in this place, and the joy will be like the joy of espousals, as when a young man marries a virgin; and it will not only be a joyful day in East Hampton, but it will doubtless be a joyful day in heaven, on your account. And your joy will be a faint resemblance, and a forerunner of that future joy, when Christ shall rejoice over you as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, in heavenly glory.

And if your pastor be faithful in his office, and you hearken and yield to him in the great errand on which Christ sends him to you, the time will come, wherein you and your pastor will be each other's crown of rejoicing, and wherein Christ and he and you shall all meet together at the glorious marriage of the Lamb, and shall rejoice in and over one another, with perfect, uninterrupted, never ending, and never fading joy.

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43 [Gen. xxiv. 58.](#)

S E R M O N   I I I .   4 4 .

TRUE SAINTS, WHEN ABSENT FROM THE BODY, ARE PRESENT WITH  
THE LORD.

2 Cor. v. 8.

*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

THE apostle in this place is giving a reason why he went on with so much boldness and immovable steadfastness, through such labors, sufferings, and dangers of his life, in the service of his Lord; for which his enemies, the false teachers among the Corinthians, sometimes reproached him as being beside himself, and driven on by a kind of madness.—In the latter part of the preceding chapter, the apostle informs the Christian Corinthians, that the reason why he did thus, was, that he firmly believed the promises that Christ had made to his faithful servants of a glorious future eternal reward, and knew that these present afflictions were light, and but for a moment, in comparison of that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The same discourse is continued in this chapter: wherein the apostle further insists on the reason he had given of his constancy in suffering, and exposing himself to death in the work of the ministry, even the more happy state he expected after death. And this is the subject of my text; wherein may be observed,

1. The great future privilege, which the apostle hoped for; that of being present with Christ. The words, in the original, properly signify dwelling with Christ, as in the same country or city, or making a home with Christ.

2. When the apostle looked for this privilege, *viz.*, when he should be absent from the body. Not to wait for it until the resurrection, when soul and body should be united again. He signifies the same thing in his epistle to the [Phil. i. 22, 23](#). “But if I live in the flesh, this

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REV. MR. DAVID BRAINERD, MISSIONARY TO THE  
INDIANS, FROM THE HONORABLE SOCIETY IN  
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KNOWLEDGE, AND PASTOR OF A CHURCH OF  
CHRISTIAN INDIANS IN NEW JERSEY; WHO DIED AT  
NORTHAMPTON IN NEW ENGLAND, OCTOBER 9, 1747,  
IN THE 30TH YEAR OF HIS AGE, AND WAS INTERRED  
ON THE 12TH FOLLOWING.

is the fruit of my labor. Yet what I shall choose, I know not. For I am in a strait between two; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.”

3. The value the apostle set on this privilege. It was such, that for the sake of it, he chose to be absent from the body. He was willing rather, or (as the word properly signifies) it were more pleasing to him, to part with the present life, and all its enjoyments, and be possessed of this great benefit, than to continue here.

4. The present benefit, which the apostle had by his faith and hope of this future privilege, and of his great value for it, *viz.*, that hence he received courage, assurance, and constancy of mind, agreeable to the proper import of the word that is rendered, we are confident. The apostle is now giving a reason of that fortitude and immovable stability of mind, with which he went through those extreme labors, hardships and dangers, which he mentions in this discourse; so that, in the midst of all, he did not faint, was not discouraged, but had constant light, and inward support, strength, and comfort in the midst of all: agreeable to the [10th verse of the foregoing chapter](#), “For which cause, we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” And the same is expressed more particularly in the [8th, 9th, and 10th verses](#), of that chapter: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” And in the [next chapter, verses 4-10](#). “In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”

Among the many useful observations there might be raised from the text, I shall at this time only insist on that which lies most plainly before us in the words; *viz.*—*The souls of true saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ.*—And they

Go to be with Christ, in the following respects:

I. They go to dwell in the same blessed abode with the glorified human nature of Christ.

The human nature of Christ is yet in being. He still continues, and will continue to all eternity, to be both God and man. His whole human nature remains: not only his human soul, but also his human body. His dead body rose from the dead; and the same that was raised from the dead, is exalted and glorified at God’s right hand; that which was dead is now alive, and lives for evermore.



And therefore there is a certain place, a particular part of the external creation, to which Christ is gone, and where he remains. And this place is that which we call the highest heaven, or the heaven of heavens; a place beyond all the visible heavens. [Eph. iv. 9, 10](#). “Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens.” This is the same which the apostle calls the third heaven, [2 Cor. xii. 2](#). reckoning the aerial heaven as the first, the starry heaven as the second, and the highest heaven as the third. This is the abode of the holy angels; they are called “the angels of heaven,” [Matt. xxiv. 36](#). “The angels which are in heaven,” [Mark xiii. 32](#). “The angels of God in heaven,” [Matt. xxii. 30](#). and [Mark xii. 25](#). They are said “always to behold the face of the Father which is in heaven,” [Matt. xviii. 10](#). And they are elsewhere often represented as before the throne of God, or surrounding his throne in heaven, and sent from thence, and descending from thence on messages to this world. And thither it is that the souls of departed saints are conducted, when they die. They are not reserved in some abode distinct from the highest heaven; a place of rest, which they are kept in, until the day of judgment; such as some imagine, which they call the *hades* of the happy: but they go directly to heaven itself. This is the saints’ home, being their Father’s house: they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and this is the other and better country that they are travelling to, [Heb. xi. 13-26](#). This is the city they belong to: [Phil. iii. 20](#). “Our conversation or (as the word properly signifies, citizenship) is in heaven.” Therefore this undoubtedly is the place the apostle has respect to in my text, when he says, “We are willing to forsake our former house, the body, and to dwell in the same house, city or country, wherein Christ dwells,” which is the proper import of the words of the original. What can this house, or city, or country be, but that house, which is elsewhere spoken of, as their proper home, and their Father’s house, and the city and country to which they properly belong, and whither they are travelling all the while they continue in this world, and the house, city, and country where we know the human nature of Christ is? This is the saints’ rest; here their hearts are while they live; and here their treasure is. “The inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, that is designed for them, is reserved in heaven,” [1 Peter i. 4](#); and therefore they never can have their proper and full rest until they come here. So that undoubtedly their souls, when absent from their bodies (when the Scriptures represent them as in a state of perfect rest), arrive hither. Those two saints, that left this world, to go to their rest in another world, without dying, *viz.*, Enoch and Elijah, went to heaven. Elijah was seen ascending up to heaven, as Christ was. And to the same resting place, is there all reason to think, that those saints go, that leave the world, to go to their rest, by death. Moses, when he died in the top of the mount, ascended to the same glorious abode with Elias, who ascended without dying. They are companions in another world; as they appeared together at Christ’s transfiguration. They were together at that time with Christ in the mount, when there was a specimen or sample of his glorification in

heaven. And doubtless they were also together afterwards, with him, when he was, actually, fully glorified in heaven. And thither undoubtedly it was, that the soul of Stephen ascended, when he expired. The circumstances of his death demonstrate it, as we have an account of it, [Acts vii. 55](#), &c: “He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man (i.e. Jesus, in his human nature) standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Before his death he had an extraordinary view of the glory that his Savior had received in heaven, not only for himself, but for him, and all his faithful followers; that he might be encouraged, by the hopes of this glory, cheerfully to lay down his life for his sake. Accordingly he dies in the hope of this, saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” By which doubtless he meant, “receive my spirit to be with thee, in that glory, wherein I have now seen thee, in heaven, at the right hand of God.” And thither it was that the soul of the penitent thief on the cross ascended. Christ said to him, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Paradise is the same with the third heaven; as appears by [2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4](#). There that which is called the third heaven in the second verse, in the fourth verse is called paradise. The departed souls of the apostles and prophets are in heaven; as is manifest from [Revelation 18:20](#), “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets.”

The church of God is distinguished in Scripture, from time to time, into these two parts; that part of it that is in heaven, and that which is in earth; [Eph. iii. 14, 15](#), “Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” [Col. i. 20](#), “And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.” Now what things in heaven are they for whom peace has been made by the blood of Christ’s cross, and who have by him been reconciled to God, but the saints in heaven? In like manner we read, [Eph. 1:10](#). of God’s gathering together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.” The spirits of just men made perfect are in the same city of the living God, and heavenly Jerusalem, with the innumerable company of angels, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; as is manifest by [Heb. xii. 22-24](#). The church of God is often in Scripture called by the name Jerusalem; and the apostle speaks of the Jerusalem which is above, or which is in heaven, as the mother of us all; but if no part of the church be in heaven, or none but Enoch and Elias, it is not likely that the church would be called the Jerusalem which is in heaven.

II. The souls of true saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ, as they go to dwell in the immediate, full and constant sight or view of him.



When we are absent from our dear friends, they are out of sight; but when we are with them, we have the opportunity and satisfaction of seeing them. So while the saints are in the body, and are absent from the Lord, He is in several respects out of sight: [1 Peter i. 8](#). “Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing,” &c They have indeed, in this world, a spiritual sight of Christ; but they see through a glass darkly, and with great interruption; but in heaven they see him face to face, [1 Cor. xiii. 12](#); “The pure in heart are blessed; for they shall see God,” [Matthew v.8](#). Their beatifical vision of God is in Christ, who is that brightness or effulgence of God’s glory, by which his glory shines forth in heaven, to the view of saints and angels there, as well as here on earth. This is the Sun of righteousness, that is not only the light of this world, but is also the sun that enlightens the heavenly Jerusalem; by whose bright beams it is that the glory of God shines forth there, to the enlightening and making happy all the glorious inhabitants. “The Lamb is the light thereof; and so the glory of God doth lighten it,” [Rev. xxi. 23](#). None sees God the Father immediately, who is the King eternal, immortal, invisible; Christ is the image of that invisible God, by which he is seen by all elect creatures. The only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, and manifested him. None has ever immediately seen the Father, but the Son; and none else sees the Father any other way, than by the Son’s revealing him. And in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect do see him as he is. They behold his glory. They see the glory of his divine nature, consisting in all the glory of the Godhead, the beauty of all his perfections; his great majesty, almighty power, his infinite wisdom, holiness, and grace, and they see the beauty of his glorified human nature, and the glory which the Father hath given him, as God-man and Mediator. For this end, Christ desired that his saints might “be with him, that they might behold his glory,” [John xvii. 24](#). And when the souls of the saints leave their bodies, to go to be with Christ, they behold the marvelous glory of that great work of his, the work of redemption, and of the glorious way of salvation by him; desire to look into. They have a most clear view of the unfathomable depths of the manifold wisdom and knowledge of God; and the most bright displays of the infinite purity and holiness of God, that do appear in that way and work; and see in a much clearer manner than the saints do here, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height of the grace and love of Christ, appearing in his redemption. And as they see the unspeakable riches and glory of the attribute of God’s grace, so they most clearly behold and understand Christ’s eternal and unmeasurable dying love to them in particular. And in short, they see every thing in Christ that tends to kindle and inflame love, and every thing that tends to gratify love, and every thing that tends to satisfy them: and that in the most clear and glorious manner, without any darkness or delusion, without any impediment or interruption. Now the saints, while in the body, see something of Christ’s glory and love; as we, in the dawning of the morning, see something of the reflected light of the sun mingled with darkness; but when separated from the body, they see their glorious and loving Redeemer, as we see the

sun when risen, and showing his whole disk above the horizon, by his direct beams, in a clear hemisphere, and with perfect day.

III. The souls of true saints, when absent from the body go to be with Jesus Christ, as they are brought into a most perfect conformity to and union with him. Their spiritual conformity is begun while they are in the body; here beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image; but when they come to see him as he is, in heaven, then they become like him in another manner. That perfect sight will abolish all remains of deformity, disagreement, and sinful unlikeness; as all darkness is abolished before the full blaze of the sun's meridian light: it is impossible that the least degree of obscurity should remain before such light; so it is impossible the least degree of sin and spiritual deformity should remain, in such a view of the spiritual beauty and glory of Christ, as the saints enjoy in heaven; when they see that Sun of righteousness without a cloud, they themselves shine forth as the sun, and shall be as little suns, without a spot. For then is come the time when Christ presents his saints to himself, in glorious beauty; "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," and having holiness without a blemish. And then the saints' union with Christ is perfected. This also is begun in this world. The relative union is both begun and perfected at once, when the soul first closes with Christ by faith: the real union, consisting in the union of hearts and affections, and in the vital union, is begun in this world and perfected in the next. The union of the heart of a believer to Christ, is begun when his heart is drawn to Christ, by the first discovery of divine excellency, at conversion; and consequent on this drawing and closing of his heart with Christ, is established a vital union with Christ; whereby the believer becomes a living branch of the true vine, living by a communication of the sap and vital juice of the stock and root; and a member of Christ's mystical body, living by a communication of spiritual and vital influences from the head, and by a kind of participation of Christ's own life. But while the saints are in the body, there is much remaining distance between Christ and them: there are remainders of alienation, and the vital union is very imperfect; and so consequently is the communication of spiritual life and vital influences: there is much between Christ and believers to keep them asunder, much indwelling sin, much temptation, a world of carnal objects, to keep off the soul from Christ, and hinder a perfect coalescence.

But when the soul leaves the body, all these clogs and hindrances shall be removed, every separating wall shall be broken down, and every impediment taken out of the way, and all distance shall cease; the heart shall be wholly and forever attached and bound to him, by a perfect view of his glory. And the vital union shall then be brought to perfection; the soul shall live perfectly in and upon Christ, being perfectly filled with his spirit, and animated by his vital influences; living, as it were, only by Christ's life, without any remainder of spiritual death, or carnal life.



IV. Departed souls of saints are with Christ, as they enjoy a glorious and immediate intercourse and converse with him.

While we are present with our friends, we have opportunity for that free and immediate conversation with them, which we cannot have in absence from them. And therefore, by reason of the vastly more free, perfect, and immediate intercourse with Christ, which the saints enjoy when absent from the body, they are fitly represented as present with him.

The most intimate intercourse becomes that relation that the saints stand in to Jesus Christ; and especially becomes that most perfect and glorious union they shall be brought into with him in heaven. They are not merely Christ's servants, but his friends, [John xv. 15](#). His brethren and companions, [Psalms cxxii. 8](#); "yea, they are the spouse of Christ." They are espoused or betrothed to Christ while in the body; but when they go to heaven, they enter into the king's palace, their marriage with him is come, and the king brings them into his chambers indeed. They then go to dwell with Christ constantly, to enjoy the most perfect converse with him. Christ conversed in the most friendly manner with his disciples on earth; he admitted one of them to lean on his bosom: but they are admitted much more fully and freely to converse with him in heaven. Though Christ be there in a state of glorious exaltation, reigning in the majesty and glory of the sovereign Lord and God of heaven and earth, angels and men; yet this will not hinder intimacy and freedom of intercourse, but rather promote it. For he is thus exalted, not only for himself, but for them; he is instated in this glory of head over all things for their sakes, that they might be exalted and glorified; and when they go to heaven where he is, they are exalted and glorified with him; and shall not be kept at a more awful distance from Christ, but shall be admitted nearer, and to a greater intimacy. For they shall be unspeakably more fit for it, and Christ in more fit circumstances to bestow on them this blessedness. Their seeing the great glory of their friend and Redeemer, will not awe them to a distance, and make them afraid of a near approach; but on the contrary, will most powerfully draw them near, and encourage and engage them to holy freedom. For they will know that it is he that is their own Redeemer, and beloved friend and bridegroom; the very same that loved them with a dying love, and redeemed them to God by his blood; [Matt. xiv. 27](#)., "It is I; be not afraid." [Rev. i. 7, 18](#)., "Fear not—I am he that liveth, and was dead." And the nature of this glory of Christ that they shall see, will be such as will draw and encourage them; for they will not only see infinite majesty and greatness, but infinite grace, condescension, and mildness, and gentleness and sweetness, equal to his majesty. For he appears in heaven, not only as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but as the Lamb, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne," [Rev. v. 5, 6](#).; and this Lamb in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, to feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water," [Rev. vii. 17](#); so that the sight of Christ's great kingly majesty will be no terror to them; but will only serve the more to heighten their pleasure and surprise. When Mary was about to embrace Christ, being full of joy at the sight of him again alive after his crucifixion, Christ forbids



her to do it for the present, because he was not yet ascended. [John xx. 16, 17.](#), “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God.” As if he had said, “This is not the time and place for that freedom your love to me desires: this is appointed in heaven after my ascension. I am going thither: and you that are my true disciples, shall, as my brethren and companions, soon be there with me in my glory. And then there shall be no restraint. That is the place appointed for the most perfect expressions of complacency and endearment, and full enjoyment of mutual love.” And accordingly the souls of departed saints with Christ in heaven, shall have Christ as it were unbosomed unto them, manifesting those infinite riches of love towards them, that have been there from eternity; and they shall be enabled to express their love to him, in an infinitely better manner than ever they could while in the body. Thus they shall eat and drink abundantly, and swim in the ocean of love, and be eternally swallowed up in the infinitely bright, and infinitely mild and sweet beams of divine love; eternally receiving that light, eternally full of it, and eternally compassed round with it, and everlastingly reflecting it back again to the fountain of it.

V. The souls of the saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ, as they are received to a glorious fellowship with Christ in his blessedness.

As the wife is received to a joint possession of her husband’s estate, and as the wife of a prince partakes with him in his princely possessions and honors; so the church, the spouse of Christ, when the marriage comes, and she is received to dwell with him in heaven, shall partake with him in his glory. When Christ rose from the dead, and took possession of eternal life; this was not as a private person, but as the public head of all his redeemed people. He took possession of it for them, as well as for himself; and “they are quickened together with him, and raised up together.” And so when he ascended into heaven, and was exalted to great glory there, this also was as a public person. He took possession of heaven, not only for himself, but his people, as their forerunner and head, that they might ascend also, “and sit together in heavenly places with him,” [Eph. ii. 5, 6.](#) “Christ writes upon them his new name,” [Rev. iii, 12.](#); i.e., he makes them partakers of his own glory and exaltation in heaven. His new name is that new honor and glory that the Father invested him with, when he set him on his own right hand. As a prince, when he advances any one to new dignity in his kingdom, gives him a new title. Christ and his saints shall be glorified together, [Rom. viii. 17.](#)

The saints in heaven have communion, or a joint participation with Christ in his glory and blessedness in heaven, in the following respects more especially.

1. They partake with him in the ineffable delights he has in heaven, in the enjoyment of his Father.

When Christ ascended into heaven, he was received to a glorious and peculiar joy and blessedness in the enjoyment of his Father, who, in his passion, hid his face from him; such an enjoyment as became the relation he stood in to the Father, and such as was a meet reward for the great and hard service he had performed on earth. Then “God showed him the path of life, and brought him into his presence, where is fullness of joy, and to sit on his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore,” as is said of Christ, [Psa. xvi. 11](#). Then the Father “made him most blessed forever. He made him exceeding glad with his countenance,” as in [Psa. xxi. 6](#). The saints, by virtue of their union with Christ, and being his members, do, in some sort partake of his childlike relation to the Father; and so are heirs with him of his happiness in the enjoyment of his Father; as seems to be intimated by the apostle, in [Galatians iv. 4-7](#). The spouse of Christ, by virtue of her espousals to that only begotten Son of God, is, as it were, a partaker of his filial relation to God, and becomes the king’s daughter, [Psa. xiv. 13](#), and so partakes with her divine husband in his enjoyment of his Father and her Father, his God and her God.” A promise of this seems to be implied in those words of Christ to Mary, [John xx. 17](#). Thus Christ’s faithful servants “enter into the joy of their Lord,” [Matt. xxv. 21, 23](#), and “Christ’s joy remains in them,” agreeably to those words of Christ, [John xv. 11](#). Christ from eternity is, as it were, in the bosom of the Father, as the object of his infinite complacence. In him is the Father’s eternal happiness. Before the world was, he was with the Father, in the enjoyment of his infinite love; and had infinite delight and blessedness in that enjoyment; as he declares of himself in [Prov. viii. 30](#): “Then I was by him as one brought up with him. And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” And when Christ ascended to the Father after his passion, he went to him, to the enjoyment of the same glory and blessedness in the enjoyment of his love; agreeably to his prayer the evening before his crucifixion, [John xvii. 5](#), “And now, oh Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.” And in the same prayer, he manifests it to be his will, that his true disciples should be with him in the enjoyment of that joy and glory, which he then asked for himself, [verse 13](#), “That my joy might be fulfilled in themselves,” [verse 22](#), “And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.” This glory of Christ, which the saints are to enjoy with him, is that which he has in the enjoyment of the Father’s infinite love to him; as appears by the last words of that prayer of our Lord, [verse 26](#), “That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.” The love which the Father has to his Son is great indeed: the Deity does, as it were, wholly and entirely flow out in a stream of love to Christ; and the joy and pleasure of Christ is proportionably great. This is the stream of Christ’s delights, the river of his infinite pleasure;

which he will make his saints to drink of with him, agreeably to [Psalms xxxvi. 8, 9.](#): “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house. Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life. In thy light shall we see light.” The saints shall have pleasure in partaking with Christ in his pleasure, and shall see light in his light. They shall partake with Christ of the same river of pleasure, shall drink of the same water of life, and of the same new wine in Christ’s Father’s kingdom, [Matt. xxvi. 29.](#) That new wine is especially that joy and happiness that Christ and his true disciples shall partake of together in glory, which is the purchase of Christ’s blood, or the reward of his obedience unto death. Christ, at his ascension into heaven, received everlasting pleasures at his Father’s right hand, and in the enjoyment of his Father’s love, as the reward of his own death, or obedience unto death. But the same righteousness is reckoned to both head and members; and both shall have fellowship in the same reward, each according to their distinct capacity.

That the saints in heaven have such a communion with Christ in his joy, and do so partake with him in his own enjoyment of the Father, does greatly manifest the transcendent excellency of their happiness, and their being admitted to a vastly higher privilege in glory than the angels.

2. The saints in heaven are received to a fellowship or participation with Christ in the glory of that dominion to which the Father hath exalted him.

The saints, when they ascend to heaven as Christ ascended, and are made to sit together with him in heavenly places, and are partakers of the glory of his exaltation, are exalted to reign with him. They are through him made kings and priests, and reign with him, and in him, over the same kingdom. As the Father hath appointed unto him a kingdom, so he has appointed to them. The Father has appointed the Son to reign over his own kingdom, and the Son appoints his saints to reign in his. The Father has given to Christ to sit with him on his throne, and Christ gives to the saints to sit with him on his throne, agreeably to Christ’s promise, [Rev. iii. 21.](#) Christ, as God’s Son, is the heir of his kingdom, and the saints are joint heirs with Christ: which implies, that they are heirs of the same inheritance, to possess the same kingdom, in and with him, according to their capacity. Christ, in his kingdom, reigns over heaven and earth; he is appointed the heir of all things; and so all things are the saints’; “whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come,” all are theirs; because they are Christ’s, and united to him, [1 Cor. iii. 21-23.](#) The angels are given to Christ as a part of his dominion: they are all given to wait upon him as ministering spirits to him. So also they are all, even the highest and most dignified of them, ministering spirits, to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation. They are Christ’s angels, and they are also their angels. Such is the saints’ union with Christ, and their interest in him, that what he possesses, they possess, in a much more perfect and blessed manner than if all things were given to them separately, and by themselves, to be disposed of accord-



ing to their discretion. They are now disposed of so as, in every respect, to be most for their blessedness, by an infinitely better discretion than their own; and in being disposed of by their head and husband, between whom and them there is the most perfect union of hearts, and so the most perfect union of wills, and who are most perfectly each other's.

As the glorified spouse of this great King reigns with and in him, in his dominion over the universe, so more especially does she partake with him in the joy and glory of his reign in his kingdom of grace; which is more peculiarly the kingdom that he possesses as Head of the church, and is that kingdom wherein she is more especially interested. It was especially to reign in this kingdom, that God the Father exalted him to his throne in heaven: he set his King on his holy hill of Zion, especially that he might reign over Zion, or over his church, in his kingdom of grace; and that he might be under the best advantages to carry on the designs of his love in this lower world. And therefore undoubtedly the saints in heaven are partakers with Christ in the joy and glory of the advancement and prosperity of his kingdom of grace on earth, and success of his gospel here, which he looks on as the peculiar glory of his reign. The good shepherd rejoices when he finds but one sheep that was lost; and his friends and neighbors in heaven rejoice with him on that occasion. That part of the family that is in heaven is surely not unacquainted with the affairs of that part of the same family that is on earth. They that are with the King and are next to him, the royal family, that dwell in his palace, are not kept in ignorance of the affairs of his kingdom. The saints in heaven are with the angels, the King's ministers, by which he manages the affairs of his kingdom, and who are continually ascending and descending from heaven to the earth, and one or other of them daily employed as ministering spirits to each individual member of the church below. To this we may add, the continual ascending of the souls of departed saints from all parts of the militant church. On these accounts the saints in heaven must needs be under a thousand times greater advantage than we here, for a full view of the state of the church on earth, and a speedy, direct, and certain acquaintance with all its affairs in every part. And that which gives them much greater advantage for such an acquaintance than the things already mentioned, is their being constantly in the immediate presence of Christ, and in the enjoyment of the most perfect intercourse with him, who is the King who manages all these affairs, and has an absolutely perfect knowledge of them. Christ is the head of the whole glorified assembly; they are mystically his glorified body: and what the head sees, it sees for the information of the whole body, according to its capacity: and what the head enjoys, is for the joy of the whole body. The saints, in leaving this world, and ascending to heaven, do not go out of sight of things appertaining to Christ's kingdom on earth; but, on the contrary, they go out of a state of obscurity, and ascend above the mists and clouds into the clearest light; to a pinnacle, in the very center of light, where every thing appears in clear view. They have as much greater advantage to view the state of Christ's kingdom, and the works of the new creation here, than while they were in this world, as a man that ascends to the top of a

high mountain has a greater advantage to view the face of the earth, than he had while he was in a deep valley, or thick forest below, surrounded on every side with those things that impeded and limited his prospect. Nor do they view as indifferent or unconcerned spectators, any more than Christ himself is an unconcerned spectator. The happiness of the saints in heaven consists very much in beholding the glory of God appearing in the work of redemption: for it is by this chiefly that God manifests his glory, the glory of his wisdom, holiness, grace, and other perfections, to both saints and angels; as is apparent by many scriptures. And therefore undoubtedly their happiness consists very much in beholding the progress of this work in its application and success, and the steps by which infinite power and wisdom bring it to its consummation. And the saints in heaven are under unspeakably greater advantage to take the pleasure of beholding the progress of this work on earth than we are; as they are under greater advantages to see and understand the marvelous steps that Divine Wisdom takes in all that is done, and the glorious ends he obtains, the opposition Satan makes, and how he is baffled and overthrown. They can better see the connection of one event with another, and the beautiful order of all things that come to pass in the church in different ages that to us appear like confusion. Nor do they only view these things, and rejoice in them, as a glorious and beautiful sight, but as persons interested, as Christ is interested; as possessing these things in Christ, and reigning with him, in this kingdom. Christ's success in his work of redemption, in bringing home souls to himself, applying his saving benefits by his Spirit, and the advancement of the kingdom of grace in the world, is the reward especially promised to him by his Father in the covenant of redemption, for the hard and difficult service he performed while in the form of a servant; as is manifest by [Isa. liii. 10-12](#). But the saints shall be rewarded with him. They shall partake with him in the joy of this reward; for this obedience that is thus rewarded is reckoned to them as they are his members. This was especially the joy that was set before Christ, for the sake of which he endured the cross and despised the shame. And his joy is the joy of all heaven. They that are with him in heaven are under much the greatest advantages to partake with him in this joy; for they have a perfect communion with him through whom, and in fellowship with whom, they enjoy and possess their whole inheritance, all their heavenly happiness; as much as the whole body has all its pleasure of music by the ear, and all the pleasure of its food by the mouth and stomach, and all the benefit and refreshment of the air by the lungs. The saints while on earth pray and labor for the same thing that Christ labored for, *viz.*, the advancement of the kingdom of God among men, the prosperity of Zion, and the flourishing of religion in this world. And most of them have been made partakers with their Head in his sufferings, and "filled up (as the apostle expresses it) that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ." And therefore they shall partake with him of the glory and joy of the end obtained; [Rom. vii. 17.](#), "We are joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." [2 Timothy vii. 12.](#), "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Christ,



when his sufferings were past, and he left the earth and ascended into heaven, was so far from having done with kingdom in this world, that it was as it were but then begun; and he ascended for that very end, that he might more fully possess and enjoy this kingdom, that he might reign in it, and be under the best advantages for it: in like manner, no more have the saints done with Christ's kingdom on earth, when they ascend into heaven. "Christ came (i.e., ascended) with clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before him, to the very end, that he might receive dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him," [Dan. vii. 13, 14](#). Which shall be eminently fulfilled after the ruin of Antichrist, which is especially the time of Christ's kingdom. And the same is the time when "the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God," as verse 27, in the same chapter. It is because they shall reign in and with Christ, the Most High, as seems intimated in the words that follow; "whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." This is true, not only of the saints on earth, but also the saints in heaven. Hence the saints in heaven, having respect to this time, sing, in [Rev. v. 10](#), "We shall reign on the earth." And agreeable hereto, it is afterwards represented, that when the forementioned time comes, the souls of them that in former ages had suffered with Christ do reign with him; having as it were given to them new life and joy, in that spiritual blessed resurrection, which shall then be of the church of God on earth; and thus, [Matt. v. 5](#), "The meek (those that meekly and patiently suffer with Christ, and for his sake) shall inherit the earth," they shall inherit it, and reign on earth with Christ. Christ is the heir of the world; and when the appointed time of his kingdom comes, his inheritance shall be given him, and then the meek, who are joint-heirs, shall inherit the earth. The place in the Old Testament whence the words are taken, leads to a true interpretation of them; [Psa. xxxvii. 11](#), "The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." That there is reference in these latter words, "the abundance of peace," to the peace and blessedness of the latter days, we may be satisfied by comparing these words with [Psa. lxxii. 7](#), "In his days shall be abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth," and [Jer. xxxiii. 6](#), "I will reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth," also [Isa. ii. 4](#), [Micah iv. 3](#), [Isa. xi. 6-9](#), and many other parallel places. The saints in heaven will be as much with Christ in reigning over the nations, and in the glory of his dominion at that time, as they will be with him in the honor of judging the world at the last day. That promise of Christ to his disciples, [Matt. xix. 28, 29](#), seems to have a special respect to the former of these. In [verse 28](#), Christ promises to the disciples, that hereafter, "when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The saints in heaven reigning on earth in the glorious latter day, is described in language accommodated to this promise of Christ, [Rev. xx. 4](#), "And I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them; and judgment was given them. And they reigned with Christ." And the

promise, [Matt. xix. 29.](#), seems to have its fulfillment at the same time: “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or fathers, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life,” i.e., in the time when the saints shall inherit the earth and reign on earth, the earth, with all its blessings and good things, shall be given in great abundance to the church, to be possessed by the saints. This shall they receive in this present world, and in the future everlasting life. The saints in heaven shall partake with Christ in the triumph and glory of those victories that he shall obtain in that future glorious time, over the kings and nations of the world, that are sometimes represented by his ruling them with a rod of iron, and dashing them in pieces as a potter’s vessel. To which doubtless there is a respect to in [Rev. ii. 26, 27.](#): “He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; (and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken to shivers) even as I received of my Father.” And [Psa. cxlix. 5.](#), to the end; “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds (i.e., in their separate state after death),” compare [Isa. lvii. 1, 2.](#), “Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all the saints.” Accordingly, when Christ appears riding forth to his victory over Antichrist, [Revelation 19](#), the hosts of heaven appear going forth with him in robes of triumph, [verse 14](#). And when Antichrist is destroyed, the inhabitants of heaven, and the holy apostles and prophets, are called upon to rejoice, [chap. xviii. 20](#). And the whole multitude of the inhabitants of heaven on that occasion, do appear to exult and praise God with exceeding joy, [chap. xix. 1-8.](#), and [chap. xix. 15](#); and are also represented as greatly rejoicing on occasion of the ruin of the heathen empire, in the days of Constantine, [chap. xii. 10](#). And it is observable, all along in the visions of that book, the hosts of heaven appear as much concerned and interested in the events appertaining to the kingdom of Christ here below, as the saints on earth. The day of the commencement of the church’s latter-day glory is eminently “the day of Christ’s espousals; the day of the gladness of his heart, when as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so he will rejoice over his church.” And then will all heaven exceedingly rejoice with him. Thus [xix. 7.](#), “Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come.”

Thus Abraham enjoys these things when they come to pass, that were of old promised to him, and which he saw beforehand, and rejoiced in. He will enjoy the fulfillment of the promise of all the families of the earth being blessed in his seed, when it shall be accomplished. And all the ancient patriarchs, who died in faith of promises of glorious things that should be accomplished in this world, “who had not received the promises, but saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them,” actually enjoy them when fulfilled. David actually saw and enjoyed the fulfillment of that promise, in its due time, which was



made to him many hundred years before, and was all his salvation and all his desire. Thus Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days pointed out by his own prophecy. Thus the saints of old that died in faith, not having received the promises, are made perfect, and have their faith crowned by the better things accomplished in these latter days of the gospel, [Heb. xi. 39, 40.](#), which they see and enjoy.

3. The departed souls of saints have fellowship with Christ, in his blessed and eternal employment of glorifying the Father.

The happiness of heaven consists not only in contemplation, and a mere passive enjoyment, but consists very much in action. And particularly in actively serving and glorifying God. This is expressly mentioned as a great part of the blessedness of the saints in their most perfect state, [Rev. xxii. 3.](#), “And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.” The angels are as a flame of fire in their ardor and activity in God’s service: the four animals in [Rev. iv.](#) (which are generally supposed to signify the angels), are represented as continually giving praise and glory to God, and are said not to rest day nor night, [verse 8.](#) The souls of departed saints are, doubtless, become as the angels of God in heaven in this respect. And Jesus Christ is the head of the whole glorious assembly; as in other things appertaining to their blessed state, so in this of their praising and glorifying the Father. When Christ, the night before he was crucified, prayed for his exaltation to glory, it was that he might glorify the Father; [John xvii. 1.](#), “These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” And this he doubtless does, now he is in heaven; not only in fulfilling the Father’s will, in what he does as Head of the church and Ruler of the universe, but also in leading the heavenly assembly in their praises. When Christ instituted the Lord’s supper, and ate and drank with his disciples at his table (giving them therein a representation and pledge of their future feasting with him, and drinking new wine in his heavenly Father’s kingdom), he at that time led them in their praises to God, in that hymn that they sang. And so doubtless he leads his glorified disciples in heaven. David was the sweet psalmist of Israel, and he led the great congregation of God’s people in their songs of praise. Herein, as well as in innumerable other things, he was a type of Christ, who is often spoken of in Scripture by the name of David. And many of the psalms that David penned, were songs of praise, that he, by the spirit of prophecy, uttered in the name of Christ, as Head of the church, and leading the saints in their praises. Christ in heaven leads the glorious assembly in their praises to God, as Moses did the congregation of Israel at the Red Sea; which is implied in its being said, that “they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb,” [Rev. xv. 2, 3.](#) In [Rev. xix. 5.](#), John tells us, that “he heard a voice come out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.” Who can it be that utters this voice out of the throne, but the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, calling on the glorious assembly of saints to praise his Father and their



Father, his God and their God? And what the consequence of this voice is, we have an account in the next words: “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

### APPLICATION

The use that I would make of what has been said on this subject is of *exhortation*. Let us all be exhorted hence earnestly to seek after that great privilege that has been spoken of, that when “we are absent from the body, we may be present with the Lord.” We cannot continue always in these earthly tabernacles—they are very frail, and will soon decay and fall, and are continually liable to be overthrown by innumerable means. Our souls must soon leave them, and go into the eternal world.—Oh, how infinitely great will the privilege and happiness of such be, who at that time shall go to be with Christ in his glory, in the manner that has been represented! The privilege of the twelve disciples was great, in being so constantly with Christ as his family, in his state of humiliation. The privilege of those three disciples was great, who were with him in the mount of his transfiguration; where was exhibited to them some little semblance of his future glory in heaven, such as they might behold in the present frail, feeble, and sinful state. They were greatly entertained and delighted with what they saw; and were for making tabernacles to dwell there, and return no more down the mount. And great was the privilege of Moses when he was with Christ in Mount Sinai, and besought him to show him his glory, and he saw his back parts as he passed by, and proclaimed his name.—But how infinitely greater the privilege of being with Christ in heaven, where he sits on the right hand of God, in the glory of the King and God of angels, and of the whole universe, shining forth as the great light, the bright sun of that world of glory; there to dwell in the full, constant and everlasting view of his beauty and brightness; there most freely and intimately to converse with him, and fully to enjoy his love, as his friends and spouse; there to have fellowship with him in the infinite pleasure and joy he has in the enjoyment of his Father! How transcendent the privilege, there to sit with him on his throne, and reign with him in the possession of all things, and partake with him in the joy and glory of his victory over his enemies, and the advancement of his kingdom in the world, and to join with him in joyful songs of praise to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God, forever and ever? Is not such a privilege worth the seeking after?

But here, as a special enforcement of this exhortation, I would improve that dispensation of God’s holy providence, that is the sorrowful occasion of our coming together at this time, *viz.*, the death of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, in the work of the gospel ministry, whose funeral is this day to be attended; together with what was observable in him, living and dying.

In this dispensation of Providence, God puts us in mind of our mortality, and forewarns us that the time is approaching when we must be absent from the body, and “must all appear (as the apostle observes in the context) before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive the things done in the body, according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad.”

And in him, whose death we are now called to consider and improve, we have not only an instance of mortality, but an instance of one that, being absent from the body, is present with the Lord; as we have all imaginable reason to conclude. And that, whether we consider the nature of the operations he was under, about the time whence he dates his conversion, or the nature and course of his inward exercises from that time forward, or his outward conversation and practice in life, or his frame and behavior during the whole of that long season wherein he looked death in the face.

His convictions of sin, preceding his first consolations in Christ (as appears by a written account he has left of his inward exercises and experiences), were exceeding deep and thorough. His trouble and exercise of mind, through a sense of guilt and misery, very great and long continued, but yet sound and solid; consisting in no unsteady, violent and unaccountable hurries and frights, and strange perturbations of mind; but arising from the most serious consideration, and proper illumination of the conscience to discern and consider the true state of things. And the light let into his mind at conversion, and the influences and exercises that his mind was subject to at that time, appear very agreeable to reason and the gospel of Jesus Christ; the change very great and remarkable, without any appearance of strong impressions on the imagination, sudden flights and pangs of the affections, and vehement emotions in animal nature; but attended with proper intellectual views of the supreme glory of the Divine Being, consisting in the infinite dignity and beauty of the perfections of his nature, and of the transcendent excellency of the way of salvation by Christ.—This was about eight years ago, when he was about twenty-one years of age.

Thus God sanctified and made meet for his use, that vessel that he intended to make of eminent honor in his house, and which he had made of large capacity, having endowed him with very uncommon abilities and gifts of nature. He was a singular instance of a ready invention, natural eloquence, easy flowing expression, sprightly apprehension, quick discernment, and very strong memory; and yet of a very penetrating genius, close and clear thought, and piercing judgment. He had an exact taste. His understanding was quick, strong, and distinguishing.

His learning was very considerable, for which he had a great taste; and he applied himself to his studies in so close a manner when he was at college, that he much injured his health; and was obliged on that account for a while to leave his studies, and return home. He was esteemed one that excelled in learning in that society.

He had an extraordinary knowledge of men, as well as things. Had a great insight into human nature, and excelled most that ever I knew in a communicative faculty. He had a peculiar talent at accommodating himself to the capacities, tempers and circumstances, of those that he would instruct or counsel.

He had extraordinary gifts for the pulpit. I never had opportunity to hear him preach, but have often heard him pray; and I think his manner of addressing himself to God, and expressing himself before him, in that duty, almost inimitable; such (so far as I may judge) as I have very rarely known equaled. He expressed himself with that exact propriety and pertinency, in such significant, weighty, pungent expressions; with that decent appearance of sincerity, reverence, and solemnity, and great distance from all affectation, as forgetting the presence of men, and as being in the immediate presence of a great and holy God, that I have scarcely ever known paralleled. And his manner of preaching, by what I have often heard of it from good judges, was no less excellent; being clear and instructive, natural, nervous, forcible, and moving, and very searching and convincing.—He rejected with disgust an affected noisiness, and violent boisterousness in the pulpit; and yet much disrelished a flat, cold delivery, when the subject of discourse, and matter delivered, required affection and earnestness.

Not only had he excellent talents for the study and the pulpit, but also for conversation. He was of a sociable disposition: and was remarkably free, entertaining, and profitable in ordinary discourse: and had much of a faculty of disputing, defending truth and confuting error.

As he excelled in his judgment and knowledge of things in general, so especially in divinity. He was truly, for one of his standing, an extraordinary divine. But above all, in matters relating to experimental religion. In this, I know I have the concurring opinion of some that have had a name for persons of the best judgment. And according to what ability I have to judge things of this nature, and according to my opportunities, which of late have been very great, I never knew his equal, of his age and standing, for clear, accurate notions of the nature and essence of true religion, and its distinctions from its various false appearances; which I suppose to be owing to these three things meeting together in him; the strength of his natural genius; the great opportunities he had of observing others, in various parts, both white people and Indians; and his own great experience.

His experiences of the holy influences of God's Spirit were not only great at his first conversion, but they were so, in a continued course, from that time forward: as appears by a private journal which he kept of his daily inward exercises, from the time of his conversion, until he was disabled by the failing of his strength, a few days before his death. The change which he looked upon as his conversion, was not only a great change of the *present* views, affections, and frame of his mind; but was evidently the beginning of that work of God on



his heart, which God *carried on* from that time to his dying day<sup>45</sup>. He greatly abhorred the way of such as live on their first work, as though they had now got through their work, and are thence forward, by degrees, settled in a cold, lifeless, negligent, worldly frame; he had an ill opinion of such persons' religion.

His experiences were very diverse from many things that have lately obtained the reputation, with multitudes, of the very height of Christian experience. About the time that the false religion, which arises chiefly from impressions on the imagination, began first to make a very great appearance in the land, he was for a little while deceived with it, so as to think highly of it. And though he knew he never had such experiences as others told of, he thought it was because others' attainments were beyond his; and so coveted them. He told me, that he never had what is called an impulse, or a strong impression on his imagination, in things of religion, in his life. But owned, that during the short time that he thought well of these things, he was tinged with that spirit of false zeal that is wont to attend them. But said that then he was not in his element, but as a fish out of water. And when, after a little while, he came clearly to see the vanity and perniciousness of such things, it cost him abundance of sorrow and distress of mind, and to my knowledge he afterwards freely and openly confessed the errors in conduct that he had run into, and laid himself low before them whom he had offended. And since his conviction of his error in those respects, he has ever had a peculiar abhorrence of that kind of bitter zeal, and those delusive experiences

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45 This more abundantly appears by further opportunity of acquaintance with his Diary, since this sermon was delivered. Grace to him seems to have been almost continually, with scarcely the intermission of a day, in very sensible, and indeed vigorous and powerful exercise, in one respect or other. His heart appears to have been exercised, in a continued course, in such things as these, viz. the most ardent and pure love to God; great weariness from the world, and sense of its vanity; great humiliation; a most abasing sense of his own vileness; a deep sense of in-dwelling sin, which indeed was most evidently by far the greatest burden of his life, and more than all other afflictions that he met with put together; great brokenness of heart before God, for his small attainments in grace, that he loved God so little, &c, mourning that he was so unprofitable; longings and earnest reachings of soul after holiness; earnest desires that God might be glorified, and the Christ's kingdom might be advanced in the world; wrestlings with God in prayer for these things; delight in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him; sweet complacency in those whose conversation savored of true holiness; compassion to the souls of men, and earnest intercessions in secret for them; great resignation to the will of God; a very frequent, most sensible renewed renunciation of all things for Christ, and giving up himself wholly to God, in soul and body; great distrust of his own heart, and universal dependence on God; longings after full deliverance from the body of sin and death, and perfect conformity to God, and perfectly glorifying him in heaven; clear views of eternity, almost as though he were actually out of the body, and had his eyes open in another world; a constant watchfulness over his own heart, and continual earnestness in his inward warfare with sin; together with great care, to the utmost, to improve time for God, in his service, and to his glory.

that have been the principal source of it. He detested enthusiasm in all its forms and operations; and abhorred whatever in opinion or experience seemed to verge towards antinomianism; as, the experiences of those whose first faith consists in believing that Christ died for them in particular; and their first love, in loving God, because they supposed they were the objects of his love; and their assurance of their good estate from some immediate testimony, or suggestion, either with or without texts of Scripture, that their sins are forgiven, that God loves them, &c, and the joys of such as rejoiced more in their own supposed distinction from others, in honor, and privileges, and high experiences, than in God's excellency and Christ's beauty; and the spiritual pride of such laymen, that are for setting up themselves as public teachers, and cry down human learning, and a learned ministry. He greatly disliked a disposition in persons to much noise and show in religion, and affecting to be abundant in publishing and proclaiming their own experience; though he did not condemn, but approved of Christians speaking of their experiences, on some occasions, and to some persons, with modesty, discretion, and reserve. He abominated the spirit and practice of the generality of the Separatists in this land. I heard him say, once and again, that he had been much with this kind of people, and was acquainted with many of them, in various parts; and that by this acquaintance, he knew that what was chiefly and most generally in repute amongst them, as the power of godliness, was entirely a different thing from that vital piety recommended in the Scripture, and had nothing in it of that nature. He never was more full in condemning these things than in his last illness, and after he ceased to have any expectation of life: and particularly when he had the greatest and nearest views of approaching eternity; and several times, when he thought himself actually dying, and expected in a few minutes to be in the eternal world, as he himself told me.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Since this sermon was preached, I find what follows in his Diary for the last summer. "Thursday, June 18. I was this day taken exceeding ill, and brought to the gates of death.—In this extreme weak state I continued for several weeks; and was frequently reduced so low as to be utterly speechless, and not able so much as to whisper a word. And even after I had so far revived, as to walk about the house, and to step out of doors, I was exercised every day with a faint turn, which continued usually four of five hours. At which times, though I was not so utterly speechless, but that I could say yes or no; yet I could not converse at all, nor speak one sentence without making stops for breath. And diverse times, in this season, my friends gathered round my bed, to see me breathe my last; which they looked for every moment, as I myself also did. "How I was the first day or two of my illness, with regard to the exercise of reason, I scarcely know; but I believe I was something shattered, with the violence of the fever, at times. But the third day of my illness, and constantly afterwards, for four or five weeks together, I enjoyed as much serenity of mind, and clearness of thought, as perhaps I ever did in my life. And I think my mind never penetrated with so much ease and freedom into divine things as at this time; and I never felt so capable of demonstrating the truth of many important doctrines of the gospel as now. "And as I saw clearly the truth of those great doctrines, which are justly styled the doctrines of grace; so I saw with no less clearness, that the essence of true religion consisted in the soul's conformity to God, and acting above all selfish views, for his

glory, longing to be for him, to live to him, and please and honor him in all things; and that, from a clear view of his infinite excellency and worthiness in himself, to be beloved, adored, worshipped, and served, by all intelligent creatures. Thus I saw, that when a soul loves God with a supreme love, he therein acts like the blessed God himself, who most justly loves himself in that manner; so when God's interest and his are become one, and he longs that God should be glorified, and rejoices to think that he is unchangeably possessed of the highest glory and blessedness, herein also he acts in conformity to God. In like manner, when the soul is fully resigned to, and rests satisfied and contented with, the divine will, here he is also conformed to God. "I saw further, that as this divine temper, whereby the soul exalts God, and treads itself in the dust, is wrought in the soul by God's discovering his own glorious perfections, in the face of Jesus Christ, to it, by the special influences of his Holy Spirit; so he could not but have regard to it, as his own work; and as it is his image in the soul, he could not but take delight in it. Then I saw again that if God should slight and reject his own moral image, he must needs deny himself; which he cannot do. And thus I saw the stability and infallibility of this religion; and that those who were truly possessed of it, had the most complete and satisfying evidence of their being interested in all the benefits of Christ's redemption, having their hearts conformed to him; and that these, and these only, were qualified for the employments and entertainments of God's kingdom of glory; as not but these would have any relish of the business of heaven, which is to ascribe glory to God, and not to themselves; and that God (though I would speak it with great reverence of his name and perfections) could not, without denying himself, finally cast such away. "The next thing I had then to do, was to inquire whether this was my religion. And here God was pleased to help me to the most easy remembrance and critical review of what had passed in course, of a religious nature, through several of the latter years of my life. And although I could discover much corruption attending my best duties, many selfish views and carnal ends, much spiritual pride, and self-exaltation, and innumerable other evils which compassed me about; I say, although I now discerned the sins of my holy things, as well as other actions; yet God was pleased, as I was reviewing, quickly to put this question out of doubt by showing me that I had, from time to time, acted above the utmost influence of mere self-love, that I had longed to please and glorify him, as my highest happiness, &c And this review was through grace attended with a present feeling of the same divine temper of mind. I felt now pleased to think of the glory of God; and longed for heaven, as a state wherein I might glorify God perfectly, rather than a place of happiness for myself. And this feeling of the love of God in my heart, which I trust the Spirit of God excited in me afresh, was sufficient to give me full satisfaction, and make me long, as I had many times before done, to be with Christ. I did not now want any of the sudden suggestions that many are so pleased with—that Christ and his benefits are mine, that God loves me—in order to give me satisfaction about my state. No, my soul now abhorred those delusions of Satan; which are thought to be the immediate witness of the Spirit, while there is nothing but an empty suggestion of a certain fact, without any gracious discovery of the divine glory, or of the Spirit's work in their own hearts. I saw the awful delusion of this kind of confidences; as well as of the whole of that religion, which they usually spring from, or at least are the attendants of, the false religion of the late day, though a day of wondrous grace; the imaginations and impressions made only on the animal affections; together with the sudden suggestions made to the mind by Satan, transformed into an angel of light, of certain facts not revealed in Scripture; these, I say, and many like things, I fear have made up the greater part of the religious appearances in many places. "These things I saw with great clearness, when I was thought to be dying, and God gave me great concern for his church and interest

As his inward experiences appear to have been of the right kind, and were very remarkable as to their degree, so was his outward behavior and practice agreeable. He in his whole course acted as one who had indeed sold all for Christ, and had entirely devoted himself to God, and made his glory his highest end, and was fully determined to spend his whole time and strength in his service. He was lively in religion, in the right way; lively, not only, nor chiefly, with his tongue, in professing and talking; but lively in the work and business of religion. He was not one of those who are for contriving ways to shun the cross, and get to heaven with ease and sloth; but was such an instance of one living a life of labor and self-denial, and spending his strength and substance in pursuing that great end, and the glory of his Redeemer, that perhaps is scarcely to be paralleled in this age in these parts of the world. Much of this may be perceived by any one that reads his printed Journal; but much more has been learned by long intimate acquaintance with him, and by looking into his Diary since his death, which he purposely concealed in what he published.

And as his desires and labors for the advancement of Christ's kingdom were great, so was his success. God was pleased to make him the instrument of bringing to pass the most remarkable things among the poor savages—in enlightening, awakening, reforming, and changing their disposition and manners, and wonderfully transforming them—that perhaps can be produced in these latter ages of the world. An account of this has been given the public in his Journals, drawn up by order of the Honorable Society in Scotland, that employed him; which I would recommend to the perusal of all such as take pleasure in the wonderful works of God's grace, and would read that which will peculiarly tend both to entertain and profit a Christian mind.<sup>47</sup>

No less extraordinary than the things already mentioned of him in life, was his constant calmness, peace, assurance, and joy in God, during the long time he looked death in the face, without the least hope of recovery; continuing without interruption to the last; while his distemper very sensibly preyed upon his vitals, from day to day, and oft brought him to that state in which he looked upon himself, and was thought by others, to be dying. The thoughts of approaching death never seemed in the least to damp, but rather to encourage him, and exhilarate his mind. And the nearer death approached, the more desirous he

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in the world at this time; not so much because the late remarkable influence upon the minds of people was abated, and almost wholly gone, as because of the false religion, the heats of imagination, and wild and selfish commotions of the animal affections, which attended the work of grace, had prevailed so far. This was that which my mind dwelt upon, almost day and night; and this to me was the darkest appearance respecting religion in the land. For it was this chiefly that had prejudiced the world against inward religion. And this I saw was the great misery of all, that so few saw any manner of difference between those exercises that were spiritual and holy, and those which have self-love only, for their beginning, center, and end.”

<sup>47</sup> See “Mr. Brainard's Journal,” *infra*.



seemed to be of it. He said, not long before his death, that “the consideration of the day of death, and the day of judgment, had a long time been peculiarly sweet to him.” And at another time, that “he could not but think of the meetness there was in throwing such a rotten carcass as his into the grave: it seemed to him to be the right way of disposing of it.” He often used the epithet *glorious*, when speaking of the day of his death, calling it *that glorious day*. On a sabbath-day morning, September 27, feeling an unusual appetite to food, and looking on it as a sign of approaching death, he said, “he should look on it as a favor, if this might be his dying day, and that he longed for the time.” He had before expressed himself desirous of seeing his brother again, whose return had been expected from the Jerseys; but then (speaking of him) he said, “I am willing to go, and never see him again: I care not what I part with, to be forever with the Lord.” Being asked, that morning, how he did, he answered, “I am almost in eternity: God knows, I long to be there. My work is done; I have done with all my friends: all the world is nothing to me.” On the evening of the next day, when he thought himself dying, and was apprehended to be so by others, and he could utter himself only by broken whispers, he often repeated the word *Eternity*; and said, “I shall soon be with the holy angels.—He will come; he will not tarry.” He told me one night, as he went to bed, that “he expected to die that night.” And added, “I am not at all afraid, I am willing to go this night, if it be the will of God. Death is what I long for.” He sometimes expressed himself as “nothing to do but to die: and being willing to go that minute, if it was the will of God.” He sometimes used that expression, “Oh why is his chariot so long in coming.”

He seemed to have remarkable exercises of resignation to the will of God. He once told me, that “he had longed for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit of God, and the glorious times of the church, and hoped they were coming; and should have been willing to have lived to promote religion at that time, if that had been the will of God. But (says he) I am willing it should be as it is: I would not have the choice to make myself for ten thousand worlds.”<sup>48</sup>

He several times spake of the different kinds of willingness to die: and spoke of it as an ignoble mean kind, to be willing, only to get rid of pain, or to go to heaven only to get honor and advancement there. His own longings for death seemed to be quite of a different kind, and for nobler ends. When he was first taken with something like a diarrhea, which is looked upon as one of the last and most fatal symptoms in a consumption, he said, “Oh now the glorious time is coming? I have longed to serve God perfectly; and God will gratify these desires.” And at one time or another, in the latter part of his illness, he uttered these expres-

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48 He writes thus in his Diary: “August 23, 1747. In the week past, I had diverse turns of inward refreshing. Though my body was inexpressibly weak, followed continually with agues and fevers, sometimes my soul centered in God as my only portion; and I felt I should be forever unhappy if he did not reign. I saw the sweetness and happiness of being his subject, at his disposal. This made all my difficulties quickly vanish.”

sions. "My heaven is to please God, and glorify him, and give all to him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory.—That is the heaven I long for; that is my religion; and that is my happiness; and always was, ever since I supposed I had any true religion: and all those that are of that religion, shall meet me in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honor to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there, but to love, and please, and glorify God. If I had a thousand souls, if they were worth any thing, I would give them all to God: but I have nothing to give, when all is done. It is impossible for any rational creature to be happy without acting all for God. God himself could not make me happy any other way.—I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying God with the holy angels; all my desire is to glorify God.—My heart goes out to the burying-place, it seems to me a desirable place: But oh to glorify God! That is it! That is above all!—It is a great comfort to me to think that I have done a little for God in the world: It is but a very small matter; yet I have done a little; and I lament it, that I have not done more for him.—There is nothing in the world worth living for, but doing good, and finishing God's work, doing the work that Christ did. I see nothing else in the world that can yield any satisfaction, besides living to God, pleasing him, and doing his whole will. My greatest joy and comfort has been to do something for promoting the interest of religion, and the souls of particular persons." <sup>49</sup>



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49 In his diary he writes thus: "September 7, 1747. When I was in great distress of body, my soul desired that God should be glorified. I saw there was no heaven but this. I could not but speak to the by-standers then of the only happiness, viz., pleasing God. Oh that I could forever live to God! The day, I trust, is at hand, the perfect day! Oh, the day of deliverance from all sin! "September 19. Near night, while I attempted to walk a little, my thoughts turned thus: How infinitely sweet it is to love God, and be all for him! Upon which it was suggested to me, 'You are not an angel, not lively and active.' To which my whole soul immediately replied, 'I as sincerely desire to love and glorify God as any angel in heaven.' Upon which it was suggested again, 'But you are filthy, not fit for heaven.' Hereupon instantly appeared the blessed robe of Christ's righteousness, which I could not but exult and triumph in. I viewed the infinite excellency of God: and my soul even broke with longings, that God should be glorified. I thought of dignity in heaven; but instantly the thought returned, I do not go to heaven to get honor, but to give all possible glory and praise. Oh, how I longed that God should be glorified on earth also! Oh, I was made for eternity, if God might be glorified! Bodily pains I cared not for; though I was then in extremity, I never felt easier; I felt willing to glorify God in that state of bodily distress, as long as he pleased I should continue so. The grave appeared really sweet, and I longed to lodge my weary bones in it: but oh, that god might be glorified! This was the burden of all my cry. Oh, I knew I should be active as an angel in heaven, and that I should be stripped of my filthy garments! So that there was no objection. But oh, to love and praise God more, to please him forever! This my soul panted after, and even now pants for, while I write. Oh, that God may be glorified in the whole earth! Lord, let thy kingdom come. I longed for a spirit of preaching to descend and rest on ministers, that they might address the consciences of men with closeness and power. I saw God had the residue of the Spirit; and my soul longed it should be poured out from on high. I could not but plead with

After he came to be in so low a state, that he ceased to have the least expectation of recovery, his mind was peculiarly carried forth with earnest concern for the prosperity of the church of God on earth; which seemed very manifestly to arise from a pure disinterested love to Christ, and desire of his glory. The prosperity of Zion, was a theme he dwelt much upon, and of which he spake much; and more and more, the nearer death approached. He told me when near his end, that “he never, in all his life, had his mind so led forth in desires and earnest prayers for the flourishing of Christ’s kingdom on earth, as since he was brought so exceeding low at Boston.” He seemed much to wonder, that there appeared no more disposition in ministers and people, to pray for the flourishing of religion through the world. And particularly, he several times expressed his wonder, that there appeared no more forwardness to comply with the proposal lately made from Scotland, for united extraordinary prayer among God’s people, for the coming of Christ’s kingdom, and sent it as his dying advice to his own congregation, that they should practice agreeably to that proposal.<sup>50</sup>

A little before his death, he said to me, as I came into the room, “My thoughts have been employed on the old dear theme, the prosperity of God’s church on earth. As I waked out of sleep (said he) I was led to cry for the pouring out of God’s Spirit, and the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, which the dear Redeemer did and suffered so much for: it is that especially makes me long for it.”—But a few days before his death, he desired us to sing a psalm concerning the prosperity of Zion; which he signified his mind was engaged in above all things; and at his desire we sang a part of the 102nd Psalm. And when we had done, though he was then so low that he could scarcely speak, he so exerted himself, that he made a prayer, very audibly, wherein, besides praying for those present, and for his own congregation, he earnestly prayed for the reviving and flourishing of religion in the world. His own congregation especially lay much on his heart. He often spake of them; and commonly when he did so, it was with extraordinary tenderness; so that his speech was interrupted and drowned with weeping.

Thus I have endeavored to represent something of the character and behavior of that excellent servant of Christ, whose funeral is now to be attended. Though I have done it very imperfectly; yet I have endeavored to do it faithfully, and as in the presence and fear of God, without flattery; which surely is to be abhorred in ministers of the gospel, when speaking as messengers of the Lord of hosts. Such reason have we to be satisfied that the person spoken of, now he is absent from the body, is present with the Lord; and now wearing a crown of glory, of distinguished brightness.

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God for my dear congregation, that he would preserve it, and not suffer his great name to lose its glory in that work; my soul still longing, that God might be glorified.”

50 See “A Call to united Extraordinary Prayer,” *infra*.

And how much is there in the consideration of such an example, and so blessed an end, to excite us, who are yet alive, with the greatest diligence and earnestness, to improve the time of life, that we also may go to be with Christ, when we forsake the body! The time is coming, and will soon come, we know not how soon, when we must take leave of all things here below, to enter on a fixed unalterable state in the eternal world. Oh, how well is it worth the while to labor and suffer, and deny ourselves, to lay up in store a good foundation of support and supply, against that time! How much is such a peace as we have heard of, worth at such a time! And how dismal would it be, to be in such circumstances, under the outward distresses of a consuming, dissolving frame, and looking death in the face from day to day, with hearts uncleansed, and sin unpardoned, under a dreadful load of guilt and divine wrath, having much sorrow and wrath in our sickness, and nothing to comfort and support our minds; nothing before us but a speedy appearance before the judgment seat of an almighty, infinitely holy, and angry God, and an endless eternity in suffering his wrath without mercy! The person we have been speaking of, had a great sense of this. He said, not long before his death, "It is sweet to me to think of eternity: the endlessness of it makes it sweet. But, oh, what shall I say to the eternity of the wicked! I cannot mention it, nor think of it!—The thought is too dreadful!" At another time, speaking of a heart devoted to God and his glory, he said, "Oh of what importance is it to have such a frame of mind, such a heart as this, when we come to die! It is this now that gives me peace."

How much is there, in particular, in the things that have been observed of this eminent minister of Christ, to excite us, who are called to the same great work of the gospel-ministry, to earnest care and endeavors, that we may be in like manner faithful in our work; that we may be filled with the same spirit, animated with the like pure and fervent flame of love to God, and the like earnest concern to advance the kingdom and glory of our Lord and Master, and the prosperity of Zion! How amiable did these principles render this servant of Christ in his life, and how blessed in his end! The time will soon come, when we also must leave our earthly tabernacles, and go to our Lord that sent us to labor in his harvest, to render an account of ourselves to him. Oh how does it concern us so to run as not uncertainly; so to fight, not as those that beat the air! And should not what we have heard excite us to depend on God for his help and assistance in our great work, and to be much in seeking the influences of his Spirit, an success in our labors, by fasting and prayer; in which the person spoken of was abundant? This practice he earnestly recommended on his death-bed, from his own experience of its great benefits, to some candidates for the ministry that stood by his bedside. He was often speaking of the great need ministers have of much of the Spirit of Christ in their work, and how little good they are like to do without it; and how, "when ministers were under the special influences of the Spirit of God, it assisted them to come at the consciences of men, and (as he expressed it) as it were to handle them with hands: whereas,

without the Spirit of God, said he, whatever reason and oratory we make use of, we do but make use of stumps, instead of hands.”

Oh that the things that were seen and heard in this extraordinary person, his holiness, heavenliness, labor and self-denial in life, his so remarkably devoting himself and his all, in heart and practice, to the glory of God, and the wonderful frame of mind manifested in so steadfast a manner, under the expectation of death, and the pains and agonies that brought it on, may excite in us all, both ministers and people, a due sense of the greatness of the work we have to do in the world, the excellency and amiableness of thorough religion in experience and practice, and the blessedness of the end of such a life, and the infinite value of their eternal reward, when absent from the body and present with the Lord; and effectually stir us up to endeavors that in the way of such a holy life, we may at last come to so blessed an end.—*Amen.*

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S E R M O N I V . <sup>5 1</sup>

GOD'S AWFUL JUDGMENT IN THE BREAKING AND WITHERING OF THE  
STRONG RODS OF A COMMUNITY.

Ezek. xix. 12.

*Her strong rods were broken and withered.*

IN order to a right understanding and improvement of these words, these four things must be observed concerning them.

1. Who she is that is here represented as having had strong rods, *viz.*, the Jewish community, who here, as often elsewhere, is called the people's mother. She is here compared to a vine planted in a very fruitful soil, verse 10. The Jewish church and state is often elsewhere compared to a vine; as [Psal. lxxx. 8.](#) &c. [Isa. v. 2.](#) [Jer. ii. 21.](#) [Ezek. xv.](#) and [chap. xvii. 6.](#)

2. What is meant by her strong rods, *viz.*, her wise, able, and well qualified magistrates or rulers. That the rulers or magistrates are intended is manifest by [verse 11](#), "And she had strong rods for the scepters of them that bear rule." And by rods that were strong, must be meant such rulers as were well qualified for magistracy, such as had great abilities and other qualifications fitting them for the business of rule. They were wont to choose a rod or staff of the strongest and hardest sort of wood that could be found, for the mace or scepter of a prince; such a one only being counted fit for that use; and this generally was overlaid with gold.

It is very remarkable that such a strong rod should grow out of a weak vine: but so it had been in Israel, through God's extraordinary blessing, in times past. Though the nation is spoken of here, and frequently elsewhere, as weak and helpless in itself, and entirely dependent as a vine, the weakest of all trees, that cannot support itself by its own strength, and never stands but as it leans on or hangs by something else that is stronger than itself; yet God had caused many of her sons to be strong rods fit for scepters; he had raised up in Israel many able and excellent princes and magistrates, who had done worthily in their day.

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51 PREACHED AT NORTHAMPTON ON THE LORD'S  
DAY, JUNE 26, 1748, ON THE DEATH OF THE  
HONORABLE JOHN STODDARD, ESQ., OFTEN A MEMBER  
OF HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL, FOR MANY YEARS CHIEF  
JUSTICE OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE  
COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE, JUDGE OF THE PROBATE OF  
WILLS, AND CHIEF COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT, &C,  
WHO DIED AT BOSTON, JUNE 19, 1748 IN THE 67TH  
YEAR OF HIS AGE.

3. It should be understood and observed what is meant by these strong rods being broken and withered, *viz.*, these able and excellent rulers being removed by death: men's dying is often compared in Scripture to the withering of the growth of the earth.

4. It should be observed after what manner the breaking and withering of these strong rods is here spoken of, *viz.*, as a great and awful calamity, that God had brought upon that people: it is spoken of as one of the chief effects of God's dreadful displeasure against them; "But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered, the fire had consumed them." The great benefits she enjoyed while her strong rods remained, are represented in the preceding verse; "And she had strong rods for the scepters of them that bear rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches; and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches." And the terrible calamities that attended the breaking and withering of her strong rods, are represented in the two verses next following in the text; "And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And fire is gone out of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit." And in the conclusion in the next words, is very emphatically declared the worthiness of such a dispensation to be greatly lamented; "So that she hath no strong rod to be a scepter to rule: this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

That which I therefore observe from the words of the text, to be the subject of discourse at this time, is this, *viz.*, when God by death removes from a people those in place of public authority and rule that have been as strong rods, it is an awful judgment of God on that people, and worthy of great lamentation.

In discoursing on this proposition, I would

1. Show what kind of rulers may fitly be called strong rods.
2. Show why the removal of such rulers from a people by death is to be looked upon as an awful judgment of God on that people, and is greatly to be lamented.

I. I would observe what qualifications of those who are in public authority and rule may properly give them the denomination of strong rods.

1. One qualification of rulers whence they may properly be denominated strong rods, is great ability for the management of public affairs. This is the case, when they who stand in a place of public authority are men of great natural abilities, men of uncommon strength of reason and largeness of understanding; especially when they have a remarkable genius for government, a peculiar turn of mind fitting them to gain an extraordinary understanding in things of that nature. They have ability, in an especial manner, for insight into the mysteries of government, and for discerning those things wherein the public welfare or calamity consists, and the proper means to avoid the one and promote the other; an extraordinary talent at distinguishing what is right and just, from that which is wrong and unequal, and to see through the false colors with which injustice is often disguised, and unravel the false and subtle arguments and cunning sophistry that is often made use of to defend iniquity.

They have not only great natural abilities in these respects, but their abilities and talents have been improved by study, learning, observation, and experience; and by these means they have obtained great actual knowledge. They have acquired great skill in public affairs, and things requisite to be known in order to their wise, prudent, and effectual management; they have obtained a great understanding of men and things, a great knowledge of human nature, and of the way of accommodating themselves to it, so as most effectually to influence it to wise purposes. They have obtained a very extensive knowledge of men with whom they are concerned in the management of public affairs, either those who have a joint concern in government, or those who are to be governed; and they have also obtained a very full and particular understanding of the state and circumstances of the country or people of whom they have the care, and know well their laws and constitution, and what their circumstances require; and likewise have a great knowledge of the people of neighboring nations, states, or provinces, with whom they have occasion to be concerned in the management of public affairs committed to them. These things all contribute to render those who are in authority fit to be denominated “strong rods.”

2. When they have not only great understanding, but largeness of heart, and a greatness and nobleness of disposition, this is another qualification that belongs to the character of a “strong rod.”

Those that are by Divine Providence set in a place of public authority and rule, are called “gods, and sons of the Most High,” [Psalm lxxxii. 6](#). And therefore it is peculiarly unbecoming them to be of a mean spirit, a disposition that will admit of their doing those things that are sordid and vile; as when they are persons of a narrow, private spirit, that may be found in little tricks and intrigues to promote their private interest. Such will shamefully defile their hands to gain a few pounds, are not ashamed to grind the faces of the poor, and screw their neighbors; and will take advantage of their authority or commission to line their own pockets with what is fraudulently taken or withheld from others. When a man in authority is of such a mean spirit, it weakens his authority, and makes him justly contemptible in the eyes of men, and is utterly inconsistent with his being a strong rod.

But on the contrary, it greatly establishes his authority, and causes others to stand in awe of him, when they see him to be a man of greatness of mind, one that abhors those things that are mean and sordid, and not capable of a compliance with them: one that is of a public spirit, and not of a private narrow disposition; a man of honor, and not of mean artifice and clandestine management, for filthy lucre; one that abhors trifling and impertinence, or to waste away his time, that should be spent in the service of God, his king, and his country, in vain amusements and diversions, and in the pursuit of the gratifications of sensual appetites. God charges the rulers in Israel, that pretended to be their great and mighty men, with being mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink. There does not seem to be any reference to their being men of strong heads, and able to bear a



great deal of strong drink, as some have supposed: there is a severe sarcasm in the words; for the prophet is speaking of the great men, princes, and judges in Israel (as appears by the next verse following), which should be mighty men, strong rods, men of eminent qualifications, excelling in nobleness of spirit, of glorious strength and fortitude of mind; but instead of that, they were mighty or eminent for nothing but gluttony and drunkenness.

3. When those that are in authority are endowed with much of a spirit of government, this is another thing that entitles them to the denomination of “strong rods.” They not only are men of great understanding and wisdom in affairs that appertain to government, but have also a peculiar talent at using their knowledge, and exerting themselves in this great and important business, according to their great understanding in it. They are men of eminent fortitude, and are not afraid of the faces of men, are not afraid to do the part that properly belongs to them as rulers, though they meet with great opposition, and the spirits of men are greatly irritated by it. They have a spirit of resolution and activity, so as to keep the wheels of government in proper motion, and to cause judgment and justice to run down as a mighty stream; they have not only a great knowledge of government, and the things that belong to it in theory, but it is, as it were, natural to them to apply the various powers and faculties with which God has endowed them, and the knowledge they have obtained by study and observation, to that business, so as to perform it most advantageously and effectually.

4. Stability and firmness of integrity, fidelity, and piety, in the exercise of authority, is another thing that greatly contributes to, and is very essential in, the character of a “strong rod.”

He is not only a man of strong reason and great discernment to know what is just, but is a man of strict integrity and righteousness, firm and immovable in the execution of justice and judgment. He is not only a man of great ability to bear down vice and immorality, but has a disposition agreeable to such ability; is one that has a strong aversion to wickedness, and is disposed to use the power God has put into his hands to suppress it; and is one that not only opposes vice by his authority, but by his example. He is one of inflexible fidelity, who will be faithful to God whose minister he is, to his people for good, and who is immovable in his regard to his supreme authority, his commands and his glory; and will be faithful to his king and country. He will not be induced by the many temptations that attend the business of men in public authority, basely to betray his trust; will not consent to do what he thinks not to be for the public good, for his own gain or advancement, or any private interest. He is well principled, and firm in acting agreeably to his principles, and will not be prevailed with to do otherwise through fear or favor, to follow a multitude, or to maintain his interest in any on whom he depends for the honor or profit of his place, whether it be prince or people; and is also one of that strength of mind, whereby he rules his own spirit.

These things very eminently contribute to a ruler's title to the denomination of a "strong rod."

5. And lastly, it also contributes to that strength of a man in authority by which he may be denominated a "strong rod," when he is in such circumstances as give him advantage for the exercise of his strength for the public good; as his being a person of honorable descent, of a distinguished education, a man of estate, one advanced in years, one that has long been in authority, so that it is become as it were natural for the people to pay him deference, to reverence him, to be influenced and governed by him, and to submit to his authority; and add to this, his being extensively known, and much honored and regarded abroad; his being one of a good presence, majesty of countenance, decency of behavior, becoming one in authority; of forcible speech, &c. These things add to his strength, and increase his ability and advantage to serve his generation in the place of a ruler, and therefore serve to render him one that is the more fitly and eminently called a "strong rod."—I now proceed,

II. To show that when such strong rods are broken and withered by death, it is an awful judgment of God on the people who are deprived of them, and worthy of great lamentation.—And that on two accounts.

1. By reason of the many positive benefits and blessings to a people that such rulers are the instruments of.

Almost all the prosperity of a public society and civil community does, under God, depend on their rulers. They are like the main springs or wheels in a machine, that keep every part in its due motion, and are in the body politic, as the vitals in the body natural, and as the pillars and foundation in a building. Civil rulers are called "the foundations of the earth," [Psal. lxxxii.](#) and [xi. 3.](#)

The prosperity of a people depends more on their rulers than is commonly imagined. As they have the public society under their care and power, so they have advantage to promote the public interest every way; and if they are such rulers as have been described, they are some of the greatest blessings to the public. Their influence has a tendency to promote wealth, and cause temporal virtue amongst them, and so unite them one to another in peace and mutual benevolence, and make them happy in society, each one the instrument of his neighbors' quietness, comfort, and prosperity; and by these means to advance their reputation and honor in the world; and which is much more, to promote their spiritual and eternal happiness. Therefore, the wise man says, [Eccles. x.17.](#) "Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles."

We have a remarkable instance and evidence of the happy and great influence of such a strong rod as has been described, to promote the universal prosperity of a people, in the history of the reign of Solomon, though many of the people were uneasy under his government, and thought him too rigorous in his administrations: see [1 Kings xii. 4.](#) "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to

Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.” [1 Kings iv. 25.](#) “And he made silver to be among them as stones for abundance.” [Chap. x. 27.](#) “And Judah and Israel were many, eating and drinking and making merry.” The queen of Sheba admired, and was greatly affected with, the happiness of the people, under the government of such a strong rod, [1 Kings x. 8, 9.](#) “Happy are thy men (says she), happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed by the Lord thy God which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.”

The flourishing state of the kingdom of Judah, while they had strong rods for the scepters of them that bare rule, is taken notice of in our context; “her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.”

Such rulers are eminently the ministers of God to his people for good: they are great gifts of the Most High to a people, blessed tokens of his favor, and vehicles of his goodness to them; and therein are images of his own Son, the grand medium of all God’s goodness to fallen mankind; and therefore, all of them are called, sons of the Most High. All civil rulers, if they are as they ought to be, such strong rods as have been described, will be like the Son of the Most High, vehicles of good to mankind, and like him, will be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. And therefore, when a people are bereaved of them, they sustain an unspeakable loss, and are the subjects of a judgment of God that is greatly to be lamented.

2. On account of the great calamities such rulers are a defense from. Innumerable are the grievous and fatal calamities which public societies are exposed to in this evil world, from which they can have no defense without government, they are like a city broken down without walls, encompassed on every side by enemies, and become unavoidably subject to all manner of confusion and misery.

Government is necessary to defend communities from miseries from within themselves; from the prevalence of intestine discord, mutual injustice, and violence; the members of the society continually making a prey of one another, without any defense from each other. Rulers are the heads of union in public societies, that hold the parts together; without which nothing else is to be expected than that the members of the society will be continually divided against themselves, every one acting the part of an enemy to his neighbor, every one’s hand against every man, and every man’s hand against him; going on in remediless and endless broils and jarring, until the society be utterly dissolved and broken in pieces, and life itself, in the neighborhood of our fellow-creatures, becomes miserable and intolerable.

We may see the need of government in societies by what is visible in families, those lesser societies, of which all public societies are constituted. How miserable would these little societies be, if all were left to themselves, without any authority or superiority in one

above the other, or any head of union and influence among them! We may be convinced by what we see of the lamentable consequences of the want of a proper exercise of authority and maintenance of government in families, which yet are not absolutely without all authority. No less need is there of government in public societies, but much more, as they are larger. A very few may possibly, without any government, act by concert, so as to concur in what shall be the welfare of the whole; but this is not to be expected among a multitude, constituted of many thousands, of a great variety of tempers and different interests.

As government is absolutely necessary, so there is a necessity of strong rods in order to it: the business being such as requires persons so qualified; no other being sufficient for, or well capable of, the government of public societies: and therefore, those public societies are miserable that have not such strong rods for scepters to rule, [Eccles. x. 16](#). “Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child.”

As government, and strong rods for the exercise of it, are necessary to preserve public societies from dreadful and fatal calamities arising from among themselves; so no less requisite are they to defend the community from foreign enemies. As they are like the pillars of a building, so they are also like the walls and bulwarks of a city: they are under God the main strength of a people in the time of war, and the chief instruments of their preservation, safety, and rest. This is signified in a very lively manner in the words that are used by the Jewish community in her lamentations, to express the expectations she had from her princes, [Lam. iv. 20](#). “The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen of the Son of God, viz., as they are their saviors from their enemies; as the judges that God raised up of old in Israel are called, [Neh. ix. 27](#). “Therefore thou deliverest them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviors, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.”

Thus both the prosperity and safety of a people under God, depends on such rulers as are strong rods. While they enjoy such blessings, they are wont to be like a vine planted in a fruitful soil, with her stature exalted among the thick branches, appearing in her height with the multitude of her branches; but when they have no strong rod to be a scepter to rule, they are like a vine planted in a wilderness that is exposed to be plucked up, and cast down to the ground, to have her fruit dried up with the east wind, and to have fire coming out of her own branches to devour her fruit.

On these accounts, when a people's strong rods are broken and withered, it is an awful judgment of God on that people, and worthy of great lamentation: as when king Josiah (who was doubtless one of the strong rods referred to in the text) was dead, the people made great lamentation for him, [2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25](#). “And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers: and all Judah and Jerusalem

mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing-men and the singing-women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.”

### APPLICATION

I come now to apply these things to our own case, under the late awful frown of Divine Providence upon us, in removing by death that honorable person in public rule and authority, an inhabitant of this town, and belonging to this congregation and church, who died at Boston the last Lord's day.

He was eminently a strong rod in the fore-mentioned respects. As to his natural abilities, strength of reason, greatness and clearness of discerning, and depth of penetration, he was one of the first rank. It may be doubted whether he has left his superior in these respects in these parts of the world. He was a man of a truly great genius, and his genius was peculiarly fitted for the understanding and managing of public affairs.

And as his natural capacity was great, so was the knowledge that he had acquired, his understanding being greatly improved by close application of mind to those things he was called to be concerned in, and by a very exact observation of them, and long experience in them. He had indeed a great insight into the nature of public societies, the mysteries of government, and the affairs of peace and war. He had a discernment that very few have of those things wherein the public weal consists, and what those things are the expose public societies; and the proper means to avoid the latter, and promote the former. He was quick in his discerning, in that in most cases, especially such as belonged to his proper business, he at first sight would see further than most men when they had done their best; but yet he had a wonderful faculty of improving his own thoughts by meditation, and carrying his views a greater and greater length by long and close application of mind. He had an extraordinary ability to distinguish right and wrong, in the midst of intricacies, and circumstances that tended to perplex and darken the case. He was able to weigh things as it were in a balance, and to distinguish those things that were solid and weighty from those that had only a fair show without substance; which he evidently discovered in his accurate, clear, and plain way of stating and committing causes to a jury, from the bench, as by others hath been observed. He wonderfully distinguished truth from falsehood, and the most labored cases seemed always to lie clear in his mind, his ideas being properly ranged; and he had a talent of communicating them to everyone's understanding, beyond almost any one; and if any were misguided, it was not because truth and falsehood, right and wrong, were not well distinguished.

He was probably one of the ablest politicians that ever New England bred. He had a very uncommon insight into human nature, and a marvelous ability to penetrate into par-



ticular tempers and dispositions of such as he had to deal with, and to discern the fittest way of treating them, so as most effectually to influence them to any good and wise purpose.

And never perhaps was there a person that had a more extensive and thorough knowledge of the state of this land, and its public affairs, and of persons that were jointly concerned with him in them. He knew this people, and their circumstances, and what their circumstances required. He discerned the diseases of this body, and what were the proper remedies, as an able and masterly physician. He had a great acquaintance with the neighboring colonies, and also the nations on this continent, with whom we are concerned in our public affairs. He had a far greater knowledge than any other person in the land, of the several nations of Indians in these northern parts of America, their tempers, manners, and the proper way of treating them; and was more extensively known by them than any other person in the country. And no other person in authority in this province had such an acquaintance with the people and country of Canada, the land of our enemies, as he had.

He was exceeding far from a disposition and forwardness to intermeddle with other people's business; but as to what belonged to his proper business, in the offices he sustained, and the important affairs of which he had the care, he had a great understanding of what belonged to them. I have often been surprised at the length of his reach, and what I have seen of his ability to foresee and determine the consequences of things, even at a great distance, and quite beyond the sight of other men. He was not wavering and unsteady in his opinion. His manner was never to pass a judgment rashly, but was wont first thoroughly to deliberate and weigh an affair; and in this, notwithstanding his great abilities, he was glad to improve by the help of conversation and discourse with others (and often spake of the great advantage he found by it), but when, on mature consideration, he had settled his judgment, he was not easily turned from it by false colors, and plausible pretences and appearances.

And besides his knowledge of things belonging to his particular calling as a ruler, he had also a great degree of understanding in things belonging to his general calling as a Christian. He was no inconsiderable divine. He was a wise casuist, as I know by the great help I have found from time to time by his judgment and advice in cases of conscience, wherein I have consulted him. And indeed I scarce knew the divine that I ever found more able to help and enlighten the mind in such cases than he. And he had no small degree of knowledge in things pertaining to experimental religion; but was wont to discourse on such subjects, not only with accurate doctrinal distinctions, but as one intimately and feelingly acquainted with these things.

He was not only great in speculative knowledge, but his knowledge was practical; such as tended to a wise conduct in the affairs, business, and duties of life; so as properly to have the denomination of wisdom, and so as properly and eminently to invest him with the

character of a wise man. And he was not only eminently wise and prudent in his own conduct, but was one of the ablest and wisest counselors of others in any difficult affair.

The greatness and honorableness of his disposition was answerable to the largeness of his understanding. He was naturally of a great mind; in this respect he was truly the son of nobles. He greatly abhorred things which were mean and sordid, and seemed to be incapable of a compliance with them. How far was he from trifling and impertinence in his conversation! How far from a busy, meddling disposition! How far from any sly and clandestine management to fill his pockets with what was fraudulently withheld, or violently squeezed, from the laborer, soldier, or inferior officer! How far from taking advantage from his commission or authority, or any superior power he had in his hands; or the ignorance, dependence, or necessities of others; to add to his own gains with what properly belonged to them, and with what they might justly expect as a proper reward for any of their services! How far was he from secretly taking bribes offered to induce him to favor any man in his cause, or by his power or interest to promote his being advanced to any place of public trust, honor, or profit! How greatly did he abhor lying and prevarication! And how immovably steadfast was he to exact truth! His hatred of those things that were mean and sordid was so apparent and well known, that it was evident that men dreaded to appear in any thing of that nature in his presence.

He was a man of a remarkably public spirit, a true lover of his country, and who greatly abhorred sacrificing the public welfare to private interest.—He was very eminently endowed with a spirit of government. The God of nature seemed to have formed him for government, as though he had been made on purpose, and cast into a mold, by which he should be every way fitted for the business of a man in public authority. Such a behavior and conduct was natural to him, as tended to maintain his authority, and possess others with awe and reverence, and to enforce and render effectual what he said and did in the exercise of his authority. He did not bear the sword in vain: he was truly a terror to evil-doers. What I saw in him often put me in mind of that saying of the wise man, [Prov. xx. 8](#). “The king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.” He was one that was not afraid of the faces of men; and every one knew that it was in vain to attempt to deter him from doing what, on mature consideration, he had determined he ought to do.—Every thing in him was great, and becoming a man in his public station. Perhaps never was there a man that appeared in New England to whom the denomination of a great man did more properly belong.

But though he was one that was great among men, exalted above others in abilities and greatness of mind, and in the place of rule, and feared not the faces of men, yet he feared God. He was strictly conscientious in his conduct, both in public and private. I never knew the man that seemed more steadfastly and immovably to act by principle, and according to rules and maxims, established and settled in his mind by the dictates of his judgment and

conscience. He was a man of strict justice and fidelity. Faithfulness was eminently his character. Some of his greatest opponents that have been of the contrary party to him in public affairs, yet have openly acknowledged this of him, that he was a faithful man. He was remarkably faithful in his public trusts. He would not basely betray his trust, from fear or favor. It was in vain to expect it; however men might oppose him or neglect him, and how great soever they were: nor would he neglect the public interest committed to him, for the sake of his own ease, but diligently and laboriously watched and labored for it night and day. And he was faithful in private affairs as well as public. He was a most faithful friend; faithful to any one that in any case asked his counsel: and his fidelity might be depended upon in whatever affair he undertook for any of his neighbors.

He was a noted instance of the virtue of temperance, unalterable in it, in all places, in all companies, and in the midst of all temptations. Though he was a man of a great spirit, yet he had a remarkable government of his spirit; and excelled in the government of his tongue. In the midst of all provocations from multitudes he had to deal with, and the great multiplicity of perplexing affairs in which he was concerned, and all the opposition and reproaches of which he was at any time the subject; yet what was there that ever proceeded out of his mouth that his enemies could lay hold of? No profane language, no vain, rash, unseemly, and unChristian speeches. If at any time he expressed himself with great warmth and vigor, it seemed to be from principle and determination of judgment, rather than from passion. When he expressed himself strongly, and with vehemence, those that were acquainted with him, and well observed him from time to time, might evidently see it was done in consequence of thought and judgment, weighing the circumstances and consequences of things.

The calmness and steadiness of his behavior in private, particularly in his family, appeared remarkable and exemplary to those who had most opportunity to observe. He was thoroughly established in those religious principles and doctrines of the first fathers of New England, usually called the doctrines of grace, and had a great detestation of the opposite errors of the present fashionable divinity, as very contrary to the word of God, and the experience of every true Christian. And as he was a friend to truth, so he was a friend to vital piety and the power of godliness, and every countenanced and favored it on all occasions.

He abhorred profaneness, and was a person of a serious and decent spirit, and ever treated sacred things with reverence. He was exemplary for his decent attendance on the public worship of God. Who ever saw him irreverently and indecently lolling, and laying down his head to sleep, or gazing about the meeting-house in time of divine service? And as he was able (as was before observed) to discourse very understandingly of experimental religion, so to some persons with whom he was very intimate, he gave intimations sufficiently plain, while conversing on these things, that they were matters of his own experience. And some serious persons in civil authority, who have ordinarily differed from him in matters





of government, yet on some occasional close conversation with him on things of religion, have manifested a high opinion of him as to real experimental piety.

As he was known to be a serious person, and an enemy to a profane or vain conversation, so he was feared on that account by great and small. When he was in the room, only his presence was sufficient to maintain decency; though many were there accounted great men, who otherwise were disposed to take a much greater freedom in their talk and behavior, than they dared to do in his presence. He was not unmindful of death, nor insensible of his own frailty, nor did death come unexpected to him. For some years past, he has spoken much to some persons of dying, and going to the eternal world, signifying that he did not expect to continue long here.

Added to all these things, to render him eminently a strong rod, he was attended with many circumstances which tended to give him advantage for the exerting of his strength for the public good. He was honorably descended, was a man of considerable substance, had been long in authority, was extensively known and honored abroad, was high in the esteem of the many tribes of Indians in the neighborhood of the British colonies, and so had great influence upon them above any other man in New England. God had endowed him with a comely presence, and majesty of countenance, becoming the great qualities of his mind, and the place in which God had set him.

In the exercise of these qualities and endowments, under these advantages, he has been as it were a father to this part of the land, on whom the whole county had, under God, its dependence in all its public affairs, and especially since the beginning of the present war. How much the weight of all the warlike concerns of the country (which above any part of the land lies exposed to the enemy) has lain on his shoulders, and how he has been the spring of all motion, and the doer of every thing that has been done, and how wisely and faithfully he has conducted these affairs, I need not inform this congregation. You well know that he took care of the county as a father of a family of children, not neglecting men's lives, and making light of their blood; but with great diligence, vigilance, and prudence, applying himself continually to the proper means of our safety and welfare. And especially has this his native town, where he has dwelt from his infancy, reaped the benefit of his happy influence. His wisdom has been, under God, very much our guide, and his authority our support and strength, and he has been a great honor to Northampton, and ornament to our church. He continued in full capacity of usefulness while he lived; he was indeed considerably advanced in years, but his powers of mind were not sensibly abated, and his strength of body was not so impaired, but that he was able to go on long journeys, in extreme heat and cold, and in a short time.

But now this "strong rod is broken and withered," and surely the judgment of God therein is very awful, and the dispensation that which may well be for a lamentation. Probably we shall be more sensible of the worth and importance of such a strong rod by the want of

it. The awful voice of God in this providence is worthy to be attended to by this whole province, and especially by the people of this county, but in a more peculiar manner by us of this town. We have now this testimony of the divine displeasure, added to all the other dark clouds God has lately brought over us, and his awful frowns upon us. It is a dispensation, on many accounts, greatly calling for our humiliation and fear before God; an awful manifestation of his supreme, universal, and absolute dominion, calling us to adore the divine sovereignty, and tremble at the presence of this great God. And it is a lively instance of human frailty and mortality. We see how that none are out of the reach of death, that no greatness, no authority, no wisdom and sagacity, no honorableness of person or station, no degree of valuableness and importance, exempts from the stroke of death. This is therefore a loud and solemn warning to all sorts to prepare for their departure hence.

And the memory of this person who is now gone, who was made so great a blessing while he lived, should engage us to show respect and kindness to his family. This we should do both out of respect to him and to his father, your former eminent pastor, who in his day was in a remarkable manner a father to this part of the land in spirituals, and especially to this town, as this his son has been in temporals.—God greatly resented it, when the children of Israel did not show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal that had been made an instrument of so much good to them, [Judges viii. 35](#). “Neither showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, according to all the good which he had showed unto Israel.”

S E R M O N V <sup>5 2</sup> .

TRUE GRACE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF DEVILS.

James ii. 19.

*Thou believest that there is one God; thou dost well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*

OBSERVE in these words,—1. Something that some depended on, as an evidence of their good estate and acceptance, as the objects of God's favor, *viz.*, a speculative faith, or belief of the doctrines of religion. The great doctrine of the existence of one only God is particularly mentioned; probably, because this was a doctrine wherein, especially, there was a visible and noted distinction between professing Christians and the heathens, amongst whom the Christians in those days were dispersed. And therefore, this was what many trusted in, as what recommended them to, or at least was an evidence of their interest in, the great spiritual and eternal privileges, in which real Christians were distinguished from the rest of the world.

2. How much is allowed concerning this faith, *viz.*, that it is a good attainment; "Thou dost well." It was good, as it was necessary. This doctrine was one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; and, in some respects, above all others fundamental. It was necessary to be believed, in order to salvation. To be without the belief of this doctrine, especially in those that had such advantage to know as they had to whom the apostle wrote, would be a great sin, and what would vastly aggravate their damnation. This belief was also good, as it had a good tendency in many respects.

3. What is implicitly denied concerning it, *viz.*, that it is any evidence of a person's being in a state of salvation. The whole context shows this to be the design of the apostle in the words. And it is particularly manifest by the conclusion of the verse; which is,

4. The thing observable in the words, *viz.*, the argument by which the apostle proves, that this is no sign of a state of grace, *viz.*, that it is found in the devils. They believe that there is one God, and that he is a holy, sin-hating God; and that he is a God of truth, and will fulfill his threatenings, by which he has denounced future judgments, and a great increase of misery on them; and that he is an almighty God, and able to execute his threatened vengeance upon them.

Therefore, the doctrine I infer from the words to make the subject of my present discourse, is this, *viz.*, nothing in the mind of man, that is of the same nature with what the devils experience, or are the subjects of, is any sure sign of saving grace.

If there be any thing that the devils have, or find in themselves, which is an evidence of the saving grace of the Spirit of God, then the apostle's argument is not good; which is plainly this: "That which is in the devils, or which they do, is no certain evidence of grace. But the devils believe that there is one God. Therefore, thy believing that there is one God, is no sure evidence that thou art gracious." So that the whole foundation of the apostle's argument lies in that proposition: "That which is in the devils, is no certain sign of grace."—Nevertheless, I shall mention two or three further reasons, or arguments of the truth of this doctrine.

I. The devils have no degree of holiness: and therefore those things which are nothing beyond what they are the subjects of, cannot be holy experiences.

The devil once was holy; but when he fell, he lost all his holiness, and became perfectly wicked. He is the greatest sinner, and in some sense the father of all sin. [John viii. 44.](#) "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." [1 John iii. 8.](#) "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." He is often spoken of, by way of eminence, as "the wicked one." So, [Matt xiii. 19.](#) "Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." And [verse xiii. 38.](#) "The tares are the children of the wicked one." [1 John ii. 13.](#) "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one." And [verse iii. 12.](#) "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one." And [verse v. 18.](#) "Whosoever is born of God—keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." So the devils are called evil spirits, unclean spirits, powers of darkness, rulers of the darkness of this world, and wickedness itself. [Eph. vi. 12.](#) "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Therefore, surely, those things which the minds of devils are the subjects of, can have nothing of the nature of true holiness in them. The knowledge and understanding which they have of the things of God and religion, cannot be of the nature of divine and holy light, nor any knowledge that is merely of the same kind. No impressions made on their hearts, can be of a spiritual nature. That kind of sense which they have of divine things, however great, cannot be a holy sense. Such affections as move their hearts, however powerful, cannot be holy affections. If there be no holiness in them as they are in the devil, there can be no holiness in them as they are in man; unless something be added to them beyond what is in the devil. And if any thing be added to them, then they are not the same things; but are something beyond what devils are the subjects of; which is contrary to the supposition; for the proposition which I am upon is, that those things which are of the same nature, and nothing beyond what devils are the subjects of, cannot be holy experiences. It is not the subject that makes the affection, or experience, or quality holy; but it is the quality that makes the subject holy.

And if those qualities and experiences which the devils are the subjects of, have nothing of the nature of holiness in them, then they can be no certain signs, that persons which have them are holy or gracious. There is no certain sign of true grace, but those things which are spiritual and gracious. It is God's image that is his seal and mark, the stamp by which those that are his are known. But that which has nothing of the nature of holiness, has nothing of this image. That which is a sure sign of grace, must either be something which has the nature and essence of grace, or flows from, or some way belongs to, its essence; for that which distinguishes things one from another is the essence, or something appertaining to their essence. And therefore, that which is sometimes found wholly without the essence of holiness or grace, can be no essential, sure, or distinguishing mark of grace.

II. The devils are not only absolutely without all true holiness, but they are not so much as the subjects of any common grace.

If any should imagine, that some things may be signs of grace which are not grace itself, or which have nothing of the nature and essence of grace and holiness in them; yet, certainly they will allow, that the qualifications which are sure evidences of grace, must be things that are near akin to grace, or having some remarkable affinity with it. But the devils are not only wholly destitute of any true holiness, but they are at the greatest distance from it, and have nothing in them in any wise akin to it.

There are many in this world who are wholly destitute of saving grace, who yet have common grace. They have no true holiness, but nevertheless have something of that which is called moral virtue; and are the subjects of some degree of the common influences of the Spirit of God. It is so with those in general that live under the light of the gospel, and are not given up to judicial blindness and hardness. Yea, those that are thus given up, yet have some degree of restraining grace while they live in this world; without which the earth could not bear them, and they would in no measure be tolerable members of human society. But when any are damned, or cast into hell, as the devils are, God wholly withdraws his restraining grace, and all merciful influences of his Spirit whatsoever. They have neither saving grace nor common grace; neither the grace of the Spirit, nor any of the common gifts of the Spirit; neither true holiness, nor moral virtue of any kind. Hence arises the vast increase of the exercise of wickedness in the hearts of men when they are damned. And herein is the chief difference between the damned in hell, and unregenerate and graceless men in this world. Not that wicked men in this world have any more holiness or true virtue than the damned, or have wicked men, when they leave this world, any principles of wickedness infused into them: but when men are cast into hell, God perfectly takes away his Spirit from them, as to all its merciful common influences, and entirely withdraws from them all restraints of his Spirit and good providence.

III. It is unreasonable to suppose, that a person's being in any respect as the devil is, should be a certain sign that he is very unlike and opposite to him, and hereafter shall not



have his part with him. True saints are extremely unlike and contrary to the devil, both relatively and really. They are so relatively. The devil is the grand rebel; the chief enemy of God and Christ; the object of God's greatest wrath; a condemned malefactor, utterly rejected and cast off by him; for ever shut out of his presence; the prisoner of his justice; an everlasting inhabitant of the infernal world. The saints, on the contrary, are the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem; members of the family of the glorious King of heaven; the children of God; the brethren and spouse of his dear Son; heirs of God; joint-heirs with Christ; kings and priests unto God. And they are extremely different really. The devil, on account of his hateful nature, and those accursed dispositions which reign in him, is called Satan, the adversary, Abaddon and Apollyon, the great destroyer, the wolf, the roaring lion, the great dragon, the old serpent. The saints are represented as God's holy ones, his anointed ones, the excellent of the earth; the meek of the earth; lambs and doves; Christ's little children; having the image of God, pure in heart; God's jewels; lilies in Christ's garden; plants of paradise; stars of heaven; temples of the living God. The saints, so far as they are saints, are as diverse from the devil, as heaven is from hell; and much more contrary than light is to darkness: and the eternal state that they are appointed to, is answerably diverse and contrary.

Now, it is not reasonable to suppose, that being in any respect as Satan is, or being the subject of any of the same properties, qualifications, affections, or actions, that are in him, is any certain evidence that persons are thus exceeding different from him, and in circumstances so diverse, and appointed to an eternal state so extremely contrary in all respects. Wicked men are in Scripture called the children of the devil. Now is it reasonable to suppose, that men's being in any respect as the devil is, can be a certain sign, that they are not his children, but the children of the infinitely holy and blessed God? We are informed, that wicked men shall hereafter have their part with devils; shall be sentenced to the same everlasting fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Now, can a man's being like the devil in any respect be a sure token that he shall not have his part with him, but with glorious angels, and with Jesus Christ, dwelling with him, where he is, that he may behold and partake of his glory?

### IMPROVEMENT.

The *first* use may lie in several inferences, for our *instruction*.

I. From what has been said, it may be inferred, by parity of reason, that nothing that damned men *do*, or ever will *experience*, can be any sure sign of grace.

Damned men are like the devils, are conformed to them in nature and state. They have nothing better in them than the devils, have no higher principles in their hearts; experience nothing, and do nothing, of a more excellent kind; as they are the children and servants of the devil, and as such, shall dwell with him, and be partakers with him of the same misery. As Christ says, concerning the saints in their future state, [Matt. xxii. 30](#). "That they shall be

as the angels of God in heaven,” so it may be said concerning ungodly men in their future state, that they shall be as the fallen, wicked angels in hell.

Each of the forementioned reasons, given to show the truth of the doctrine with respect to devils, holds good with respect to damned men. Damned men have no degree of holiness; and therefore those things which are nothing beyond what they have, cannot be holy experiences. Damned men are not only absolutely destitute of all true holiness, but they have not so much as any common grace. And lastly, it is unreasonable to suppose, that a person’s being in any respect as the damned in hell are, should be a certain sign that they are very unlike and opposite to them, and hereafter shall not have their portion with them.

II. We may hence infer, that no degree of speculative knowledge of things of religion is any certain sign of saving grace. The devil, before his fall, was among those bright and glorious angels of heaven, which are represented as morning-stars, and flames of fire, that excel in strength and wisdom. And though he be now become sinful, yet his sin has not abolished the faculties of the angelic nature; as when man fell, he did not lose the faculties of the human nature.—Sin destroys spiritual principles, but not the natural faculties. It is true, sin, when in full dominion, entirely prevents the exercise of the natural faculties in holy and spiritual understanding; and lays many impediments in the way of their proper exercise in other respects. It lays the natural faculty of reason under great disadvantages, by many and strong prejudices; and in fallen men the faculties of the soul are, doubtless, greatly impeded in their exercise, through that great weakness and disorder of the corporeal organ to which it is strictly united, and which is the consequence of sin.—But there seems to be nothing in the nature of sin, or moral corruption, that has any tendency to destroy the natural capacity, or even to diminish it, properly speaking. If sin were of such a nature as necessarily to have that tendency and effect; then it might be expected, that wicked men, in a future state, where they are given up entirely to the unrestrained exercise of their corruptions and lusts, and sin is in all respects brought to its greatest perfection in them, would have the capacity of their souls greatly diminished. This we have no reason to suppose; but rather, on the contrary, that their capacities are greatly enlarged, and that their actual knowledge is vastly increased; and that even with respect to the Divine Being, and things of religion, and the great concerns of the immortal souls of men, the eyes of wicked men are opened, when they go into another world.

The greatness of the abilities of devils may be argued, from the representation in [Eph. vi. 12](#). “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,” &c. The same may also be argued from what the Scripture says of Satan’s subtlety. [Gen. iii. 1](#), [2. Cor. xi. 3](#). and [Acts xiii. 10](#). And as the devil has a faculty of understanding of large capacity, so he is capable of a great speculative knowledge of the things of God, and the invisible and eternal world, as well as other things; and must needs actually have a great understanding of these things; as these have always been chiefly in his view; and as his circumstances, from

his first existence, have been such as have tended chiefly to engage him to attend to these things. Before his fall, he was one of those angels who continually beheld the face of the Father in heaven: and sin has no tendency to destroy the memory, and therefore has no tendency to blot out of it any speculative knowledge that was formerly there.

As the devil's subtlety shows his great capacity; so the way in which his subtlety is exercised and manifested—which is principally in his artful management with respect to things of religion, his exceeding subtle representations, insinuations, reasonings, and temptations, concerning these things—demonstrates his great actual understanding of them; as, in order to be a very artful disputant in any science, though it be only to confound and deceive such as are conversant in it, a person had need to have a great and extensive acquaintance with the things which pertain to that science.

Thus the devil has undoubtedly a great degree of speculative knowledge in divinity; having been, as it were, educated in the best divinity school in the universe, viz. the heaven of heavens. He must needs have such an extensive and accurate knowledge concerning the nature and attributes of God, as we, worms of the dust, in our present state, are not capable of. And he must have a far more extensive knowledge of the works of God, as of the work of creation in particular; for he was a spectator of the creation of this visible world; he was one of those morning-stars, [Job xxxviii. 4-7](#). “who sang together, and of those sons of God, that shouted for joy, when God laid the foundations of the earth, and laid the measures thereof, and stretched the line upon it.” And so he must have a very great knowledge of God's works of providence. He has been a spectator of the series of these works from the beginning; he has seen how God has governed the world in all ages; and he has seen the whole train of God's wonderful successive dispensations of providence towards his church, from generation to generation. And he has not been an indifferent spectator; but the great opposition between God and him, in the whole course of those dispensations, has necessarily engaged his attention in the strictest observation of them. He must have a great degree of knowledge concerning Jesus Christ as the Savior of men, and the nature and method of the work of redemption, and the wonderful wisdom of God in this contrivance. It is that work of God wherein, above all others, God has acted in opposition to him, and in which he has chiefly set himself in opposition to God. It is with relation to this affair, that the mighty warfare has been maintained, which has been carried on between Michael and his angels, and the devil and his angels, through all ages from the beginning of the world, and especially since Christ appeared. The devil has had enough to engage his attention to the steps of divine wisdom in this work: for it is to that wisdom he has opposed his subtlety; and he has seen and found, to his great disappointment and unspeakable torment, how divine wisdom, as exercised in that work, has baffled and confounded his devices. He has a great knowledge of the things of another world; for the things of that world are in his immediate view. He has a great knowledge of heaven; for he has been an inhabitant of that world of glory: and





he has a great knowledge of hell, and the nature of its misery; for he is the first inhabitant of hell; and above all the other inhabitants, has experience of its torments, and has felt them constantly, for more than fifty-seven hundred years. He must have a great knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; for it is evident he is not hindered from knowing what is written there, by the use he made of the words of Scripture in his temptation of our Savior. And if he can know, he has much opportunity to know, and must needs have a disposition to know, with the greatest exactness; that he may, to greater effect, pervert and wrest the Scripture, and prevent such an effect of the word of God on the hearts of men, as shall tend to overthrow his kingdom. He must have a great knowledge of the nature of mankind, their capacity, their dispositions, and the corruptions of their hearts; for he has had long and great observation and experience. The heart of man is what he had chiefly to do with, in his subtle devices, mighty efforts, restless and indefatigable operations and exertions of himself, from the beginning of the world. And it is evident that he has a great speculative knowledge of the nature of experimental religion, by his being able to imitate it so artfully, and in such a manner as to transform himself into an angel of light.

Therefore it is manifest, from my text and doctrine, that no degree of speculative knowledge of religion is any certain sign of true piety. Whatever clear notions a man may have of the attributes of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the nature of the two covenants, the economy of the persons of the Trinity, and the part which each person has in the affair of man's redemption; if he can discourse never so excellently of the offices of Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and the admirable methods of divine wisdom, and the harmony of the various attributes of God in that way; if he can talk never so clearly and exactly of the method of the justification of a sinner, and of the nature of conversion, and the operations of the Spirit of God, in applying the redemption of Christ; giving good distinctions, happily solving difficulties, and answering objections, in a manner tending greatly to enlighten the ignorant, to the edification of the church of God, and the conviction of gainsayers, and the great increase of light in the world: if he has more knowledge of this sort than hundreds of true saints of an ordinary education, and most divines; yet all is no certain evidence of any degree of saving grace in the heart.

It is true, the Scripture often speaks of knowledge of divine things, as what is peculiar to true saints; as in [John xvii. 3](#). "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." [Matt. xi. 27](#). "No man knoweth the Sun, but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." [Ps. ix. 10](#). "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." [Philip. iii. 8](#). "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." But then, we must understand it of a different kind of knowledge from that speculative understanding which the devil has to so great a degree. It will also be allowed, that the spiritual saving knowledge of God and divine things, greatly promotes speculative knowledge,

as it engages the mind in its search into things of this kind, and much assists to a distinct understanding of them; so that, other things being equal, they who have spiritual knowledge, are much more likely than others to have a good doctrinal acquaintance may be no distinguishing characteristic of true saints.

III. It may also be inferred from what has been observed, that for persons merely to yield a speculative assent to the doctrines of religion as true, is no certain evidence of a state of grace. My text tells us, that the devils believe; and as they believe that there is one God, so they believe the truth of the doctrines of religion in general. The devil is orthodox in his faith; he believes the true scheme of doctrine; he is no Deist, Socinian, Arian, Pelagian, or antinomian; the articles of his faith are all sound, and in them he is thoroughly established.

Therefore, for a person to believe the doctrines of Christianity merely from the force of arguments, as discerned only by speculation, is no evidence of grace.

It is probably a very rare thing for unregenerate men to have a strong persuasion of the truth of the doctrines of religion, especially such of them as are very mysterious, and much above the comprehension of reason. Yet if he be very confident of the truth of Christianity and its doctrines, and is able to argue most strongly for the proof of them, in this he goes nothing beyond the devil; who doubtless has a great knowledge of the rational arguments by which the truth of the Christian religion and its several principles are evinced.

And therefore when the Scripture speaks of believing that Jesus is the Son of God, as a sure evidence of grace, as in [1 John v. 1.](#) and other places, it must be understood, not of a mere speculative assent, but of another kind and manner of believing, which is called the faith of God's elect, [Titus i. 1.](#) There is a spiritual conviction of the truth, which is a believing with the whole heart, peculiar to true saints; of which I shall speak more particularly.

IV. It may be inferred from the doctrine which has been insisted on, that it is no certain sign of persons being savingly converted, that they have been subjects of very great distress and terrors of mind, through apprehensions of God's wrath, and fears of damnation.

That the devils are the subjects of great terrors, through apprehensions of God's wrath, and fears of its future effects, is implied in my text; which speaks not only of their believing, but trembling. It must be no small degree of terror which should make those principalities and powers, those mighty, proud, and sturdy beings, to tremble.

There are many terrors that some persons who are concerned for their salvation, are the subjects of, which are not from any proper awakenings of conscience, or apprehensions of truth, but from melancholy or frightful impressions on their imagination; or some groundless apprehensions, and the delusions and false suggestions of Satan. But if they have had never so great and long-continued terrors from real awakenings, and convictions of truth, and views of things as they are, this is no more than what is in the devils, and will be in all wicked men in another world. However stupid and senseless most ungodly men are now, all will be effectually awakened at last. There will be no such thing as slumbering in



hell. There are many that cannot be awakened by the most solemn warnings and awful threatenings of the word of God—the most alarming discourses from the pulpit, and the most awakening and awful providences—but all will be thoroughly awakened by the sound of the last trumpet, and the appearance of Christ to judgment. All sorts will then be filled with most amazing terrors, from apprehensions of truth, and seeing things as they are; when “the kings of the earth, and the great men (such as were the most lofty and stout-hearted, most ready to treat the things of religion with contempt), shall hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” [Rev. vi. 15-17.](#)—Therefore if persons have been first awakened, and afterwards have had comfort and joy, it is no certain sign that their comforts are of the right hand, because they were preceded by very great terrors.

V. It may be further inferred from the doctrine, that no work of the law on men’s hearts, in conviction of guilt, and just desert of punishment, is a sure argument that a person has been savingly converted.

Not only are no awakenings and terrors any certain evidence of this, but no mere legal work whatsoever, though carried to the utmost extent. Nothing wherein there is no grace or spiritual light, but only the mere conviction of natural conscience, and those acts and operations of the mind which are the result of this—and so are, as it were, merely forced by the clear light of conscience, without the concurrence of the heart and inclination with that light—is any certain sign of the saving grace of God, or that a person was ever savingly converted.

The evidence of this, from my text and doctrine, is demonstrative; because the devils are the subjects of these things; and all wicked men that shall finally perish, will be the subjects of the same. Natural conscience is not extinguished in the damned in hell; but, on the contrary, remains there in its greatest strength, and is brought to its most perfect exercise; most fully to do its proper office as God’s vicegerent in the soul, to condemn those rebels against the King of heaven and earth, and manifest God’s just wrath and vengeance, and by that means to torment them, and be as a never-dying worm within them. Wretched men find means in this world to blind the eyes and stop the mouth of this vicegerent of a sin-revenging God; but they shall not be able to do it always. In another world, the eyes and mouth of conscience will be fully opened. God will hereafter make wicked men to see and know these things from which now they industriously hide their eyes, [Isa. xxvi. 10, 11.](#) “Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people, yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.” We have this expression often annexed to God’s

threatenings of wrath to his enemies; “And they shall know that I am the Lord,” this shall be accomplished by their woeful experience, and clear light in their consciences, whereby they shall be made to know, whether they will or not, how great and terrible, holy and righteous, a God Jehovah is, whose authority they have despised; and they shall know that he is righteous and holy in their destruction. This all the ungodly will be convinced of at the day of judgment, by the bringing to light of all their wickedness of heart and practice; and setting all their sins, with all their aggravations, in order, not only in the view of others, even of the whole world, but in the view of their own consciences. This is threatened, [Psalm l. 21](#). “These things thou has done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.” Compare this with the four first verses of the psalm.—The design of the day of judgment is not to find out what is just, as it is with human judgments; but it is to manifest what is just; to make known God’s justice in the judgment which he will execute, to men’s own consciences, and to the world. And therefore that day is called “the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” [Rom. ii. 5](#). Now sinners often cavil against the justice of God’s dispensations, and particularly the punishment which he threatens for their sins; excusing themselves, and condemning him: but when God comes to manifest their wickedness in the light of that day, and to call them to an account, they will be speechless; [Matt. xxii. 11, 12](#). “And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless.” When the King of heaven and earth comes to judgment, their consciences will be so perfectly enlightened and convinced by the all-searching Light they shall then stand in, that their mouths will be effectually stopped, as to all excuses for themselves, all pleading of their own righteousness to excuse or justify them, and all objections against the justice of their Judge, that their conscience will condemn them only, and not God.

Therefore it follows from the doctrine, that it can be no certain sign of grace, that persons have had great convictions of sin. Suppose they have had their sins of life, with their aggravations, remarkably set before them, so greatly to affect and terrify them; and withal, have had a great sight of the wickedness of their hearts, the greatness of the sin of unbelief, and of the unexcusableness and heinousness of their most secret spiritual iniquities. Perhaps they have been convinced of the utter insufficiency of their own righteousness, and they despair of being recommended to God by it; have been convinced that they are wholly without excuse before God, and deserve damnation; and that God would be just in executing the threatened punishment upon them, though it be so dreadful. All these things will be in the ungodly at the day of judgment, when they shall stand with devils, at the left hand, and shall be doomed as accursed to everlasting fire with them.

Indeed there will be no submission in them. Their conscience will be convinced that God is just in their condemnation; but yet their wills will not be bowed to God's justice. There will be no acquiescence of mind in that divine attribute; no yielding of the soul to God's sovereignty, but the highest degree of enmity and opposition. A true submission of the heart and will to the justice and sovereignty of God, is therefore allowed to be something peculiar to true converts, being something which the devils and damned souls are and ever will be far from; and to which a mere work of the law, and convictions of conscience, however great and clear, will never bring men.

When sinners are the subjects of great convictions of conscience, and a remarkable work of the law, it is only transacting the business of the day of judgment in the conscience before-hand. God sits enthroned in the clouds of heaven; the sinner is arraigned as it were at God's bar; and God appears in his awful greatness, as a just and holy, sin-hating and sin-revenging, God, as he will then. The sinner's iniquities are brought to light; his sins set in order before him; the hidden things of darkness, and the counsels of the heart are made manifest, as it will be then. Many witnesses do as it were rise up against the sinner under convictions of conscience, as they will against the wicked at the day of judgment; and the books are opened, particularly the book of God's strict and holy law is opened in the conscience, and its rules applied for the condemnation of the sinner; which is the book that will be opened at the day of judgment, as the grand rule to all such wicked men as have lived under it. And the sentence of the law is pronounced against the sinner, and the justice of the sentence made manifest, as it will be at the day of judgment. The conviction of a sinner at the day of judgment will be a work of the law, as well as the conviction of conscience in this world: and the work of the law (if the work be merely legal) is never carried further in the consciences of sinners now than it will be at that day, when its work will be perfect in thoroughly stopping the sinner's mouth; [Rom. iii. 19](#). "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Every mouth shall be stopped by the law, either now or hereafter; and all the world shall become sensibly guilty before God, guilty of death, deserving of damnation.—And therefore, if sinners have been the subjects of a great work of the law, and have thus become guilty, and their mouths have been stopped; it is no certain sign that ever they have been converted.

Indeed the want of a thorough sense of guilt, and desert of punishment, and conviction of the justice of God in threatening damnation, is a sign that a person never was converted, and truly brought with the whole soul to embrace Christ as a Savior from this punishment: for it is easily demonstrable, that there is no such thing as entirely and cordially accepting an offer of a Savior from punishment which we think we do not deserve. But having such a conviction is no certain sign that persons have true faith, or have every truly received Christ as their Savior. And if persons have great comfort, joy, and confidence suddenly let

into their minds, after great convictions, it is no infallible evidence that their comforts are built on a good foundation.

It is manifest, therefore, that too much stress has been laid by many persons on a great work of the law preceding their comforts, who seem not only to have looked on such a work of the law as necessary to precede faith, but also to have esteemed it as the chief evidence of the truth and genuineness of succeeding faith and comforts. By this means it is to be feared very many have been deceived, and established in false hope. And what is to be seen in the event of things, in multitudes of instances, confirms this. It may be safely allowed that it is not so usual for great convictions of conscience to prove abortive, and fail of a good issue, as for lesser convictions; and that more generally when the Spirit of God proceeds so far with sinners, in the work of the law, as to give them a great sight of their hearts, and of the heinousness of their spiritual iniquities; and to convince them that they are without excuse—and that all their righteousness can do nothing to merit God's favor; but they lie justly exposed to God's eternal vengeance with mercy—a work of saving conversion follows. But we can have no warrant to say, it is universally so, or to lay it down as an infallible rule, that when convictions of conscience have gone thus far, saving faith and repentance will surely follow. If any should think they have ground for such a determination, because they cannot conceive what end God should have, in carrying a work of conviction to such a length, and so preparing the heart for faith, and after all, never giving saving faith to the soul; I desire it may be considered, where will be the end of our doubts and difficulties, if we think ourselves sufficient to determine so positively and particularly concerning God's ends and designs in what he does. It may be asked such an objector, what is God's end in giving a sinner any degree of the strivings of his Spirit, and conviction of conscience, when he afterwards suffers it to come to nothing?

If he may give some degree that may finally be in vain, who shall set the bounds, and say how great the degree shall be? Who can, on sure grounds, determine, that when a sinner has so much of that conviction which the devils and damned in hell have, true faith and eternal salvation will be the certain consequence? This we may certainly determine, that, if the apostle's argument in the text be good, not any thing whatsoever that the devils have is certainly connected with such a consequence. Seeing sinners, while such, are capable of the most perfect convictions, and will have them at the day of judgment, and in hell; who shall say, that God never shall cause reprobates to anticipate the future judgment and damnation in that respect? And if he does so, who shall say to him, what dost thou? Or call him to account concerning his ends in so doing? Not but that many possible wise ends might be thought of, and mentioned, if it were needful, or I had now room for it.—The Spirit of God is often quenched by the exercise of the wickedness of men's hearts, after he has gone far in a work of conviction, so that their convictions never have a good issue. And who can say that sinners, by the exercise of their opposition and enmity against God, which is not at all

mortified by the greatest legal convictions, neither in the damned in hell nor sinners on earth, may not provoke God to take his Spirit from them, even after he has proceeded the greatest length in a work of conviction? Who can say, that God never is provoked to destroy some, after he has brought them, as it were, through the wilderness, even to the edge of the land of rest? As he slew some of the Israelites, even in the plains of Moab.

And let it be considered, where is our warrant in Scripture, to make use of any legal convictions, or any method or order of successive events in a work of the law, and consequent comforts, as a sure sign of regeneration. The Scripture is abundant, in expressly mentioning evidences of grace, and of a state of favor with God, as characteristics of true saints. But where do we ever find such things as these amongst those evidences? Or where do we find any other signs insisted on, besides grace itself, its nature, exercises, and fruits? These were the evidences that Job relied upon: these were the things that the psalmist everywhere insists upon as evidences of sincerity, and particularly in the [119th Psalm](#), from the beginning to the end: these were the signs that Hezekiah trusted to in his sickness.

These were the characteristics of those that are truly happy given by our Savior in the beginning of his sermon on the mount. These are the things that Christ mentions, as the true evidences of being his real disciples, in his last and dying discourse to his disciples, in the [14th, 15th, and 16th chapters](#) of John, and in his intercessory prayer, [chap. xvii](#). These are the things which the apostle Paul often speaks of as evidences of his sincerity, and sure title to a crown of glory. And these are the things he often mentions to others, in his epistles, as the proper evidences of real Christianity, a justified state, and a title to glory. He insists on the fruits of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; as the proper evidences of being Christ's, and living in the Spirit: [Gal. v. 22-25](#). It is that charity, or divine love, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, &c, that he insists on, as the most essential evidence of true godliness; without which, all other things are nothing. Such are the signs which the apostle James insists on, as the proper evidence of a truly wise and good man: [James iii. 17](#). "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." And such are the signs of true Christianity, which the apostle John insists on throughout his epistles. And we never have anywhere in the Bible, from the beginning to the end of it, any other signs of godliness given, than such as these. If persons have such things as these apparently in them, it ought to be determined that they are truly converted, without its being first known what method the Spirit of God took to introduce these things into the soul, which oftentimes is altogether untraceable. All the works of God are in some respects unsearchable; but the Scripture often represents the works of the Spirit of God as peculiarly so: [Isa. xl. 13](#). "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him?" [Eccles. xi. 5](#). "As thou

knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all.” [John iii. 8.](#) “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”



VI. It follows from my text and doctrine, that it is no certain sign of grace, that persons have earnest desires and longings after salvation.

The devils, doubtless, long for deliverance from the misery they suffer, and from that greater misery which they expect. If they tremble through fear of it, they must, necessarily, earnestly desire to be delivered from it. Wicked men are, in Scripture, represented as longing for the privileges of the righteous, when the door is shut, and they are shut out from among them: they come to the door, and cry Lord, Lord, open to us. Therefore, we are not to look on all desires that are very earnest and vehement, as certain evidences of a pious heart. There are earnest desires of a religious nature, which the saints have, that are the proper breathings of a new nature, and distinguishing qualities of true saints: but there are also longings, which unregenerate men may have, which are often mistaken for marks of godliness. They think they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have earnest desires after God and Christ, and long for heaven; when, indeed, all is to be resolved into self-love; and so is a longing which arises from no higher principles than the earnest desires of the devils.

VII. It may be inferred from what has been observed, that persons who have no grace may have a great apprehension of an external glory in things heavenly and divine, and of whatsoever is external pertaining to religion.

If persons have impressed strongly on their minds ideas obtained by the external senses, whether by the ear, as any kind of sound, pleasant music, or words spoken of excellent signification; words of Scripture, suitable to their case, or adapted to the subject of their meditations: or ideas obtained by the eye, as of a visible beauty and glory, a shining light, golden streets, gates of precious stone, a most magnificent throne surrounded by angels and saints in shining ranks: or any thing external belonging to Jesus Christ, either in his humbled state, as hanging on the cross, with his crown of thorns, his wounds open, and blood trickling down; or in his glorified state, with awful majesty, or ravishing beauty and sweetness in his countenance; his face shining above the brightness of the sun, and the like: these things are no certain signs of grace.

Multitudes that are now in hell, will have ideas of the external glory that pertains to things heavenly, far beyond whatever any have in this world. They will see all that external glory and beauty, in which Christ will appear at the day of judgment, when the sun shall be turned into darkness before him; which, doubtless, will be ten thousand times greater than ever was impressed on the imagination of either saints or sinners in this present state, or ever was conceived by any mortal man.



VIII. It may be inferred from the doctrine, that persons who have no grace may have a very great and affecting sense of many divine things on their hearts.

The devil has not only a great speculative knowledge, but he has a sense of many divine things, which deeply affects him, and is most strongly impressed on his heart. As,

1. The devils and damned souls have a great sense of the vast importance of the things of another world. They are in the invisible world, and they see and know how great the things of that world are: their experience teaches them in the most affecting manner. They have a great sense of the worth of salvation, and the worth of immortal souls, and the vast importance of those things that concern men's eternal welfare. The parable in the latter end of the 16th chapter of Luke teaches this, in representing the rich man in hell, as entreating that Lazarus might be sent to his five brothers, to testify to them, lest they should come to that place of torment. They who endure the torments of hell have doubtless a most lively and affecting sense of the vastness of an endless eternity, and of the comparative momentariness of this life, and the vanity of the concerns and enjoyments of time.—They are convinced effectually, that all the things of this world, even those that appear greatest and most important to the inhabitants of the earth, are despicable trifles, in comparison of the things of the eternal world. They have a great sense of the *preciousness of time*, and of the means of grace, and the inestimable value of the privileges which they enjoy which live under the gospel. They are fully sensible of the folly of those that go on in sin; neglect their opportunities; make light of the counsels and warnings of God; and bitterly lament their exceeding folly in their own sins, by which they have brought on themselves so great and remediless misery. When sinners, by woeful experience, know the dreadful issue of their evil way, they will mourn at the last, saying, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voices of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!" [Prov. iv. 11-13.](#)

Therefore, however true godliness is attended with a great sense of the importance of divine things—and it is rare that men who have no grace maintain such a sense in any steady and persevering manner—yet it is manifest that those things are no certain evidences of grace. Unregenerate men may have a sense of the importance of eternity, and the vanity of time, the worth of immortal souls; the preciousness of time and the means of grace, and the folly of the way of allowed sin. They may have such a sense of those things, as may deeply affect them, and cause them to mourn for their own sins, and be much concerned for others; though it be true, they have not these things in the same manner, and in all respects from the same principles and views, as godly men have them.

2. Devils and damned men have a strong and most affecting sense of the awful greatness and majesty of God. This is greatly made manifest in the execution of divine vengeance on his enemies. [Rom. ix. 22.](#) "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" The

devils tremble before this great and terrible God, and under a strong sense of his awful majesty. It is greatly manifested to them and damned souls now; but shall be manifested in a further degree, in that day when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance upon them; and when they shall earnestly desire to fly, and be hid from the face of him that sits on the throne (which shall be, “because of the glory of his majesty,” [Isa. ii. 10.](#)) and when they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. When Christ comes at the last day, in the glory of his Father, every eye shall see him in that glory (in this respect, they shall see his terrible majesty), and they also that pierced him, [Rev. i. 7.](#) Both those devils, and wicked men, which tormented and insulted him when he appeared in meanness and ignominy, shall then see him in the glory of his Father.

It is evident, therefore, that a sense of God’s terrible majesty is no certain evidence of saving grace: for we see that wicked men and devils are capable of it; yea, many wicked men in this world have actually had it. This is a manifestation which God made of himself in the sight of that wicked congregation at mount Sinai, which they saw, and with which they were deeply affected, so that all the people in the camp trembled.

3. Devils and damned men have some kind of conviction and sense of all attributes of God, both natural and moral, that is strong and very affecting.

The devils know God’s almighty power: they saw a great manifestation of it, when they saw God lay the foundation of the earth, &c, and were much affected with it. They have seen innumerable other great demonstrations of his power; as in the universal deluge, the destruction of Sodom, the wonders of Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; causing the sun to stand still in Joshua’s time, and many others.—And they had a very affecting manifestation of God’s mighty power on themselves, in casting all their hosts down from heaven into hell; and have continual affecting experience of it, in God’s reserving them in strong chains of darkness, and in the strong pains they feel. They will hereafter have far more affecting experience of it, when they shall be punished from the glory of God’s power, with that mighty destruction in expectation of which they now tremble. So the devils have a great knowledge of the wisdom of God: they have had unspeakably more opportunity and occasion to observe it in the work of creation, and also in the works of providence, than any mortal man has ever had; and have been themselves the subjects of innumerable affecting manifestations of it, in God’s disappointing and confounding them in their most subtle devices, in so wonderful and amazing a manner. So they see and find the infinite purity and holiness of the divine nature, in the most affecting manner, as this appears in his infinite hatred of sin, in what they feel of the dreadful effects of that hatred. They know already by what they suffer, and will know hereafter to a greater degree, and far more affecting manner, that such is the opposition of God’s nature to sin, that it is like a consuming fire, which burns with infinite vehemence against it. They also will see the holiness of God, as exercised in his love to

righteousness and holiness, in the glory of Christ and his church; which also will be very affecting to devils and wicked men. And the exact justice of God will be manifested to them in the clearest and strongest, most convincing and affecting, light, at the day of judgment; when they will also see great and affecting demonstrations of the riches of his grace, in the marvelous fruits of his love to the vessels of mercy; when they shall see them at the right hand of Christ, shining as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and shall hear the blessed sentence pronounced upon them; and will be deeply affected with it, as seems naturally implied in [Luke xiii. 28, 29](#). The devils know God's truth, and therefore they believe his threatenings, and tremble in expectation of their accomplishment. And wicked men that now doubt his truth, and dare not trust his word, will hereafter, in the most convincing, affecting manner, find his word to be true in all that he has threatened, and will see that he is faithful to his promises in the rewards of his saints. Devils and damned men know that God is eternal and unchangeable; and therefore they despair of there ever being an end to their misery. Therefore it is manifest, that merely persons having an affecting sense of some, or even of all God's attributes, is no certain sign that they have the true grace of God in their hearts.

Object. Here possibly some may object against the force of the foregoing reasoning, that ungodly men in this world are in exceeding different circumstances from those in which the devils are, and from those which wicked men will be in at the day of judgment. Those things which are visible and present to these, are now future and invisible to the other; and wicked men in this world are in the body, that clogs and hinders the soul, and are encompassed with objects that blind and stupify them. Therefore it does not follow, that because the wicked in another world have a great apprehension and lively sense of such things without grace, ungodly men in their present state may have the same.

Ans. To this I answer: It is not supposed that ever men in this life have all those things which have been mentioned to the same degree that the devils and damned men have them.—None supposes that ever any in this life have terrors of conscience to an equal degree with them. It is not to be supposed that any mortal man, whether godly or ungodly, has an equal degree of speculative knowledge with the devil. And, as was just now observed, the wicked at the day of judgment, will have a vastly greater idea of the external glory of Christ than ever any have in the present state. So, doubtless, they will have a far greater sense of God's awful greatness and terrible majesty, than any could subsist under in this frail state. So we may well conclude, that the devils and wicked men in hell have a greater and more affecting sense of the vastness of eternity, and (in some respects) a greater sense of the importance of the things of another world, than any here have; and they have also longings after salvation to a higher degree than any wicked men in this world.

But yet it is evident that men in this world may have things of the same kind with devils and damned men; the same sort of light in the understanding; the same views and affections,

the same sense of things, the same kind of impressions on the mind and on the heart. The objection is against the conclusiveness of that reasoning which is the apostle's more properly than mine. The apostle judged it a conclusive argument against such as thought their believing there was one God an evidence of their being gracious, that the devils believed the same. So the argument is exactly the same against such as think they have grace, because they believe God is a holy God, or because they have a sense of the awful majesty of God.—The same may be observed of other things that have been mentioned. My text has reference, not only to the act of the understandings of devils in believing, but to that affection of their hearts which accompanies the views they have; as trembling is an effect of the affection of the heart. Which shows, that if men have both the same views of understanding, and also the same affections of heart, that the devils have, it is no sign of grace.

And as to the particular degree to which these things may be carried in men in this world without grace, it appears not safe to make use of it as an infallible rule to determine men's state. I know not where we have any rule to go by, to fix the precise degree in which God by his providence, or his common influences on the mind, will excite in wicked men in this world, the same views and affections which the wicked have in another world; which, it is manifest, the former are capable of as well as the latter, having the same faculties and principles of soul; and which views and affections, it is evident, they often are actually the subjects of in some degree, some in a greater and some in a less degree. The infallible evidences of grace which are laid down in Scripture are of another kind: they are all of a holy and spiritual nature; and therefore things of that kind which a heart that is wholly carnal and corrupt cannot receive or experience, *1 Cor. ii. 14*. I might also here add, that observation and experience, in very many instances, seem to confirm what Scripture and reason teaches in these things.

The second use may be of self-examination.

Let the things which have been observed put all on examining themselves, and inquiring, whether they have any better evidences of saving grace, than such as have been mentioned.

We see how the infallible Spirit of God, in the text, plainly represents the things of which the devils are the subjects, as no sure signs of grace. And we have now, in some instances, observed how far the devils and damned men go, and will go, in their experience, their knowledge of divine things, their belief of truth, their awakenings and terrors of conscience, their conviction of guilt, and of the justice of God in their eternal dreadful damnation, their longings after salvation, their sight of the external glory of Christ and heavenly things, their sense of the vast importance of the things of religion, and another world; their sense of the awful greatness and terrible majesty of God, yea, of all God's attributes. These things may well put us on serious self-examination, whether we have any thing to evidence our good estate, beyond what the devils have. Christ said to his disciples, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the

kingdom of heaven,” so the Spirit of Christ, in his apostle James, does in effect say, in my text, except what you experience in your souls go beyond the experiences of the devils, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God.

Here, it may be, some will be ready to say, I have something besides all these things; what the devils have not, even love and joy.

I answer, you may have something besides the experiences of devils, and yet nothing beyond them. Though the experience be different, yet it may not be owing to any different principle, but only the different circumstances under which these principles are exercised. The principles from whence the fore-mentioned things in devils and damned men arise, are these two, nature understanding and self-love. It is from these principles of natural understanding and self-love, as exercised about their own dispositions and actions, and God as their judge, that they have natural conscience, and have such convictions of conscience as have been spoken of. It is from these principles that they have such a sense of the importance of the things of religion, and the eternal world, and such longings after salvation. It is from the joint exercise of these two principles that they are so sensible of the awful majesty of God, and of all the attributes of the divine nature, and so greatly affected with them. And it is from these principles, joined with external sense, the wicked, at the day of judgment, will have so great an apprehension of, and will be so greatly affected by, the external glory of Christ and his saints. And that you have a kind of love or gratitude and joy, which devils and damned men have not, may possibly not arise from any other principles in your heart different from these two, but only from these principles as exercised in different circumstances. As for instance, your being a subject of the restraining grace of God, and under circumstances of hope. The natural understanding and self-love of devils possibly might affect them in the same manner if they were in the same circumstances. If your love to God has its first source from nothing else than a supposed immediate divine witness, or any other supposed evidence, that Christ died for you in particular, and that God loves you; it springs from no higher principles than self-love; which is a principle that reigns in the hearts of devils. Self-love is sufficient, without grace, to cause men to love those that love them; [Luke vi. 32.](#) “For if ye love them which love you, what thank have you? For sinners also love those that love them.” And would not the hearts of devils be filled with great joy, if they, by any means, should take up a confident persuasion that God had pardoned them, and was become their friend, and that they should be delivered from that wrath of which they now are in trembling expectation. If the devils go so far as you have heard, even in their circumstances, being totally cast off, and given up to unrestrained wickedness, being without hope, knowing that God is and ever will be their enemy, they suffering his wrath without mercy: how far may we reasonably suppose they might go, in imitation of grace and pious experience, if they had the same degree of knowledge, as clear views, and as strong conviction, under circumstances of hope, and offers of mercy; and being the subjects of common grace, re-



straining their corruptions, and assisting and exciting the natural principles of reason, conscience, &c! Such things, or any thing like them, in the heart of a sinner in this world; at the same time that he, from some strong impression on his imagination, has suddenly, after great terrors, imbibed a confidence, that now this great God is his Friend and Father, has released him from all the misery he feared, and has promised him eternal happiness: I say, such things would, doubtless, vastly heighten his ecstasy of joy, and raise the exercise of natural gratitude (that principle from whence sinners love those that love them), and would occasion a great imitation of many graces in strong exercises. Is it any wonder then that multitudes under such a sort of affection are deceived? Especially when they have devils to help forward the delusion, whose great subtlety has chiefly been exercised in deceiving mankind through all past generations.

*Inquiry.* Here possibly some may be ready to inquire, if there be so many things which men may experience from no higher principles than are in the minds and hearts of devils; what are those exercises and affections that are of a higher nature, which I must find in my heart, and which I may justly look upon as sure signs of the saving grace of God's Spirit?

*Answer.* I answer, those experiences and affections which are good evidences of grace, differ from all that the devils have, and all that can arise from such principles as are in their hearts, in two things, viz., their foundation and their tendency.

1. They differ in their foundation, or in that belonging to them which is the foundation of all the rest that pertains to them, viz., an apprehension of sense of the supreme holy beauty and comeliness of divine things, as they are in themselves, or in their own nature.

Of this the devils and damned in hell are, and for ever will be, entirely destitute. This the devils once had, while they stood in their integrity; but they wholly lost it when they fell. And this is the only thing that can be mentioned pertaining to the devil's apprehension and sense of the Divine Being, that he did lose. Nothing else belonging to the knowledge of God, can be devised, of which he is destitute. It has been observed, that there is no one attribute of the divine nature, but what he knows, with a strong and very affecting conviction. This I think is evident and undeniable. But to the supreme beauty of the divine nature he is altogether blind. He sees no more of it, than a man born perfectly blind does of colors. The great sight he has of the attributes of God gives him an idea and strong sense of his awful majesty, but no idea of his beauty and comeliness. Though he has seen so much of God's wonderful works of power, wisdom, holiness, justice, and truth, and his wonderful works of grace to mankind, of so many thousand years, and has had occasion to observe them with the strongest attention; yet all serves not to give him the least sense of his divine beauty. And though the devils should continue to exercise their mighty powers of mind with the strongest intention; and should take things in all possible views, in every order and arrangement; yet they never will see this. So little akin is the knowledge they have of God of that kind, the more do they hate God. That wherein the beauty of the divine nature does most essentially

consist, viz., his holiness, or moral excellency, appears in their eyes furthest from beauty. It is on that very account chiefly that he appears hateful to them. The more holiness they see in him, the more hateful he appears: the greater their sight is of his holiness, the higher is their hatred of him raised. And because of their hatred of his holiness, they hate him the more, the more they see of his other attributes. They would hate a holy Being, whatever his other attributes were; but they hate such a holy Being the worse, for his being infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, &c, more than they would do, if they saw him in less power and less wisdom.

The wicked, at the day of judgment, will see everything else in Christ, but his beauty and amiableness. There is no one quality or property of his person, that can be thought of, but what will be set before them in the strongest light at that day, but only such as consist in this. They will see him coming in the clouds of heaven, “in power, and great glory, in the glory of his Father.” They will have that view of his external glory, which is vastly beyond what we can imagine; and they will have the strongest and most convincing demonstrations of all his attributes and perfections. They will have a sense of his great majesty, that will be, as it were, infinitely affecting to them. They shall be made to know effectually, “that he is the Lord.” They shall see what he is, and what he does; his nature and works shall appear in the strongest view: but his infinite beauty and amiableness, which is all in all, and without which every other property is nothing, and worse than nothing, they will not see.

Therefore in a sight or sense of this fundamentally consists the difference between the saving grace of God’s Spirit, and the experiences of the devils and damned souls. This is the foundation of every thing else that is distinguishing in true Christian experience. This is the foundation of the faith of God’s elect. This gives the mind a saving belief of the truth of divine things. It is a view of the excellency of the gospel, or sense of the divine beauty and amiableness of the scheme of doctrine there exhibited, that savingly convinces the mind that it is indeed divine or of God. This account of the matter is plainly implied; [2 Cor. iv. 3, 4](#). “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them.” And, [verse 6](#), “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” It is very evident that a saving belief of the gospel, is here spoken of by the apostle as arising from a view of the divine glory or beauty of the things it exhibits. It is by this view that the soul of a true convert is enabled savingly to see the sufficiency of Christ for his salvation. He that has his eyes opened to behold the divine superlative beauty and loveliness of Jesus Christ, is convinced of his sufficiency to stand as a Mediator between him, a guilty hell-deserving wretch, and an infinitely holy God,

in an exceeding different manner than ever he can be convinced by the arguments of authors or preachers, however excellent.

When he once comes to see Christ's divine loveliness, he wonders no more that he is thought worthy by God the Father to be accepted for the vilest sinner. Now it is not difficult for him to conceive how the blood of Christ should be esteemed by God so precious as to be worthy to be accepted as a compensation for the greatest sins. The soul now properly sees the preciousness of Christ, and so does properly see and understand the very ground and reason of his acceptableness to God, and the value God sets on his blood, obedience, and intercession. This satisfies the poor guilty soul, and gives it rest, when the finest and most elaborate discourses about the sufficiency of Christ, and suitableness of the way of salvation, would not do it. When a man comes to see the proper foundation of faith and affiance with his own eyes, then he believes savingly. "He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, hath everlasting life," [John vi. 40](#). When Christ thus manifests God's name to men, then they believe that all things whatsoever God has given to Christ are of him, and believes that Christ was sent of God," [John xvii. 6, 8](#). And "they that thus know Christ's name will trust in him," [Psalm ix. 10](#). In order to true faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God is revealed in men, [Gal. i. 15, 16](#). And it is this sight of the divine beauty of Christ, that bows the wills, and draws the hearts of men. A sight of the greatness of God in his attributes, may overwhelm men, and be more than they can endure; but the enmity and opposition of the heart may remain in its full strength, and the will remain inflexible. Whereas one glimpse of the moral and spiritual glory of God, and the supreme amiableness of Jesus Christ shining into the heart, overcomes and abolishes this opposition, and inclines the soul to Christ, as it were, by an omnipotent power. So that now, not only the understanding, but the will and the whole soul, receives and embraces the Savior. This is most certainly the discovery, which is the first internal foundation of a saving faith in Christ in the soul of the true convert, and not any immediate outward or inward witness, that Christ loves him, or that he died for him in particular, and is his Savior; so begetting confidence and joy, and seeming love to Christ, because he loves him. By such faith and conversion (demonstrably vain and counterfeit), multitudes have been deluded. The sight of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, works true supreme love to God. This is a sight of the proper foundation of supreme love to God, viz., the supreme loveliness of his nature; and a love to him on this ground is truly above any thing that can come from a mere principle of self-love, which is in the hearts of devils as well as men. And this begets true spiritual and holy joy in the soul, which is indeed joy in God, and glorying in him, and not rejoicing in ourselves.

This sight of the beauty of divine things will excite true desires and longings of soul after those things: not like the longings of devils, but natural free desires; the desires of appetite, the thirstings of a new nature, as a new-born babe desires the mother's breast; and





as a hungry man longs for some pleasant food he thinks of; or as the thirsty hart pants after the cool and clear stream.

This sense of divine beauty is the first thing in the actual change made in the soul in true conversion, and is the foundation of every thing else belonging to that change; as is evident by those words of the apostle, [2 Cor. iii. 18](#). “But we all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as the Spirit of the Lord.”

2. Truly gracious affections and exercises of mind differ from such as are counterfeit, which arise from no higher principles than are in the hearts of devils, in their tendency; and that in these two respects.

(1.) They are of a tendency and influence very contrary to that which was especially the devil’s sin, even pride. That pride was in peculiar manner the devil’s sin, is manifest from [1 Tim. iii. 6](#). “Not a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” False and delusive experiences evermore tend to this, though oftentimes under the disguise of great and extraordinary humility. Spiritual pride is the prevailing temper and general character of hypocrites, deluded with false discoveries and affections.—They are in general of a disposition directly contrary to those two things belonging to the Christian temper, directed to by the apostle; the one in [Rom. xii. 16](#). “Be not wise in your own conceit,” and the other in [Phil. ii. 3](#). “Let each esteem others better than themselves.” False experience is conceited of itself, and affected with itself. Thus he that has false humility is much affected to think how he is abased before God. He that has false love is affected, when he thinks of the greatness of his love. The very food and nourishment of false experience is to view itself, and take much notice of itself; and its very breath and life is to be some way showing itself.—Whereas truly gracious views and affections are of a quite contrary tendency. They nourish no self-conceit; no exalting notion of the man’s own righteousness, experience, or privileges; no high conceit of his humiliations. They incline to no ostentation, nor self-exaltation, under any disguise whatsoever. But that sense of the supreme, holy beauty and glory of God and Christ, which is the foundation of them, mortifies pride, and truly humbles the soul. It not only cuts off some of the outermost branches, but it strikes at the very root of pride; it alters the very nature and disposition of the heart. The light of God’s beauty, and that alone, truly shows the soul its own deformity, and effectually inclines it to exalt God and abase itself.

(2.) These gracious exercises and affections differ from the other in their tendency to destroy Satan’s interest; and that in two respects:

First, in the person himself. They cause the soul to hate every evil and false way, and to produce universal holiness of heart and life, disposing him to make the service of God, the promotion of his glory and the good of mankind, the very business of his life: whereas those false discoveries and affections have not this effect. There may indeed be a great zeal, and

a great deal of what is called religion; but it is not a truly Christian zeal: it is not being zealous of good works. Their religion is not the service of God; it is not seeking and serving God; but indeed seeking and serving themselves.—Though there may be a change of life, it is not a change from every wicked way to a uniform Christian life and practice, but only turning the stream of corruption from one channel to another. Thus the apostle James distinguishes, in our context, a true faith from the faith of devils; [James ii. 19, 20](#). “Thou believest that there is one God. The devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” And thus the apostle John distinguishes true communion with God; [1 John i. 6, 7](#). “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” By this he distinguishes true spiritual knowledge, in [verses ii. 3, 4](#). “Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” And hereby the same apostle distinguishes true love, in [verses iii. 18, 19](#). “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed (in work, as the word signifies) and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.”

2. Truly gracious experiences have a tendency to destroy Satan’s interest in the world.

When false religion, consisting in the counterfeits of the operations of the Spirit of God, and in high pretences and great appearances of inward experimental religion, prevails among a people—though for the present it may surprise many, and may be the occasion of alarming and awakening some sinners—tends greatly to wound and weaken the cause of vital religion, and to strengthen the interest of Satan, desperately to harden the hearts of sinners, exceedingly to fill the world with prejudice against the power of godliness, to promote infidelity and licentious principles and practices, to build up and make strong the devil’s kingdom in the world, more than open vice profaneness, or professed atheism, or public persecution, and perhaps more than any thing else whatsoever.

But it is not so with true religion in its genuine beauty.—That, if it prevails in great power, will doubtless excite the rage of the devil, and many other enemies of religion. However, it gives great advantage to its friends, and exceedingly strengthens their cause, and tends to convince or confound their enemies. True religion is a divine light in the souls of the saints; and as it shines out in the conversation before men, it tends to induce others to glorify God. There is nothing like it (as to means) to awaken the consciences of men, to convince infidels, and to stop the mouths of gainsayers.—Though men naturally hate the power of godliness, yet when they see the fruits of it, there is a witness in their consciences in its favor. “He that serveth Christ in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, is acceptable to God, and approved of men,” [Rom. xiv. 17, 18](#). The prevailing of true religion ever tends to its honor in the world, though it commonly is the occasion of great persecution.



It is a sure thing, the more it appears and is exemplified in the view of the world, the more will its honor, and the honor of its author, be advanced. [Phil. i. 11](#). “Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.”

The third use may be of exhortation, to seek those distinguishing qualifications and affections of soul which neither the devil, nor any unholy being, has or can have.

How excellent is that inward virtue and religion which consists in those! Herein consists the most excellent experiences of saints and angels in heaven. Herein consists the best experience of the man Christ Jesus, whether in his humbled or glorified state. Herein consists the image of God.—Yea, this is spoken of in Scripture as a communication of something of God’s own beauty and excellency. A participation of the divine nature, [2 Peter i. 4](#). A partaking of his holiness, [Heb. xii. 10](#). A partaking of Christ’s fullness, [John i. 16](#). Hereby the saints are filled with all the fullness of God, [Eph. iii. 18, 19](#). Hereby they have fellowship with both the Father and the Son, [1 John i. 3](#). that is, they communicate with them in their happiness. Yea, by means of this divine virtue, there is a mutual indwelling of God and the saints; [1 John iv. 16](#). “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

This qualification must render the person that has it excellent and happy indeed, and doubtless is the highest dignity and blessedness of any creature. This is the peculiar gift of God, which he bestows only on his special favorites. As to silver, gold, and diamonds, earthly crowns and kingdoms, he often throws them out to those whom he esteems as dogs and swine; but this is the peculiar blessing of his dear children. This is what flesh and blood cannot impart. God alone can bestow it. This was the special benefit which Christ died to procure for his elect, the most excellent token of his everlasting love; the chief fruit of his great labors, and the most precious purchase of his blood.

By this, above all other things, do men glorify God. By this, above all other things, do the saints shine as lights in the world, and are blessings to mankind. And this, above all things, tends to their own comfort; from hence arises that “peace which passeth all understanding,” and that “joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.” And this is that which will most certainly issue in the eternal salvation of those who have it. It is impossible that the soul possessing it should sink and perish. It is an immortal seed; it is eternal life begun; and therefore they that have it can never die. It is the dawning of the light of glory. It is the day-star risen in the heart, that is a sure forerunner of that sun’s rising which will bring on an everlasting day. This is that water which Christ gives, which is in him that drinks it “a well of water springing up into everlasting life,” [John iv. 14](#). It is something from heaven, of a heavenly nature, and tends to heaven. And those that have it, however they may now wander in a wilderness, or be tossed to and fro on a tempestuous ocean, shall certainly arrive in heaven at last, where this heavenly spark shall be increased and perfected, and the souls of the saints all be transformed into a bright and pure flame, and they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Amen.

**FIFTEEN SERMONS**

ON

**VARIOUS SUBJECTS.**



P R E F A C E .

The following Sermons were not transcribed with any view to a publication in this country. In the year 1773, I was desired by a gentleman in Scotland to transcribe a number of the author's sermons on some of the most plain, practical, and experimental subjects, that they might be printed there. The reader will hence see, that it was not the design to pick out the most curious and elaborate discourses, but those of a different stamp. Among the very numerous discourses on practical and experimental subjects out of which I was to choose, it was no easy task to determine which to publish and which to omit. And different persons would no doubt in this case judge differently. Many sermons equally worthy of the light as these, were omitted, and perhaps some that were more worthy: yet it is hoped that the public will judge these not unworthy of their acceptance and attention.

The reader cannot be insensible of the disadvantages attending all posthumous works, especially sermons, which are generally prepared only for the next sabbath, and for a particular congregation, and often in great haste, and amidst many avocations. Yet if in these sermons he shall find the most important truths exhibited, and pressed home on the conscience with that pungency which tends to awaken, convince, humble, and edify; if he shall find that serious strain of piety which, in spite of himself, forces upon him a serious frame of mind; if in the perusal he cannot but be ashamed and alarmed at himself, and in some measure feel the reality and weight of eternal things; if at least he, like Agrippa, shall be almost persuaded to be a Christian;—I presume he will not grudge the time requisite to peruse what is now offered him. These, if I mistake not, are the great ends to be aimed at in all sermons, whether preached or printed, and are ends which can never be accomplished by those modern fashionable discourses which are delivered under the name of sermons, but really are mere harangues on such moral subjects as have been much better handled by Cicero, Seneca, or the Spectator, and contain very little more of the gospel than is to be found in the heathen philosophers. That the important ends now mentioned may be indeed accomplished by this publication to every reader is the sincere desire of the public's humble servant,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

*New-Haven*, Dec. 21, 1779.

N. B. The reader will observe some sermons not dated. Those I suppose were written before the year 1733, when the author was thirty years of age; as in that year he began to date his sermons, and all written after that appear to be dated.

S E R M O N I . <sup>5 3</sup>

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SALVATION OF THE SOUL IS TO BE SOUGHT.

GEN. vi. 22.

*Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*

Concerning these words, I would observe three things:

1. What it was that God commanded Noah, to which these words refer. It was the building of an ark according to the particular direction of God, against the time when the flood of waters should come; and the laying up of food for himself, his family, and the other animals, which were to be preserved in the ark. We have the particular commands which God gave him respecting this affair, from the [14th verse](#), “Make thee an ark of gopher wood,” &c.

2. We may observe the *special design* of the work which God had enjoined upon Noah: it was to save himself and his family, when the rest of the world should be drowned. See ver. 17, 18.

3. We may observe Noah’s obedience. He obeyed God: *Thus did Noah*. And his obedience was thorough and universal: *According to all that God commanded him, so did he*. He not only began, but he went through his work, which God had commanded him to undertake for his salvation from the flood. To this obedience the apostle refers in [Heb. xi. 7](#). “By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.”

Doctrine.— *We should be willing to engage in and go through great undertakings, in order to our own salvation.*

The building of the ark, which was enjoined upon Noah, that he and his family might be saved, was a great undertaking: the ark was a building of vast size; the length of it being three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A cubit, till of late, was by learned men reckoned to be equal to a foot and a half of our measure. But lately some learned men of our nation have travelled into Egypt, and other ancient countries, and have measured some ancient buildings there, which are of several thousand years standing, and of which ancient histories give us the dimensions in cubits; particularly the pyramids of Egypt, which are standing entire at this day. By measuring these, and by comparing the measure in feet with the ancient accounts of their measure in cubits, a cubit is found to be almost two and twenty inches. Therefore learned men more lately reckon a cubit much larger than they did formerly. So that the ark reckoned so much larger every way, will appear to be almost of double the bulk which was formerly ascribed to it. According to this



computation of the cubit, it was more than five hundred and fifty feet long, about ninety feet broad, and about fifty feet in height.

To build such a structure, with all those apartments and divisions in it which were necessary, and in such a manner as to be fit to float upon the water for so long a time, was *then* a great undertaking. It took Noah, with all the workmen he employed, a hundred and twenty years, or thereabouts, to build it. For so long it was, that the Spirit of God strove, and the long-suffering God waited on the old world; as you may see in [Gen. vi. 3](#). “My Spirit shall not always strive with man; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” All this while the ark was a preparing, as appears by [1 Pet. iii. 20](#). “When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” It was a long time that Noah constantly employed himself in this business. Men would esteem that undertaking very great, which should keep them constantly employed even for one half of that time.—Noah must have had a great and constant care upon his mind for these one hundred and twenty years, in superintending this work, and in seeing that all was done exactly according to the directions which God had given him.

Not only was Noah himself continually employed, but it required a great number of workmen to be constantly employed, during all that time, in procuring, and collecting, and fitting the materials, and in putting them together in due form. How great a thing was it for Noah to undertake such a work! For beside the continual care and labour, it was a work of vast expense. It is not probable that any of that wicked generation would put to a finger to help forward such a work, which doubtless they believed was merely the fruit of Noah’s folly, without full wages. Noah must needs have been very rich, to be able to bear the expense of such a work, and to pay so many workmen for so long a time. It would have been a very great expense for a prince; and doubtless Noah was very rich, as Abraham and Job were afterwards. But it is probable that Noah spent all his worldly substance in this work, thus manifesting his faith in the word of God, by selling all he had, as believing there would surely come a flood, which would destroy all; so that if he should keep what he had, it would be of no service to him. Herein he has set us an example, showing us how we ought to sell all for our salvation.

Noah’s undertaking was of great difficulty, as it exposed him to the continual reproaches of all his neighbours, for that whole one hundred and twenty years. None of them believed what he told them of a flood which was about to drown the world. For a man to undertake such a vast piece of work, under a notion that it should be the means of saving him when the world should be destroyed, it made him the continual laughing-stock of the world. When he was about to hire workmen, doubtless all laughed at him, and we may suppose, that though the workmen consented to work for wages, yet they laughed at the folly of him who employed them. When the ark was begun, we may suppose that every one that passed by and saw such a huge hulk stand there, laughed at it, calling it *Noah’s folly*.

In these days, men are with difficulty brought to do or submit to that which makes them the objects of the reproach of all their neighbours. Indeed, if while *some* reproach them, *others* stand by them and honour them, this will support them. But it is very difficult for a man to go on in a way wherein he makes himself the laughing-stock of the *whole* world, and wherein he can find none who do not despise him. Where is the man that can stand the shock of such a trial for twenty years?

But in such an undertaking as this, Noah, at the divine direction, engaged and went through it, that himself and his family might be saved from the common destruction which was shortly about to come on the world. He began, and also made an end: “According to all that God commanded him, so did he.”<sup>54</sup> Length of time did not weary him: he did not grow weary of his vast expense. He stood the shock of the derision of all his neighbours, and of all the world, year after year: he did not grow weary of being their laughing-stock, so as to give over his enterprise; but persevered in it till the ark was finished. After this, he was at the trouble and charge of procuring stores for the maintenance of his family, and of all the various kinds of creatures, for so long a time. Such an undertaking he engaged in and went through in order to a *temporal* salvation. How great an undertaking then should men be willing to engage in and go through in order to their *eternal* salvation! A salvation from an eternal deluge; from being overwhelmed with the billows of God’s wrath, of which Noah’s flood was but a shadow.

I shall particularly handle this doctrine under the three following propositions.

I. There is a work or business which must be undertaken and accomplished by men, if they would be saved.

II. This business is a *great* undertaking.

III. Men should be willing to enter upon and go through this undertaking, though it be great, seeing it is for their *own salvation*.

I. Prop. There is a work or business which men must enter upon and accomplish, in order to their salvation.—Men have no reason to expect to be saved in idleness, or to go to heaven in a way of doing nothing. No; in order to it, there is a great work, which must be not only begun, but finished.—I shall speak upon this proposition, in answer to two inquiries.

Inq. 1. What is this work or business which must be undertaken and accomplished in order to the salvation of men.

Ans. It is the work of seeking salvation in a way of constant observance of all the duty to which God directs us in his word. If we would be saved, we must seek salvation. For although men do not obtain heaven of themselves, yet they do not go thither accidentally, or without any intention or endeavours of their own. God, in his word, hath directed men to

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54 [Gen. vi. 22.](#)



seek their salvation as they would hope to obtain it. There is a race that is set before them, which they must run, and in that race come off victors, in order to their winning the prize.

The Scriptures have told us what particular duties must be performed by us in order to our salvation. It is not sufficient that men seek their salvation only in the observance of *some* of those duties; but they must be observed universally. The work we have to do is not an obedience only to some, but to all the commands of God; a compliance with every institution of worship; a diligent use of all the appointed means of grace; a doing of all duty towards God and towards man.—It is not sufficient that men have some respect to all the commands of God, and that they may be said to seek their salvation in some sort of observance of all the commands; but they must be devoted to it. They must not make this a business by the bye, or a thing in which they are negligent and careless, or which they do with a slack hand; but it must be their great business, being attended to as their great concern. They must not only seek, but strive; they must do what their hand findeth to do with their might, as men thoroughly engaged in their minds, and influenced and set forward by great desire and strong resolution. They must act as those that see so much of the importance of religion above all other things, that every thing else must be as an occasional affair, and nothing must stand in competition with its duties. This must be *the one* thing they do; [Phil. iii. 13](#). “This one thing I do.”—It must be the business to which they make all other affairs give place, and to which they are ready to make other things a sacrifice. They must be ready to part with pleasures and honour, estate and life, and to sell all, that they may successfully accomplish this business.

It is required of every man, that he not only do *something* in this business, but that he should *devote* himself to it; which implies that he should give up himself to it, all his affairs, and all his temporal enjoyments. This is the import of taking up the cross, of taking Christ’s yoke upon us, and of denying ourselves to follow Christ. The rich young man, who came kneeling to Christ to know what he should do to be saved, ([Mark x. 17.](#)) in some sense sought salvation, but did not obtain it. In some sense he kept all the commands from his youth up; but was not cordially devoted to this business.—He had not made a sacrifice to it of all his enjoyments, as appeared when Christ came to try him; he would not part with his estate for him.

It is not only necessary that men should seem to be very much engaged, and appear as if they were devoted to their duty for a little while; but there must be a *constant* devotedness, in a persevering way, as Noah was to the business of the building the ark, going on with that great, difficult, and expensive affair, till it was finished, and till the flood came.—Men must not only be diligent in the use of the means of grace, and be anxiously engaged to escape eternal ruin, till they obtain hope and comfort; but afterwards they must persevere in the duties of religion, till the flood come, the flood of death.—Not only must the faculties, strength, and possessions of men be devoted to this work, but also their time and their lives:



they must give up their whole lives to it, even to the very day when God causes the storms and floods to come. This is the work or business which men have to do in order to their salvation.

Inq. 2. Why is it needful that men should undertake to go through such a work in order to their salvation?

Ans. 1. Not to *merit* salvation, or to recommend them to the saving mercy of God. Men are not saved on the *account* of any work of theirs, and yet they are not saved *without* works. If we merely consider what it is for which, or on the account of which, men are saved, no work at all in men is necessary to their salvation. In this respect they are saved wholly without any work of theirs, [Tit. iii. 5](#). “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”—We must indeed be saved on the account of works; but not our own. It is on account of the works which Christ hath done for us. Works are the fixed price of eternal life; it is fixed by an eternal, unalterable rule of righteousness. But since the fall there is no hope of *our* doing these works, without salvation offered freely without money and without price.—But,

2. Though it be not needful that we do any thing to merit salvation, which Christ hath fully merited for all who believe in him; yet God, for wise and holy ends, hath appointed, that we should come to final salvation in no other way, but that of good works done by us.

God did not save Noah on account of the labour and expense he was at in building the ark. Noah’s salvation from the flood was an instance of the free and distinguishing mercy of God. Nor did God stand in need of Noah’s care, or cost, or labour, to build an ark. The same power which created the world, and which brought the flood of waters upon the earth, could have made the ark in an instant, without any care or cost to Noah, or any of the labour of those many workmen who were employed for so long a time. Yet God was pleased to appoint, that Noah should be saved in this way.—So God hath appointed that man should not be saved without his undertaking and doing this work of which I have been speaking; and therefore we are commanded “to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling,” [Philip. ii. 12](#).

There are many wise ends to be answered by the establishment of such a work as prerequisite to salvation. The glory of God requires it. For although God stand in no need of any thing that men do to recommend them to his saving mercy, yet it would reflect much on the glory of God’s wisdom and holiness, to bestow salvation on men in such a way as tends to encourage them in sloth and wickedness; or in any other way than that which tends to promote diligence and holiness. Man was made capable of action, with many powers of both body and mind fitting him for it. He was made for business and not idleness; and the main business for which he was made, was that of religion. Therefore it becomes the wisdom

of God to bestow salvation and happiness on man, in such a way as tends most to promote his end in this respect, and to stir him up to a diligent use of his faculties and talents.

It becomes the wisdom of God so to order it, that things of great value and importance should not be obtained without great labour and diligence. Much human learning and great moral accomplishments are not to be obtained without care and labour. It is wisely so ordered, in order to maintain in man a due sense of the value of those things which are excellent. If great things were in common easily obtained, it would have a tendency to cause men to slight and undervalue them. Men commonly despise those things which are cheap, and which are obtained without difficulty.

Although the work of obedience performed by men, be not necessary in order to merit salvation; yet it is necessary in order to their being prepared for it. Men cannot be prepared for salvation without seeking it in such a way as hath been described. This is necessary in order that they have a proper sense of their own necessities, and unworthiness; and in order that they be prepared and disposed to prize salvation when bestowed, and be properly thankful to God for it. The requisition of so great a work in order to our salvation is no way inconsistent with the freedom of the offer of salvation; as after all, it is both offered and bestowed without any respect to our work, as the price or meritorious cause of our salvation, as I have already explained. Besides, salvation bestowed in this way is better for us, more for our advantage and happiness, both in this and the future world, than if it were given without this requisition.

II. Prop. This work or business, which must be done in order to the salvation of men, is a *great* undertaking. It often appears so to men upon whom it is urged. Utterly to break off from all their sins, and to give up themselves for ever to the business of religion, without making a reserve of any one lust, submitting to and complying with every command of God, in all cases, and persevering therein, appears to many so great a thing, that they are in vain urged to undertake it. In so doing it seems to them, that they should give up themselves to a perpetual bondage. The greater part of men therefore choose to put it off, and keep it at as great a distance as they can. They cannot bear to think of entering immediately on such a hard service, and rather than do it, they will run the risk of eternal damnation, by putting it off to an uncertain future opportunity.

Although the business of religion is far from really being as it appears to such men, for the devil will be sure, if he can, to represent it in false colours to sinners, and make it appear as black and terrible as he can; yet it is indeed a great business, a great undertaking, and it is fit that all who are urged to it, should count the cost beforehand, and be sensible of the difficulty attending it. For though the devil discourages many from this undertaking, by representing it to be more difficult than it really is; yet with others he takes a contrary course, and flatters them it is a very easy thing, a trivial business, which may be done at any time when they please, and so imboldens them to defer it from that consideration. But let none

conceive any other notion of that business of religion, which is absolutely necessary to their salvation, than that it is a great undertaking. It is so on the following accounts.

1. It is a business of great *labour* and *care*. There are many commands to be obeyed, many duties to be done, duties to God, duties to our neighbour, and duties to ourselves.—There is much opposition in the way of these duties from *without*. There is a subtle and powerful adversary laying all manner of blocks in the way. There are innumerable temptations of Satan to be resisted and repelled. There is great opposition from the world, innumerable snares laid on every side, many rocks and mountains to be passed over, many streams to be passed through, and many flatteries and enticements from a vain world to be resisted. There is a great opposition from *within*; a dull and sluggish heart, which is exceedingly averse from that activity in religion which is necessary; a carnal heart, which is averse from religion and spiritual exercises, and continually drawing the contrary way; and a proud and a deceitful heart, in which corruption will be exerting itself in all manner of ways. So that nothing can be done to any effect without a most strict and careful watch, great labour and strife.

2. It is a *constant* business.—In that business which requires great labour, men love now and then to have a space of relaxation, that they may rest from their extraordinary labour. But this is a business which must be followed every day. [Luke ix. 23](#). “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily* and follow me.”—We must never give ourselves any relaxation from this business; it must be continually prosecuted day after day. If sometimes we make a great stir and bustle concerning religion, but then lay all aside to take our ease, and do so from time to time, it will be of no good effect; we had even as good do nothing at all. The business of religion so followed is never like to come to any good issue, nor is the work ever like to be accomplished to any good purpose.

3. It is a great undertaking, as it is an undertaking of *great expense*.—We must therein sell all: we must follow this business at the expense of all our unlawful pleasures and delights, at the expense of our carnal ease, often at the expense of our substance, of our credit among men, the good will of our neighbours, at the expense of all our earthly friends, and even at the expense of life itself. Herein it is like Noah’s undertaking to build the ark, which, as hath been shown, was a costly undertaking: it was expensive to his reputation among men, exposing him to be the continual laughing-stock of all his neighbours and of the whole world: and it was expensive to his estate, and probably cost him all that he had.

4. Sometimes the fear, trouble, and exercise of mind, which are undergone respecting this business, and the salvation of the soul, are great and long continued, before any comfort is obtained. Sometimes persons in this situation labour long in the dark, and sometimes, as it were, in the very fire, they having great distress of conscience, great fears, and many perplexing temptations, before they obtain light and comfort to make their care and labour more easy to them. They sometimes earnestly, and for a long time, seek comfort, but find

it not, because they seek it not in a right manner, nor in the right objects. God therefore hides his face. They cry, but God doth not answer their prayers. They strive, but all seems in vain. They seem to themselves not at all to get forward, or nearer to a deliverance from sin; but to go backward, rather than forward. They see no glimmerings of light: things rather appear darker and darker. Insomuch that they are often ready to be discouraged, and to sink under the weight of their present distress, and under the prospect of future misery. In this situation, and under these views, some are almost driven to despair.

Many, after they have obtained some saving comfort, are again involved in darkness and trouble. It is with them as it was with the Christian Hebrews, [Heb. x. 32](#). “After ye were illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” Some through a melancholy habit and distemper of body, together with Satan’s temptations, spend a great part of their lives in distress and darkness, even after they have had some saving comfort.

5. It is a business which, by reason of the many difficulties, snares, and dangers that attend it, requires much instruction, consideration, and *counsel*. There is no business wherein men stand in need of counsel more than in this. It is a difficult undertaking, a hard matter to proceed aright in it. There are ten thousand wrong ways, which men may take; there are many labyrinths wherein many poor souls are entangled and never find the way out; there are many rocks on which thousands of souls have suffered shipwreck, for want of having steered aright.

Men of themselves know not how to proceed in this business, any more than the children of Israel in the wilderness knew where to go without the guidance of the pillar of cloud and fire. There is great need that they search the Scriptures, and give diligent heed to the instructions and directions contained in them, as to a light shining in a dark place; and that they ask counsel of those skilled in these matters. And there is no business in which men have so much need of seeking to God by prayer, for his counsel, and that he would lead them in the right way, and show them the strait gate. “For strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; <sup>55</sup>” yea there are none that find it without direction from heaven.

The building of the ark was a work of great difficulty on this account, that Noah’s wisdom was not sufficient to direct him how to make such a building as should be a sufficient security against such a flood, and which should be a convenient dwelling-place for himself, his family, and all the various kinds of beasts, and birds, and creeping things. Nor could he ever have known how to construct this building, had not God directed him.

6. This business never ends till *life* ends. They that undertake this laborious, careful, expensive, self-denying business, must not expect to rest from their labours, till death shall have put an end to them. The long continuance of the work which Noah undertook was

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55 [Matt. vii. 14](#).

what especially made it a great undertaking. This also was what made the travel of the children of Israel through the wilderness appear so great to them, that it was continued for so long a time. Their spirits failed, they were discouraged, and had not a heart to go through with so great an undertaking.

But such is *this* business that it runs parallel with life, whether it be longer or shorter. Although we should live to a great age, our race and warfare will not be finished till death shall come. We must not expect that an end will be put to our labour, and care, and strife by any hope of a good estate which we may obtain. Past attainments and past success will not excuse us from what remains for the future, nor will they make future constant labour and care not necessary to our salvation.

III. Men should be willing to engage in and go through this business, however great and difficult it may seem to them, seeing it is for their *own salvation*.—Because,

1. A deluge of wrath will *surely come*. The inhabitants of the old world would not believe that there would come such a flood of waters upon the earth, as that of which Noah told them, though he told them often; neither would they take any care to avoid the destruction. Yet such a deluge did come; nothing of all those things of which Noah had forewarned them, failed.

So there will surely come a more dreadful deluge of divine wrath on this wicked world. We are often forewarned of it in the Scriptures, and the world, as then, doth not believe any such thing. Yet the threatening will as certainly be accomplished, as the threatening denounced against the old world. A day of wrath is coming; it will come at its appointed season; it will not tarry, it shall not be delayed one moment beyond its appointed time.

2. All such as do not seasonably undertake and go through the great work mentioned will surely *be swallowed up* in this deluge. When the floods of wrath shall come, they will universally overwhelm the wicked world: all such as shall not have taken care to prepare an ark, will surely be swallowed up in it: they will find no other way of escape. In vain shall salvation be expected from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; for the flood shall be above the tops of all the mountains. Or if they shall hide themselves in the caves and dens of the mountains, there the waters of the flood will find them out, and there shall they miserably perish.

As those of the old world who were not in the ark perished, ([Gen. vii. 21-23.](#)) so all who shall not have secured to themselves a place in the spiritual ark of the gospel, shall perish much more miserably than the old world.—Doubtless the inhabitants of the old world had many contrivances to save themselves. Some, we may suppose, ascend to the tops of their houses, being driven out of one story to another, till at last they perished. Others climbed to the tops of high towers; who yet were washed thence by the boisterous waves of the rising flood. Some climbed to the tops of trees; others to the tops of mountains, and especially of

the highest mountains. But all was in vain; the flood sooner or later swallowed them all up; only Noah and his family, who had taken care to prepare an ark, remained alive.

So it will doubtless be at the end of the world, when Christ shall come to judge the world in righteousness. Some, when they shall look up and see him coming in the clouds of heaven, shall hide themselves in closets, and secret places in their houses. Others flying to the caves and dens of the earth, shall attempt to hide themselves there. Others shall call upon the rocks and mountains to fell on them, and cover them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.—So it will be after the sentence is pronounced, and wicked men see that terrible fire coming, which is to burn this world for ever, and which will be a deluge of fire, and will burn the earth even to the bottoms of the mountains, and to its very centre. (Deut. xxxii. 22.) “For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.” I say, when the wicked shall, after the sentence, see this great fire beginning to kindle, and to take hold of this earth; there will be many contrivances devised by them to escape, some flying to caves and holes in the earth, some hiding themselves in one place, and some in another. But let them hide themselves where they will, or let them do what they will, it will be utterly in vain. Every cave shall burn as an oven, the rocks and mountains shall melt with fervent heat, and if they could creep down to the very centre of the earth, still the heat would follow them, and rage with as much vehemence there, as on the very surface.

So when wicked men, who neglect their great work in their lifetime, who are not willing to go through the difficulty and labour of this work, draw near to death, they sometimes do many things to escape death, and put forth many endeavours to lengthen out their lives at least a little longer. For this end they send for physicians, and perhaps many are consulted, and their prescriptions are punctually observed. They also use many endeavours to save their souls from hell. They cry to God; they confess their past sins; they promise future reformation; and, oh! what would they not give for some small addition to their lives, or some hope of future happiness. But all proves in vain: God hath numbered their days and finished them; and as they have sinned away the day of grace, they must even bear the consequence, and for ever lie down in sorrow.

3. The destruction, when it shall come, will be *infinitely terrible*. The destruction of the old world by the flood was terrible; but that eternal destruction which is coming on the wicked is infinitely more so. That flood of waters was but an image of this awful flood of divine vengeance. When the waters poured down, more like spouts or cataracts, or the fall of a great river, than like rain; what an awful appearance was there of the wrath of God! This however is but an image of that terrible outpouring of the wrath of God which shall be for ever, yea for ever and ever, on wicked men. And when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the waters burst forth out of the ground, as though they had issued out of

the womb, ([Job xxxviii. 8.](#)) this was an image of the mighty breakings forth of God's wrath, which shall be, when the floodgates of wrath shall be drawn up. How may we suppose that the wicked of the old world repented that they had not hearkened to the warnings which Noah had given them, when they saw these dreadful things, and saw that they must perish! How much more will you repent your refusing to hearken to the gracious warnings of the gospel, when you shall see the fire of God's wrath against you, pouring down from heaven, and bursting on all sides out of the bowels of the earth!

4. Though the work which is necessary in order to man's salvation be a great work, yet it is not impossible. What was required of Noah, doubtless appeared a very great and difficult undertaking. Yet he undertook it with resolution, and he was carried through it. So if we undertake this work with the same good will and resolution, we shall undoubtedly be successful. However difficult it be, yet multitudes have gone through it, and have obtained salvation by the means. It is not a work beyond the faculties of our nature, nor beyond the opportunities which God giveth us. If men will but take warning and hearken to counsel, if they will but be sincere and in good earnest, be seasonable in their work, take their opportunities, use their advantages, be steadfast and not wavering; they shall not fail.

#### **APPLICATION.**

The use I would make of this doctrine, is to exhort all to undertake and go through this great work, which they have to do in order to their salvation, and this, let the work seem ever so great and difficult. If your nature be averse to it, and there seems to be very frightful things in the way, so that your heart is ready to fail at the prospect; yet seriously consider what has been said, and act a wise part. Seeing it is for yourselves, for your own salvation; seeing it is for so great a salvation, for your deliverance from eternal destruction; and seeing it is of such absolute necessity in order to your salvation, that the deluge of divine wrath will come, and there will be no escaping it without preparing an ark; is it not best for you to undertake the work, engage in it with your might, and go through it, though this cannot be done without great labour, care, difficulty, and expense?

I would by no means flatter you concerning this work, or go about to make you believe, that you shall find an easy light business of it: no, I would not have you expect any such thing. I would have you sit down and count the cost; and if you cannot find it in your hearts to engage in a great, hard, laborious, and expensive undertaking, and to persevere in it to the end of life, pretend not to be religious. Indulge yourselves in your ease; follow your pleasures; eat, drink, and be merry; even conclude to go to hell in that way, and never make any more pretences of seeking your salvation. Here consider several things in particular.

1. How *often* you have been warned of the approaching flood of God's wrath. How frequently you have been told of hell, heard the threatenings of the word of God set before you, and been warned to flee from the wrath to come. It is with you as it was with the inhab-



itants of the old world. Noah warned them abundantly of the approaching flood, and counselled them to take care for their safety. [1 Pet. iii. 19, 20.](#)—Noah warned them in words; and he preached to them. He warned them also in his actions. His building the ark, which took him so long a time, and in which he employed so many hands, was a standing warning to them. All the blows of the hammer and axe, during the progress of that building, were so many calls and warnings to the old world, to take care for their preservation from the approaching destruction. Every knock of the workmen was a knock of Jesus Christ at the door of their hearts: but they would not hearken. All these warnings, though repeated every day, and continued for so long a time, availed nothing.

Now, is it not much so with you, as it was with them? How often have you been warned! how have you heard the warning knocks of the gospel, sabbath after sabbath, for these many years! Yet how have some of you no more regarded them than the inhabitants of the old world regarded the noise of the workmen's tools in Noah's ark!

Obj. But here possibly it may be objected by some, that though it be true they have often been told of hell, yet they never saw any thing of it, and therefore they cannot realize it that there is any such place. They have often heard of hell, and are told that wicked men, when they die, go to a most dreadful place of torment; that hereafter there will be a day of judgment, and that the world will be consumed by fire. But how do they know that it is really so? How do they know what becomes of those wicked men that die? None of them come back to tell them. They have nothing to depend on but the word which they hear. And how do they know that all is not a cunningly-devised fable?

Ans. The sinners of the old world had the very same objection against what Noah told them of a flood about to drown the world. Yet the bare word of God proved to be sufficient evidence that such a thing was coming. What was the reason that none of the many millions then upon earth believed what Noah said, but this, that it was a strange thing, that no such thing had ever before been known? And what a strange story must that of Noah have appeared to them, wherein he told them of a deluge of waters above the tops of the mountains! Therefore it is said, [Heb. xi. 7.](#) that "Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet." It is probable, none could conceive how it could be that the whole world should be drowned in a flood of waters; and all were ready to ask, where there was water enough for it; and by what means it should be brought upon the earth? Noah did not tell them how it should be brought to pass; he only told them that God had said that it should be: and that proved to be enough. The event showed their folly in not depending on the mere word of God, who was able, who knew how to bring it to pass, and who could not lie.

In like manner the word of God will prove true, in threatening a flood of eternal wrath to overwhelm all the wicked. You will believe it when the event shall prove it, when it shall be too late to profit by the belief. The word of God will never fail; nothing is so sure as that: heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God shall not pass away. It is firmer than



mountains of brass. At the end, the vision will speak and not lie. The decree shall bring forth, and all wicked men shall know that God is the Lord, that he is a God of truth, and that they are fools who will not depend on his word. The wicked of the old world counted Noah a fool for depending so much on the word of God, as to put himself to all the fatigue and expense of building the ark; but the event showed that they themselves were the fools, and that he was wise.

2. Consider that the Spirit of God will not *always* strive with you; nor will his long-suffering always wait upon you. So God said concerning the inhabitants of the old world, [Gen. vi. 3](#). “My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” All this while God was striving with them. It was a day of grace with them, and God’s long-suffering all this while waited upon them, ([1 Pet. iii. 20](#).) “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” All this while they had an opportunity to escape, if they would but hearken and believe God.

Even after the ark was finished, which seems to have been but little before the flood came, still there was an opportunity; the door of the ark stood open for some time. There was some time during which Noah was employed in laying up stores in the ark. Even then it was not too late; the door of the ark yet stood open.—About a week before the flood came, Noah was commanded to begin to gather in the beasts and birds. During this last week still the door of the ark stood open. But on the very day that the flood began to come, while the rain was yet withheld, Noah and his wife, his three sons, and their wives, went into the ark; and we are told, [Gen. vii. 16](#). That “God shut him in.” Then the day of God’s patience was past; the door of the ark was shut; God himself, who shuts and no man opens, shut the door. Then all hope of their escaping the flood was past; it was too late to repent that they had not hearkened to Noah’s warnings, and had not entered into the ark while the door stood open.

After Noah and his family had entered into the ark, and God had shut them in, after the windows of heaven were opened, and they saw how the waters were poured down out of heaven, we may suppose that many of those who were near came running to the door of the ark, knocking, and crying most piteously for entrance. But it was too late; God himself had shut the door, and Noah had no licence, and probably no power, to open it. We may suppose, they stood knocking and calling, *Open to us, open to us; O let us in; we beg that we may be let in*. And probably some of them pleaded old acquaintance with Noah; that they had always been his neighbours, and had even helped him to build the ark. But all was in vain. There they stood till the waters of the flood came, and without mercy swept them away from the door of the ark.

So it will be with you, if you continue to refuse to hearken to the warnings which are given you. Now God is striving with you; now he is warning you of the approaching flood, and calling upon you sabbath after sabbath. Now the door of the ark stands open. But God’s

Spirit will not always strive with you; his long-suffering will not always wait upon you. There is an appointed day of God's patience, which is as certainly limited as it was to the old world. God hath set your bounds, which you cannot pass. Though now warnings are continued in plenty, yet there will be *last* knocks and *last* calls, the last that ever you shall hear. When the appointed time shall be elapsed, God will shut the door, and you shall never see it open again; for God shutteth, and no man openeth.—If you improve not your opportunity before that time, you will cry in vain, “Lord, Lord, open to us.” ([Matt xxv. 11.](#) and [Luke xiii. 25,](#) &c.) While you shall stand at the door with your piteous cries, the flood of God's wrath will come upon you, overwhelm you, and you shall not escape. The tempest shall carry you away without mercy, and you shall be for ever swallowed up and lost.

3. Consider how *mighty* the billows of divine wrath will be when they shall come. The waters of Noah's flood were very great. The deluge was vast; it was very deep; the billows reached fifteen cubits above the highest mountains; and it was an ocean which had no shore; signifying the greatness of that wrath which is coming on wicked men in another world, which will be like a mighty flood of waters overwhelming them, and rising vastly high over their heads, with billows reaching to the very heavens. Those billows will be higher and heavier than mountains on their poor souls. The wrath of God will be an ocean without shores, as Noah's flood was: it will be misery that will have no end.

The misery of the damned in hell can be better represented by nothing, than by a deluge of misery, a mighty deluge of wrath, which will be ten thousand times worse than a deluge of waters; for it will be a deluge of liquid fire, as in the Scriptures it is called a lake of fire and brimstone.—At the end of the world all the wicked shall be swallowed up in a vast deluge of fire, which shall be as great and as mighty as Noah's deluge of water. (See [2 Pet. iii. 5, 6, 7.](#)) After that the wicked will have mighty billows of fire and brimstone eternally rolling over their poor souls, and their miserable tormented bodies. Those billows may be called vast liquid mountains of fire and brimstone. And when one billow shall have gone over their heads, another shall follow, without intermission, giving them no rest day nor night to all eternity.

4. This flood of wrath will probably come upon you suddenly, when you shall think little of it, and it shall seem far from you. So the flood came upon the old world, see [Matt. xxiv. 36,](#) &c.—Probably many of them were surprised in the night by the waters bursting suddenly in at their doors, or under the foundations of their houses, coming in upon them in their beds. For when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, the waters, as observed before, burst forth in mighty torrents. To such a sudden surprise of the wicked of the old world in the night, probably that alludes in [Job xxvii. 20.](#) “Terrors take hold on him as waters; a tempest stealeth him away in the night.”

So destruction is wont to come on wicked men, who hear many warnings of approaching destruction, and yet will not be influenced by them. For “he that is often reprov'd, and

hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,” (Prov. xxix. 1.) And “when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape,” 1 Thess. v. 3.

5. If you will not hearken to the many warnings which are given you of approaching destruction, you will be guilty of more than *brutish madness*. “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib.”<sup>56</sup> They know upon whom they are dependent, and whom they must obey, and act accordingly. But you, so long as you neglect your own salvation, act as if you knew not God, your Creator and Proprietor, nor your dependence upon him.—The very beasts, when they see signs of an approaching storm, will betake themselves to their dens for shelter. Yet you, when abundantly warned of the approaching storm of divine vengeance, will not fly to *the hiding-place from the storm, and the covert from the tempest*. The sparrow, the swallow, and other birds, when they are forewarned of approaching winter, will betake themselves to a safer climate. Yet you who have been often forewarned of the piercing blasts of divine wrath, will not, in order to escape them, enter into the New Jerusalem, of most mild and salubrious air, though the gate stands wide open to receive you. The very ants will be diligent in summer to lay up for winter: yet you will do nothing to lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come. Balaam’s ass would not run upon a drawn sword, though his master, for the sake of gain, would expose himself to the sword of God’s wrath; and so God made the dumb ass, both in words and actions, to rebuke the madness of the prophet, 1 Pet. ii. 16. In like manner, you, although you have been often warned that the sword of God’s wrath is drawn against you, and will certainly be thrust through you, if you proceed in your present course, still proceed, regardless of the consequence.

So God made the very beasts and birds of the old world to rebuke the madness of the men of that day: for they, even all sorts of them, fled to the ark, while the door was yet open: which the men of that day refused to do; God hereby thus signifying, that their folly was greater than that of the very brute creatures.—Such folly and madness are you guilty of, who refuse to hearken to the warnings that are given you of the approaching flood of the wrath of God.

You have been once more warned to-day, while the door of the ark yet stands open. You have, as it were, once again heard the knocks of the hammer and axe in the building of the ark, to put you in mind that a flood is approaching. Take heed therefore that you do not still stop your ears, treat these warnings with a regardless heart, and still neglect the great work which you have to do, lest the flood of wrath suddenly come upon you, sweep you away, and there be no remedy.

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56 Isa. i. 3.

S E R M O N   I I .   5 7

THE UNREASONABLENESS OF INDETERMINATION IN RELIGION.

1 Kings xviii. 21.

*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*

It is the manner of God, before he bestows any signal mercy on the people, first to prepare them for it; and before he removes any awful judgments which he hath brought upon them for their sins, first to cause them to forsake those sins which procured those judgments. We have an instance of this in the context.—It was a time of sore famine in Israel. There had been neither rain nor dew for the space of three years and six months. This famine was brought upon the land for their idolatry. But God was now about to remove this judgment; and therefore, to prepare them for it, sends Elijah to convince them of the folly of idolatry, and to bring them to repentance for it.—In order to this, Elijah, by the command of the Lord, goes and shows himself to Ahab, and directs him to send and gather all Israel to him at mount Carmel, and all the prophets of Baal, four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves that ate at Jezebel's table, four hundred, that they might determine the matter and bring the controversy to an issue, whether Jehovah or Baal were God. To this end, Elijah proposes, that each should take a bullock, that he should take one, and the prophets of Baal another, that each should cut his bullock to pieces, lay it on the wood, and put no fire under; and that the God who should answer by fire should be concluded to be God.

The text contains an account of what Elijah said to all the people at their first meeting, and of their silence: 1 Kings xviii. 21. “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” To which the people, it seems, made no reply. In these words, we may observe,

1. How Elijah expostulates with the people about their halting so long between two opinions; in which expostulation may be observed,

(1.) What the two opinions were, between which they halted, *viz.* Whether the Lord were God, or whether Baal were God. The case in Israel seems to have been this: there were some who were altogether for Baal, and wholly rejected the true God; of which number, to be sure, were Jezebel and the prophets of Baal. And there were some among them who were altogether for the God of Israel, and wholly rejected Baal; as God told Elijah, that “he had yet left in Israel seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to Baal, and whose mouths had not kissed him,” 1 Kings xix. 18.

But the rest of the people halted between two opinions. They saw that some were for one, and some for the other, and they did not know which to choose; and, as is commonly the case when difference of opinion prevails, there were many who had no religion at all; they were not settled in any thing; the different opinions prevalent in Israel distracted and confounded them. Many who professed to believe in the true God, were yet very cold and indifferent, and many were wavering and unsettled. They saw that the king and queen were for Baal; and Baal's party was the prevailing party; but their forefathers had been for the Lord; and they knew not which were right. Thus they halted between two opinions.

(2.) In this expostulation is implied the unreasonableness of their thus halting between two opinions. [1 Kings xviii. 21.](#) "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Which implies that they ought to determine one way or the other.

2. We may observe their silence on this occasion: [1 Kings xviii. 21.](#) "And the people answered him not a word," as being, convicted in their own consciences of the unreasonableness of their being for so long a time wavering and unresolved; they had nothing to reply in excuse for themselves.

doctrine. *Unresolvedness in religion is very unreasonable.*

I. prop. Many persons remain exceedingly undetermined with respect to religion. They are very much undetermined in themselves whether to embrace religion or to reject it. Many who are baptized, and make a profession of religion, and seem to be Christians, are yet in their own minds halting between two opinions: they never yet came fully to a conclusion whether to be Christians or not. They are taught the Christian religion in their childhood, and have the Bible, the word preached, and the means of grace, all their days; yet continue, and grow up, and many grow old, in an unresolvedness whether to embrace Christianity or not; and many continue unresolved as long as they live.

1. There are some persons who have never come to a settled determination in their own minds, whether or no there be any *truth* in religion. They hear of the things of religion from their childhood all their days; but never come to a conclusion in their own minds whether they be real or fabulous. Particularly, some have never come to any determination in their own minds, whether there be any such thing as *conversion*. They hear much talk about it, and know that many pretend to be the subjects of it; but they are never resolved whether all be not merely designed hypocrisy and imposture.

Some never come to any determination whether the Scriptures be the word of God, or whether they be the invention of men; and whether the story concerning Jesus Christ be any thing but a fable. They fear it is true, but sometimes very much doubt of it. Sometimes when they hear arguments for it, they assent that it is true; but upon every little objection or temptation arising, they call it in question; and are always wavering and never settled about it.

So it seems to have been with many of the Jews in Christ's time; they were always at a loss what to make of him, whether he were indeed the Christ, or whether he were Elias, or one of the old prophets, or a mere impostor. [John x. 24, 25](#). "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not." Some have never so much as come to a resolution in their own minds, whether there be a God or not. They know not that there is, and oftentimes very much doubt of it.

2. There are some who never have come to any determination in their own minds whether to embrace religion in the *practice* of it. Religion consists not merely, or chiefly, in theory or speculation, but in practice. It is a practical thing; the end of it is to guide and influence us in our practice: and considered in this view, there are multitudes who never have come to a conclusion whether to embrace religion or not. It is probably pretty general for men to design to be religious some time or other before they die; for none intend to go to hell. But they still keep it at a distance; they put it off from time to time, and never come to any conclusion which determines them in their present practice. And some never so much as fix upon any time. They design to be religious some time before they die, but they know not when.

There are many who have always continued unresolved about the necessity of striving and being earnestly engaged for salvation. They flatter themselves that they may obtain salvation, though they be not so earnestly engaged; though they mind the world and their worldly affairs more than their salvation. They are often told how necessary it is that they make haste and not delay, that they do whatever their hand findeth to do with their might; that a dull, slack way of seeking salvation is never likely to be effectual. But of these things they are never thoroughly convinced. Some seem to resolve to be in earnest, and seem to set out with some engagedness of mind; but soon fail, because they have never been fully convinced of its necessity.

Many have never come to a determination what to choose for their portion. There are but two things which God offers to mankind for their portion: one is this world, with the pleasures and profits of sin, together with eternal misery ensuing; the other is heaven and eternal glory, with a life of self-denial and respect to all the commands of God. Many, as long as they live, come to no settled determination which of these to choose. They must have one or the other, they cannot have both; but they always remain in suspense, and never make their choice.

They would fain have heaven and this world too; they would have salvation and the pleasures and profits of sin too. But considering heaven and the world, as God offers them, they will have neither. God offers heaven only with the self-denial and difficulty which are in the way to it; and they are not willing to have heaven on these conditions. God offers the world and the pleasures of sin to men not alone, but with eternal misery in connexion with

them; and so neither are they willing to have the world. They would fain divide heaven from the holiness and self-denial which are the way to it, and from the holiness which reigns in it, and then they would be glad to have heaven. They would fain divide sin from hell, and then they would fully determine for ever to cleave to sin.

But God will not make such a division for them. They must have one or the other of these for their portion, as God offers; and therefore they never make any choice at all.—Indeed they do practically and in effect choose sin and hell. But they do not come to any resolution in their *own minds* which they will have for their portion, whether heaven and holiness, or the world and hell: they are always wavering and halting between two opinions. Sometimes they seem to determine for the one, and sometimes for the other. When they meet with no difficulty or temptation, and can, as they say, do their duty without hurting themselves or much crossing their carnal inclinations, they seem to choose heaven and holiness. At other times, wherein they meet with difficulty in the way of duty, and great temptations of worldly profits or pleasures are laid before them, then they choose the world, and let heaven and holiness alone.—There are among us vast multitudes before whom these two things have been set hundreds of times, who have never to this day come to a determination which to have.

So they have never yet determined which shall be their master, whether God or mammon. There are but few who have undertaken the service of God, and are come to a resolution and preparedness of mind to serve God and follow Christ at all times, and to whatever difficulties it may expose them. Yet, at the same time, neither are they determined that they will continue to serve Satan: they are afraid to draw up such a conclusion.—Thus many spend their lives without making their choice, though they do in the mean time practically choose the service of Satan. These are the persons of whom the apostle James speaks in [chap. i. 8](#). “The double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

II. To continue thus undetermined and unresolved in the things of religion, is very unreasonable, and that upon the following accounts.

1. In the things of religion we are to the highest degree interested. The truth or falsehood of the doctrines of religion concerns us to the highest degree possible. It is no matter of indifference to us whether there be a God or not; or whether the Scriptures be the word of God; or whether Christ be the Son of God; or whether there be any such thing as conversion. It makes an infinite difference to us, whether these things be so or not. Therefore we are under the greatest obligation in point of interest to resolve in our minds whether they be true or false. They who are undetermined whether there be any truth in religion, and are contented to be so, not inquiring, nor thoroughly using the means to be determined, act very unreasonably. They remain in doubt whether there be any such thing as heaven or hell; are quiet and easy to continue ignorant in this matter; are not engaged in their minds to come to a determination; do not search and inquire what arguments there are to prove any



such things; nor diligently weigh and consider the force of them; but busy their minds about other things of infinitely less importance; and act as if they thought it did not much concern them whether there be a future and eternal state.

If they think that there is not, yet it is a matter of so great importance, that no wise man would rest until he had satisfied himself; because if there be such a future state as the Scriptures assert, then we must have our part in it, either in a state of eternal rewards, or in a state of eternal punishment.—So it is no matter of indifference to us what we have for our portion, whether this world with hell, or a life of holiness and self-denial with heaven. These opposite portions relate, not merely to a few days in this world, but to eternity. It is infinite madness therefore not to come to a determination.

So it is no matter of indifference what master we serve, whether God or mammon; or what interest we will pursue, whether our temporal or eternal interest; or which we prefer, the commands of God, or our pleasures, our ease, and convenience. We ought therefore to come to some determination which we will choose.

2. God hath made us reasonable creatures, and capable of rationally determining for ourselves. Doubtless God hath made man capable of discovering the truth in matters of religion, of coming to a good determination in these questions, whether the Scriptures be the word of God, whether there be a future slate, and the like. The resolution of these questions, which it so much concerns us to determine, is not above our capacities. God hath not set these things beyond the extent of our faculties.

God hath made us capable of making a wise choice for ourselves, as to the life we shall choose to lead. He hath given man so much understanding, as to make him capable of determining which is best; to lead a life of self-denial, and enjoy eternal happiness, or to take our swing in sinful enjoyments, and burn in hell for ever. The question is of no difficult determination.—It is so far from being a matter too hard for our reason, that the reason of a child is sufficient to determine this matter. Therefore men in remaining undetermined in these matters, do not act as reasonable creatures, but make themselves like “the horse and the mule, which have no understanding,” [Psal. xxxii. 9](#).

3. God puts into our hands a happy opportunity to determine for ourselves. What better opportunity can a man desire to consult his own interest, than to have liberty to choose his own portion? God setteth life and death before us. [Deut. xxx. 19](#). “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed after thee may live.” See also [Ezek. xviii. 31, 32](#). and [chap. xxxiii. 11](#). What better opportunity can we desire for securing to ourselves the greatest good, than to have eternal life and unchangeable happiness set before us, and offered to our choice? Therefore those who neglect coming to a resolution, act unreasonably, because they stand so much in their own light, and neglect so glorious an opportunity.



4. The things among which we are to make our choice are but few in number; there are but two portions set before us, one of which must be our portion; either life or death, either blessing or cursing; either a life of universal and persevering obedience, with eternal glory, or a worldly, carnal, wicked life, with eternal misery. If there were many terms in the offer made us, many things of nearly an equal value, one of which we must choose, to remain long in suspense and undetermined would be more excusable; there would be more reason for long deliberation before we should fix. But there are only two terms, there are but two states in another world, in one or the other of which we must be fixed to all eternity.

And there are but two states in this world, a state of sin, and a state of holiness; a natural state, and a converted state. There is but one way in which we can come to life, which renders the determination of reason much the easier. There are but two masters, to one of which we must be reputed the servants, Baal and Jehovah, God and Mammon: there are but two competitors for the possession of us, Christ and the devil.—There are but two paths, in one of which you are to travel, either in the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life, or the broad way which leadeth unto destruction.

This shows the unreasonableness of those who live under light, and have the offers of the gospel made to them, and yet remain from year to year unfixed and undetermined, halting between two opinions.

5. God hath given us all needed helps to determine us. We have all needful helps to determine our understandings, as to the truth of the things of religion, as whether there be a God, whether the Scriptures be the word of God, whether there be a future state, &c. We are not left in the dark as to these things, as the poor heathens are, who are under great disadvantages to come to the knowledge of the truth, though they be not under an impossibility, for “they may haply feel after God and find him,” [Acts xvii. 27](#). But we have a clear sunshine to guide us, we have a particular description of those things which are set before us for truth, and have great opportunity to examine them. The Scripture lies open before us, and all the doctrines of the gospel are particularly set forth, with the reasons on which their evidence is founded. We may search and try their force and sufficiency, as we please.

We have great helps to a wise and rational determination in our choice; to determine whether it be best for us to choose a life of sin or a life of holiness, the service of God or the service of Baal. We have very plainly set before us the advantages of both sides; the loss and gain are particularly stated. Christ hath dealt by us faithfully, and hath told us what we shall get and what we shall lose by being his followers. He hath also told us what we shall get and what we shall lose by a life of sin. He hath not dealt by us deceitfully. He hath not pretended greater advantages in godliness than there really are, nor greater disadvantages or dangers in sin. [John xiv. 2](#). “In my Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.”

He hath told us plainly that we must take up the cross daily and follow him; that we must hate father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, and our own life also, in order to become his disciples; and that we must cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes, in order to enter into heaven. Thus we have a fair opportunity to count the costs on both sides, and are directed so to do; [Luke xiv. 28.](#)—How unreasonable therefore is it for men who have all these helps and advantages, to remain in suspense, and to come to no conclusion whether they will be Christians or heathens, whether they will be for God or the devil; though they have lived under the preaching of the word and offers of the gospel for many years.

6. We have no reason to expect to be under better advantages to determine hereafter than we are now. We never shall have a clearer revelation of gospel truth; never shall have the advantages and disadvantages of both sides more plainly set before us, than they are already in the word of God; nor are we ever like to be under better advantages to know what will be best for us, and most for our interest. Those therefore who delay, gain nothing by their delays, but give Satan more opportunity to darken their minds, to deceive them, and lead them astray in their choice. Therefore their delay of coming to a resolution is unreasonable.

7. If they come not to a determination in this life, God will determine for them, and will appoint them their portion with the wicked. If sinners, by refusing to choose either life or death, either heaven or hell, could thereby avoid both, or if in this case the matter would remain undetermined, till they should determine it; the folly and unreasonableness of delaying a determination would not be so great. But that is not the case; if they go on halting between two opinions, God will determine for them, and that quickly; he will determine where their portion shall be, *viz.* among the unbelievers, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. God will not wait upon them always, to see what they will choose; but he will put an issue to the matter by his unalterable sentence.—Therefore it becomes all, if they are afraid to have their lot assigned them in hell, to come soon to a determination.

8. Delay in this case is unreasonable, because those who delay know not how soon the opportunity of choosing for themselves will be past. This opportunity will last no longer than life; when once life is past, they will no more have the offer made them; the sentence will be past; the matter will be closed.

Those who delay their choice in this world will be glad to choose afterwards; then they will not be at a loss which to choose; they will be able easily to determine. The judgments of sinners, after this life, are soon resolved, whether there be any truth in religion or not; they can soon determine which is most eligible; a life of obedience and self-denial, with heaven for a reward, or a life of irreligion and sin, with hell for a punishment. They no longer halt between two opinions; but it is too late, their opportunity is past. They would give all

the world for another opportunity to choose; they would then soon come to a determination. But it will not be granted them.

### APPLICATION.

I. Let this put every one upon examining himself, whether or no he have ever yet come to a full determination in the affair of religion.

*First*, Inquire whether you have yet come to a full determination with respect to the truth of the things of religion. Have you ever been fully convinced? Is it a question which has been answered and determined with you, whether there be a future state; or does it yet remain a question with you unresolved? Are you not yet to seek whether there be any future state, and whether or no the story about Jesus Christ be any more than a fable? Here I desire you to note two things.

1. If the main reason why you assent to the truth of religion be, that others believe so, and you have been so instructed from your childhood; you are of those with whom the truth of religion yet remains undetermined. Tradition and education will never fix and settle the mind in a satisfactory and effectual belief of the truth. Though men, taking religion upon trust, may seem to give a full assent to the truth of religion, and not to call it in question; yet such a faith will not stand a shock; a temptation easily overthrows it. The reason of man in time of trial will not rest on so poor an evidence.

There are multitudes who seem to grant the truth of religion, with whom the main foundation of their faith is the tradition of their fathers, or the profession of their neighbours; and it is to be feared, it is so with many who count themselves good Christians. But as to all such persons as never have seen any other evidence to satisfy them, either of the truth or falsehood of religion, they only halt between two opinions.—The same may be said of those who are unstable in their disposition with regard to Christ or the things which he taught.

2. If you are fully come to a determination concerning the things of religion, that they are true, they will be of weight with you above all things in the world. If you be really convinced that these things are no fable, but reality, it is impossible but that you must be influenced by them above all things in the world; for these things are so great, and so infinitely exceed all temporal things, that it cannot be otherwise. He that really is convinced that there is a heaven and hell, and an eternal judgment; that the soul, as soon as parted from the body, appears before the judgment-seat of God; and that the happiness and misery of a future state is as great as the Scripture represents it; or that God is as holy, just, and jealous, as he hath declared concerning himself in his word; I say, he that is really convinced, and hath settled it with himself, that these things are certainly true, will be influenced by them above all things in the world. He will be more concerned by far how he shall escape eternal damnation, and have the favour of God and eternal life, than how he shall get the world, gratify the flesh, please his neighbours, get honour, or obtain any temporal advantage whatsoever.

His main inquiry will not be, [Matt. 6:31](#) *what shall I eat, and what shall I drink, &c.* but he will [Matt. 6:33](#) *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.*

Examine yourselves therefore by this: Are not your hearts chiefly set upon the world and the things of it? Is it not more your concern, care, and endeavour to further your outward interest, than to secure an interest in heaven? And is not this the very reason that you have never seen the reality of eternal things?

*Secondly*, Inquire whether you have ever yet come to a determination about religion with respect to the *practice* of it; whether you have chosen heaven with the way to it, *viz.* the way of obedience and self-denial, before this world and the ways of sin; whether you have determined upon it as most eligible, to devote yourselves to the service of God.—Here I shall mention three or four things which are signs that men halt between two opinions in this matter.

I. To put off duty till hereafter. When persons love to keep their duty at a distance, engage not in it for the present, but think of engaging when they shall be under better conveniences for it;—when they are very good *intenders* concerning what they will do to-morrow, but very poor *performers* to-day; when they say, as Felix, [Acts xxiv. 25](#). “Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee;”—it is a sign that they halt between two opinions, and have never as yet come to a full determination with respect to the practice of religion. Those that have once fully determined that religion is necessary and eligible, will not desire to put it off, but will make it their present and immediate business.

2. It is a sign of the same thing when persons are strict and conscientious in some things, but not universal in their obedience; do some duties, but live in the omission of others; avoid some sins, but allow themselves in others; are conscientious with respect to the duties of worship public and private, but not in their behaviour to their neighbours; are not just in their dealings, nor conscientious in paying their debts; nor do to others as they would that they should do to them; but have crooked perverse ways in their dealings among mankind.

The same may be said when they are just in their dealings and trade with men, but are not conscientious in other things; indulge sensual appetites, drink to excess, or allow themselves in wanton practices: or are honest and temperate, but licentious in using their tongues, backbiting and reproaching their fellow-men, [2 Tim. iii. 6, 7](#).

3. It is a sign that you halt between two opinions, if you sometimes are wont to be considerably engaged in religion, but at other times neglect it; sometimes forming a resolution to be in good earnest, then dropping it again; sometimes seeming to be really engaged in seeking salvation, and very earnest in religious duties; at other times wholly taken up about the things of the world, while religion is neglected, and religious duties are omitted.

These things show that you are yet unsettled, have never yet come to a full determination concerning religion, but are halting between two opinions, and therefore are thus unstable in all your ways, and proceed thus by fits and starts in religion, [James i. 6, 7, 8](#). “But let him

ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” If your determination were fixed in religion, you would be more steady in your practice.

4. It is a sign that you are halting between two opinions, if it be your manner to balk your duty whenever any notable difficulty comes in the way, considerably cross to your interest, or very inconsistent with your ease or convenience, or your temporal honour. Whatever zeal you may seem to have, whatever concern about the things of religion, and however strict you be in ordinary, you have never, if this be your manner, come to a full determination; have never fully made choice of religion and the benefits of it for your only portion; and at best have got no further than king Agrippa, who was *almost* persuaded to be a Christian, [Acts xxvi. 28](#). You are in the state of the stony-ground hearers, you have no root in yourselves, and like a tree without root, are easily blown down by every wind.

II. I shall conclude with an earnest exhortation to all, no longer to halt between two opinions, but immediately to come to a determination whether to be Christians or not. Let me insist upon it, that you now make a choice, whether you will have heaven, with a life of universal and persevering obedience, for your portion; or hell, with a life spent in the pursuit of this world.—Consider those things which have been said, showing the unreasonableness of continuing in such irresolution about an affair of infinite importance to you, and as to which you have so short an opportunity to make your choice.—Consider two things in addition to what hath been already said.

1. Those who live under the gospel, and thus continue undetermined about religion, are more abominable to God than the heathen. He hates those persons who continue from year to year, under the calls, and warnings, and instructions, and entreaties of God’s word; who yet can be brought to nothing; who will come to no determination at all; will neither be Christians nor heathens. These are they who are spoken of in [Rev. iii. 15, 16](#). “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.”—And [Ezek. xx. 39](#). “As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, Go ye. serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.”—These are ([2 Tim. iii. 7.](#)) “ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.”

2. If you still refuse to come to a determination whether to be Christians or not, how just will it be, if God shall give you no further opportunity! If you refuse to make any choice at all—after all that hath been done to bring you to it, in setting life and death so often before you, in calling and warning you, how just will it be, if God shall wait no longer upon you; but shall, by his unalterable sentence, determine the case himself, and fix your state with

the unbelievers, and teach you the truth and eligbleness of religion, by sad and fatal experience, when it will be too late for you to choose your portion.

S E R M O N   I I I .   5 8

UNBELIEVERS CONTEMN THE GLORY AND EXCELLENCY OF CHRIST.

[Acts iv. 11.](#)

*This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders.*

In the foregoing chapters we have an account of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, and of its extraordinary effects in their speaking boldly in the name of Jesus, and speaking many strange languages, and so being made the instruments of the sudden conversion of vast multitudes. And in the chapter immediately preceding, there is an account how Peter and John miraculously healed a man who had been a cripple from his birth; which, together with the word which they spake to the people that flocked together on the occasion, was the means of a new accession to the church: so that the number of them that heard the word and believed, as we are told in the fourth verse of this chapter, was about five thousand.

This sudden and extraordinary progress of the gospel greatly alarmed the priests and scribes, and other chief men among the Jews; so that they laid hands on Peter and John, and put them in hold, and the next day brought them forth to appear before them, and called them to an account for what they had done. They asked them particularly by what power, or by what name, they had wrought the miracle on the impotent man. Upon which Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, makes answer, “Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,—Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner.” The apostle quotes to them as now fulfilled, the [118th Psalm, ver. 22.](#) “The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner.” This text, in that psalm, the apostle applies by telling them,

1. That *This is the stone, i. e.* this person of whom he had spoken in the foregoing verse, *viz.* Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, and whom God had raised from the dead.

2. That they were the *builders* spoken of. They before whom the apostle then was, and to whom he was speaking, were rulers, and elders, and scribes of the people, the high priest and other priests. They, as they were set to be rulers and teachers among God’s people, by their office, were called to be builders of the church of God.

3. That they set this stone *at nought*. They had so done by refusing to accept of him. Christ came to his own, and his own received him not: and not only so, but they had openly manifested the greatest contempt of him. They had mocked him, scourged and spit upon



him, and in derision crowned him with a crown of thorns, and arrayed him in a mock robe, and then had put him to a most ignominious death.

4. That notwithstanding this, he was become the head of the corner. In spite of all that they could do, he had obtained the chief place in the building. God had made him the main foundation of it, by raising him from the dead, and so putting great honour upon him; by pouring out his Spirit, and enduing his disciples with extraordinary gifts; by suddenly convening so many thousands to be the followers of Christ.—They put him to death, that he might have no followers, concluding that that would utterly put an end to his interest in Judea. But they were greatly disappointed: for the gospel had incomparably greater success after Christ's death than before. God had accomplished that very thing which they endeavoured to prevent by Christ's crucifixion, *viz.* Christ's being believed in and submitted to, as the great prophet of God, and prince of his people.

### DOCTRINE.

Unbelievers set at nought the glory and excellency in Christ.

1. They set at nought the excellency of his person.—Christ is a great and glorious person, a person of infinite worthiness, on which account he is infinitely esteemed and loved of the Father, and is continually adored by the angels. But unbelievers have no esteem at all for him on that account. They have no value for him on account of his being the Son of God. He is not set the higher in their esteem on the account of his standing in so near and honourable a relation to God the Father. He is not valued at all the more for his being a divine person. By his having the divine nature, he is infinitely exalted above all created beings. But he is not at all exalted by it in their esteem. They set nothing by his infinite majesty: his glorious brightness and greatness excite not any true respect or reverence in them.

Christ is the holy One of God: he is so holy that the heavens are not pure in his sight. He is possessed of all that holiness which is the infinite beauty and loveliness of the divine nature. But an unbeliever sets nothing by the holiness of Christ.—Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God, [1 Cor. i. 24](#). But an unbeliever sets nothing by his power and wisdom. The Lord Jesus Christ is full of grace and mercy: the mercy and love of God appear no where else so brightly and gloriously as they do in the face of Jesus Christ.—But an unbeliever sets no value at all upon the infinite grace of Christ.

Neither do unbelievers set any thing by those excellent virtues which appeared in Christ's human nature when he was upon earth. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; he was meek and lowly of heart; he was patient under afflictions and injuries; when he was reviled, he reviled not again. But unbelievers set nothing by these things in Jesus Christ.—They very often hear how excellent and glorious a person Christ is: they are told of his holiness, and grace, and condescension, and meekness, and have the excellencies of Christ plainly set forth to them; yet they set all at nought.

2. They set at nought his excellency in his work and office. They are told how glorious and complete a mediator he is, how sufficient to answer all our necessities, and to save sinners to the uttermost; but they make light of it all; yea, they make nothing of it. They hear of the wonderful wisdom of God in contriving such a way of salvation by Christ, they have the manifold wisdom of God set forth to them; but they make no account of the excellency of this way of salvation.

The unbeliever hears what a wonderful thing it was, that he who was in the form of God, and esteemed it no robbery to be equal with God, should take upon him the human nature, and come and live in this world in a mean and low condition; but he makes nothing of this. He hears much of the dying love of Christ to sinners, how wonderful it was that so glorious a person, who is infinitely above the angels, should so set his love on such worms of the dust, as to come and be made a curse for them, and die a cruel and ignominious death in their stead; but he sets nothing by all this. This dying love of Christ is of no account with him; those great things that Christ hath done and suffered are with him light matters.

Unbelievers not only set *little* by the glory and excellency of Christ, but they set *nothing* by these things. Notwithstanding all the shows and pretences which many natural men make of respect to Christ, by speaking honourably of him in their prayers, and in their common conversation, and by coming to sacraments, and attending other ordinances of Christ; yet indeed they do not set so much by all the glory and excellency of Christ—either of his person, or of his work as a Saviour—as they do by the smallest earthly enjoyment.

I proceed now to mention some *evidences* of the truth of this doctrine.

1. They never give Christ any *honour* on account of his glory and excellency. They may, and often do, pay Christ an external and seeming respect; but they do not honour him in their hearts. They have no exalting thoughts of Christ, no inward respect or reverence towards him. All their outward worship is only feigned; none of it arises from any real honour or respect in their hearts towards Christ. It is either only for fashion's sake, and in compliance with custom, or else it is forced, and what they are driven to by fear, as we read, [Psal. lxvi. 3](#). "Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee." In the original it is, *shall thine enemies lie unto thee, i. e.* yield a feigned obedience. Through the greatness of Christ's power, and for fear of his wrath, his enemies who have no respect or honour for him in their hearts, will lie to him, and make a show of respect when they have none.

An unbeliever is not sensible that Christ is worthy of any glory, and therefore does not at all seek the glory of Christ in any thing that he does; he does nothing in religion out of respect to Christ's glory, but wholly for other ends; which shows that he sees not Christ to be worthy of any glory.—Christ is set last and lowest in the heart of an unbeliever.—He has high thoughts of other things; he has high thoughts of created objects and earthly enjoyments, but mean and low thoughts of Christ.



The unbeliever shows the mean and contemptible thoughts that he has of Christ, in refusing to accept of him, and in shutting the door of his heart against him. Christ stands at the door and knocks, and sometimes stands many years knocking at the door of his heart, but he refuses to open to him.—Now it certainly shows that men have a very mean thought of a person, when they shut him out of their doors. Unbelievers show the mean and dishonourable thoughts they have of Christ, in that they dare not trust him. They believe not what he says to be true: they will not trust the word of Christ, so far as the word of one of their honest neighbours, or of a servant whom they have found to be faithful. It also appears that they have no real honour for Christ in their hearts, in that they refuse to obey his commands. They do nothing from a spirit of obedience to him: and that external obedience which they render, is but a forced, feigned obedience, and not from any respect to Christ's authority or worthiness to be obeyed.

2. They have no *love* to him on account of his glory and excellency. If they saw any excellency in Christ, they would have some measure of love to him. But the truth is, they see no form or comeliness in Christ, and hence they have no love at all to him. An unbeliever never exercises one act of true love to Christ. All that he is told of his divine perfections, of his holiness, his meekness, and grace, has no influence at all to draw forth any love. The display of these things doth no more draw forth love out of the heart of an unbeliever, than it draws forth love from the stones and rocks.

A natural man hath no love of benevolence towards Christ. Notwithstanding all that is declared to him of the excellency of Christ, he has no good-will towards him. He rejoices not in his glory and happiness; he would not care what became of Christ, if he could but escape hell. If Christ should be dethroned, or should cease to be, he has not so much good-will to Christ, as would make him concerned about it. And if the kingdom and interest of Christ in the world should go to ruin, it would be nowise grievous to the unbeliever, provided his own interest could be secure.

So also an unbeliever has no love of complacency in Jesus Christ for his excellency. He takes no delight in the consideration of that excellency of Christ of which he is told.—He is told that it is exceedingly beautiful and glorious; but the thoughts of the glory of Christ are nowise entertaining to him: he has no delight in the thoughts of it, or in any contemplations upon it. He takes delight in thinking of earthly objects; but when he comes to turn his mind upon Jesus Christ, if ever he so does, this is to him a dry and barren subject: he finds nothing there to feed and delight his soul; no beauty or loveliness to please or gratify him.

3. Unbelievers have no *desires* after the enjoyment of Christ. If they did set any thing by the excellency of Christ, they would have some desires after him on account of that excellency; especially when he is offered to them, and is from time to time set forth as the proper object of their choice and desires. That which men prize, they are wont to desire,

especially if it be represented to them as attainable, and as fit and suitable for them. But unbelievers only desire to be delivered from hell, but not to enjoy Christ.

They cannot conceive what happiness there can be in beholding Christ and being with him, in seeing his holiness, and contemplating his wonderful grace and divine glory. They have no relish for any such thing, nor appetite after it.

4. They show that they set at nought the glory and excellency of Christ, in that they seek not a conformity to that glory and excellency. A natural man may seek to be holy, but it is not for holiness' sake, it is only that he may escape wrath. He has no desires after holiness, nor is it indeed holiness that he seeks, because he is all the while an enemy to holiness. A natural man has no desires to have his soul conformed to the glorious beauty and excellency of Christ, nor to have his image upon him.

If he prized or delighted in the excellencies of Christ, he would necessarily desire to be like him so far as he could.—This we see in ourselves and in all men: when we see any qualifications in others that are pleasing to us, it is natural for us to endeavour to imitate, and to be conformed to those persons. Hence men are apt to learn of those for whom they have a great esteem: they naturally fall into an imitation of their ways and manner of behaviour. But natural men feel within themselves no disposition or inclination to learn of Christ, or to imitate him. Their tempers and dispositions remain quite contrary to Christ's, neither do they grow at all better or more conformed to him, but rather worse. [2 Tim. iii. 13](#). “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse.”

#### APPLICATION.

I. This doctrine may teach us the heinousness of the sin of *unbelief*, as this sin sets all the glory and excellency of Christ at nought. It often appears strange to natural men, that unbelief should be spoken of as such a heinous and crying sin. They cannot see such evil in it. There are other sins which often trouble their consciences, when this troubles them not at all, though it be that which brings far greater guilt upon them, than those sins about which they are more troubled.

What has been said may show why unbelief is spoken of as a heinous sin, [John iii. 18](#), and [ch. xvi. 9](#), and [1 John v. 10](#). For thereby all the glory of Christ is set at nought, though it be so great, though it be infinite, though it be the glory of the Godhead itself, and though it has been so gloriously manifested in what Christ has done and suffered. Natural men in their unbelief cast contempt on all this glory, and tread it under foot, as being nothing worth. Their unbelief treats the excellency of Christ as being of less value than the meanest earthly enjoyments.

II. This doctrine may convict natural men in four particulars.

1. Hereby you may be convinced of the greatness of your guilt. Consider how great and excellent that Person is, whom you thus set at nought. Contempt of any person is heinous

in proportion to the worthiness and dignity of the person contemned. Though we are but worms of the dust, and very vile, sinful creatures; yet we take it grievously when we are despised. Consider how you yourselves are ready to resent it, when any of your neighbours seem to slight you, and set light by what you say and do, and to make no account of it, but to treat you as if you were good for nothing, or not worth minding. Do you take this well of your neighbours and equals, when you observe any thing of this nature? Are you not ready to look upon it with resentment, to think very ill of it, and to judge that you have great cause to be offended?

But if it be such a crime to despise you and set you at nought, what is it to set at nought the eternal infinitely glorious Son of God, in comparison with whom you and all nations are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity? You dislike it much to be contemned by your equals; but you would take it yet more grievously to be despised by your inferiors, by those whom, on every account, you must excel.—What a crime is it then for a vile, sinful worm, to set at nought him who is the brightness of the glory of the King of kings!

It would be a crime inexpressibly heinous, to set little by the glory and excellency of such a person; but it is more so, to set nothing at all by it, as you do. You have no value at all for it, as has been shown. And this is the more aggravated, as Christ is a person whom you so much need, and as he came into the world out of infinite grace to sinners, to lay down his life to deliver them from hell, and purchase for them eternal glory. How much has Christ done and suffered, that you might have opportunity to be saved! Yet you set nothing by the blood of Christ, even that blood that was shed for such poor sinners as you are, and that is offered to you for your salvation. But you trample under foot the blood of the Son of God. If Christ had come into the world only to teach us, it would have been a heinous thing to trample under foot his word and instructions. But when he came to die for us, how much more heinous is it to trample under foot his blood!

Men take it hardly to have any of their qualifications or actions despised, which they esteem commendable. But especially do they highly resent it when others slight their kindness. And above all when they put themselves out of their way, and have denied themselves, and suffered considerably to do others a kindness; then to have their kindness despised and set at nought, is what men would above all things resent. How heinous then is it, and how exceedingly provoking to God must it be, thus to set at nought so great kindness and love of Christ, when from love to sinners he suffered so much!

Consider how highly the angels, who are so much above you, do set by the glory and excellency of Christ. They admire and adore the glory of Christ, and cease not day nor night to praise the same in the most exalted strains. [Rev. v. 11, 12.](#) “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom,

and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” The saints admire the excellency of Christ, and the glorious angels admire it, and every creature in heaven and earth, but only you unbelieving children of men.

Consider not only how much the angels set by the glory of Christ, but how much God himself sets by it: for he is the darling of heaven, he was eternally God’s delight; and because of his glory God hath thought him worthy to be appointed the heir of all things, and hath seen fit to ordain that all men *should honour the Son even as they honour the Father*.—Is he thus worthy of the infinite esteem and love of God himself? and is he worthy of no esteem from you?

2. Hereby you may be convinced of your danger. You must needs think that such guilt will bring great wrath. Dreadful destruction is denounced in Scripture against those that despise only the disciples of Christ, [Matt. xviii. 6](#). What destruction then will come on them that despise all the glorious excellency of Christ himself?

Consider that you not only have no value for all the glory and excellency of Christ; but you are enemies to him on that very account. The very ground of that enmity and opposition which there is between your hearts and Jesus Christ, is the glorious perfections and excellencies that there are in Jesus Christ. By being such a holy and excellent Saviour, he is contrary to your lusts and corruptions. If there were a Saviour offered to you that was agreeable to your corrupt nature, such a Saviour you would accept. But Christ being a Saviour of such purity, holiness, and divine perfection, this is the cause why you have no inclination to him, but are offended in him.

Instead of being a precious stone in your eyes, he is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to you. That he is a Saviour who hath manifested such divine perfections in what he hath done and suffered, is one principal reason why you set nothing by him. Consider how provoking this must needs be to God the Father, who has given his only-begotten Son for your salvation; and what wrath it merits from the Son whom you thus treat. And consider how you will hereafter bear this wrath.

Consider that, however Christ be set at nought by you, he shall be the head of the corner. Though you set him low, yet he shall be exalted even with respect to you. It is but a vain thing for you to make light of Christ and treat him with contempt. How much soever you contemn him, you cannot break his bands asunder, nor cast his cords from you. You will still be in his hands. While you despise Christ, God will despise you, and the Lord will have you in derision. God will set his King on his holy hill of Zion in spite of all his enemies; [Psalm ii. 1-6](#). Though you say, We will not have this man to reign over us, yet Christ will rule over you; [Psalm cx. 2](#). “Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” If you will not submit to the sceptre of his grace, you shall be subject to the rod of his wrath, and he will rule you with a rod of iron; [Psalm ii. 9-12](#).

3. You may hence be led to see how worthless many of those things in yourselves are, that you have been ready to make much of. Particularly, if you set nothing by all the glory of Christ, what are those desires that you have after Christ good for? and that willingness that you think you find to come to Christ? Sinners are often wont to excuse themselves in their unbelief, because they see not but that they are willing to come to Christ, and would gladly come to him if they could. And they make much of such desires, as though God were unjust to punish them for not coming to Christ, when they would gladly come if they could. But this doctrine shows that your willingness and desires to come to Christ are not worthy to be mentioned as any excuse; for they are not from any respect to Christ, but are merely forced; you at the same time set nothing by all his excellency and glory.

So you may hence learn the worthlessness of all your pains and endeavours after Christ. When sinners have taken a great deal of pains to get an interest in Christ, they are wont to make a righteousness of it; little considering that at the very time they are taking so much pains, they set nothing at all by Christ for any glory or excellency there is in him; but set him wholly at nought, and seek him out of respect to their own interest.

4. Hence learn how justly God might for ever refuse to give you an interest in Christ. For why should God give you any part or interest in him whom you set at nought, all whose glory and excellency you value not in the least, but rather trample it under your feet.

Why should God give you any interest in him whom you so despise? seeing you despise him, how justly might you be obliged to go without any interest in him! How justly might you be refused any part in that precious stone, whose preciousness you esteem no more than that of the stones of the street! Is God obliged to cast such a pearl before swine who will trample it under their feet? Is God obliged to make you possessors of his infinitely glorious and dear Son, when at the same time you count him not worth the having, for the sake of any worth or excellency that there is in him; but merely because you cannot escape hell without him?

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S E R M O N I V . <sup>5 9</sup>

THE FOLLY OF LOOKING BACK IN FLEEING OUT OF SODOM.

[LUKE xvii. 32.](#)

Remember Lot's Wife.

CHRIST here foretells his coming in his kingdom, in answer to the question which the Pharisees asked him, viz. *When the kingdom of God should come*. And in what he says of his coming, he, evidently has respect to two things; his coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, and his coming at the end of the world. He compares his coming at those times to the coming of God in two remarkable judgments that were past; first, to that in the time of the flood; ” and as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.<sup>60</sup> ” Next, he compares it to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; “likewise also, as it was in the days of Lot, even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.”

Then he immediately proceeds to direct his people how they should behave themselves at the appearance of the signal of that day's approach, referring especially to the destruction of Jerusalem. [Luke xxvii. 31.](#) “In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.” In which words Christ shows that they should make the utmost haste to flee and get out of the city to the mountains, as he commands, [Matt. xxiv. 15-18](#) &c.—“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains; let him which is in the house-top not come down to take any thing out of the house, neither let him which is in the field turn back to take his clothes.”

Jerusalem was like Sodom, in that it was devoted to destruction, by special divine wrath; and indeed to a more terrible destruction than that of Sodom. Therefore the like direction is given concerning fleeing out of it with the utmost haste, without looking behind, as the angel gave to Lot, when he bid him flee out of Sodom, [Gen. xix. 17.](#) “Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain.” And in the text Christ enforces his counsel by the instance of Lot's wife. He bids them remember her, and take warning by her, who looked back as she was fleeing out of Sodom, and became a pillar of salt.

If it be inquired why Christ gave this direction to his people to flee out of Jerusalem, in such exceeding haste, at the first notice of the signal of her approaching destruction; I answer, it seems to be, because fleeing out of Jerusalem was a type of fleeing out of a state of sin. Escaping out of that unbelieving city typified an escape out of a state of unbelief. Therefore they were directed to flee without staying to take any thing out of their houses, to signify

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5 9 D A T E D , M A Y , 1 7 3 5 .

60 [Luke 17:26.](#)



with what haste and concern we should flee out of a natural condition, that no respect to any worldly enjoyment should prevent us one moment, and that we should flee to Jesus Christ, the refuge of souls, our strong rock, and the mount of our defence, so as, in fleeing to him, to leave and forsake heartily all earthly things.

This seems to be the chief reason also why Lot was directed to make such haste, and not to look behind; because his fleeing out of Sodom was designed on purpose to be a type of our fleeing from that state of sin and misery in which we naturally are.

### DOCTRINE.

We ought not to look back when we are fleeing out of Sodom. The following reasons may be sufficient to support this doctrine:

1. That Sodom is a city full of filthiness and abominations. It is full of those impurities that ought to be had in the utmost abhorrence and detestation by all. The inhabitants of it are a polluted company, they are all under the power and dominion of hateful lusts. All their faculties and affections are polluted with those vile dispositions that are unworthy of the human nature, that greatly debase it, that are exceedingly hateful to God, and that dreadfully incense his anger. Every kind of spiritual abomination abounds in it. There is nothing so hateful and abominable but that there it is to be found, and there it abounds.

Sodom is a city full of devils and all unclean spirits: there they have their rendezvous, and there they have their dominion. There they sport, and wallow in filthiness, as it is said of mystical Babylon, [Rev. xviii. 2.](#) Babylon is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.—Who would be of such a society? who would not flee from such a city with the utmost haste, and never look back upon it, and never have the least inclination of returning?

Some in Sodom may seem to carry a fair face, and make a fair outward show; but if we could look into their hearts, they are every one altogether filthy and abominable. We ought to flee from such a city, with the utmost abhorrence of the place and society, with no desires to dwell longer there, and never to discover the least inclination to return to it: but should be desirous to get to the greatest possible distance from it, that we might in no wise be partakers in her abominations.

2. We ought not to look back when fleeing out of Sodom, because Sodom is a city appointed to destruction. The cry of the city hath reached up to heaven. The earth cannot bear such a burden as her inhabitants are; she will therefore disburden herself of them, and spew them out. God will not suffer such a city to stand; he will consume it. God is holy, and his nature is infinitely opposite to all such uncleanness; he will therefore be a consuming fire to it. The holiness of God will not suffer it to stand, and the majesty and justice of God require that the inhabitants of that city who thus offend and provoke him be destroyed. And God will surely destroy them; it is the immutable and irreversible decree of God.—He hath said

it, and he will do it. The decree is gone forth, and so sure as there is a God, and he is almighty, and able to fulfil his decrees and threatenings, so surely will he destroy Sodom. [Gen. xix. 12, 13](#). “Whatsoever thou hast in this city, bring them out of this place; for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.” And in [ver. 14](#). “Up, get ye out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city.”

This city is an accursed city; it is destined to ruin.—Therefore, as we would not be partakers of her curse, and would not be destroyed, we should flee out of it, and not look behind us, [Rev. xviii. 4](#). “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

3. We ought not to look back when fleeing out of Sodom, because the destruction to which it is appointed is exceedingly dreadful: it is appointed to utter destruction, to be wholly and entirely consumed. It is appointed to suffer the wrath of the great God, which is to be poured down from God upon it, like a dreadful storm of fire and brimstone. This city is to be filled full of the wrath of God. Every one that remains in it shall have the fire of God’s wrath come down on his head and into his soul: he shall be full of fire and full of the wrath of the Almighty. He shall be encompassed with fire without and full of fire within: his head, his heart, his bowels, and all his limbs shall be full of fire, and not a drop of water to cool him.

Nor shall he have any place to flee to for relief. Go where he will, there is the fire of God’s wrath: his destruction and torment will be inevitable.—He shall be destroyed without any pity. He shall cry aloud, but there shall be none to help, there shall be none to regard his lamentations, or to afford relief. The decree is gone forth, and the days come when Sodom shall burn as an oven, and all the inhabitants thereof shall be as stubble. As it was in the literal Sodom, the whole city was full of fire: in their houses there was no safety, for they were all on fire; and if they fled out into the streets, they also were full of fire. Fire continually came down out of heaven every where.—That was a dismal time. What a cry was there then in that city, in every part of it! But there was none to help; they had no where to go, where they could hide their heads from fire: they had none to pity or relieve them. If they fled to their friends, they could not help them.

Now, with what haste should we flee from a city appointed to such a destruction! and how should we flee without looking behind us! how should it be our whole intent, to get at the greatest distance from a city in such circumstances! how far should we be from thinking at all of returning to a city which has such wrath hanging over it!

4. The destruction to which Sodom is appointed is an universal destruction. None that stay in it shall escape: none will have the good fortune to be in any by-corner, where the fire will not search them out. All sorts, old and young, great and small, shall be destroyed. There shall be no exception of any age, or any sex, or any condition, but all shall perish together.

[Gen. xix. 24, 25.](#) “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and he overthrew those cities and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.” We therefore must not delay or look behind us; for there is no place of safety in Sodom, nor in all the plain on which Sodom is built. The mountain of safety is before us, and not behind us.

5. The destruction to which Sodom is appointed is an everlasting destruction. This is said of the literal Sodom, that it suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, [Jude 7.](#) “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” The destruction that Sodom and Gomorrah suffered was an eternal destruction: those cities were destroyed, and have never been built since, and are not capable of being rebuilt; for the land on which they stood at the time of their destruction sunk, and has been ever since covered with the lake of Sodom or the Dead sea, or as it is called in Scripture, *the Salt Sea*. This seems to have been thus ordered on purpose to be a type of the eternal destruction of ungodly men. So that fire by which they were destroyed is called *eternal fire*, because it was so typically, it was a type of the eternal destruction of ungodly men; which may be in part what is intended, when it is said in that text in Jude, that they were set forth for an example, or for a type or representation of the eternal fire in which all the ungodly are to be consumed.

Sodom has in all ages since been covered with a lake which was first brought on it by fire and brimstone, to be a type of the lake of fire and brimstone in which ungodly men shall have their part for ever and ever, as we read [Rev. xx. 15.](#) and elsewhere.—We ought not therefore to look back when fleeing out of Sodom, seeing that the destruction to which it is appointed is an eternal destruction; for this renders the destruction infinitely dreadful.

6. Sodom is a city appointed to swift and sudden destruction. The destruction is not only certain and inevitable, and infinitely dreadful, but it will come speedily. “Their judgment lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not;” [2 Pet. ii. 3.](#) And so [Deut. xxxii. 35.](#) “The day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”—The storm of wrath, the black clouds of divine vengeance, even now every moment hang over them, just ready to break forth and come down in a dreadful manner upon them. God hath already whet his sword and bent his bow, and made ready his arrow on the string, [Psalm vii. 12.](#) Therefore we should make haste, and not look behind us. For if we linger and stop to look back, and flee not for our lives, there is great danger that we shall be involved in the common ruin.

The destruction of Sodom is not only swift, but will come suddenly and unexpectedly.—It seems to have been a fair morning in Sodom before it was destroyed. [Gen. xix. 23.](#) It seems that there were no clouds to be seen, no appearance of any storm at all, much less of a storm of fire and brimstone. The inhabitants of Sodom expected no such thing; even when Lot

told his sons-in-law of it, they would not believe it; [Gen. xix. 14.](#)—They were making merry; their hearts were at ease, they thought nothing of such a calamity at hand. But it came at once, as travail upon a woman with child, and there was no escaping; as [ver. 28, 29.](#) “They did eat, they drank; they bought, they sold; they planted, they builded: but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.”

So it is with wicked men; [Psalm lxxiii. 19.](#) “How are they brought into desolation in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.”—If therefore we linger and look back, we may be suddenly overtaken and seized with destruction.

7. There is nothing in Sodom that is worth looking back upon. All the enjoyments of Sodom will soon perish in the common destruction; all will be burnt up. And surely it is not worth the while to look back on things that are perishing and consuming in the flames, as it is with all the enjoyments of sin; they are all appointed to the fire. Therefore it is foolish for any who are fleeing out of Sodom to hanker any more after them; for when they are burnt up, what good can they do? And is it worth the while for us to return back for the sake of a moment’s enjoyment of them, before they are burnt, and so expose ourselves to be burnt up with them?

Lot’s wife looked back, because she remembered the pleasant things that she left in Sodom. She hankered after them; she could not but look back with a wishful eye upon the city, where she had lived in such ease and pleasure. Sodom was a place of great outward plenty; they ate the fat, and drank the sweet. The soil about Sodom was exceedingly fruitful; it is said to be *as the garden of God*, [Gen. xii. 10.](#) And *fulness of bread* was one of the sins of the place, [Ezek. xvi. 49.](#)

Here Lot and his wife lived plentifully; and it was a place where the inhabitants wallowed in carnal pleasures and delights. But however much it abounded in these things, what were they worth now, when the city was burning? Lot’s wife was very foolish in lingering in her escape, for the sake of things which were all on fire.—So the enjoyments, the profits, and pleasures of sin, have the wrath and curse of God on them: brimstone is scattered on them; hell-fire is ready to kindle on them. It is not therefore worth while for any person to look back after such things.

8. We are warned by messengers sent to us from God to make haste in our flight from Sodom, and not to look behind us. God sends to us his ministers, the angels of the churches, on this grand errand, as he sent the angels to warn Lot and his wife to flee for their lives, [Gen. xix. 15, 16.](#)—If we delay or look back, now that we have had such fair warning, we shall be exceedingly inexcusable and monstrously foolish.

#### APPLICATION.

The use that I would make of this doctrine, is to *warn* those who are in a natural condition to flee out of it, and by no means to look back. While you are out of Christ, you are in

Sodom. The whole history of the destruction of Sodom, with all its circumstances, seems to be inserted in the Scriptures for our warning, and is set forth for an example, as the apostle Jude says. It in a lively manner typifies the case of natural men, the destruction of those that continue in a natural state, and the manner of their escape who flee to Christ. The psalmist, when speaking of the appointed punishment of ungodly men, seems evidently to refer to the destruction of Sodom, [Psalm xi. 6](#). “Upon the wicked God shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.”

Consider therefore, you that are seeking an interest in Christ, you are to flee out of Sodom. Sodom is the place of your nativity, and the place where you have spent your lives. You are citizens of that city which is full of filthiness and abomination before God, that polluted and accursed city. You belong to that impure society. You not only live among them, but you are of them, you have committed those abominations, and have so provoked God as you have heard. It is you that I have all this while been speaking of under this doctrine; you are the inhabitants of Sodom. Perhaps you may look on your circumstances as not very dreadful; but you dwell in Sodom.—Though you may be reformed, and appear with a clean outside, and a smooth face to the world; yet as long as you are in a natural condition, you are impure inhabitants of Sodom.

The world of mankind is divided into two companies, or, as I may say, into two cities: there is the city of Zion, the church of God, the holy and beloved city; and there is Sodom, that polluted and accursed city, which is appointed to destruction. You belong to the latter of these. How much soever you may look upon yourselves as better than some others, you are of the same city; the same company with fornicators, and drunkards, and adulterers, and common swearers, and highwaymen, and pirates, and Sodomites. How much soever you may think yourselves distinguished, as long as you are out of Christ you belong to the very same society; you are of the company, you join with them, and are no better than they, any otherwise than as you have greater restraints. You are considered in the sight of God as fit to be ranked with them. You and they are altogether the objects of loathing and abhorrence, and have the wrath of God abiding on you; you will go with them and be destroyed with them, if you do not escape from your present state. Yea, you are of the same society and the same company with the devils, for Sodom is not only the city of wicked men, but it is the hold of every foul spirit.

You belong to that city which is appointed to an awful, inevitable, universal, swift, and sudden destruction; a city that hath a storm of fire and wrath hanging over it. Many of you are convinced of the awful state you are in while in Sodom, and are making some attempts to escape from the wrath which hangs over it. Let such be warned by what has been said, to escape for their lives, and not to look back. Look not back, unless you choose to have a share in the burning tempest that is coming down on that city.—Look not back in remembrance of the enjoyments which you have had in Sodom, as hankering after the pleasant things

which you have had there, after the ease, the security, and the pleasure which you have there enjoyed.

Remember Lot's wife, for she looked back, as being loth utterly and for ever to leave the ease, the pleasure, and plenty which she enjoyed in Sodom, and as having a mind to return to them again: remember what became of her.—Remember the children of Israel in the wilderness, who were desirous of going back again into Egypt. [Numb. xi. 5.](#) “We remember the flesh which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks and onions, and the garlick.” Remember what was the issue. You must be willing for ever to leave all the ease, and pleasure, and profit of sin, to forsake all for salvation, as Lot forsook all, and left all he had, to escape out of Sodom.

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S E R M O N V .

THE FOLLY OF LOOKING BACK IN FLEEING OUT OF SODOM.

LUKE xvii. 32.

*Remember Lot's wife.*

THE doctrine from these words was, That *we ought not to look back when we are fleeing out of Sodom.*—Having confirmed this doctrine by several reasons, we came to the application of it in a use of warning to sinners in a natural state, and especially to those who are awakened and convinced of the awful state in which they are, and are desirous of escaping the wrath which is to come. And further to enforce this warning, let me entreat all you who are in this state, to consider the several things which I shall now mention:

1. The destruction of which you are in danger is infinitely more dreadful than that destruction of the literal Sodom from which Lot fled. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in a storm of fire and brimstone, was but a shadow of the destruction of ungodly men in hell, and is no more to it than a shadow or a picture is to a reality, or than painted fire is to real fire. The misery of hell is set forth by various shadows and images in Scripture, as blackness of darkness, a never-dying worm, a furnace of fire, a lake of fire and brimstone, the torments of the valley of the son of Hinnom, a storm of fire and brimstone. The reason why so many similitudes are used, is because none of them are sufficient. Any one does but partly and very imperfectly represent the truth, and therefore God makes use of many.

You have therefore much more need to make haste in your escape, and not to look behind you, than Lot and his wife had when they fled out of Sodom; for you are every day and every moment in danger of a thousand times more dreadful storm coming on your heads, than that which came on Sodom, when the Lord rained brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven upon them; so that it will be vastly more sottish in you to look back than it was in Lot's wife.

2. The destruction of which you are in danger is not only greater than the temporal destruction of Sodom, but greater than the eternal destruction of the inhabitants of Sodom. For however well you may think you have behaved yourselves, you who have continued impenitent under the glorious gospel, have sinned more, and provoked God far more, and have greater guilt upon you, than the inhabitants of Sodom; although you may seem to yourselves, and perhaps to others, to be very harmless creatures. [Matt. x. 15.](#) "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."

3. Multitudes, while they; have been looking back, have been suddenly overtaken and seized by the storm of wrath. The wrath of God hath not delayed, while they have delayed; it has not waited at all for them to turn about and flee; but has presently seized them, and

they have been past hope. When Lot's wife looked back, she was immediately destroyed, God had exercised patience towards her before. When she lingered at the setting out, the angels pressed her, and her husband and children, to make haste. Not only so, but when they yet delayed, they brought her forth, and set her without the city, the Lord being merciful to her. But now when, notwithstanding this mercy, and the warnings which had been given her, she looked back, God exercised no more patience towards her, but proceeded immediately to put her to death.

Now God has in like manner been merciful to you. You in time past have been lingering; you have been warned by the angel of your danger, and pressed to make haste and flee; yet you have delayed. And now at length God hath as it were laid hold on you, by the convictions of his Spirit, to draw you out of Sodom; and therefore *remember Lot's wife*. If now, after all, you should look back, when God hath been so merciful to you, you will have reason to fear, that God will suddenly destroy you. Multitudes, when they have been looking back, and putting off to another time, have never had another opportunity; they have been suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy.

4. If you look back, and live long after it, there will be great danger that you will never get any further. The only way to seek salvation is to press forward with all your might, and still to look and press forward, never to stand still or slacken your pace. When Lot's wife stopped in her flight and stood still in order that she might look, her punishment was, that there she was to stand for ever; she never got any further; she never got beyond that place: but there she stood as a pillar of salt, a durable pillar and monument of wrath, for her folly and wickedness.

So it was very often with backsliders, though they may live a considerable time after. When they look back, after they have been taking pains for their salvation, they lose all, they put themselves under vast disadvantages; by quenching the Spirit of God, and losing their convictions, they dreadfully harden their own hearts, and stupify their souls. They make way for discouragements, dreadfully strengthen and establish the interest of sin in their hearts, many ways give Satan great advantages to ruin them, and provoke God oftentimes utterly to leave them to hardness of heart. When they come to look back, their souls presently become dead and hard like the body of Lot's wife. And though they live long after, they never get any further; it is worse for them than if they were immediately damned. When persons in fleeing out of Sodom look back, their last case is far worse than the first; [Matt. xii. 43, 44, 45](#). And experience confirms, that none ordinarily are so hard to be brought to repentance as backsliders.

5. It may well stir you up to flee for your lives, and not to look behind you, when you consider how many have lately fled to the mountain, while you yet remain in Sodom. To what multitudes hath God given the wisdom to flee to Christ, the mountain of safety! They have fled to the little city Zoar, which God will spare and never destroy. How many have



you seen of all sorts resorting out of Sodom thither, as believing the word of God by the angels, that God would surely destroy that place. They are in a safe condition; they are got out of the reach of the storm; the fire and brimstone can do them no hurt there.

But you yet remain in that cursed city among that accursed company. You are yet in Sodom, which God is about so terribly to destroy, where you are in danger every minute of having snares, fire, and brimstone, come down on your head.—Though so many have obtained, yet you have not obtained deliverance. Good has come, but you have seen none of it. Others are happy, but no man knows what will become of you: you have no part nor lot in that glorious salvation of souls, which has lately been among us.—The consideration of this should stir you up effectually to escape, and in your escape to press forward—still to press forward—and to resolve to press forward for ever, let what will be in the way, to hearken to no temptation, and never to look back, or in any wise slacken or abate your endeavours as long as you live, but if possible to increase in them more and more.

6. Backsliding after such a time as this,<sup>61</sup> will have a vastly greater tendency to seal a man's damnation than at another time. The greater means men have, the louder calls and the greater advantages they are under, the more dangerous is backsliding, the more it has a tendency to enhance guilt, to provoke God, and to harden the heart.

We, in this land of light, have long enjoyed greater advantages than most of the world. But the advantages which persons are under now for their salvation, are perhaps tenfold what they have been at such times as we have ordinarily lived in; and backsliding will be proportionably the greater sin, and the more dangerous to the soul. You have seen God's glory and his wonders amongst us, in a most marvellous manner.—If therefore you look back after this, there will be great danger that God will swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest; as God sware concerning them that were for going back into Egypt, after they had seen the wonders which God wrought for Israel. [Numb. xiv. 22, 23.](#) "Because all those men that have seen my glory and my miracles that I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it."—The wonders that we have seen among us of late, have been of a more glorious nature than those that the children of Israel saw in Egypt and in the wilderness.

7. We know not but that great part of the wicked world are, at this day, in Sodom's circumstances, when Lot fled out of it; having some outward, temporal destruction hanging over it. It looks as if some great thing were coming; the state of things in the world seems to be ripe for some great revolution. The world has got to such a terrible degree of wickedness, that it is probable the cry of it has reached up to heaven; and it is hardly probable that God will suffer things to go on, as they now do, much longer. It is likely that God will ere long

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61 The time of the revival of religion at Northampton, A. D. 1735.

appear in awful majesty to vindicate his own cause; and then none will be safe that are out of Christ. Now therefore every one should flee for his life, and escape to the mountain, lest he be consumed. We cannot certainly tell what God is about to do, but this we may know, that those who are out of Christ are in a most unsafe state.

8. To enforce this warning against looking back, let me beseech you to consider the exceeding proneness to it there is in the heart. The heart of man is a backsliding heart. There is in the heart a great love and hankering desire after the ease, pleasure, and enjoyments of Sodom, as there was in Lot's wife, by which persons are continually liable to temptations to look back. The heart is so much towards Sodom, that it is a difficult thing to keep the eye from turning that way, and the feet from tending thither. When men under convictions are put upon fleeing, it is a mere force, it is because God lays hold on their hands, as he did on Lot's and his wife's, and drags them so far. But the tendency of the heart is to go back to Sodom.

Persons are very prone to backsliding also through discouragement. The heart is unsteady, soon tired, and apt to listen to discouraging temptations. A little difficulty and delay soon overcome its feeble resolutions. And discouragement tends to backsliding: it weakens persons' hands, lies as a dead weight on their hearts, and makes them drag heavily; and if it continue long, it very often issues in security and senselessness. Convictions are often shaken off that way: they begin first to go off with discouragement. Backsliding is a disease that is exceeding secret in its way of working. It is a flattering distemper; it works like a consumption, wherein persons often flatter themselves that they are not worse, but something better, and in a hopeful way to recover, till a few days before they die. So backsliding commonly comes on gradually, and steals on men insensibly, and they still flatter themselves that they are not backslidden.—They plead that they are seeking yet, and they hope they have not lost their convictions. And by the time they find it out, and cannot pretend so any longer, they are commonly so far gone, that they care not much if they have lost their convictions. And when it is come to that, it is commonly a gone case as to those convictions. Thus they blind themselves, and keep themselves insensible of their own disease, and so are not terrified with it, nor awakened to use means for relief, till it is past cure.

Thus it is that backsliding commonly comes upon persons that have for some time been under any considerable convictions, and afterwards lose them. Let the consideration of this your danger excite you to the greatest care and diligence to keep your hearts, and to watchfulness and constant prayer against backsliding. And let it put you upon endeavours to strengthen your resolutions of guarding against every thing that tends to the contrary, that you may indeed hold out to the end, for *then shall you know, if you follow on to know the Lord.*

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S E R M O N V I . <sup>6 2</sup>

THE WARNINGS OF SCRIPTURE ARE IN THE BEST MANNER ADAPTED  
TO THE AWAKENING AND CONVERSION OF SINNERS.

LUKE xvi. 31.

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

WE here have an account how the rich man in hell—after he had in vain begged of Abraham to send Lazarus to his relief—prays that Lazarus may be sent to his brethren to warn them, that they might take care for their salvation, and escape that place of torment. By the way, it may be proper to remark, that we cannot from this conclude, that the damned will have any workings of natural affection to their near relations in this world, or any concern for their salvation. The design of Christ was only parabolically to represent what different thoughts worldly and wicked men will have of things, when in hell, from what they have while upon earth. The rich man, when he was upon earth, only minded his honour, ease, and pleasure, and did not think it worth while to take care of his soul, and to be at much pains to escape hell. But now he is of another mind, and is sensible that if his five brethren, who live in the same careless neglect of their souls as he did, knew what hell is, they would take more care.

But this seems to be put into the parable chiefly to introduce what follows, the reply which Abraham made to him, [Luke xvi. 29](#) *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.* As much as to say, They have already abundant warning and instruction, which God himself hath provided for them, let them make use of that.

The rich man replies, *Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent* <sup>63</sup>. Then come in the words of the text, *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead* <sup>64</sup>. By Moses and the prophets is meant the whole Old Testament, which was the whole canon of Scripture which they had in those times. The hearing of them implies, attending to what they say, believing them, and obeying them—*they would not be persuaded*—that is, they would not be persuaded to take thorough care of their souls, to forsake their sins and turn to God, so as to avoid this place of torments—*though, one rose from the dead*; though one should so from the invisible world, either from heaven, where they see the torments of the damned, or from hell, where they feel them.

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<sup>6 2</sup> N O T D A T E D .

<sup>63</sup> [Luke xvi. 30](#)

<sup>64</sup> [Luke xvi. 31.](#)

**DOCTRINE.**

The warnings of God's word are more fitted to obtain the ends of awakening sinners, and bringing them to repentance, than the rising of one from the dead to warn them.

In this passage, Moses and the prophets seem not only to be equalized to the warnings of one from the invisible world, but to be preferred before them. They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them: they have already those means which God in his infinite wisdom hath seen to be fittest for them, and more suitable to their nature and circumstances, than the rising of one from the dead.—But whether there can be any more than an equality necessarily inferred or not; yet if only the warnings of the Old Testament have an equal tendency to bring men to repentance, as the rising of one from the dead; then surely these, together with the much clearer revelation under the gospel-dispensation by Christ and his apostles—wherein we are abundantly more plainly told of another world, and wherein life and immortality are brought to light—must have a much greater tendency and fitness to obtain these ends.

Sinners are apt to find fault with the means of grace which they enjoy, and to say with themselves, If I had ever seen hell, or had ever heard the cries of the damned, or had ever seen a person who had felt hell-torments, or had seen them at a distance, that would awaken me; then I would forsake all my sins, and would do whatever I could to escape hell. But now I am only told of hell in the Bible and by ministers; and there never was any in this world that saw or felt it: so that I am ready to think it is mere delusion and fancy. How do I know that there is any hell? How do I know but that when I die there will be an end of me?

But it is the indisposition of sinners to this great work, to which they are directed, which makes them find fault with their means and advantages. The slothful and negligent, who hate to bestir themselves, are they who object. "The way of the slothful is as a hedge of thorns.<sup>65</sup>"—Sinners know not what they would have. They are fixedly averse to breaking off their sins by righteousness; and to make the matter the more excusable, they object against the sufficiency of their means, and so they will not believe, except they see hell, or see some person who has seen it.

But God, who knows our nature and circumstances, knows what is most adapted to them. He who made the faculties of our souls, knows what will have the greatest tendency to move them, and to work upon them. He who is striving with us, to bring us to repentance and salvation, uses the fittest and best means. In contriving and appointing the means of our salvation, he chooses better for us than we should for ourselves.

Suppose a person should rise from the dead to warn sinners, either from heaven, where they see the misery of the damned, or from hell, where they feel it; and should tell how dismal those torments are, having seen or felt them; and suppose he should confirm what he said,

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65 [Proverbs xv. 19.](#)

by declaring that he had seen the smoke of their torments, the raging of the flames, the dreadful crew of devils and damned souls together, and had heard their dismal cries and shrieks; or suppose he should say that he had felt them, and should express by words and actions the doleful state of the damned and the extremity of their torments; this would probably greatly fright and terrify many sinners who were not terrified by reading the Bible, nor by hearing preaching about hell-torments. But it would be very much because of the unusualness and strangeness of the thing. Men are apt to be much affected with strange things, and to be much affrighted by spectres in the dark, because they are unusual. But if they were as common as preaching is, they would lose their effect.

It might be that on such an unusual occasion, as the rising of one from the dead, for a while men would reform their lives, and possibly some might be so affected as never to forget it. But we are to consider which would have the greatest tendency to awaken us, if both were alike new and unusual, to be warned of the misery of hell by the great God himself, declaring as it were from heaven how dreadful hell is, and abundantly warning us about it; or to be warned only by a man coming from the invisible world, who had either seen or felt these miseries. It is in this view that we shall consider the matter; and we shall show what advantages the former mode of warning has above the latter: or how the warnings of God's word have a greater tendency to awaken sinners and bring them to repentance, than the rising of one from the dead to warn them.

1. God, in many respects, knows better what belongs to the punishment of sinners than departed souls. Departed souls doubtless know what hell-torments are, much better than any on earth. The souls of the wicked feel them, and the souls of the saints see them afar off. God glorifies his justice in the punishment of ungodly men, in the view of the saints and angels, and thereby makes them the more admire the riches of his goodness in choosing them to life. As the rich man saw Lazarus in heaven afar off, so Lazarus saw the rich man in hell; he saw hell-torments; and therefore the rich man desires he may be sent to warn his brethren.—And if one should rise from the dead to warn wicked men, if it would at all awaken them, it would be because he knew what hell-torments were by his own knowledge, and could describe them to others, as having seen and felt them.

But surely the all-seeing God knows as well as any of the dead, what the present sufferings of the damned are. He is every where present with his all-seeing eye. He is in heaven and in hell, and in and through every part of the creation. He is where every devil is; and where every damned soul is, he is present by his knowledge and his essence. He not only knows as well as those in heaven, who see at a distance; but he knows as perfectly as those who feel the misery. He seeth into the innermost recesses of the hearts of those miserable spirits. He seeth all the sorrow and anguish that are there; for he upholds them in being. They and all the powers of their spirits, whereby they are capable of either happiness or misery, are in his hands.



Besides, it is his wrath they endure; he measures out to them their several portions of punishment; he makes his wrath enter into them; he is a consuming fire to them; his anger is that fire, in which they are tormented. He therefore is doubtless able to give us as clear and distinct, and as true, an account of hell, as the damned themselves, if they should rise from the dead. He needs not any to inform him.

He knows far better what the eternity of those torments is than any of them. He can better tell us how awful a thing eternity is. He knows better what the future judgment of sinners will be, when the Lord Jesus shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. He knows far better than they how much the torment of the wicked will then be increased.

2. We have the truth upon surer grounds from God's testimony, than we could have it from the testimony of one rising from the dead. Suppose one should rise from the dead, and tell us of the dreadfulness of hell-torments; how precarious a foundation would that be to build upon, in a matter of such importance, unless we consider it as confirmed by divine testimony. We should be uncertain whether there were not some delusion in the case. We know that it is impossible for God to lie; and we may know that the matter is just as he declares it to us. But if one should come from the dead, we could not be so sure that we were no way imposed upon. We could not be so sure that he who testified was not himself subject to some delusion. We could not be sure that the matter was not strained too high, and represented greater than it really is.

One coming from the dead could not, merely by force of his own testimony, make us sure that we should come to that place of torments if we did not repent and reform. And if there should come more witnesses than one from the dead, if there should be ever so many, yet there is no authority equal to that of God; there is no testimony of spirits from the invisible world which would be so indisputable and unquestionable as the divine testimony. How could we know, unless by some divine revelation, that they who should come from the dead had not come to deceive us? How could we know how wicked, or how good they were, and upon what views they acted?

Whereas we have the greatest ground to be assured, that the First Being, and the Fountain of all being and perfection, is nothing but light and truth itself, and therefore that it is impossible he should deceive or be deceived.

3. The warnings of God's word have greatly the advantage, by reason of the greatness and majesty of him who speaks. The speeches and declarations of those who are great, excellent, and honourable, have a greater tendency to move the affections, than the declarations of others who are less excellent. Things spoken by a king affect more than the same things spoken by a mean man.

But God is infinitely greater than kings; he is universal King of heaven and earth, the absolute Sovereign of all things. Now, what can have a greater tendency to strike the mind

and move the heart, than to be warned by this great and glorious Being? Shall we be unmoved when he speaks who made heaven and earth by the word of his power? If his immediate speeches, declarations, and warnings, will not influence us, what will? *Isa. i. 2.* “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken.”—That is to the present purpose which we have in *Matt. xxi. 37.* “But last of all he sent his son, saying, They will reverence my son.” He sent his servants before, but they did not regard them. He therefore sent his son, who was a much greater and more honourable messenger, and said, Surely they will regard him.

What if God should send messengers from the dead to warn us, even many in succession, and men should reject them; we should justly argue, that it would have a much greater tendency to make men regard and obey the counsel, if he would send his Son, or come himself. But God hath sent his Son, and therein he hath come himself. He came down from heaven, and took upon him our nature, and dwelt among us, teaching and warning us concerning hell and damnation.

In the Bible, we not only have those warnings which were given by inspiration of the prophets, but we have God’s own words, which he spake as it were by his own mouth. In the Old Testament is his voice out of the midst of the fire and the darkness, from mount Sinai; and in the New Testament, we have God speaking to us, as dwelling among us. He came down from heaven, and instructed us in a familiar manner for a long while; and we have his instructions recorded in our Bibles.—Now, which has the greatest tendency to influence men, to have one of the departed spirits sent back into its body to warn them, or to have God himself assume a body and warn them?

4. It more evidently shows the importance of the affair, that God should immediately concern himself in it, than the coming of one from the dead would do. Those things about which kings most immediately concern themselves are commonly matters of the greatest importance, while they leave less concerns to be managed by their officers. And surely that must be a matter of very great moment, in which God shows himself so much concerned as he does in our salvation. God, in all ages of the world, hath showed himself very much concerned in this matter. How abundantly hath he warned us in his holy word? How earnest hath he shown himself in it! How many arguments and expostulations hath he used, that we might avoid the way to hell!—This evidently argues, that what we are warned about is a matter of the utmost concern, and proves it much more than if we were only warned by one risen from the dead.

5. God warning us of our danger of damnation hath a greater tendency to have influence upon us, because he is our Judge. Damnation is a punishment to which he condemns and which he inflicts. What he warns us of is his own wrath and vengeance. In his word we have his threatenings against sin denounced by himself. He tells us, that if we go on in sin, he will destroy us, and cast us, out of his sight, and pour out his wrath upon us, and hold us

eternally under misery. He tells us so himself; and this hath a much greater tendency to influence us, than to be told so by another, who is not to be our judge, who hath not in his hands the power of making us miserable.—When a king immediately threatens his own displeasure, it has a greater tendency to terrify men, than when another man threatens it, or warns them of the danger.

6. God is infinitely wise, and knows better how to speak to us so as to persuade us, than one risen from the dead. He perfectly knows our nature and state, and knows how to adapt his instructions and warnings to our frame and circumstances in the world; and without doubt that method which God has chosen, is agreeable to his infinite wisdom, and most adapted to our nature.

If one should come from hell to warn sinners, it may be he would tell them of hell in such a manner as would have more of a tendency to drive men into despair, and set them a blaspheming as they do in hell, than to excite them to strive for salvation, and diligently to use the means which God hath appointed. But God knoweth what revelation of hell we can bear, and what hath the most tendency to do us good in this our infirm, dark, and sinful state.—The declarations of one come from hell might more tend to drive us from God than to bring us near to him. It is best for us to be warned and instructed by God, who knows best how to do it.

These are some of the reasons why the warnings of God's word have more of a tendency to bring us to repentance, than the warning of one risen from the dead.

#### **APPLICATION.**

1. It is a natural inference from this doctrine, that if these means which God hath appointed do not answer to lead men to repentance and reformation, no others would.—Although this be not an absolutely necessary consequence from the words of the doctrine; yet it seems to be Christ's aim to teach us, that if God's means will not answer, none will. Our own means, those which we can devise, however they may seem more likely at a distance to be effectual, if brought to the trial, will not prove to be better. The rich man thought that if his brethren were warned by one rising from the dead, they would surely repent. But Abraham tells him, he is mistaken.

If one rising from the dead would not answer the purpose, we may rationally conclude that no other kind of means, different from those appointed by God, would. For what can we think of, which seems to have more tendency to awaken men, and lead to repentance, than one coming from the dead to them; except those means which we enjoy.—Indeed men can think of many means, which they may imagine, if they enjoyed them, would make them believe and repent: but they deceive themselves.

It may be they think, if they could see some prophet, and see him work miracles, that this would awaken them. But how was it then when there were prophets? There has rarely



been a more degenerate time than that of Elijah and Elisha, who wrought so many miracles. The people did not regard their prophecies nor their miracles; but walked in their own ways, and served their own gods, so that Elijah thought there was none left of the true worshippers of God. And how did they treat the prophet Jeremiah, solemnly warning them from God of their approaching destruction? And how often do the prophets complain that all their prophecies and warnings were neglected and despised!

Would it be sufficient if you could hear God speak from heaven? How was it in Moses's time, when they heard God speak out of the midst of the fire, and heard the voice of words exceeding loud and full of majesty, so that they exceedingly trembled; when they saw mount Sinai all covered with smoke, and shaking exceedingly? How did they behave themselves? Did they all turn from their sins, and after that walk in the ways of God? It is true, they were very much affected at first, while it was a new and strange thing to them; but how hard-hearted and rebellious were they soon after! They did not scruple to rebel against this same great and glorious God. Yea, they made a golden calf while Moses was in the mount conversing with God, just after they had seen those dreadful appearances of divine majesty.

Thus they rebelled against the Lord, although they had seen so many miracles and wonders in Egypt at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; although they continually saw the pillar of cloud and of fire going before them, were continually fed in a miraculous manner with manna, and in the same miraculous manner made to drink water out of the rock.

Men are apt to think, that if they had lived in Christ's time, and had seen and heard him, and had seen his miracles, that they would have effectually convinced and turned them from sin. But how was it in fact? How few were there brought to repentance by all his discourses and miracles! How hard-hearted were they! Some were very much affected for a little while; but how few constant steady followers had he! He was, notwithstanding his miracles, rejected, despised, and even murdered by the people among whom he dwelt. And they were men of the same natures as sinners in these days.

The Scripture is full of instances, sufficient to convince us, that if the word of God will not awaken and convert sinners, nothing will.—And we see enough in these days to convince us of it. Men sometimes meet with those things by which we should not imagine, if we did not see it, and were not used to it, but that they would be thoroughly awakened and reformed.—They sometimes hear the warnings of dying men expecting to go to hell. One would think this would be enough to awaken them; and it may be they are affected with it for the present: but it only touches them; it vanishes away, and is gone like a puff of wind.

Sometimes sinners themselves are laid upon beds of sickness, and their lives hang in doubt before them. They are brought to the sides of the grave, and to the very mouth of hell, and their hearts are full of terror and amazement. Yet if they recover, they soon forget it, and return to the ways of folly and wickedness.—Sometimes this is repeated; they are taken sick again, are again in extreme peril of death, their hearts are full of amazement, and they

make many promises and vows; yet being recovered, they again soon forget all, and return to sin and folly. Such things are enough to convince us, that if the word of God be not sufficient to convince men, and make them break off their sins, no external means would be sufficient.

Perhaps some may yet be ready to think, that if sinners should see hell, and here the cries of the damned, that would be effectual, though nothing else would. But if we duly consider the matter, we shall see reason to think, that it would not have so great a tendency to turn men from sin, as the word of God. Such a thing would doubtless be effectual to terrify and affright men, and probably to death. Such a mean is not at all suitable to our nature and state in the world. If it should not fright men to death, it would not have so great a tendency to make them diligently use means for their salvation as the warnings of Scripture. It would probably drive them to despair; or so take away their spirits that they would have no heart to seek God. Instead of driving them to God, it would probably make them hate him the more. It would make them more like devils; and set them a blaspheming as the damned do. For while the hearts of men are filled with natural darkness, they cannot see the glory of the divine justice appearing in such extreme torments.

Therefore the means which God hath instituted for us, are doubtless the best, and most conducive to lead men to repentance and salvation. They are doubtless far better than any other which we can devise.

2. Hence we learn the dreadful hardness of men's hearts, since the word of God hath no more influence upon them, and they are no more moved and wrought upon by those means which infinite wisdom hath provided. The warnings of the word of God are, as you have heard, better and more powerful means than if one should rise from the dead to warn us, and tell us our danger, and the dreadfulness of the wrath of God. You have also heard, that if these means will not answer the end of awakening and leading sinners to repentance, no other will; neither the working of miracles, nor the hearing of God speak with an audible voice from heaven, nor any thing else.—Yet how few are there who are effectually wrought upon by the word of God! They are very thinly sown; there is but here and there one.

When we read how the children of Israel conducted themselves in the wilderness, how often they murmured and offended; we are ready to wonder at the hardness of their hearts. And when we read the history of Christ, and how the Jews hated and rejected him notwithstanding his many miracles; we are ready to wonder how they could be so hard-hearted. But we have as much reason to wonder at ourselves, for we have naturally the same sort of hearts that they had; and sinners in these days manifest a hardness of heart as much to be wondered at, in that they are not influenced by the word of God; for they who will not hear Moses and the prophets, Jesus Christ and his apostles, neither would be persuaded, if one should rise from the dead, or if an angel should come from heaven.



The best means of awakening and conversion are plentifully enjoyed by us, much more plentifully in several respects, than they were by those who had only Moses and the prophets. In the first place, we have divine truth more fully revealed in the Bible than they had then. Light now shines abundantly clear. Gospel-truth is revealed, not in types and shadows, but plainly. Heaven and hell are much more clearly and expressly made known. We are told, that the glory of that revelation was no glory in comparison with the revelation of the gospel.

Again, we have a greater plenty of Bibles than they had under the dispensation of Moses and the prophets. Then there was no such thing as printing, and Bibles were scarce things. They seldom had any Bibles any where else but in their synagogues. But now we have them in our houses; we can look into them when we please. Besides, Christ hath appointed the gospel-ministry, by which we have the word of God explained and enforced every week. Yet how little influence hath the word of God to bring men to repentance!

Let this strike conviction into those who never yet have found any such effect by the word of God. Though you are convinced of nothing else, yet you have abundant reason to be convinced that your hearts are as hard as a stone, and that you are exceedingly stupid and sottish.

3. Hence we may learn how justly and fairly God deals with us. He gives us the best means of awakening and reclaiming us from our sins; better than if he had sent one from the dead to warn us. He gives us those means which are most suited to our nature and circumstances. He gives sinners abundant warning before he punishes them. What could he have done more than he hath done? We can devise or imagine no sort of warning which would have been better than what God hath given us. How justly therefore are ungodly men punished! how inexcusable will they be!

4. Let all make use of the means which God hath instituted. They are the best and only means by which we may expect to obtain salvation. We shall be most inexcusable therefore if we neglect them. Let us attend to the word of God, read and hear it carefully, consider it thoroughly and daily walk by it. Let us be diligent in this work. The word of God is a great price put into our hands to get wisdom and eternal salvation; let us therefore improve it while we have it, as we know not how soon we may be deprived of it; lest Christ say to us, as in [Luke xix. 42](#). "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes."

S E R M O N V I I . 6 6

HYPOCRITES DEFICIENT IN THE DUTY OF PRAYER.

JOB xxvii. 10.

Will he always call upon God?

CONCERNING these words, I would observe,

1. Who it is that is here spoken of, *viz.* the hypocrite; as you may see, if you take the two preceding verses with the verse of the text. [Job xxvii.8-10](#). “For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him . Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?” Job’s three friends, in their speeches to him, insisted much upon it, that he was a hypocrite. But Job, in this chapter, asserts his sincerity and integrity, and shows how different his own behaviour had been from that of hypocrites. Particularly he declares his stedfast and immovable resolution of persevering and holding out in the ways of religion and righteousness to the end; as you may see in the six first verses. In the text, he shows how contrary to this stedfastness and perseverance the character of the hypocrite is, who is not wont thus to hold out in religion.

2. We may observe what duty of religion it is, with respect to which the hypocrite is deciphered in the text, and that is the duty of *prayer* or calling upon God.

3. Here is something supposed of the hypocrite relating to this duty, *viz.* That he may continue in it *for a while*; he may call upon God for a season.

4. Something asserted, *viz.* That it is not the manner of hypocrites to continue always in this duty. *Will he always call upon God?* It is in the form of an interrogation; but the words have the force of a strong assertion, that however the hypocrite may call upon God for a season, yet he will not *always* continue in it.

DOCTRINE.

However hypocrites may continue for a season in the duty of prayer, yet it is their manner, after a while, in a great measure to leave off.

In speaking upon this doctrine, I shall show,

I. How hypocrites often continue for a season to call upon God.

II. How it is their manner, after a while, in a great measure to leave off the practice of this duty.

III. Give some reasons why this is the manner of hypocrites.

I. I would show how hypocrites often continue for a season in the duty of prayer.

1. They do so for a while after they have received common illuminations and affections. While they are under awakenings, they may through fear of hell call upon God, and attend very constantly upon the duty of secret prayer. And after they have had some melting affections, having their hearts much moved with the goodness of God, or with some affecting encouragements, and false joy and comfort; while these impressions last they continue to call upon God in the duty of secret prayer.

2. After they have obtained a hope, and have made profession of their good estate, they often continue for a while in the duty of secret prayer. For a while they are affected with their hope: they think that God hath delivered them out of a natural condition, and given them an interest in Christ, thus introducing them into a state of safety from that eternal misery which they lately feared. With this supposed kindness of God to them, they are much affected, and often find in themselves for a while a kind of love to God, excited by his supposed love to them. Now, while this affection towards God continues, the duties of religion seem pleasant to them; it is even with some delight that they approach to God in their closets; and for the present it may be, they think of no other than continuing to call upon God as long as they live.

Yea, they may continue in the duty of secret prayer for a while after the liveliness of their affections is past, through the influence of their former intentions. They intended to continue seeking God always; and now suddenly to leave off would be too shocking to their own minds. And the force of their own preconceived notions, *viz.* That godly persons continue in religion, may have some effect. Therefore, though they have no love to the duty of prayer, and begin to grow weary of it, yet as they love their own hope, they are somewhat backward to take a course, which will prove it to be a false hope, and so deprive them of it.

If they should all at once bear the sign of a false hope, they would scare themselves. Their hope is dear to them, and it would fright them to see any plain evidence that it is not true. Hence, for a considerable time after the force of their illuminations and affections is over, and after they hate the duty of prayer and would be glad to have done with it, if they could without showing themselves to be hypocrites, they hold up a kind of attendance upon the duty of secret prayer.—This may keep up the outside of religion in them for a good while, and occasion it to be somewhat slowly that they are brought to neglect it. They must not leave off suddenly, because that would be too great a shock to their false peace.—But they must come gradually to it, as they find their consciences can bear it, and as they can find out devices and salvos to cover the matter, and make their so doing consistent, in their own opinion, with the truth of their hope.—But,

II. It is the manner of hypocrites, after a while, in a great measure to leave off the practice of this duty. We are often taught, that the seeming goodness and piety of hypocrites is not of a lasting and persevering nature. It is so with respect to their practice of the duty of prayer in particular, and especially of secret prayer. They can omit this duty, and their

omission of it not be taken notice of by others, who know what profession they have made. So that a regard to their own reputation doth not oblige them still to practice it. If others saw how they neglect it, it would exceedingly shock their charity towards them. But their neglect doth not fall under their observation; at least not under the observation of many. Therefore they may omit this duty, and still have the credit of being converted persons.

Men of this character can come to a neglect of secret prayer by degrees without shocking their peace. For though indeed for a converted person to live in a great measure without secret prayer, is very wide of the notion they once had of a true convert; yet they find means by degrees to alter their notions, and to bring their principles to suit with their inclinations; and at length they come to a notion, that a man may be a convert, and yet live very much in neglect of this duty. In time, they can bring all things to suit well together; as a hope of heaven, an indulgence of sloth, gratifying carnal appetites, and living in a great measure a prayerless life. They cannot indeed suddenly make these things agree; it must be a work of time; and length of time will effect it. By degrees they find out ways to guard and defend their consciences against those powerful enemies; so that those enemies, and a quiet, secure conscience, can at length dwell together.

Whereas it is asserted in the doctrine, that it is the manner of hypocrites, after a while, in a great measure to leave off this duty; I would observe to you,

1. That it is not intended but that they may commonly continue to the end of life in an external attendance on prayer with others. They may commonly be present at public prayers in the congregation, and also at family prayer. This, in such places of light as this is, men commonly do before they are so much as awakened. Many vicious persons, who make no pretence to serious religion, commonly attend public prayers in the congregation, and also more private prayers in the families in which they live, unless it be when carnal designs interfere, or when their youthful pleasures and diversions, and their vain company, call them; and then they make no conscience of attending family prayer. Otherwise they may continue to attend upon prayer as long as they live, and yet may truly be said not to call upon God. For such prayer, in the manner of it, is not their own. They are present only for the sake of their credit, or in compliance with others. They may be present at these prayers, and yet have no proper prayer of their own. Many of those concerning whom it may be said, as in [Job xv. 4.](#) that *they cast off fear and restrain prayer* before God, are yet frequently present at family and public prayers.

2. But they in a great measure leave off the practice of secret prayer. They come to this pass by degrees. At first they begin to be careless about it, under some particular temptations. Because they have been out in young company, or have been taken up very much with worldly business, they omit it once: after that they more easily omit it again. Thus it presently becomes a frequent thing with them to omit it; and after a while, it comes to that pass, that they seldom attend it. Perhaps they attend it on sabbath days, and sometimes on other days.

But they have ceased to make it a constant practice daily to retire to worship God alone, and to seek his face in secret places. They sometimes do a little to quiet conscience, and just to keep alive their old hope; because it would be shocking to them, even after all their subtle dealing with their consciences, to call themselves converts, and yet totally to live without prayer. Yet the practice of secret prayer they have in a great measure left off.—I come now, III. To the reasons why this is the manner of hypocrites.

1. Hypocrites never had the spirit of prayer. They may have been stirred up to the external performance of this duty, and that with a great deal of earnestness and affection, and yet always have been destitute of the true spirit of prayer. The spirit of prayer is a holy spirit, a gracious spirit. We read of the spirit of grace and supplication: [Zech. xii. 10](#). “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications.”—Wherever there is a true spirit of supplication, there is the spirit of grace. The true spirit of prayer is no other than God’s own spirit dwelling in the hearts of the saints. And as this spirit comes from God, so doth it naturally tend to God in holy breathings and pantings. It naturally leads to God to converse with him by prayer. Therefore the Spirit is said to make intercession for the saints with groanings which cannot be uttered, [Rom. viii. 26](#).

The Spirit of God makes intercession for them, as it is that Spirit which in some respect indites their prayers, and leads them to pour out their souls before God. Therefore the saints are said to worship God in the spirit; [Phil. iii. 3](#). “We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit;” and [John iv. 23](#). “The true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” The truly godly have the spirit of adoption, the spirit of a child, to which it is natural to go to God and call upon him, crying to him as to a father.

But hypocrites have nothing of this spirit of adoption: they have not the spirit of children; for this is a gracious and holy spirit, given only in a real work of regeneration. Therefore it is often mentioned as a part of the distinguishing character of the godly, that they call upon God. [Psalm cxiv. 18,19](#). “The Lord is nigh to them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will also hear their cry, and will save them.” [Joel ii. 32](#). “It shall come to pass, that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

It is natural to one who is truly born from above to pray to God, and to pour out his soul in holy supplications before his heavenly Father. This is as natural to the new nature and life as breathing is to the nature and life of the body. But hypocrites have not this new nature. Those illuminations and affections which they had, went away, and left no change of nature. Therefore prayer naturally dies away in them, having no foundation laid in the nature of the soul. It is maintained awhile only by a certain force put upon nature. But force is not constant; and as that declines, nature will take place again.



The spirit of a true convert is a spirit of true love to God, and that naturally inclines the soul to those duties wherein it is conversant with God, and makes it to delight in approaching him. But a hypocrite hath no such spirit. He is left under the reigning power of enmity against God, which natural! v inclines him to shun his presence.

The spirit of a true convert is a spirit of faith and reliance on the power, wisdom, and mercy of God, and such a spirit is naturally expressed in prayer. True prayer is nothing else but faith expressed. Hence we read of the prayer of faith; [James v. 15](#). True Christian prayer is the faith and reliance of the soul breathed forth in words. But a hypocrite is without the spirit of faith. He hath no true reliance or dependence on God, but is really self-dependent.

As to those common convictions and affections which the hypocrite had, and which made him keep up the duty of prayer for a while; they not reaching the bottom of the heart, nor being accompanied with any change of nature, a little thing extinguishes them. The cares of the world commonly choke and suffocate them, and often the pleasures and vanities of youth totally put an end to them, and with them ends their constant practice of the duty of prayer.

2. When a hypocrite hath had his false conversion, his wants are in his sense of things already supplied, his desires are already answered, and so he finds no further business at the throne of grace. He never was sensible that he had any other needs, but a need of being safe from hell. And now that he is converted, as he thinks, that need is supplied. Why then should he still go on to resort to the throne of grace with earnest requests? He is out of danger; all that he was afraid of is removed: he hath got enough to carry him to heaven, and what more should he desire?—While under-awakenings he had this to stir him up to go to God in prayer, that he was in continual fear of hell. This put him upon crying to God for mercy. But since in his own opinion he is converted, he hath no further business about which to go to God. And although he may keep up the duty of prayer in the outward form a little while, for fear of spoiling his hope, yet he will find it a dull business to continue it without necessity, and so by degrees he will let drop the practice. The work of the hypocrite is done when he is converted, and therefore he standeth in no further need of help.

But it is far otherwise with the true convert. His work is not done; but he finds still a great work to do, and great wants to be supplied. He sees himself still to be a poor, empty, helpless creature, and that he still stands in great and continual need of God's help. He is sensible that without God he can do nothing. A false conversion makes a man in his own eyes self-sufficient. He saith he is rich, and increased with goods, and hath need of nothing; and knoweth not that he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. But after a true conversion, the soul remains sensible of its own impotence and emptiness, as it is in itself, and its sense of it is rather increased than diminished. It is still sensible of its universal dependence on God for every thing. A true convert is sensible that his grace is very imperfect; and he is very far from having all that he desires. Instead of that, by conversion



are begotten in him new desires which he never had before. He now finds in him holy appetites, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a longing after more acquaintance and communion with God. So that he hath business enough still at the throne of grace; yea, his business there, instead of being diminished, is rather increased.

3. The hope which the hypocrite hath of his good estate takes off the force that the command of God before had upon his conscience; so that now he dares neglect so plain a duty. The command which requires the practice of the duty of prayer is exceeding plain: [Matt. xxvi. 41.](#) "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." [Eph. vi. 18.](#) "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints." [Matt. vi. 6.](#) "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." As long as the hypocrite was in his own apprehension in continual danger of hell, he durst not disobey these commands. But since he is, as he thinks, safe from hell, he is grown bold, he dares to live in the neglect of the plainest command in the Bible.

4. It is the manner of hypocrites, after a while, to return to sinful practices, which will tend to keep them from praying. While they were under convictions, they reformed their lives, and walked very exactly. This reformation continues, after their supposed conversion, while they are much affected with hope and false comfort. But as these things die away, their old lusts revive, and by degrees they return like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. They return to their sensual, worldly, proud, and contentious practices, as before. And no wonder this makes them forsake their closets. Sinning and praying agree not well together. If a man be constant in the duty of secret prayer, it will tend to restrain him from wilful sinning. So, on the other hand, if he allow himself in sinful practices, it will restrain him from praying. It will give quite another turn to his mind, so that he will have no disposition to the practice of such a duty: it will be contrary to him. A man who knows that he lives in sin against God, will not be inclined to come daily into the presence of God; but will rather be inclined to fly from his presence, as Adam, when he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, ran away from God, and hid himself among the trees of the garden.

To keep up the duty of prayer after he hath given loose to his lusts, would tend very much to disquiet a man's conscience. It would give advantage to his conscience to testify aloud against him. If he should come from his wickedness into the presence of God, immediately to speak to him, his conscience would, as it were, fly in his face. Therefore hypocrites, as they by degrees admit their wicked practices, exclude prayer.

5. Hypocrites never counted the cost of perseverance in seeking God, and of following him to the end of life. To continue instant in prayer with all perseverance to the end of life, requires much care, watchfulness, and labour. For much opposition is made to it by the flesh, the world, and the devil; and Christians meet with many temptations to forsake this

practice. He that would persevere in this duty must be laborious in religion in general. But hypocrites never count the cost of such labour; *i. e.* they never were prepared in the disposition of their minds to give their lives to the service of God, and to the duties of religion. It is therefore no great wonder they are weary, and give up, after they have continued for a while, as their affections are gone, and they find that prayer to them grows irksome and tedious.

6. Hypocrites have no interest in those gracious promises which God hath made to his people, of those spiritual supplies which are needful in order to uphold them in the way of their duty to the end. God hath promised to true saints that they shall not forsake him; [Jer. xxxii. 40](#). “I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” He hath promised that he will keep them in the way of their duty; [1 Thess. v. 23, 24](#). “And the God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”—But hypocrites have no interest in these and such like promises; and therefore are liable to fall away. If God do not uphold men, there is no dependence on their stedfastness. If the Spirit of God depart from them, they will soon become careless and profane, and there will be an end to their seeming devotion and piety.

The *application* may be in a use of exhortation, in two branches.

I. I would exhort those who have entertained a hope of their being true converts—and who since their supposed conversion have left off the duty of secret prayer, and ordinarily allow themselves in the omission of it—to throw away their hope. If you have left off calling upon God, it is time for you to leave off hoping and flattering yourselves with an imagination that you are the children of God. Probably it will be a very difficult thing for you to do this. It is hard for a man to let go a hope of heaven, on which he hath once allowed himself to lay hold, and which he hath retained for a considerable time. True conversion is a rare thing; but that men should be brought off from a false hope of conversion—after they are once settled and established in it, and have continued in it for some time—is much more rare.

Those things in men which, if known, would be sufficient to convince others that they are hypocrites, will not convince themselves; and those things which would be sufficient to convince them concerning others, will not be sufficient to convince them concerning themselves. They can make larger allowances for themselves than they can for others. They can find out ways to solve objections against their own hope, when they can find none in the like case for their neighbour.

But if your case be such as is spoken of in the doctrine, it is surely time for you to seek a better hope, and another work of God’s Spirit, than ever you have yet experienced; something more thorough and effectual. When you find by experience, that the seed which was sown in your hearts, though at first it sprang up and seemed flourishing, is withering away, as by the heat of the sun, or is choked, as with thorns; this shows in what sort of ground the



seed was sown, that it is either stony or thorny ground; and that therefore it is necessary you should pass through another change, whereby your heart may become good ground, which shall bring forth fruit with patience.

Insist not on that as a reason why you should not throw away your hope, that you had the judgment of others, that the change of which you were the subject was right. It is a small matter to be judged of man's judgment, whether you be approved or condemned, and whether it be by minister or people, wise or unwise. [1 Cor. iv. 3.](#) "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment." If your goodness have proved to be as the morning cloud and early dew; if you be one of those who have forsaken God, and left off calling upon his name, you have the judgment and sentence of God in the Scriptures against you, which is a thousand times more than to have the judgment of all the wise and godly men and ministers in the world in your favour.

Others, from your account of things, may have been obliged to have charity for you, and to think that—provided you were not mistaken, and in your account did not misrepresent things, or express them by wrong terms—you were really converted. But what a miserable foundation is this, upon which to build a hope as to your eternal state!

Here I request your attention to a few things in particular, which I have to say to you concerning your hope.

1. Why will you retain that hope which by evident experience you find poisons you? Is it reasonable to think, that a holy hope, a hope that is from heaven, would have such an influence? No, surely; nothing of such a malignant influence comes from that world of purity and glory. No poison groweth in the paradise of God. The same hope which leads men to sin in this world, will lead to hell hereafter. Why therefore will you retain such a hope, of which your own experience shows you the ill tendency, in that it encourages you to lead a wicked life? For certainly that life is a wicked life wherein you live in the neglect of so well-known a duty, as that of secret prayer, and in the disobedience of so plain a command of God, as that by which the duty is enjoined. And is not a way of disobedience to God a way to hell?

If your own experience of the nature and tendency of your hope will not convince you of the falseness of it, what will? Are you resolved to retain your hope, let it prove ever so unsound and hurtful? Will you hold it fast till you go to hell with it? Many men cling to a false hope, and embrace it so closely, that they never let it go till the flames of hell cause their arms to unclench and let go their hold.—Consider how you will answer it at the day of judgment, when God shall call you to an account for your folly in resting in such a hope. Will it be a sufficient answer for you to say, that you had the charity of others, and that they thought your conversion was right.

Certainly it is foolish for men to imagine, that God had no more wisdom, or could contrive no other way of bestowing comfort and hope of eternal life, than one which should encourage men to forsake him. \_\_\_\_\_

S E R M O N   V I I I .

HYPOCRITES DEFICIENT IN THE DUTY OF PRAYER.

JOB xxvii. 10.

Will he always call upon God?

FROM these words, our doctrine was, that however hypocrites may continue for a season in the duty of prayer, yet it is their manner, after a while, in a great measure to leave it off. This was our subject in the preceding discourse, in which, after having shown how hypocrites often continue for a season to call upon God—how it is their manner, after a while, in a great measure to leave it off—and having given the reasons why this is their manner, I came at length to make *application*, which I proposed to do in a use of *exhortation*, in two branches; and first to exhort those who entertain a hope of their good estate, and yet live in the neglect of secret prayer, to reject their hope. One particular consideration I have already laid before men of this character, to the end just mentioned; and I now proceed to say to them,

2. How is your conduct consistent with loving God above all. If you have not a spirit to love God above your dearest earthly friends, and your most pleasant earthly enjoyments; the Scriptures are very plain and full in it, that you are not true Christians. But if you had indeed such a spirit, would you thus grow weary of the practice of drawing near to him, and become habitually so averse to it, as in a great measure to cast off so plain a duty, which is so much the life of a child of God? It is the nature of love to be averse to absence, and to love a near access to those whom we love. We love to be with them; we delight to come often to them, and to have much conversation with them. But when a person who hath heretofore been wont to converse freely with another, by degrees forsakes him, grows strange, and converses with him but little, and that although the other be importunate with him for the continuance of their former intimacy; this plainly shows the coldness of his heart towards him.

The neglect of the duty of prayer seems to be inconsistent with supreme love to God also upon another account, and that is, that it is against the will of God so plainly revealed.—True love to God seeks to please him in every thing, and universally to conform to his will.

3. Your thus restraining prayer before God is not only inconsistent with the love, but also with the fear, of God. It is an argument that you cast off fear, as is manifest by that text, [Job xv. 4.](#) “Yea, thou easiest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.” While you thus live in the transgression of so plain a command of God, you evidently show, that there is no fear of God before your eyes. [Psal. xxxvi. 1.](#) “The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.”



4. Consider how living in such a neglect is consistent with leading a holy life. We are abundantly instructed in Scripture, that true Christians do lead a holy life; that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, [Heb. xii. 14.](#) and that every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even' as Christ is pure, [1 John iii. 3.](#) In [Prov. xvi. 17.](#) it is said, The *highway* of the upright is to depart from evil, *i. e.* the common beaten road in which all the godly travel. To the like purpose is [Isa. xxxv. 8.](#) "A *highway* shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the *way of holiness*; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for *those*:" *i. e.* those redeemed persons spoken of in the foregoing verses. It is spoken of in [Rom. viii. 1.](#) as the character of all believers, that they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

But how is a life, in a great measure prayerless, consistent with a holy life? To lead a holy life is to lead a life devoted to God; a life of worshipping and serving God; a life consecrated to the service of God. But how doth he lead such a life who doth not so much as maintain the duty of prayer? How can such a man be said to walk by the Spirit, and to be a servant of the most high God? A holy life is a life of faith. The life that true Christians live in the world, they live by the faith of the Son of God. But who can believe that the man lives by faith who lives without prayer, which is the natural expression of faith? Prayer is as natural an expression of faith, as breathing is of life; and to say a man lives a life of faith, and yet lives a prayerless life, is every whit as inconsistent and incredible, as to say, that a man lives without breathing. A prayerless life is so far from being holy, that it is a profane life: he that lives so, lives like a heathen, who calleth not on God's name; he that lives a prayerless life, lives without God in the world.

5. If you live in the neglect of secret prayer, you show your good-will to neglect all the worship of God. He that prays only when he prays with others, would not pray at all, were it not that the eyes of others are upon him. He that will not pray where none but God seeth him, manifestly doth not pray at all out of respect to God, or regard to his all-seeing eye, and therefore doth in effect cast off all prayer. And he that casts off prayer, in effect casts off all the worship of God, of which prayer is the principal duty. Now, what a miserable saint is he who is no worshipper of God! He that casts off the worship of God, in effect casts off God himself: he refuses to own him, or to be conversant with him as his God. For the way in which men own God, and are conversant with him as their God, is by worshipping him.

6. How can you expect to dwell with God for ever, if you so neglect and forsake him here? This your practice shows, that you place not your happiness in God, in nearness to him, and communion with him. He who refuses to visit and converse with a friend, and who in a great measure forsakes him, when he is abundantly invited and importuned to come; plainly shows that he places not his happiness in the company and conversation of that friend. Now, if this be the case with you respecting God, then how can you expect to

have it for your happiness to all eternity, to be with God, and to enjoy holy communion with him?

Let those persons who hope they are converted, and yet have in a great measure left off the duty of secret prayer, and whose manner it is ordinarily to neglect it, for their own sake seriously consider these things. For what will it profit them to please themselves with *that*, while they live, which will fail them at last, and leave them in fearful and amazing disappointment?

It is probable, that some of you who have entertained a good opinion of your state, and have looked upon yourselves as converts—but have of late in a great measure left off the duty—will this evening attend secret prayer, and so may continue to do for a little while after your hearing this sermon, to the end that you may solve the objection which is made against the truth of your hope. But this will not hold. As it hath been in former instances of the like nature, so what you now hear will have such effect upon you but a little while.—When the business and cares of the world shall again begin to crowd a little upon you, or the next time you shall go out into young company, it is probable you will again neglect this duty. After the next *frolic* to which you go, it is highly probable you will neglect not only secret, but also family prayer. Or at least, after a while, you will come to the same pass as before, in casting off fear, and restraining prayer before God.

It is not very likely that you will ever *be constant and persevering in this duty*, until you shall have obtained a better principle in your hearts. The streams which have no springs to feed them will dry up. The drought and heat consume the snow-waters. Although they run plentifully in the spring, yet when the sun ascends higher with a burning heat, they are gone. The seed that is sown in stony places, though it seem to flourish at present, yet as the sun shall rise with a burning heat, will wither away. None will bring forth fruit with patience, but those whose hearts are become good ground.

Without any heavenly seed remaining in them, men may, whenever they fall in among the godly, continue all their lives to talk like saints. They may, for their credit sake, tell of what they have experienced: but their *deeds* will not hold.—They may continue to tell of their inward experiences, and yet live in the neglect of secret prayer, and of other duties.

II. I would take occasion from this doctrine to exhort all to persevere in the duty of prayer. This exhortation is much insisted on in the word of God. It is insisted on in the Old Testament; [1 Chron. xvi. 11](#). “Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face *continually*.” [Isa. lxii. 7](#). “Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence;” *i. e.* be not silent as to the voice of prayer, as is manifest by the following words, [Isa. lxii. 7](#). “and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Israel of old is reprov'd for growing weary of the duty of prayer. [Isa. xliii. 22](#). “But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.”

Perseverance in the duty of prayer is very much insisted on in the New Testament; as [Luke xviii.](#) at the beginning, [Luke xvii. 1.](#) “A man ought always to pray and not to faint;” *i. e.* not to be discouraged or weary of the duty; but should always continue in it. Again, [Luke xxi. 36.](#) “Watch ye therefore, and pray *always.*” We have the example of Anna the prophetess set before us, [Luke ii. 36,](#) &c. who, though she had lived to be more than a hundred years old, yet was not weary of this duty. It is said, [Luke ii.37](#) “She departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” Cornelius also is commended for his constancy in this duty. It is said, that he prayed to God always; [Acts x. 2.](#) The apostle Paul in his epistles, insists very much on constancy in this duty; [Rom.xii.12.](#) “Continuing instant in prayer.” [Eph. vi. 18, 19.](#) “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.” [Col. iv. 2.](#) “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same.” [1 Thess. v. 17.](#) “Pray without ceasing.” To the same effect the apostle Peter, [1 Pet. iv. 7.](#) “Watch unto prayer.”—Thus abundantly the Scriptures insist upon it, that we should persevere in the duty of prayer; which shows that it is of very great importance that we should persevere. If the contrary be the manner of hypocrites, as hath been shown in the doctrine, then surely we ought to beware of this leaven.

But here let the following things be particularly considered as motives to perseverance in this duty.

1. That perseverance in the way of duty is necessary to salvation, and is abundantly declared to be so in the Holy Scriptures; as [Isa. lxiv. 5.](#) “Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth, for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.” [Heb. x. 38, and 39.](#) “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” [Rom. xi. 22.](#) “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue, in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”—So in many other places.

Many, when they think they are converted, seem to imagine that their work is done, and that there is nothing else needful in order to their going to heaven. Indeed perseverance in holiness of life is not necessary to salvation in the same way as the righteousness by which a right to salvation is obtained. Nor is actual perseverance necessary in order to our becoming interested in that righteousness by which we are justified. For as soon as ever a soul hath believed in Christ, or hath put forth one act of faith in him, it becomes interested in his righteousness, and in all the promises purchased by it.

But persevering in the way of duty is necessary to salvation, as a concomitant and evidence of a title to salvation. There is never a title to salvation without it, though it be not the righteousness by which a title to salvation is obtained. It is necessary to salvation, as it is the necessary consequence of true faith. It is an evidence which universally attends up-



rightness, and the defect of it is an infallible evidence of the want of uprightness. [Psalm cxxv. 4, 5](#). There such as are good and upright in heart, are distinguished from such as fall away or turn aside: [Psalm cxxv. 4, 5](#). “Do good, O Lord, to those that are good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside to their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. But peace shall be upon Israel.”—It is mentioned as an evidence that the hearts of the children of Israel were not right with God, that they did not persevere in the ways of holiness. [Psalm lxxviii. 8](#). “A generation that set not their hearts aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.”

Christ gives this as a distinguishing character of those that are his disciples indeed, and of a true and saving faith, that it is accompanied with perseverance in obedience to Christ’s word. [John viii. 31](#). “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” This is mentioned as a necessary evidence of an interest in Christ, [Heb. iii. 14](#). “We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end.”

Perseverance is not only a necessary concomitant and evidence of a title to salvation; but also a necessary prerequisite to the actual possession of eternal life. It is the only way to heaven, the narrow way that leadeth to life. Hence Christ exhorts the church of Philadelphia to persevere in holiness from this consideration, that it was necessary in order to her obtaining the crown. [Rev. iii. 11](#). “Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” It is necessary not only that persons should once have been walking in the way of duty, but that they should be found so doing when Christ cometh. [Luke xii. 43](#). “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”—Holding out to the end is often made the condition of actual salvation. [Matt. x. 22](#). “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved:” and [Rev. ii. 10](#). “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

2. In order to your own perseverance in the way of duty, your own care and watchfulness is necessary. For though it be promised that true saints shall persevere, yet that is no argument that their care and watchfulness is not necessary in order to it; because their care to keep the commands of God is the thing promised. If the saints should fail of care, watchfulness, and diligence to persevere in holiness, that failure of their care and diligence would itself be a failure of holiness. They who persevere not in watchfulness and diligence, persevere not in holiness of life, for holiness of life very much consists in watchfulness and diligence to keep the commands of God.

It is one promise of the covenant of grace, that the saints shall keep God’s commandments. [Ezek. xi. 19, 20](#).—Yet that is no argument that they have no need to take care to keep these commandments, or to do their duty. So the promise of God, that the saints shall persevere in holiness, is no argument that it is not necessary that they should take heed lest they fall away.

Therefore the Scriptures abundantly warn men to watch over themselves diligently, and to give earnest heed lest they fall away. [1 Cor. xvi. 13.](#) “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” [1 Cor. x. 12.](#) “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” [Heb. iii. 12-14.](#) “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” [Heb. iv. 1.](#) “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” [2 Pet. iii. 17.](#) “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” [2 John 8.](#) “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”—Thus you see how earnestly the Scriptures press on Christians exhortations to take diligent heed to themselves that they fall not away. And certainly these cautions are not without reason.

The Scriptures particularly insist upon watchfulness in order to perseverance in the duty of prayer. Watch and pray, saith Christ; which implies, that we should watch unto prayer, as the apostle Peter says, [1 Pet. iv. 7.](#) It implies, that we should watch against a neglect of prayer, as well as against other sins. The apostle, in places which have been already mentioned, directs us to pray with all prayer, watching thereunto with all perseverance, and to continue in prayer, and watch in the same.—Nor is it any wonder that the apostles so much insisted on watching in order to a continuance in prayer with all perseverance; for there are many temptations to neglect this duty; first to be inconstant in it, and from time to time to omit it; then in a great measure to neglect it. The devil watches by temptation to draw us away from God, and to hinder us from going to him in prayer. We are surrounded with one and another tempting object, business, and diversion: particularly we meet with many things which are great temptations to a neglect of this duty.

3. To move you to persevere in the duty of prayer, consider how much you always stand in need of the help of God. If persons who have formerly attended this duty, leave it off, the language of it is, that now they stand in no further need of God’s help, that they have no further occasion to go to God with requests and supplications: when indeed it is in God we live, and move, and have our being. We cannot draw a breath without his help. You need his help every day for the supply of your outward wants; and especially you stand in continual need of him to help your souls. Without his protection they would immediately fall into the hands of the devil, who always stands as a roaring lion, ready, whenever he is permitted, to fall upon the souls of men and devour them.—If God should indeed preserve your lives, but should otherwise forsake and leave you to yourselves, you would be most miserable: your lives would be a curse to you.

Those that are converted, if God should forsake them, would soon fall away totally from a state of grace into a state far more miserable than ever they were in before their conversion. They have no strength of their own to resist those powerful enemies who surround them. Sin and Satan would immediately carry them away, as a mighty flood, if God should forsake them.—You stand in need of daily supplies from God. Without God you can receive no spiritual light nor comfort, can exercise no grace, can bring forth no fruit. Without God your souls will wither and pine away, and sink into a most wretched state. You continually need the instructions and directions of God. What can a little child do in a vast howling wilderness, without some one to guide it, and to lead it in the right way? Without God you will soon fall into snares, and pits, and many fatal calamities.

Seeing therefore you stand in such continual need of the help of God, how reasonable is it that you should continually seek it of him, and perseveringly acknowledge your dependence upon him, by resorting to him, to spread your needs before him, and to offer up your requests to him in prayer.—Let us consider how miserable we should be, if we should leave off prayer, and God at the same time should leave off to take care of us, or to afford us any more supplies of his grace. By our constancy in prayer, we cannot be profitable to God; and if we leave it off, God will sustain no damage: he doth not need our prayers; *Job xxxv. 6, 7.*—But if God cease to care for us and to help us, we immediately sink: we can do nothing: we can receive nothing without him.

4. Consider the great benefit of a constant, diligent, and persevering attendance on this duty. It is one of the greatest and most excellent means of nourishing the new nature, and of causing the soul to flourish and prosper. It is an excellent mean of keeping up an acquaintance with, and of growing in the knowledge of, God. It is the way to a life of communion with God. It is an excellent mean of taking off the heart from the vanities of the world, and of causing the mind to be conversant in heaven. It is an excellent preservative from sin and the wiles of the devil, and a powerful antidote against the poison of the old serpent. It is a duty whereby strength is derived from God against the lusts and corruptions of the heart, and the snares of the world.

It hath a great tendency to keep the soul in a wakeful frame, and to lead us to a strict walk with God, and to a life that shall be fruitful in such good works, as tend to adorn the doctrine of Christ, and to cause our light so to shine before others, that they seeing our good works shall glorify our Father who is in heaven. And if the duty be constantly and diligently attended, it will be a very pleasant duty. Slack and slothful attendance upon it, and unsteadiness in it, are the causes which make it so great a burden as it is to some persons. Their slothfulness in it hath naturally the effect to beget a dislike of the duty, and a great indisposition to it. But if it be constantly and diligently attended, it is one of the best means of leading not only a Christian and amiable, but also a pleasant life; a life of much sweet fellowship with Christ, and of the abundant enjoyment of the light of his countenance.



Besides, the great power which prayer, when duly attended, hath with God, is worthy of your notice. By it men become like Jacob, who as a prince had power with God, and prevailed, when he wrestled for the blessing. See the power of prayer represented in [James v. 16-18](#). By these things you may be sensible how much you will lose, if you shall be negligent in this great duty of calling upon God; and how ill you will consult your own interest by such a neglect.

I conclude my discourse with two directions in order to constancy and perseverance in this duty.

1. Watch against the beginnings of a neglect of this duty. Persons who have for a time practised, and afterwards neglect it, commonly leave it off by degrees. While their convictions and religious affections last, they are very constant in their closets, and no worldly business, or company, or diversion hinders them. But as their convictions and affections begin to die away, they begin to find excuses to neglect it sometimes. They are now so hurried; they have now such and such things to attend to; or there are now such inconveniences in the way, that they persuade themselves they may very excusably omit it for this time. Afterwards it pretty frequently so happens, that they have something to hinder, something which they call a just excuse. After a while, a less thing becomes a sufficient excuse than was allowed to be such at first. Thus the person by degrees contracts more and more a habit of neglecting prayer, and becomes more and more indisposed to it. And even when he doth perform it, it is in such a poor, dull, heartless, miserable manner, that he says to himself, he might as well not do it at all, as do it thus. Thus he makes his own dulness and indisposition an excuse for wholly neglecting it, or at least for living in a great measure in its neglect.—After this manner do Satan and men's own corruptions inveigle them to their ruin.

Therefore beware of the first beginnings of a neglect: watch against temptations to it: take heed how you begin to allow excuses. Be watchful to keep up the duty in the height of it; let it not so much as begin to sink. For when you give way, though it be but little, it is like giving way to an enemy in the field of battle: the first beginning of a retreat greatly encourages the enemy, and weakens the retreating soldiers.

2. Let me direct you to forsake all such practices as you find by experience do indispose you to the duty of secret prayer. Examine the things in which you have allowed yourselves, and inquire whether they have had this effect. You are able to look over your past behaviour, and may doubtless, on an impartial consideration, make a judgment of the practices and courses in which you have allowed yourselves.

Particularly let young people examine their manner of company keeping, and the round of diversions in which with their companions they have allowed themselves. I only desire that you would ask at the month of your own consciences what has been the effect of these things with respect to your attendance on the duty of secret prayer. Have you not found that such practices have tended to the neglect of this duty? Have you not found that after

them you have been more indisposed to it, and less conscientious and careful to attend it? Yea, have they not, from time to time, actually been the means of your neglecting it?

If you cannot deny that this is really the case, then, if you seek the good of your souls, forsake these practices. Whatever you may plead for them, as that there is no harm in them, of that there is a time for all things, and the like; yet if you find this harm in the consequence, it is time for you to forsake them. And if you value heaven more than a little worldly diversion; if you set a higher price on eternal glory, than on a dance or a song, you will forsake them.

If these things be lawful in themselves, yet if your experience show, that they are attended with such a consequence as I have now mentioned, that is enough. It is lawful in itself for you to enjoy your right hand and your right eye: but if by experience you find they cause you to offend, it is time for you to cut off the one, and pluck out the other, as you would rather go to heaven without them than go to hell with them, into that place of torment where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

S E R M O N I X .

THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED UNAVOIDABLE AND  
INTOLERABLE.



EZEK. xxii. 14.

Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it.

IN the former part of this chapter, we have a dreadful catalogue of the sins of Jerusalem; as you may see from the first to the thirteenth verse. In the thirteenth, which is the verse preceding the text, God manifests his great displeasure and fearful wrath against them for their iniquities. “Behold, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.”<sup>67</sup> The expression of God’s smiting his hand, signifies the greatness of his anger, and his preparing himself, as it were, to execute wrath answerable to their heinous crimes. It is an allusion to what we sometimes see in men when they are surprised, by seeing or hearing of some horrid offence, or most intolerable injury, which very much stirs their spirits, and animates them with high resentment; on such an occasion they will rise up in wrath and smite their hands together, as an expression of the heat of their indignation, and full resolution to be avenged on those who have committed the injury; as in chap. xxi. 17. “I will also smite mine hands together, and I will cause my fury to rest: I the Lord have said it.” Then, in the text, the punishment of that people is represented.

1. The nature of their punishment is more generally represented in that, God will undertake to *deal* with them.—The prophets could do nothing with them. God had sent them one after another; but those sinners were too strong for them, and beat one, and killed another. Therefore now God himself undertakes to deal with them.

2. Their punishment is more particularly represented in three things, *viz.* The intolerableness, the remedilessness, and the unavoidableness of it.—The *intolerableness* of it: *can thine heart endure?*—Its *remedilessness*, or the impossibility of their doing any thing for their own relief: *can thine hands be strong?*—Its *unavoidableness*: *I the Lord have spoken it, and wilt do it.*

DOCTRINE.

Since God hath undertaken to deal with impenitent sinners, they shall neither shun the threatened misery, nor deliver themselves out of it, nor can they bear it.

In handling this doctrine I shall, 1. Show what is implied in God’s undertaking to deal with impenitent sinners. 2. That therefore they cannot avoid punishment. 3. That they

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67 Ezek. xxii. 13.

cannot in any measure deliver themselves from it, or do any thing; for their own relief under it. 4. That they cannot bear it. 5. I shall answer an inquiry; and then proceed to the use.

I. I shall show what is implied in God's undertaking to deal with impenitent sinners. Others are not able to deal with them. They baffle all the means used with them by those that are appointed to teach and to rule over them.—They will not yield to parents, or to the counsels, warnings, or reproofs of ministers: they prove obstinate and stiff-hearted. Therefore God undertakes to deal with them. This implies the following things:

1. That God will *reckon* with them, and take of them satisfaction to his justice. In this world God puts forth his authority to command them, and to require their subjection to him. In his commands he is very positive, strictly requiring of them the performance of duties, and as positively forbidding things contrary to their duty. But they have no regard to these commands. God continues commanding, and they continue rebelling. They make nothing of God's authority—God threatens but they despise his threatenings.—They make nothing of dishonouring God; they care not how much their behaviour is to his dishonour. He offers them mercy, if they will repent and return; but they despise his mercy as well as his wrath. God calleth, but they refuse. Thus they are continually plunging themselves deeper and deeper in debt, and at the same time imagine they shall escape the payment of the debt, and design entirely to rob God of his due.

But God hath undertaken to right himself. He will reckon with them; he hath undertaken to see that the debts due to him are paid. All their sins are written in his book; not one of them is forgotten, and every one must be paid. If God be wise enough, and strong enough, he will have full satisfaction: he will exact the very uttermost farthing. He undertakes it as his part, as what belongs to him, to see himself righted, wherein he hath been wronged. “To me belongeth vengeance.” *Ibid Deut. vii. 10.* “He will not be slack to him that hateth him; he will repay him to his face.”

2. He hath undertaken to *vindicate* the honour of his majesty. His majesty they despise. They hear that he is a great God; but they despise his greatness; they look upon him as worthy of contempt, and treat him accordingly. They hear of him by the name of a great King; but his authority they regard not, and sometimes trample upon it for years together.

But God hath not left the honour of his majesty wholly to their care. Though they now trample it in the dust, yet that is no sign that it will finally be lost. If God had left it wholly to their hands, it would indeed be lost. But God doth not leave his honour and his glory with his enemies; it is too precious in his eyes to be so neglected. He hath reserved the care of it to himself: he will see to it that his own injured majesty is vindicated. If the honour of God, upon which sinners trample, finally lie in the dust, it will be because he is not strong enough to vindicate himself. He hath sworn, in *Numb. xiv. 21.* “As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.”

Sinners despise his Son, and trample him under their feet; but he will see if he cannot make the glory of his Son appear, with respect to them; that all the earth may know how evil a thing it is to despise the Son of God. God intends that all men and angels, all heaven and all earth, shall see whether he be sufficient to magnify himself upon sinners who now despise him. He intends that the issue of things with respect to them shall be open, that all men may see it.

3. He hath undertaken to *subdue* impenitent sinners.—Their hearts while in this world are very unsubdued. They lift up their heads and conduct themselves very proudly and contemptuously, and often sin with a high hand. They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongues walk through the earth. They practically say as Pharaoh did, “Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord, neither will I obey his voice.”<sup>68</sup> “They say to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.”

Some, who cover their sin with their specious show, who put on a face of religion, and a demure countenance and behaviour, yet have this spirit secretly reigning in their breasts. Notwithstanding all their fair show, and good eternal carriage, they despise God in their hearts, and have the weapons of war about them, though they carry their swords under their skirts. They have most proud, stubborn, and rebellious hearts, which are ready to rise in opposition, to contend with him, and to find fault with his dispensations. Their hearts are full of pride, enmity, stubbornness, and blasphemy, which work in them many ways, while they sit under the preaching of the word, and while the Spirit of God is striving in them: and they always continue to oppose and resist God as long as they live in the world; they never lay down the weapons of their rebellion.

But God hath undertaken to deal with them and to subdue them; and those proud and stubborn hearts, which will not yield to the power of God’s word, shall be broken by the power of his hand. If they will not be willing subjects to the golden sceptre, and will not yield to the attractives of his love, they shall be subject to the force of the iron rod, whether they will or not.

Them that proudly set up their own righteousness, and their own wills, God hath undertaken to bring down: and without doubt, it will be done. He hath undertaken to make those who are now regardless, to regard him. They shall know that he is Jehovah. Now they will not own that he is the Lord; but they shall know it. [Isa. xxvi. 11.](#) “Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see.”

Now wicked men not only hate God, but they slight him; they are not afraid of him. But he will subdue their contempt. When he shall come to take them in hand, they will hate him still; but they will not slight him; they will not make light of his power as they now do; they will see and feel too much of the infinity of his power to slight it. They are now wont

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68 [Exodus v. 2.](#)



to slight his wrath; but then they will slight it no more, they will find by sufficient experience that his wrath is not to be slighted: they will learn this to their cost, and they never will forget it.

4. God hath undertaken to rectify their *judgments*. Now they will not be convinced of those things which God tells them in his word. Ministers take much pains to convince them, but all is in vain. Therefore God will undertake to convince them, and he will do it effectually.—Now they will not be convinced of the truth of divine things. They have indeed convincing arguments set before them; they hear and see enough to convince them; yet so prone are they to unbelief and atheism, that divine things never seem to them to be real. But God will hereafter make them seem real.

Now they are always doubting of the truth of the Scriptures, questioning whether they be the word of God, and whether the threatenings of Scripture be true. But God hath undertaken to convince them that those threatenings are true, and he will make them to know that they are true, so that they will never doubt any more for ever. They will be convinced by dear experience. Now they are always questioning whether there be any such place as hell. They hear much about it, but it always seems to them like a dream. But God will make it seem otherwise than a dream. Now they are often told of the vanity of the world; but we may as well preach to the beasts, to persuade them of the vanity of earthly things. But God will undertake to convince them of this; he will hereafter give them a thorough conviction of it, so that they shall have a strong sense of the vanity of all these things.

Now ministers often tell sinners of the great importance of an interest in Christ, and that that is the one thing needful. They are also told the folly of delaying the care of their souls, and how much it concerns them to improve their opportunity. But the instructions of ministers do not convince them, therefore God will undertake to convince them.

Impenitent sinners, while in this world, hear how dreadful hell is. But they will not believe that it is so dreadful as ministers represent. They cannot think that they shall to all eternity suffer such exquisite and horrible torments. But they shall be taught and convinced to purpose, that the representations ministers give of those torments, agreeable to the word of God, are indeed as dreadful as they declare.—Since God hath undertaken to deal with sinners, and to rectify their judgments in these matters, he will do it thoroughly; for his work is perfect; when he undertakes to do things, he doth not do them by halves; therefore before he shall have done with sinners, he will convince them effectually, so that they shall never be in danger of relapsing into their former errors. He will convince them of their folly and stupidity in entertaining such notions as they now entertain.

Thus God hath undertaken to deal with obstinate unbelievers. They carry things on in great confusion; but we need not be dismayed at it: let us wait, and we shall see that God will rectify things. Sinners will not always continue to rebel and despise with impunity. The honour of God will in due time be vindicated; and they shall be subdued and convicted, and

shall give an account. There is no sin, not so much as an idle word that they shall speak, but they must give an account of it; [Matt. xii. 36](#). And their sins must be fully balanced, and recompensed, and satisfaction obtained. Because judgment against their evil works is not speedily executed, their hearts are fully set in them to do evil. Yet God is a righteous judge; he will see that judgment is executed in due time.—I come now,

II. To show, that therefore impenitent sinners shall *not avoid* their due punishment. God hath undertaken to inflict it; he hath engaged to do it; he takes it as what properly belongs to him, and we may expect it of him. If he hath sworn by his life, that he will do it; and if he hath power sufficient; if he is the living God, doubtless we shall see it done. And that God hath declared that he will punish impenitent sinners, is manifest from many Scriptures; as [Deut. xxxii. 41](#). “I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.” [Deut. vii. 10](#). “He will not be slack to him that hateth him: he will repay him to his face.” [Exod. xxxiv. 7](#). “That will by no means clear the guilty.” [Nahum i. 3](#). “The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.”

God saith in the text, “and will do it;” which leaves no room to doubt of the actual fulfilment of the threatening in its utmost extent. Some have flattered themselves, that although God hath threatened very dreadful things to wicked men for their sins, yet in his heart he never intends to fulfil his threatenings, but only to terrify them, and make them afraid, while they live. But would the infinitely holy God, who is not a man that he should lie, and who speaketh no vain words, utter himself in this manner: *I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it; I have not only, threatened, but I will also fulfil my threatenings*; when at the same time these words did not agree with his heart, but he secretly knew that though he had spoken, yet he intended not to do it? Who is he that dares to entertain such horrid blasphemy in his heart?

No; let no impenitent sinner flatter himself so vainly and foolishly. If it were indeed only a man, a being of like impotency and mutability with themselves, who had undertaken to deal with them; they might perhaps with some reason flatter themselves, that they should find some means to avoid the threatened punishment. But since an omniscient, omnipotent, immutable God hath undertaken, vain are all such hopes.

There is no hope that possibly they may steal away to heaven, though they die unconverted. There is no hope that they can deceive God by any false show of repentance and faith, and so be taken to heaven through mistake: for the eyes of God are as a flame of fire; they perfectly see through every man; the inmost closet of the heart is all open to him.

There is no hope of escaping the threatened punishment by sinking into nothing at death, like brute creatures. Indeed, many wicked men upon their death-beds wish for this. If it were so, death would—be nothing to them in comparison with what it now is. But all such wishes are vain.

There is no hope of their escaping without notice, when they leave the body. There is no hope that God, by reason of the multiplicity of affairs which he hath to mind, will happen to overlook them, and not take notice of them, when they come to die; that their souls will slip away privately, and hide themselves in some secret corner, and so escape divine vengeance.

There is no hope that they shall be missed in a crowd at the day of judgment, and that they can have opportunity to hide themselves in some cave or den of the mountains, or in any secret hole of the earth; and that while so doing, they will not be minded, by reason of the many things which will be the objects of attention on that day. -Neither is there any hope that they will be able to crowd themselves in among the multitude of the saints at the right hand of the Judge, and so go to heaven undiscovered. Nor is there any hope that God will alter his mind, or that he will repent of what he hath said; for he is not the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? When did God ever undertake to do any thing and fail? -I come now,

III. To show, that as impenitent sinners cannot shun the threatened punishment; so neither can they do any thing to *deliver* themselves from it, or to relieve themselves under it. This is implied in those words of the text, *Can thine hands be strong?* It is with our hands that we make and accomplish things for ourselves. But the wicked in hell will have no strength of hand to accomplish any thing at all for themselves, or to bring to pass any deliverance, or any degree of relief.

1. They will not be able in that conflict to *overcome* their enemy, and so to deliver themselves. God, who will then undertake to deal with them, and will gird himself with might to execute wrath, will be their enemy, and will act the part of an enemy with a witness; and they will have no strength to oppose him. Those, who live negligent of their souls under the light of the gospel, act as if they supposed, that they should be able hereafter to make their part good with God. [1 Cor. x. 22](#). "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?"—But they will have no power, no might to resist that omnipotence, which will be engaged against them.

2. They will have no strength in their hands to do any thing to appease God, or in the least to abate the fierceness of his wrath. They will not be able to offer any satisfaction: they will not be able to procure God's pity. Though they cry, God will not hear them. They will find no price to offer to God, in order to purchase favour, or to pay any part of their debt.

3. They will not be able to find any to *befriend* them, and intercede with God for them. They had' the offer of a mediator often made them in this world; but they will have no such offers in hell. None will befriend them in hell; all there will be their enemies. They will have no friend in heaven: none of the saints or angels will befriend them: or if they should, it would be to no purpose. There will be no creature that will have any power to deliver them, nor will any ever pity them.



4. Nor will they ever be able to make their escape. They will find no means to break prison and flee. In hell they will be reserved in chains of darkness for ever and ever. Malefactors have often found means to escape the hand of civil justice. But none ever escaped out of the prison of hell, which is God's prison. It is a strong prison: it is beyond any finite power, or the united strength of all wicked men and devils, to unlock or break open the door of that prison. Christ hath the key of hell; "he shuts and no man opens."

5. Nor will they ever be able to find any thing to *relieve* them in hell. They will never find any resting place there; any secret corner, which will be cooler than the rest, where they may have a little respite, a small abatement of the extremity of their torment. They never will be able to find any cooling stream or fountain, in any part of that world of torment; no, nor so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues. They will find no company to give them any comfort, or to do them the least good. They will find no place, where they can remain, and rest, and take breath for one minute: for they will be tormented with fire and brimstone; and will have no rest day nor night for ever and ever.

Thus impenitent sinners will be able neither to shun the punishment threatened, nor to deliver themselves from it, nor to find any relief under it.

S E R M O N X .

THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED UNAVOIDABLE AND  
INTOLERABLE.

EZEK. xxii. 14.

Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it.

HAVING shown that impenitent sinners will hereafter be able, neither to avoid the punishment threatened, nor to deliver themselves from it, nor to find any relief under it; I come now,

IV. To show, that neither will they be able to *bear* it. Neither will their hands be strong to deliver them from it, nor will their hearts be able to endure it. It is common with men, when they meet with calamities in this world, in the first place to endeavour to shun them. But if they find that they cannot shun them; then after they are come, they endeavour to deliver themselves from them as soon as they can; or at least, to deliver themselves in some degree. But if they find that they can by no means deliver themselves, and see that they must bear them; then they fortify their spirits, and take up a resolution, that they will support themselves under them as well as they can.

But it will be utterly in vain for impenitent sinners to think to do thus with respect to the torments of hell. They will not be able to endure them, or at all to support themselves under them: the torment will be immensely beyond their strength. What will it signify for a worm, which is about to be pressed under the weight of some great rock, to be let fall with its whole weight upon it, to collect its strength, to set itself to bear up the weight of the rock, and to preserve itself from being crushed by it?—Much more vain will it be for a poor damned soul, to endeavour to support itself under the weight of the wrath of Almighty God. What is the strength of man, who is but a worm, to support himself against the power of Jehovah, and against the fierceness of his wrath? What is man's strength, when set to bear up against the exertions of infinite power? [Matt. xxi. 44.](#) "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

When sinners hear of hell-torments, they sometimes think with themselves; Well, if it shall come to that, that I must go to hell, I will bear it as well as I can: as if by clothing themselves with resolution and firmness of mind, they would be able to support themselves in some measure: when, alas! they will have no resolution, no courage at all. However they shall have prepared themselves, and collected their strength; yet as soon as they shall begin to feel that wrath, their hearts will melt and be as water. However they may seem to harden their hearts, in order to prepare themselves to bear, yet the first moment they feel it, their hearts will become like wax before the furnace. Their courage and resolution will be all gone

in an instant; it will vanish away like a shadow, in the twinkling of an eye. The stoutest and most sturdy will have no more courage than the feeblest infant: let a man be an infant, or a giant, it will be all one. They will not be able to keep alive any courage, any strength, any comfort, any hope at all. I come now, as was proposed,

V. To answer an inquiry which may naturally be raised concerning these things.

INQ. Some may be ready to say, If this be the case, if impenitent sinners can neither shun future punishment, nor deliver themselves from it, nor bear it; then what will become of them?

ANS. They will wholly sink down into eternal death. There will be that sinking of heart, of which we now cannot conceive. We see how it is with the body when in extreme pain. The nature of the body will support itself for a considerable time under very great pain, so as to keep from wholly sinking. There will be great struggles, lamentable groans and pantings, and it may be convulsions. These are the struggling of nature to support itself under the extremity of the pain. There is, as it were, a great lothness in nature to yield to it; it cannot bear wholly to sink.

But yet sometimes pain of body is so very exquisite, that the nature of the body cannot support itself under it; however loth it may be to sink, yet it cannot bear the pain; there are a few struggles, and throes, and pantings, and it may be a shriek or two, and then nature yields to the violence of the torments, sinks down, and the body dies. This is the death of the body. So it will be with the soul in hell; it will have no strength or power to deliver itself; and its torment and horror will be so great, so mighty, so vastly disproportioned to its strength, that having no strength in the least to support itself, although it be infinitely contrary to the nature and inclination of the soul utterly to sink; yet it will utterly and totally sink, without the least degree of remaining comfort, or strength, or courage, or hope. And though it will never be annihilated, its being and perception will never be abolished; yet such will be the infinite depth of gloominess into which it will sink, that it will be in a state of death, eternal death.

The nature of man desires happiness; it is the nature of the soul to crave and thirst after well-being; and if it be under misery, it eagerly pants after relief; and the greater the misery is, the more eagerly doth it struggle for help. But if all relief be withholden, all strength overborne, all support utterly gone; then it sinks into the darkness of death.

We can conceive but little of the matter; but to help your conception, imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, or a great furnace, where your pain would be as much greater than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire, as the heat is greater. Imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, and all the while full of quick sense; what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace! and how long would that quarter of an hour seem to you! And after you had endured it for one



minute, how overbearing would it be to you to think that you had it to endure the other fourteen!

But what would be the effect on your soul, if you knew you must lie there enduring that torment to the full for twenty-four hours! And how much greater would be the effect, if you knew you must endure it for a whole year; and how vastly greater still, if you knew you must endure it for a thousand years!—O then, how would your hearts sink, if you knew, that you must bear it for ever and ever! that there would be no end! that after millions of millions of ages, your torment would be no nearer to an end, and that you never, never should be delivered!

But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents. How then will the heart of a poor creature sink under it! How utterly inexpressible and inconceivable must the sinking of the soul be in such a case!

This is the death threatened in the law. This is dying in the highest sense of the word. This is to die sensibly; to die and know it; to be sensible of the gloom of death. This is to be undone; this is worthy of the name of destruction. This sinking of the soul under an infinite weight, which it cannot bear, is the gloom of hell. We read in Scripture of the blackness of darkness; this is it, this is the very thing.—We read in Scripture of sinners being lost, and of their losing their souls: this is the thing intended; this is to lose the soul: they that are the subjects of this are utterly lost.

#### **APPLICATION.**

This subject may be applied in a use of awakening, impenitent sinners.—What hath been said under this doctrine is for thee, O impenitent sinner, O poor wretch, who art in the same miserable state in which thou earnest into the world, excepting that thou art loaded with vastly greater guilt by thine actual sins. These dreadful things which thou hast heard are for thee, who art yet unconverted, and still remainest an alien and stranger, without Christ and without God in the world. They are for thee, who to this day remainest an enemy to God, and a child of the devil, even in this remarkable season, when others both here and elsewhere, far and near, are flocking to Christ; for thee who nearest the fame of these things, but knowest nothing of the power of godliness in thine own heart.

Whoever thou art, whether young or old, little or great, if thou art in a Christless unconverted state, this is the wrath, this is the death to which thou art condemned. This is the wrath that abideth on thee; this is the hell over which thou hangest, and into which thou art ready to drop every day and every night.

If thou shalt remain blind, and hard, and dead in sin a little longer, this destruction will come upon thee: God hath spoken, and he will do it. It is in vain for thee to flatter thyself with hopes that thou shalt avoid it, or to say in thine heart, perhaps it will not be; perhaps things have been represented worse than they are. If thou wilt not be convinced by the word

preached to thee by men in the name of God, God himself will undertake to convince thee. [Ezek. xiv. 4, 7, 8.](#)

Doth it seem to thee not real that thou shalt suffer such a dreadful destruction, because it seems to thee that thou dost not deserve it? and because thou dost not see any thing so horrid in myself, as to answer such a dreadful punishment? Why is it that thy wickedness doth not seem bad enough to deserve this punishment? The reason is, that thou lovest thy wickedness; thy wickedness seems good to thee; it appears lovely to thee; thou dost not see any such hatefulness in it as to answer such misery.

But know, thou stupid, blind, hardened wretch, that God doth not see, as thou seest with thy polluted eyes: thy sins in his sight are infinitely abominable.—Thou knowest that thou hast a thousand and a thousand times made light of the majesty of God. And why should not that majesty, which thou hast thus despised, be manifested in the greatness of thy punishment? Thou hast often heard what a great and dreadful God Jehovah is: but thou hast made so light of it, that thou hast not been afraid of him, thou hast not been afraid to sin against him, nor to go on day after day, by thy sins, to provoke him to wrath, nor to cast his commands under foot, and trample on them. Now why may not God, in the greatness of thy destruction, justly vindicate and manifest the greatness of that majesty which thou hast despised?

Thou hast despised the mighty power of God; thou hast not been afraid of it. Now why is it not fit that God should show the greatness of his power in thy ruin. What king is there who will not show his authority in the punishment of those subjects that despise it? and who will not vindicate his royal majesty in executing vengeance on those that rise in rebellion? And art thou such a fool as to think that the great King of heaven and earth, before whom all other kings are so many grasshoppers, will not vindicate his kingly majesty on such contemptuous rebels as thou art? Thou art very much mistaken if thou thinkest so. If thou be regardless of God's majesty, be it known to thee, God is not regardless of his own majesty; he taketh care of its honour, and he will vindicate it.

Think it not strange that God should deal so severely with thee, or that the wrath which thou shalt suffer should be so great. For as great as it is, it is no greater than that love of God which thou hast despised. The love of God, and his grace, condescension, and pity to sinners in sending his Son into the world to die for them, is every whit as great and wonderful as this inexpressible wrath. This mercy hath been held forth to thee, and described in its wonderful greatness, hundreds of times, and as often hath it been offered to thee; but thou wouldst not accept Christ; thou wouldst not have this great love of God; thou despisedst God's dying love; thou trampledst the benefits of it under foot. Know why shouldst thou not have wrath as great as that love and mercy which thou despisest and rejectest? Doth it seem incredible to thee that God should so harden his heart against a poor sinner, as to destroy him, and to bear him down with infinite power and merciless wrath? and is this a



greater thing than it is for thee to harden thy heart, as thou hast done, against infinite mercy, and against the dying love of God?

Doth it seem to thee incredible, that God should be so utterly regardless of the sinner's welfare, as to sink him into an infinite abyss of misery? Is this shocking to thee? And is it not at all shocking to thee, that thou shouldst be so utterly regardless as thou hast been of the honour and glory of the infinite God?

It arises from thy stupidity, and because thou hast a heart of stone, that thou art so senseless of thine own wickedness, as to think that thou hast not deserved such a punishment, and that it is to thee incredible that it will be inflicted upon thee. But if, when all is said and done, thou be not convinced, wait but a little while, and thou wilt be convinced: God will undertake to do the work which ministers cannot do. Though judgment against thine evil works be not yet executed, and God now let thee alone; yet he will soon come upon thee with his great power, and men thou shalt know what God is, and what thou art.

Flatter not thyself, that if these things shall prove true, and the worst shall come, thou wilt set thyself to bear it as well as thou canst. What will it signify, to set thyself to bear and to collect thy strength to support thyself, when thou shalt fall into the hands of that omnipotent King, Jehovah? He that made thee, can make his sword approach unto thee. His sword is not the sword of man, nor is his wrath the wrath of man. If it were, possibly stoutness might be maintained under it. But it is the fierceness of the wrath of the great God, who is able to baffle and dissipate all thy strength in a moment. He can fill thy poor soul with an ocean of wrath, a deluge of fire and brimstone; or he can make it ten thousand times fuller of torment than ever an oven was full of fire; and at the same time, can fill it with despair of ever seeing any end to its torment, or any rest from its misery: and then where will be thy strength? what will become of thy courage? what will signify thine attempts to bear?

What art thou in the hands of the great God, who made heaven and earth by speaking a word? What art thou, when dealt with by that strength, which manages all this vast universe, holds the globe of the earth, directs all the motions of the heavenly bodies from age to age, and, when the fixed time shall come, will shake all to pieces? There are other wicked beings a thousand times stronger than thou: there are strong and proud spirits of a gigantic stoutness and hardiness. But how little are they in the hands of the great God! they are less than weak infants; they are nothing, and less than nothing, in the hands of an angry God, as will appear at the day of judgment. Their hearts will be broken; they will sink; they will have no strength nor courage left; they will be as weak as water; their souls will sink down into an infinite gloom, an abyss of death and despair. Then what will become of thee, a poor worm, when thou shalt fall into the hands of that God, when he shall come to show his wrath, and make his power known on thee?

If the strength of all the wicked men on earth, and of all the devils in hell, were united in one, and thou wert possessed of it all; and if the courage, greatness, and stoutness of all

their hearts were united in thy single heart, thou wouldst be nothing in the hands of Jehovah. If it were all collected, and thou shouldst set thyself to bear as well as thou couldst, all would sink under his great wrath in an instant, and would be utterly abolished: thine hands would drop down at once, and thine heart would melt as wax. The great mountains, the firm rocks, cannot stand before the power of God. He can tear the earth in pieces in a moment; yea, he can shatter the whole universe, and dash it to pieces at one blow. How then will thine hands be strong, or thine heart endure?

Thou canst not stand before a lion of the forest; an angry wild beast, if stirred up, will easily tear such an one as thou art in pieces. Yea, not only so, but thou art crushed before the moth. A little thing, a little worm or spider, or some such insect, is able to kill thee. What then canst thou do in the hands of God? It is vain to set the briers and thorns in battle-array against glowing flames; the points of thorns, though sharp, do nothing to withstand the fire.

Some of you have seen buildings on fire; imagine therefore with yourselves, what a poor hand you would make at fighting with the flames, if you were in the midst of so great and fierce a fire. You have often seen a spider, or some other noisome insect, when thrown into the midst of a fierce fire, and have observed how immediately it yields to the force of the flames. There is no long struggle, no fighting against the fire, no strength exerted to oppose the heat, or to fly from it; but it immediately stretches forth itself and yields; and the fire takes possession of it, and at once it becomes full of fire. Here is a little image of what you will be in hell, except you repent and fly to Christ. To encourage yourselves, that you will set yourselves to bear hell-torments as well as you can, is just as if a worm, that is about to be thrown into a glowing furnace, should swell and fortify itself, and prepare itself to fight the flames.

What can you do with lightnings? What doth it signify to fight with them? What an absurd figure would a poor weak man make, who in a thunder-storm should expect a flash of lightning on his head or his breast, and should go forth sword in hand to oppose it; when a flash would in an instant drink up all his spirits and his life, and melt his sword!

Consider these things, all you enemies of God, and rejecters of Christ, whether you be old men and women, Christless heads of families, or young people and wicked children. Be assured, that if you do not hearken and repent, God intends to show his wrath, and make his power known upon you. He intends to magnify himself exceedingly in sinking you down in hell. He intends to show his great majesty at the day of judgment, before a vast assembly, in your misery; before a greater assembly many thousand-fold than ever yet appeared on earth; before a vast assembly of saints, and a vast assembly of wicked men, a vast assembly of holy angels, and before all the crew of devils. God will before all these get himself honour in your destruction; you shall be tormented in the presence of them all. Then all will see that God is a great God indeed; then all will see how dreadful a thing it is to sin against such a God, and to reject such a Saviour, such love and grace, as you have rejected and despised.

All will be filled with awe at the great sight, and all the saints and angels will look upon you, and adore that majesty, that mighty power, and that holiness and justice of God, which shall appear in your ineffable destruction and misery.

It is probable that some who hear me, are at this very moment unawakened, and are in a great degree careless about their souls. I fear there are some among us who are most fearfully hardened: their hearts are harder than the very rocks. It is easier to make impressions upon an adamant than upon their hearts. I suppose some of you have heard all that I have said with ease and quietness: it appears to you as great sounding words, but doth not reach your hearts. You have heard such things many times: you have been too much used to the roaring of heaven's cannon, to be frightened at it. It will therefore probably be in vain for me to say any thing further to you: I will only put you in mind that ere long God will deal with you. I cannot deal with you, you despise what I say; I have no power to make you sensible of your danger and misery, and of the dreadfulfulness of the wrath of God. The attempts of men in this way have often proved vain.

However, God hath undertaken to deal with such men as you are. It is his manner commonly first to let men try their utmost strength; particularly to let ministers try, that thus he may show ministers their own weakness and impotency; and when they have done what they can, and all fails, then God takes the matter into his own hands. So it seems by your obstinacy as if God intended to undertake to deal with you. He will undertake to subdue you; he will see, if he cannot cure you of your senselessness and regardlessness of his threatenings. And you will be convinced; you will be subdued effectually; your strength will be utterly broken, your courage and hope will sink. God will surely break those who will not bow. Having girded himself with his power and wrath, he hath heretofore undertaken to deal with many hard, stubborn, senseless, obstinate hearts; and he never failed, he always did his work thoroughly.

It will not be long before you will be wonderfully changed. You who now hear of hell and the wrath of the great God, and sit here so easy and quiet, and go away so careless; by and by will shake and tremble, and cry out, and shriek, and gnash your teeth, and will be thoroughly convinced of the vast weight and importance of these things which you now despise.



S E R M O N X I .

THE ETERNITY OF HELL TORMENTS.

MATT. xxv. 46.

These shall go away into everlasting punishment.

IN this chapter we have the most particular description of the day of judgment, of any in the whole Bible. Christ here declares, that when he shall hereafter sit on the throne of his glory, the righteous and the wicked shall be set before him, and separated one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Then we have an account how both will be judged according to their works; how the good works of the one and the evil works of the other will be rehearsed, and how the sentence shall be pronounced accordingly. We are told what the sentence will be on each, and then we have an account of the execution of the sentence on both. In the words of the text is the account of the execution of the sentence on the wicked or the ungodly: concerning which, it is to my purpose to observe two things.

1. The duration of the punishment on which they are here said to enter: it is called everlasting punishment.

2. The time of their entrance on this everlasting punishment; *viz.* after the day of judgment, when all these things that are of a temporary continuance shall have come to an end, and even those of them that are most lasting,—the frame of the world itself; the earth which is said to abide for ever; the ancient mountains and everlasting hills; the sun, moon, and stars. When the heavens shall have waxed old like a garment, and as a vesture shall be changed, then shall be the time when the wicked shall enter on their punishment.

*Doctrine.*—The misery of the wicked in hell will be absolutely eternal.

There are two opinions which I mean to oppose in this doctrine. One is, That the eternal death with which wicked men are threatened in Scripture, signifies no more than eternal annihilation; that God will punish their wickedness by eternally abolishing their being.

The other opinion which I mean to oppose is, That though the punishment of the wicked shall consist in sensible misery, yet it shall not be absolutely eternal; but only of a very long continuance.

Therefore to establish the doctrine in opposition to these different opinions, I shall undertake to show,

I. That it is not contrary to the divine perfections to inflict on wicked men a punishment that is absolutely eternal.

II. That the eternal death which God threatens, is not annihilation, but an abiding sensible punishment or misery.

III. That this misery will not only continue for a very long time, but will be absolutely without end.

IV. That various good ends will be obtained by the eternal punishment of the wicked.

I. I am to show that it is not contrary to the divine perfections to inflict on wicked men a punishment that is absolutely eternal.

This is the sum of the objections usually made against this doctrine, That it is inconsistent with the justice, and especially with the mercy, of God. And some say, If it be strictly just, yet how can we suppose that a merciful God can bear eternally to torment his creatures.

1. I shall briefly show, That it is not inconsistent with the justice of God to inflict an eternal punishment. To evince this, I shall use only one argument, *viz.* that sin is heinous enough to deserve such a punishment, and such a punishment is no more than proportionable to the evil or demerit of sin. If the evil of sin be infinite, as the punishment is, then it is manifest that the punishment is no more than proportionable to the sin punished, and is no more than sin deserves. And if the obligation to love, honour, and obey God be infinite, then sin which is the violation of this obligation, is a violation of infinite obligation, and so is an infinite evil. Again, if God be infinitely worthy of love, honour, and obedience, then our obligation to love, and honour, and obey him is infinitely great.—So that God being infinitely glorious, or infinitely worthy of our love, honour, and obedience; our obligation to love, honour, and obey him, and so to avoid all sin, is infinitely great. Again, our obligation to love, honour, and obey God being infinitely great, sin is the violation of infinite obligation, and so is an infinite evil. Once more, sin being an infinite evil, deserves an infinite punishment, an infinite punishment is no more than it deserves: therefore such punishment is just; which was the thing to be proved. There is no evading the force of this reasoning, but by denying that God, the sovereign of the universe, is infinitely glorious; which I presume none of my hearers will venture to do.

2. I am to show, That it is not inconsistent with the mercy of God, to inflict an eternal punishment on wicked men. It is an unreasonable and unscriptural notion of the mercy of God, that he is merciful in such a sense that he cannot bear that penal justice should be executed. This is to conceive of the mercy of God as a passion to which his nature is so subject that God is liable to be moved, and affected, and overcome by seeing a creature in misery, so that he cannot bear to see justice executed: which is a most unworthy and absurd notion of the mercy of God, and would, if true, argue great weakness.—It would be a great defect, and not a perfection, in the sovereign and supreme Judge of the world, to be merciful in such a sense that he could not bear to have penal justice executed. It is a very unscriptural notion of the mercy of God. The Scriptures every where represent the mercy of God as free and sovereign, and not that the exercises of it are necessary, so that God cannot bear justice should take place. The Scriptures abundantly speak of it as the glory of the divine attribute

of mercy, that it is free and sovereign in its exercises; and not that God cannot but deliver sinners from misery. This is a mean and most unworthy idea of the divine mercy.

It is most absurd also as it is contrary to plain fact. For if there be any meaning in the objection, this is supposed in it, that all misery of the creature, whether just or unjust, is in itself contrary to the nature of God. For if his mercy be of such a nature, that a very great degree of misery, though just, is contrary to his nature; then it is only to add to the mercy, and then a less degree of misery is contrary to his nature; again to add further to it, and a still less degree of misery is contrary to his nature. And so the mercy of God being infinite, all misery must be contrary to his nature; which we see to be contrary to fact: for we see that God in his providence, doth indeed inflict very great calamities on mankind even in this life.

However strong such kind of objections against the eternal misery of the wicked, may seem to the carnal, senseless hearts of men, as though it were against God's justice and mercy; yet their seeming strength arises from a want of sense of the infinite evil, odiousness, and provocation there is in sin. Hence it seems to us not suitable that any poor creature should be the subject of such misery, because we have no sense of any thing abominable and provoking in any creature answerable toil. If we had, then this infinite calamity would not seem unsuitable. For one thing would but appear answerable and proportionable to another, and so the mind would rest in it as fit and suitable, and no more than what is proper to be ordered by the just, holy, and good Governor of the world.

That this is so, we may be convinced by this consideration, *viz.* that when we hear or read of some horrid instances of cruelty, it may be to some poor innocent child, or some holy martyr—and their cruel persecutors, having no regard to their shrieks and cries, only sported themselves with their misery, and would not vouchsafe even to put an end to their lives—we have a sense of the evil of them, and they make a deep impression on our minds. Hence it seems just, every way fit and suitable, that God should inflict a very terrible punishment on persons who have perpetrated such wickedness. It seems no way disagreeable to any perfection of the Judge of the world; we can think of it without being at all shocked. The reason is, that we have a sense of the evil of their conduct, and a sense of the proportion there is between the evil or demerit and the punishment.

Just so, if we saw a proportion between the evil of sin and eternal punishment, if we saw something in wicked men that should appear as hateful to us, as eternal misery appears dreadful; something that should as much stir up indignation and detestation, as eternal misery does terror; all objections against this doctrine would vanish at once. Though now it seem incredible; though when we hear of it and are so often told of it, we know not how to realize it; though when we hear of such a degree and duration of torments as are held forth in this doctrine, and think what eternity is, it is ready to seem impossible, that such torments should be inflicted on poor feeble creatures by a Creator of infinite mercy; yet this



arises principally from these two causes: (1.) It is so contrary to the depraved inclinations of mankind, that they hate to believe it, and cannot bear it should be true. (2.) They see not the suitableness of eternal punishment to the evil of sin; they see not that it is no more than proportionable to the demerit of sin.

Having thus shown that the eternal punishment of the wicked is not inconsistent with the divine perfections, I shall now proceed to show, that it is so far from being inconsistent with the divine perfections, that those perfections evidently require it; i. e. they require that sin should have so great a punishment, either in the person who has committed it, or in a surety; and therefore with respect to those who believe not in a surety, and have no interest in him, the divine perfections require that this punishment should be inflicted on them.

This appears, as it is not only not unsuitable that sin should be thus punished; but it is positively suitable, decent, and proper. -If this be made to appear, that it is positively suitable that sin should be thus punished, then it will follow, that the perfections of God require it; for certainly the perfections of God require what is proper to be done. The perfection and excellency of God require that to take place which is perfect, excellent, and proper in its own nature. But that sin should be punished eternally is such a thing; which appears by the following considerations.

1. It is suitable that God should infinitely hate sin, and be an infinite enemy to it. Sin, as I have before shown, is an infinite evil, and therefore is infinitely odious and detestable. It is proper that God should hate every evil, and hate it according to its odious and detestable nature. And sin being infinitely evil and odious, it is proper that God should hate it infinitely.

2. If infinite hatred of sin be suitable to the divine character, then the *expressions* of such hatred are also suitable to his character. Because that which is suitable to be, is suitable to be expressed; that which is lovely in itself, is lovely when it appears. If it be suitable that God should be an infinite enemy to sin, or that he should hate it infinitely, then it is suitable that he should *act* as such an enemy. If it be suitable that he should hate and have enmity against sin, then it is suitable for him to express that hatred and enmity in that to which hatred and enmity by its own nature tends. But certainly hatred in its own nature tends to opposition, and to set itself against that which is hated, and to procure its evil and not its good: and that in proportion to the hatred. Great hatred naturally tends to the great evil, and infinite hatred to the infinite evil, of its object.

Whence it follows, that if it be suitable that there should be infinite hatred of sin in God, as I have shown it is, it is suitable that he should execute an infinite punishment on it; and so the perfections of God require that he should punish sin with an infinite, or which is the same thing, with an eternal, punishment.

Thus we see not only the great objection against this doctrine answered, but the truth of the doctrine established by reason. I now proceed further to establish it by considering the remaining particulars under the doctrine.

II. That eternal death or punishment which God threatens to the wicked, is not annihilation, but an abiding sensible punishment or misery.—The truth of this proposition will appear by the following particulars.

1. The Scripture every where represents the punishment of the wicked, as implying very extreme pains and sufferings; but a state of annihilation is no state of suffering at all. Persons annihilated have no sense or feeling of pain or pleasure, and much less do they feel that punishment which carries in it an *extreme* pain or suffering. They no more suffer to eternity than they did suffer from eternity.

2. It is agreeable both to Scripture and reason to suppose, that the wicked will be punished in such a manner, that they shall be sensible of the punishment they are under; that they should be sensible that now God has executed and fulfilled what he threatened, what they disregarded, and would not believe. They should know themselves that justice takes place upon “them; that God vindicates that majesty which they despised; that God is not so despicable a being as they thought him to be. They should be sensible for what they are punished, while they are under the threatened punishment. It is reasonable that they should be sensible of their own guilt, and should remember their former opportunities and obligations, and should see their own folly and God’s justice.—If the punishment threatened be eternal annihilation, they will never know that it is inflicted; they will never know that God is just in their punishment, or that they have their deserts. And how is this agreeable to the Scriptures, in which God threatens, that he will repay the wicked *to his face*, [Deut. vii. 10](#). And to that in [Job xxi. 19, 20](#). “God rewardeth him, and he shall know it; his eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.” And to that in [Ezek. xxii. 21, 22](#). “Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.”—And how is it agreeable to that expression so often annexed to the threatenings of God’s wrath against wicked men, *And ye shall know that I am the Lord?*

3. The Scripture teaches, that the wicked will suffer different *degrees* of torment, according to the different aggravations of their sins. [Matt. v. 22](#). “Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” Here Christ teaches us, that the torments of wicked men will be different in different persons, according to the different degrees of their guilt.—It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, for Tyre and Sidon, than for the cities where most of Christ’s mighty works were wrought.—Again, our Lord assures us, That he that knoweth his Lord’s will, and prepareth not himself, nor doth according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knoweth not, and committeth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes—These several passages of Scripture infallibly prove, that there will be dif-



ferent degrees of punishment in hell; which is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that the punishment consists in *annihilation*, in which there can be no *degrees*.

4. The Scriptures are very express and abundant in this matter, That the eternal punishment of the wicked will consist in sensible misery and torment, and not in annihilation.—What is said of Judas is worthy to be observed here, [Matt. xxvi. 24](#). “It had been good for that man if he had not been born;”—This seems plainly to teach us, that the punishment of the wicked is such that their existence, upon the whole, is worse than non-existence. But if their punishment consists merely in annihilation, this is not true.—The wicked, in their punishment, are said to *weep, and wail, and gnash their teeth*; which implies not only real existence, but life, knowledge, and activity, and that they are in a very sensible and exquisite manner affected with their punishment.—[Isa. xxxiii. 14](#). Sinners in the state of their punishment are represented to dwell with everlasting burnings. But if they are only turned into nothing, where is the foundation for this representation? It is absurd to say, that sinners will dwell with annihilation; for there is no dwelling in the case. It is also absurd to call annihilation a burning, which implies a state of existence, sensibility, and extreme pain; whereas in annihilation there is neither.

It is said, that they shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone. How can this expression with any propriety be understood to mean a state of annihilation? Yea, they are expressly said to have no rest day nor night, but to be tormented with fire and brimstone for ever and ever, [Rev. xx. 10](#). But annihilation is a state of rest, a state in which not the least torment can possibly be suffered. The rich man in hell lifted up his eyes being in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and entered into a particular conversation with Abraham; all which proves that he was not annihilated.

The spirits of ungodly men before the resurrection are not in a state of annihilation, but in a state of misery; they are spirits in prison, as the apostle saith of them that were drowned in the flood, [1 Pet. iii. 19](#).—And this appears very plainly from the instance of the rich man before mentioned, if we consider him as representing the wicked in their separate state between death and the resurrection. But if the wicked even then, are in a state of torment, much more will they be, when they shall come to suffer that which is the proper punishment of their sins.

Annihilation is not so great a calamity but that some men have undoubtedly chosen it, rather than a state of suffering even in this life. This was the case of Job, a good man. But if a good man in this world may suffer that which is worse than annihilation, doubtless the proper punishment of the wicked, in which God means to manifest his peculiar abhorrence of their wickedness, will be a calamity vastly greater still; and therefore cannot be annihilation. That must be a very mean and contemptible testimony of God’s wrath towards those who have rebelled against his crown and dignity-broken his laws, and despised both his vengeance

and his grace—which is not so great a calamity as some of his true children have suffered in life.

The eternal punishment of the wicked is said to be the *second death*, as [Rev. xx. 14.](#) and [Rev. xxi. 8.](#) It is doubtless called the second death in reference to the death of the body; and as the death of the body is ordinarily attended with great pain and distress, so the like, or something vastly greater, is implied in calling the eternal punishment of the wicked the *second death*; and there would be no propriety in calling it so, if it consisted merely in annihilation. And this second death wicked men will suffer; for it cannot be called the second death with respect to any other than men; it cannot be called so with respect to devils, as they die no temporal death, which is the first death. In [Rev. ii. 11.](#) it is said, “He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death;” implying that all-who do not overcome their lusts, but live in sin, shall suffer the second death.

Again, wicked men will suffer the same kind of death with the devils; as in verse 25th of the context, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Now the punishment of the devil is not annihilation, but torment: he therefore trembles for fear of it; not for fear of being annihilated,—he would be glad of that. What he is afraid of is torment, as appears by [Luke viii. 28.](#) where he cries out, and beseeches Christ, that he would not torment him before the time. And it is said, [Rev. xx. 10.](#) “The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.”

It is strange how men will go directly against so plain and full revelations of Scripture, as to suppose, notwithstanding all these things, that the eternal punishment threatened against the wicked signifies no more than annihilation.

III. As the future punishment of the wicked consists in sensible misery; so it shall not only continue for a very long time, but shall be absolutely without end.

Of those who have held that the torments of hell are not absolutely eternal, there have been two sorts. Some suppose, that in the threatenings of everlasting punishment, the terms used do not necessarily import a proper eternity, but only a very long duration. Others suppose, that if they do import a proper eternity, yet we cannot necessarily conclude thence, that God will fulfil his threatenings.—Therefore I shall,

*First*, Show that the threatenings of eternal punishment do very plainly and fully import a proper, absolute eternity, and not merely a long duration.—This appears,

1. Because when the Scripture speaks of the wicked being sentenced to their punishment at the time when all temporal things are come to an end, it then speaks of it as everlasting, as in the text, and elsewhere. It is true, that the term for ever is not always in Scripture used to signify eternity. Sometimes it means, as long as a man liveth. In this sense it is said, that the Hebrew servant, who chose to abide with his master, should have his ear bored, and should serve his master for ever. Sometimes it means, during the continuance of the state

and church of the Jews. In this sense, several laws, which were peculiar to that church, and were to continue in force no longer than that church should last, are called statutes for ever. See [Exodus xxvii. 21.](#) [chap. xxviii. 43,](#) &c. Sometimes it means as long as the world stands. So in [Eccles. i. 4.](#) “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever.”

And this last is the longest temporal duration that such a term is ever used to signify. For the duration of the world is the longest of things temporal, as its beginning was the earliest. Therefore when the Scripture speaks of things as being before the foundation of the world, it means that they existed before the beginning of time. So those things which continue after the end of the world, are eternal things. When heaven and earth are shaken and removed, those things that remain will be what cannot be shaken, but will remain for ever, [Heb. xii. 26, 27.](#)

But the punishment of the wicked will not only remain after the end of the world, but is called everlasting, as in the text, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment.” So in [2 Thess. i. 9, 10.](#) “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints,” &c.—Now, what can be meant by a thing being everlasting, *after* all temporal things are come to an end, but that it is absolutely without end?

2. Such expressions are used to set forth the duration of the punishment of the wicked, as are never used in the scriptures of the New Testament to signify any thing but a proper eternity. It is said, not only that the punishment shall be for ever, but *for ever and ever.* [Rev. xiv. 11.](#) “The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever.*”—[Rev. xx. 10.](#) “Shall be tormented day and night, *for ever and ever.*”—Doubtless the New Testament has some expression to signify a proper eternity, of which it has so often occasion to speak. But it has no higher expression than this: if this do not signify an absolute eternity, there is none that does.

3. The Scripture uses the same way of speaking to set forth the eternity of *punishment* and the eternity of *happiness*, yea, the eternity of God himself. [Matt. xxv. 46.](#) “These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment: but the righteous into life *eternal.*” The words everlasting and eternal, in the original, are the very same. [Rev. xxii. 5.](#) “And they (the saints) shall reign for ever and ever.” And the Scripture has no higher expression to signify the eternity of God himself, than that of his being *for ever and ever*; as [Rev. iv. 9.](#) “To him who sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever;” and in the [10th verse](#), and in [chap. v. 14.](#) and [chap. x. 6.](#) and [chap. xv. 7.](#)

Again, the Scripture expresses God’s eternity by this, that it shall be *for ever*, after the world is come to an end; [Psalm cii. 26, 27.](#) “They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”



4. The Scripture says, that wicked men shall not be delivered, till they have paid the uttermost farthing of their debt; [Matt. v. 26](#). The last mite; [Luke xii. 59](#). *i. e.* the utmost that is deserved; and all mercy is excluded by this expression. But we have shown that they *deserve* an infinite, an endless punishment.

5. The Scripture says absolutely, that their punishment shall not have an end; [Mark ix. 44](#). “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Now, it will not do to say, that the meaning is, Their worm shall live *great while*, or that it shall be a great while before their fire is quenched. If ever the time comes that their worm shall *die*; if ever there shall be a *quenching* of the fire at all, then it is not true that their worm *dieth not*, and that the fire is *not quenched*. For if there be a dying of the worm, and a quenching of the fire, let it be at what time it will, nearer or further off, it is equally contrary to such a negation—*it dieth not, it is not quenched*.

*Secondly*, There are others who allow, that the expressions of the threatenings do denote a proper eternity; but then, they say, it doth not certainly follow, that the punishment will really be eternal; because, God may *threaten*, and yet not *fulfil* his threatenings. Though they allow that the threatenings are positive and peremptory, without any reserve, yet they say, God is not obliged to fulfil absolute positive threatenings, as he is absolute promises. Because in promises a right is conveyed that the creature to whom the promises are made will claim; but there is no danger of the creature’s claiming any right by a threatening. Therefore I am now to show, that what God has positively declared in this matter, does indeed make it certain, that it shall be as he has declared. To this end, I shall mention two things:

1. It is evidently contrary to the divine *truth*, positively to declare any thing to be real, whether past, present, or to come, which God at the same time knows is not so. Absolutely threatening that any thing shall be, is the same as absolutely declaring that it is to be. For any to suppose, that God absolutely declares that any thing *will be*, which he at the same time knows *wilt not be*, is blasphemy, if there be any such thing as blasphemy.

Indeed, it is very true, that there is no *obligation* on God, arising from the claim of the creature, as there is in promises. They seem to reckon the wrong way, who suppose the necessity of the execution of the threatening to arise from a proper obligation on God to the creature to execute consequent on his threatening. For indeed the certainty of the execution arises the other way, *viz.* on the obligation there was on the omniscient God, in threatening, to conform his threatening to what he knew would be future in execution. Though, strictly speaking, God is not properly *obliged* to the creature to execute because he has threatened, yet he was obliged not *absolutely* to threaten, if at the same time he knew that he should not or would not fulfil: because this would not have been consistent with his truth. So that from the truth of God there is an inviolable connexion between positive threatenings and execution. They who suppose that God positively declared, that he would do contrary to what he knew would come to pass, do therein suppose, that he absolutely threatened contrary to what he

knew to be *truth*. And how any one can speak contrary to what he knows to be truth, in declaring, promising, or threatening, or any other way, consistently with inviolable truth, is inconceivable.

Threatenings are significations of something; and if they are made consistently with truth, they are true significations, or significations of truth, *that which shalt be*. If absolute threatenings are significations of any thing, they are significations of the *futurity* of the things threatened. But if the futurity of the things threatened be not true and real, then how can the threatening be a *true* signification? And if God, in them, speaks contrary to what he *knows*, and contrary to what he *intends*, how he can speak true is inconceivable.

Absolute threatenings are a kind of *predictions*; and though God is not properly *obliged* by any claim of ours to fulfil predictions, unless they are of the nature of promises; yet it certainly would be contrary to *truth*, to predict that such a thing would come to pass, which he knew at the same time would not come to pass. Threatenings are declarations of something future, and they must be declarations of future truth, if they are true declarations. Its being future alters not the case any more than if it were present. It is equally contrary to truth, to declare contrary to what at the same time is known to be truth, whether it be of things past, present, or to come; for all are alike to God.

Beside, we have often declarations in Scripture of the future eternal punishment of the wicked, in the proper form of *predictions*, and not in the form of *threatenings*. So in the text, <sup>69</sup> “These shall go away into everlasting punishment.” So in those frequent assertions of eternal punishment in the Revelation, some of which I have already quoted. The Revelation is a *prophecy*, and is so called in the book itself; so are those declarations of eternal punishment.—The like declarations we have also in many other places of Scripture.

2. The doctrine of those who teach, that it is not certain that God will fulfil those absolute threatenings, is *blasphemous* another way; and that is, as God, according to their supposition, was obliged to make use of a *fallacy* to govern the world. They own, that it is needful that men should *apprehend* themselves liable to an eternal punishment, that they might thereby be restrained from sin, and that God has threatened such a punishment, for the very end that they might *believe* themselves exposed to it. But what an unworthy opinion does this convey of God and his government, of his infinite majesty, and wisdom, and all-sufficiency!—Beside, they suppose, that though God has made use of such a fallacy, yet it is not such an one but that they have *detected* him in it. Though God *intended* men should believe it to be certain, that sinners are liable to an eternal punishment; yet they suppose, that they have been so cunning as to find out that it is not certain: and so that God had not laid his design so deep, but that such cunning men as they can discern the cheat, and defeat the

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<sup>69</sup> Matt. xxv. 46.

design: because they have found out, that there is no necessary connexion between the threatening of eternal punishment, and the execution of that threatening.

Considering these things, is it not greatly to be wondered at, that Archbishop Tillotson, who has made so great a figure among the new-fashioned divines, should advance such an opinion as this?

Before I conclude this head, it may be proper for me to answer an objection or two, that may arise in the minds of some.

1. It may be here said, We have instances wherein God hath not fulfilled his threatenings; as his threatening to Adam, and in him to mankind, that they should surely die, if they should eat the forbidden fruit. I answer, it is not true that God did not fulfil that threatening: he fulfilled it, and will fulfil it in every jot and tittle. When God said,<sup>70</sup> “Thou shalt surely die,” if we respect spiritual death, it was fulfilled in Adam’s person in the day that he ate. For immediately his image, his holy spirit, and original righteousness, which was the highest and best life of our first parents, were lost; and they were immediately in a doleful state of spiritual death.

If we respect temporal death, that was also fulfilled: he brought death upon himself and all his posterity, and he virtually suffered that death on that very day on which he ate. His body was brought into a corruptible, mortal, and dying condition, and so it continued till it was dissolved. If we look at all that death which was comprehended in the threatening, it was, properly speaking, fulfilled in Christ. When God said to Adam, If thou eatest, thou shalt die, he spake not only to him, and of him personally; but the words respected mankind, Adam and his race, and doubtless were so understood by him. His offspring were to be looked upon as sinning in him, and so should die with him. The words do as justly allow of an imputation of death as of sin; they are as well consistent with *dying* in a surety, as with *sinning* in one. Therefore, the threatening is fulfilled in the death of Christ, the surety.

2. Another objection may arise from God’s threatening to Nineveh. He threatened, that in forty days Nineveh should be destroyed, which yet he did not fulfil.—I answer, that threatening could justly be looked upon no otherwise than as *conditional*. It was of the nature of a *warning*, and not of an absolute denunciation. Why was Jonah sent to the Ninevites, but to give them warning, that they might have opportunity to repent, reform, and avert the approaching destruction? God had no other design or end in sending the prophet to them, but that they might be warned and tried by him, as God warned the Israelites, Judah and Jerusalem, before their destruction. Therefore the prophets, together with their prophecies of approaching destruction, joined earnest exhortations to repent and reform, that it might be averted.

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70 Gen. ii. 17.

No more could justly be understood to be certainly threatened, than that Nineveh should be destroyed in forty days, *continuing as it was*. For it was for their wickedness that that destruction was threatened, and so the Ninevites took it. Therefore, when the cause was removed, the effect ceased. It was contrary to God's known manner, to threaten punishment and destruction for sin in this world absolutely, so that it should come upon the persons threatened unavoidably, let them repent and reform and do what they would: [Jer. xviii. 7, 8](#). "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." So that all threatening of this nature had a *condition* implied in them, according to the known and declared manner of God's dealing. And the Ninevites did not take it as an *absolute*, sentence of denunciation: if they had, they would have despaired of any benefit by fasting and reformation.

But the threatenings of eternal wrath are positive and absolute. There is nothing in the word of God from which we can gather any condition. The only opportunity of escaping is in this world; this is the only state of trial, wherein we have any offers of mercy, or place for repentance.

IV. I shall mention several good and important *ends*, which will be obtained by the eternal punishment of the wicked.

1. Hereby God vindicates his injured *majesty*. Wherein sinners cast contempt upon it, and trample it in the dust,

God vindicates and honours it, and makes it appear, as it is indeed, infinite, by showing that it is infinitely dreadful to contemn or offend it.

2. God glorifies his *justice*—The glory of God is the greatest good; it is that which is the chief end of the creation; it is of greater importance than any thing else. But this is one way wherein God will glorify himself, as in the eternal destruction of ungodly men he will glorify his justice. Therein he will appear as a just governor of the world. The vindictive justice of God will appear strict, exact, awful, and terrible, and therefore glorious.

3. God hereby indirectly glorifies his *grace* on the vessels of mercy.—The saints in heaven will behold the torments of the damned: "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."<sup>71</sup> [Isaiah lxvi. 24](#). "And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." And in [Rev. xiv. 10](#). it is said, that they shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. So they will be tormented in the presence also of the glorified saints.

Hereby the saints will be made the more sensible how great their salvation is. When they shall see how great the misery is from which God hath saved them, and how great a

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71 [Rev. xiv. 11](#).

difference he hath made between their state, and the state of others, who were by nature, and perhaps for a time by practice, no more sinful and ill-deserving than any, it will give them a greater sense of the wonderfulness of God's grace to them. Every time they look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God, in making them so to differ. This the apostle informs us is one end of the damnation of ungodly men; [Rom. ix. 22, 23](#). "What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the *riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy*, which he had afore prepared unto glory?" The view of the misery of the damned will double the ardour of the love and gratitude of the saints in heaven.

4. The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints for ever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and freeness of the grace of God in their happiness; but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness; it will give them a more lively relish of it; it will make them prize it more. When they see others, who were of the same nature, and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they so distinguished, O it will make them sensible how happy they are. A sense of the opposite misery, in all cases, greatly increases the relish of any joy or pleasure.

The sight of the wonderful power, the great and dreadful majesty, and awful justice and holiness of God, manifested in the eternal punishment of ungodly men, will make them prize his favour and love vastly the more; and they will be so much the more happy in the enjoyment of it.

#### APPLICATION.

1. From what hath been said, we may learn the folly and madness of the greater part of mankind, in that for the sake of present momentary gratification, they run the venture of enduring all these eternal torments. They prefer a small pleasure, or a little wealth, or a little earthly honour and greatness, which can last but for a moment, to an escape from this punishment. If it be true that the torments of hell are eternal, what will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? What is there in this world, which is not a trifle, and lighter than vanity, in comparison with these eternal things?

How mad are men, who so often hear of these things and pretend to believe them; who can live but a little while, a few years; who do not even expect to live here longer than others of their species ordinarily do; and who yet are careless about what becomes of themselves



in another world, where there is no change and no end! How mad are they, when they hear that if they go on in sin, they shall be eternally miserable, that they are not moved by it, but hear it with as much carelessness and coldness as if they were no way concerned in the matter; when they know not but that it may be their case, that they may be suffering these torments before a week is at an end!

How can men be so careless of such a matter as their own eternal and desperate destruction and torment! What a strange stupor and senselessness possesses the hearts of men! How common a thing is it to see men, who are told from sabbath to sabbath of eternal misery, and who are as mortal as other men, so careless about it, that they seem not to be at all restrained by it from whatever their souls lust after! It is not half so much their care to escape eternal misery, as it is to get money and land, and to be considerable in the world, and to gratify their senses. Their thoughts are much more exercised about these things, and much more of their care and concern is about them. Eternal misery, though they lie every day exposed to it, is a thing neglected, it is but now and then thought of, and then with a great deal of stupidity, and not with concern enough to stir them up to do any thing considerable in order to escape it. They are not sensible that it is worth their while to take any considerable pains in order to it. And if they do take pains for a little while, they soon leave off, and something else takes up their thoughts and concern.

Thus you see it among young and old. Multitudes of youth lead a careless life, taking little care about their salvation. So you may see it among persons of middle age; and with many advanced in years, and when they certainly draw near to the grave.—Yet these same persons will seem to acknowledge, that the greater part of men go to hell and suffer eternal misery, and this through carelessness about it. However, they will do the same. How strange is it that men can enjoy themselves and be at rest, when they are thus hanging over eternal burnings; at the same time, having no lease of their lives, and not knowing how soon the thread by which they hang will break, nor indeed do they pretend to know; and if it breaks, they *are* gone, they are lost for ever, and there is no remedy! Yet they trouble not themselves much about it; nor will they hearken to those who cry to them, and entreat them to take care for themselves, and labour to get out of that dangerous condition: they are not willing to take so much pains: they choose not to be diverted from amusing themselves with toys and vanities. Thus, well might the wise man say, [Eccles. ix. 3.](#) “The heart of the sons of men is full of evil. Madness is in their heart while they live; and after that they go to the dead.”—How much wiser are those few, who make it their main business to lay a foundation for eternity, to secure their salvation!

2. I shall improve this subject in a use of exhortation to sinners, to take care to escape these eternal torments. If they be eternal, one would think that would be enough to awaken your concern, and excite your diligence. If the punishment be eternal, it is infinite, as we said before; and therefore no other evil, no death, no temporary torment that ever you heard

of, or that you can imagine, is any thing in comparison with it, but is as much less and less considerable, not only as a grain of sand is less than the whole universe, but as it is less than the boundless space which encompasses the universe.—Therefore here,

(1.) Be entreated to consider attentively how great and awful a thing eternity is. Although you cannot comprehend it the more by considering, yet you may be made more sensible that it is not a thing to be disregarded.—Do but consider what it is to suffer extreme torment for ever and ever; to suffer it day and night, from one year to another, from one age to another, and from one thousand ages to another, and so adding age to age, and thousands to thousands, in pain, in wailing and lamenting, groaning and shrieking, and gnashing your teeth; with your souls full of dreadful grief and amazement, with your bodies and every member full of racking torture, without any possibility of getting ease; without any possibility of moving God to pity by your cries; without any possibility of hiding yourselves from him; without any possibility of diverting your thoughts from your pain; without any possibility of obtaining any manner of mitigation, or help, or change for the better.

(2.) Do but consider how dreadful despair will be in such torment. How dismal will it be, when you are under these racking torments, to know assuredly that you never, never shall be delivered from them; to have no hope: when you shall wish that you might be turned into nothing, but shall have no hope of it; when you shall wish that you might be turned into a toad or a serpent, but shall have no hope of it; when you would rejoice, if you might but have any relief, after you shall have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it. After you shall have worn out the age of the sun, moon, and stars, in your dolorous groans and lamentations, without rest day and night, or one minute's ease, yet you shall have no hope of ever being delivered; after you shall have worn a thousand more such ages, you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer to the end of your torments; but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks, the same doleful cries, incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend up for ever and ever. Your souls, which shall have been agitated with the wrath of God all this while, will still exist to bear more wrath; your bodies, which shall have been burning all this while in these glowing flames, shall not have been consumed, but will remain to roast through eternity, which will not have been at all shortened by what shall have been past.

You may by considering make yourselves more sensible than you ordinarily are; but it is a little you can conceive of what it is to have no hope in such torments. How sinking would it be to you, to endure such pain as you have felt in this world, without any hopes, and to know that you never should be delivered from it, nor have one minute's rest! You can now scarcely conceive how doleful that would be. How much more to endure the vast weight of the wrath of God without hope! The more the damned in hell think of the eternity of their torments, the more amazing will it appear to them; and alas! they will not be able

to keep it out of their minds. Their tortures will not divert them from it, but will fix their attention to it. O how dreadful will eternity appear to them after they shall have been thinking on it for ages together, and shall have so long an experience of their torments! The damned in hell will have two infinites perpetually to amaze them, and swallow them up: one is an infinite God, whose wrath they will bear, and in whom they will behold their perfect and irreconcilable enemy. The other is the infinite duration of their torment.

If it were possible for the damned in hell to have a comprehensive knowledge of eternity, their sorrow and grief would be infinite in degree. The comprehensive view of so much sorrow, which they must endure, would cause infinite grief for the present. Though they will not have a comprehensive knowledge of it, yet they will doubtless have a vastly more lively and strong apprehension of it than we can have in this world. Their torments will give them an impression of it.—A man in his present state, without any enlargement of his capacity, would have a vastly more lively impression of eternity than he has, if he were only under some pretty sharp pain in some member of his body, and were at the same time assured, that he must endure that pain forever. His pain would give him a greater sense of eternity than other men have. How much more will those excruciating torments, which the damned will suffer, have this effect!

Besides, their capacity will probably be enlarged, their understandings will be quicker and stronger in a future state; and God can give them as great a sense and as strong an impression of eternity, as he pleases, to increase their grief and torment.—O be entreated, ye that are in a Christless state, and are going on in a way to hell, that are daily exposed to damnation, to consider these things. If you do not, it will surely be but a little while before you will experience them, and then you will know how dreadful it is to despair in hell; and it may be before this year, or this month, or this week, is at an end; before another sabbath, or ever you shall have opportunity to hear another sermon.

(3.) That you may effectually escape these dreadful and eternal torments, be entreated to flee and embrace him who came into the world for the very end of saving sinners from these torments, who has paid the whole debt due to the divine law, and exhausted eternal in temporal sufferings. What great encouragement is it to those of you who are sensible that you are exposed to eternal punishment, that there is a Saviour provided, who is able and who freely offers to save you from that punishment, and that in a way which is perfectly consistent with the glory of God, yea, which is more to the glory of God than it would be if you should suffer the eternal punishment of hell. For if you should suffer that punishment you would never pay the whole of the debt. Those who are sent to hell never will have paid the whole of the debt which they owe to God, nor indeed a part which bears any proportion to the whole. They never will have paid a part which bears so great a proportion to the whole, as one mite to ten thousand talents. Justice therefore never can be actually satisfied in your damnation; but it is actually satisfied in Christ. Therefore he is accepted of the Father, and

therefore all who believe are accepted and justified in him. Therefore believe in him, come to him, commit your souls to him to be saved by him. In him you shall be safe from the eternal torments of hell. Nor is that all: but through him you shall inherit inconceivable blessedness and glory, which will be of equal duration with the torments of hell. For, as at the last day the wicked shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, so shall the righteous, or those who trust in Christ, go into *life eternal*.

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S E R M O N   X I I .   7 2

THE PEACE WHICH CHRIST GIVES HIS TRUE FOLLOWERS.

[JOHN xiv. 27.](#)

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.

THESE words are a part of a most affectionate and affecting discourse that Christ had with his disciples the same evening in which he was betrayed, knowing that he was to be crucified the next day. This discourse begins with the [31st verse of the 13th, and is continued to the end of the 16th chapter](#). Christ began his discourse after he partook of the passover with them, after he had instituted and administered the sacrament of the supper, and after Judas was gone out, and none were left but his true and faithful disciples; whom he now addresses as his dear children. This was the last discourse that Christ had with them before his death. As it was his parting discourse, and, as it were, his dying discourse, so it is on many accounts the most remarkable we have recorded in our Bibles.

It is evident this discourse made a deep impression on the minds of the disciples; and we may suppose that it did so, in a special manner, on the mind of John the beloved disciple, whose heart was especially full of love to him, and who had just then been leaning on his bosom. In this discourse Christ had told his dear disciples that he was going away, which filled them with sorrow and heaviness. The words of the text are given to comfort them, and to relieve their sorrow. He supports them with the promise of that peace which he would leave with them, and which they would have in him and with him, when he was gone.

This promise he delivers in three emphatical expressions which illustrate one another. “Peace I leave with you.<sup>73</sup>” As much as to say, though I am going away, yet I will not take all comfort away with me. While I have been with you, I have been your support and comfort, and you have had peace in me in the midst of the losses you have sustained, and troubles you have met with from this evil generation. This peace I will not take from you, but leave it with you in a more full possession.

“My peace I give unto you.” Christ by calling it his peace signifies two things,

1. That it was his *own*, that which he had to give. It was the peculiar benefit that he had to bestow on his children, now he was about to leave the world as to his human presence. Silver and gold he had none; for, while in his estate of humiliation, he was poor. The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head: [Luke ix. 58](#). He had no earthly estate to leave to his disciples who were as it were his family: but he had peace to give them.

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7 2   D A T E D ,   A U G U S T ,   1 7 5 0 .

73   [John xiv. 27.](#)

2. It was *his* peace that he gave them; as it was the *same kind* of peace which he himself enjoyed. The same excellent and divine peace which he ever had in God, and which he was about to receive in his exalted state in a vastly greater perfection and fulness: for the happiness Christ gives to his people, is a participation of his own happiness: agreeable to [chapter xv. 11](#). “These things have I said unto you, that my joy might remain in you.” And in his prayer with his disciples at the conclusion of this discourse, [chapter xvii. 13](#). “And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” And [verse 22](#). “And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.”

Christ here alludes to men making their wills before death. When parents are about to leave their children by death, they are wont in their last will and testament to give them their estate; that estate which they themselves were wont to possess and enjoy. So it was with Christ when he was about to leave the world, with respect to the peace which he gave his disciples; only with this difference, that earthly parents, when they die, though they leave the same estate to their children which they themselves heretofore enjoyed; yet when the children come to the full possession of it, they enjoy it no more; the parents do not enjoy it with their children. The time of the full possession of parents and children is not together. Whereas with respect to Christ’s peace, he did not only possess it himself before his death, when he bequeathed it to his disciples; but also afterwards more fully: so that they were received to possess it with him.

The third and last expression is, “not as the world giveth, give I unto you.”<sup>74</sup> Which is as much as to say, my gifts and legacies, now I am going to leave the world, are not like those which the rich and great men of the world are wont to leave to their heirs, when they die. They bequeath to their children their worldly possessions; and it may be, vast treasures of silver and gold, and sometimes an earthly kingdom. But the thing that I give you, is my peace, a vastly different thing from what they are wont to give, and which cannot be obtained by all that they can bestow, or their children inherit from them.

### DOCTRINE.

That peace which Christ, when he died, left as a legacy to all his true saints, is very different from all those things which the men of this world bequeath to their children, when they die.

I. Christ at his death made over the blessings of the new covenant to believers, as it were in a will or testament.

II. A great blessing that Christ made over to believers in this his testament was his peace.

III. This legacy of Christ is exceedingly diverse from all that any of the men of this world ever leave to their children when they die.

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74 *ibid.*

I. Christ at his death made over the blessings of the new covenant to believers, as it were in a will or testament.

The new covenant is represented by the apostle as Christ's last will and testament. [Heb. ix. 15, 16.](#) "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." What men convey by their will or testament, is their own estate. So Christ in the new covenant conveys to believers his own inheritance, so far as they are capable of possessing and enjoying it. They have that eternal life given to them in their measure, which Christ himself possesses. They live in him, and with him, and by a participation of his life. *Because he lives they live also.* They inherit his kingdom: the same kingdom which the Father appointed unto him. [Luke xxii. 29.](#) "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." They shall reign on his throne, [Rev. iii. 21.](#) They have his glory given to them, [John xvii.](#) And because all things are Christ's, so in Christ all things are the saints', [1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.](#)

Men in their wills or testaments most commonly give their estates to their children: so believers are in Scripture represented as Christ's children. [Heb. ii. 13.](#) "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me." Men most commonly make their wills a little before their death: so Christ did, in a very special and solemn manner, make over and confirm to his disciples the blessings of the new covenant, on the evening before the day of his crucifixion, in that discourse of which my text is a part. The promises of the new covenant were never so particularly expressed, and so solemnly given forth by Christ in all the time that he was upon earth, as in this discourse. Christ promises them mansions in his Father's house, [chapter xvi. 1, 2, 3.](#) Here he promises them whatever blessings they should need and ask in his name. [Chapter xv. 7. xiv. 23, 24.](#) Here he more solemnly and fully than any where else, gives forth and confirms the promise of the Holy Spirit, which is the sum of the blessings of the covenant of grace. [Chap. xiv. 18. xvii. 26. xv. 25. xvi. 7.](#) Here he promises them his own and his Father's gracious presence and favour. [Chapter xiv. 18. xix. 20, 21.](#) Here he promises them *peace*, as in the text. Here he promises them his joy. [Chapter xv. 11.](#) Here he promises grace to bring forth holy fruits. [Chapter xv. 16.](#) And victory over the world. [Chapter xvi. 33.](#) And indeed there seems to be no where else so full and complete an edition of the covenant of grace in the whole Bible, as in this dying discourse of Christ with his eleven true disciples.

This covenant between Christ and his children is like a will or testament also in this respect, that it becomes effectual, and a way is made for putting it in execution, no other way than by his death; as the apostle observes it is with a will or testament among men. "For a testament is of force after men are dead." [Heb. ix. 17.](#) For though the covenant of grace indeed was of force before the death of Christ, yet it was of force no otherwise than by his

death; so that his death then did virtually intervene"; being already undertaken and engaged. As a man's heirs come by the legacies bequeathed to them no otherwise than by the death of the testator, so men come by the spiritual and eternal inheritance no otherwise than by the death of Christ. If it had not been for the death of Christ they never could have obtained it.

II. A great blessing that Christ in his testament hath bequeathed to his true followers, is his peace. Here are two things that I would observe particularly, *viz.* That Christ hath bequeathed to believers true peace; and then, that the peace he has given them is his peace.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ has bequeathed true peace and comfort to his followers. Christ is called the Prince of peace. [Isa. ix. 6.](#) And when he was born into the world, the angels on that joyful and wonderful occasion sang, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace; because of that peace which he should procure for and bestow on the children of men; peace with God, and peace one with another, and tranquillity and peace within themselves: which last is especially the benefit spoken of in the text. This Christ has procured for his followers, and laid a foundation for their enjoyment of it, in that he has procured for them the other two, *viz.* peace with God, and one with another. He has procured for them peace and reconciliation with God, and his favour and friendship; in that he satisfied for their sins, and laid a foundation for the perfect removal of the guilt of sin, and the forgiveness of all their trespasses, and wrought out for them a perfect and glorious righteousness, most acceptable to God, and sufficient to recommend them to God's full acceptance, to the adoption of children, and to the eternal fruits of his fatherly kindness.

By these means true saints are brought into a state of freedom from condemnation, and all the curses of the law of God. [Rom. viii. 34.](#) "Who is he that condemneth?" And by these means they are safe from that dreadful and eternal misery to which naturally they are exposed, and are set on high out of the reach of all their enemies, so that the gates of hell and powers of darkness can never destroy them; nor can wicked men, though they may persecute, ever hurt them. [Rom. viii. 31.](#) "If God be for us, who can be against us?" [Numb. xxiii. 8.](#) "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" [Ver. 23.](#) "There is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel." By these means they are out of the reach of death, [John vi. 4;](#) [ix. 50, 51.](#) "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." By these means death with respect to them has lost its sting, and is no more worthy of the name of death. [1 Cor. xv. 55.](#) "O death, where is thy sting?" By these means they have no need to be afraid of the day of judgment, when the heavens and earth shall be dissolved. [Psal. xlvi. 1, 2.](#) "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed: and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Yea, a true saint has reason to be at rest in an assurance, that nothing can separate him from the love of God. [Rom. viii. 38, 39.](#)



Thus he that is in Christ, is in a safe refuge from every thing that might disturb him; [Isa. xxxii. 2.](#) “And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” And hence they that dwell in Christ have that promise fulfilled to them which we have in [the 18th verse](#) of the same chapter: “And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.”

And the true followers of Christ have not only ground of rest and peace of soul, by reason of their safety from evil, but on account of their sure title and certain enjoyment of all that good which they stand in need of, living, dying, and through all eternity. They are on a sure foundation for happiness, are built on a rock that can never be moved, and have a fountain that is sufficient, and can never be exhausted. The covenant is ordered in all things and sure, and God has passed his word and oath, <sup>75</sup> “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.” The infinite Jehovah is become their God, who can do every thing for them. He is their portion who has an infinite fulness of good in himself. “He is their shield and exceeding great reward.” <sup>76</sup> “As great a good is made over to them as they can desire or conceive of; and is made as sure as they can desire: therefore they have reason to put their hearts at rest, and be at peace in their minds.

Besides, he has bequeathed peace to the souls of his people, as he has procured for them and made over to them the spirit of grace and true holiness; which has a natural tendency to the peace and quietness of the soul. It implies a discovery and relish of a suitable and sufficient good. It brings a person into a view of divine beauty, and to a relish of that good which is a man’s proper happiness; and so it brings the soul to its true centre. The soul by his means is brought to rest, and ceases from restlessly inquiring, as others do, who will show us any good; and wandering to and fro, like lost sheep seeking rest, and finding none. The soul hath found him who is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, and sits down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet unto his taste. [Cant. ii. 2.](#) And thus that saying of Christ is fulfilled, [John iv. 14.](#) “Whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.” And besides, true grace naturally tends to peace and quietness, as it settles things in the soul in their due order, sets reason on the throne, and subjects the senses and affections to its government, which before were uppermost. Grace tends to tranquillity as it mortifies tumultuous desires and passions, subdues the eager and insatiable appetites of the sensual nature and greediness after the vanities of the world. It mortifies such principles as hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, envyings, and the like, which are a continual source of inward uneasiness and perturbation; and supplies those sweet,

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75 [Heb. vi. 18.](#)

76 [Gen. xv. 1](#) loosely quoted.

calming, and quieting principles of humility, meekness, resignation, patience, gentleness, forgiveness, and sweet reliance on God. It also tends to peace, as it fixes the aim of the soul to a certain end; so that the soul is no longer distracted and drawn by opposite ends to be sought, and opposite portions to be obtained, and many masters of contrary wills and commands to be served; but the heart is fixed in the choice of one certain, sufficient, and unfailing good: and the soul's aim at this, and hope of it, is like an anchor that keeps it steadfast, that it should no more be driven to and fro by every wind.

2. This peace which Christ has left as a legacy to his true followers, is his peace. It is the peace which himself enjoys. This is what I take to be principally intended in the expression. It is the peace that he enjoyed while on earth, in his state of humiliation. Though he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and was every where hated and persecuted by men and devils, and had no place of rest in this world; yet in God, his Father, he had peace. We read of his rejoicing in spirit, [Luke x. 21](#). So Christ's true disciples, though in the world they have tribulation, yet in God have peace.

When Christ had finished his labours and sufferings, had risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, he entered into his rest, a state of most blessed, perfect, and everlasting peace: delivered by his own sufferings from our imputed guilt, acquitted and justified of the Father on his resurrection. Having obtained a perfect victory over all his enemies, he was received of his Father into heaven, the rest which he had prepared for him, there to enjoy his heart's desire fully and perfectly to all eternity. And then were those words in the [six first verses of the 21st Psalm](#), which have respect to Christ, fulfilled. This peace and rest of the Messiah is exceeding glorious. [Isa. xi. 10](#). "And his rest shall be glorious." This rest is what Christ has procured, not only for himself, but also his people, by his death; and he has bequeathed it to them, that they may enjoy it with him, imperfectly in this, and perfectly and eternally in another, world.

That peace, which has been described, and which believers enjoy, is a participation of the peace which their glorious Lord and Master himself enjoys, by virtue of the same blood by which Christ himself has entered into rest. It is in a participation of this same justification; for believers are justified with Christ. As he was justified when he rose from the dead, and as he was made free from our guilt, which he had as our surety, so believers are justified in him and through him; as being accepted of God in the same righteousness. It is in the favour of the same God and heavenly Father that they enjoy peace. "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." It is in a participation of the same Spirit; for believers have the Spirit of Christ. He had the Spirit given to him not by measure, and of his fulness do they all receive, and grace for grace. As the oil poured on the head of Aaron went down to the skirts of his garments, so the Spirit poured on Christ, the head, descends to all his members. It is as partaking of the same grace of the Spirit that believers enjoy this peace; [John i. 16](#).

It is as being united to Christ, and living by a participation of his life, as a branch lives by the life of the vine. It is as partaking of the same love of God; [John xvii. 26](#). “That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.”—It is as having a part with him in his victory over the same enemies: and also as having an interest in the same kind of eternal rest and peace. [Eph. ii. 5, 6](#). “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,—and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places.”

III. This legacy of Christ to his true disciples is very different from all that the men of this world ever leave to their children when they die. The men of this world, many of them, when they come to die, have great estates to bequeath to their children, an abundance of the good things of this world, large tracts of ground, perhaps in a fruitful soil, covered with flocks and herds. They sometimes leave to their children stately mansions, and vast treasures of silver, gold, jewels, and precious things, fetched from both the Indies, and from every side of the globe. They leave them wherewith to live in much state and magnificence, and make a great show among men, to fare very sumptuously, and swim in worldly pleasures. Some have crowns, sceptres, and palaces, and great monarchies to leave to their heirs. But none of these things are to be compared to that blessed peace of Christ which he has bequeathed to his true followers. These things are such as God commonly in his providence gives his worst enemies, those whom he hates and despises most. But Christ’s peace is a precious benefit, which he reserves for his peculiar favourites. These worldly things, even the best of them, that the men and princes of the world leave for their children, are things which God in his providence throws out to those whom he looks on as dogs; out Christ’s peace is the bread of his children. All these earthly things are but empty shadows, which, however men set their hearts upon them, are not bread, and never can satisfy their souls; but this peace of Christ is a truly substantial satisfying food. [Isa. lv. 2](#). None of those things, if men have them to the best advantage, and in ever so great abundance, can give true peace and rest to the soul, as is abundantly manifest not only in reason, but experience; it being found in all ages, that those who have the most of them, have commonly the least quietness of mind. It is true, there may be a kind of quietness, a false peace, in the enjoyment of worldly things; men may bless their souls, and think themselves the only happy persons, and despise others: may say to their souls, as the rich man did, [Luke xii. 19](#). “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” But Christ’s peace, which he gives to his true disciples, differs from this peace that men may have in the enjoyments of the world, in the following respects:

1. Christ’s peace is a reasonable peace and rest of soul; it is what has its foundation in light and knowledge, in the proper exercises of reason, and a right view of things; whereas the peace of the world is founded in blindness and delusion. The peace that the people of Christ have, arises from their having their eyes open, and seeing things as they are. The more they consider, and the more they know of the truth and reality of things—the more

they know what is true concerning themselves, the state and condition they are in; the more they know of God, and what manner of being he is; the more certain they are of another world and future judgment, and of the truth of God's threatening and promises; the more their consciences are awakened and enlightened, and the brighter and the more searching the light—the more is their peace established. Whereas, on the contrary, the peace that the men of the world have in their worldly enjoyments can subsist no otherwise than by their being kept in ignorance. They must be blindfolded and deceived, otherwise they can have no peace: do but let light in upon their consciences, so that they may look about them and see what they are, and what circumstances they are in, and it will at once destroy all their quietness and comfort. Their peace can live no where but in the dark. Light turns their ease into torment. The more they know what is true concerning God and concerning themselves, the more they are sensible of the truth concerning those enjoyments which they possess; and the more they are sensible what things now are, and what things are like to be hereafter, the more will their calm be turned into a storm. The-worldly man's peace cannot be maintained but by avoiding consideration and reflection. If he allows himself to think, and properly to exercise his reason, it destroys his quietness and comfort. If he would establish his carnal peace, it concerns him to put out the light of his mind, and turn beast as fast as he can. The faculty of reason, if at liberty, proves a mortal enemy to his peace. It concerns him, if he would keep alive his peace, to stupify his mind and deceive himself, and to imagine things to be otherwise than they are. But with respect to the peace which Christ gives, reason is its great friend. The more this faculty is exercised, the more it is established. The more they consider and view things with truth and exactness, the firmer is their comfort and the higher their joy. How vast a difference then is there between the peace of a Christian and the worldling! How miserable are they who cannot enjoy peace any otherwise than by hiding their eyes from the light, and confining themselves to darkness. Their peace is stupidity; it is as the ease that a man has who has taken a dose of stupifying poison, the ease and pleasure that a drunkard may have in a house on fire over his head, or the joy of a distracted man in thinking that he is a king, though a miserable wretch confined in bedlam! Whereas the peace that Christ gives his true disciples is the light of life, something of the tranquillity of heaven, the peace of the celestial paradise that has the glory of God to lighten it.

2. Christ's peace is a virtuous and holy peace. The peace that the men of the world enjoy is vicious: it is vile, depraves and debases the mind, and makes men brutish. But the peace that the saints enjoy in Christ, is not only their comfort, but it is a part of their beauty and dignity. The Christian tranquillity, rest, and joy of real saints, are not only unspeakable privileges, but they are virtues and graces of God's Spirit, wherein his image partly consists. This peace has its source in those principles which are in the highest degree virtuous and amiable, such as poverty of spirit, holy resignation, trust in God, divine love, meekness, and charity; the exercise of the blessed fruits of the Spirit, [Gal. v. 22, 23](#).



3. This peace greatly differs from that which is enjoyed by the men of the world, with regard to its exquisite sweetness. It is a peace so much above all that natural men enjoy in worldly things, that it surpasses their understanding and conception. [Phil. iv. 7](#). It is exquisitely sweet and secure, because it has so firm a foundation, the everlasting rock that never can be moved; because perfectly agreeable to reason; because it rises from holy and divine principles, that, as they are the virtue, so are they the proper happiness of men; and because the greatness of the objective good that the saints enjoy, is no other than the infinite bounty and fulness of that God who is the fountain of all good. The fulness and perfection of that provision that is made in Christ and the new covenant, is a foundation laid for the saints' perfect peace; and this hereafter they shall actually enjoy. And though their peace is not now perfect, it is not owing to any defect in the provision made, but to their own imperfection, sin, and darkness. As yet, they partly cleave to the world, and seek peace from thence, and do not perfectly cleave to Christ. But the more they do so, and the more they see of the provision made, and accept of it, and cleave to that alone, the nearer are they brought to perfect tranquillity. [Isa xxvi. 5](#).

4. The peace of the Christian infinitely differs from that of the worldling, in that it is unfailing and eternal. That peace which carnal men have in the things of the world, is, according to the foundation upon which it is built, of short continuance; like the comfort of a dream, [1 John ii. 1](#) [Cor. vii. 31](#). These things, the best and most durable of them, are like bubbles on the face of the water; they vanish in a moment. [Hos. x. 7](#).—But the foundation of the Christian's peace is everlasting; it is what no time, no change, can destroy. It will remain when the body dies: it will remain when the mountains depart and the hills shall be removed, and when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. The fountain of his comfort shall never be diminished, and the stream shall never be dried. His comfort and joy is a living spring in the soul, a well of water springing up to everlasting life.

APPLICATION.

The use that I would make of this doctrine, is to improve it as an inducement unto all to forsake the world, no longer seeking peace and rest in its vanities, and to cleave to Christ and follow him. Happiness and rest are what all men pursue. But the things of the world, wherein most men seek it, can never afford it; they are labouring and spending themselves in vain. But Christ invites you to come to him, and offers you this peace, which he gives his true followers, and that so much excels all that the world can afford, [Isa. lv. 2, 3](#).

You that have hitherto spent your time in the pursuit of satisfaction in the profit or glory of the world, or in the pleasures and vanities of youth, have this day an offer of that excellent and everlasting peace and blessedness, which Christ has purchased with the price of his own blood. As long as you continue to reject those offers and invitations of Christ, and continue in a Christless condition, you never will enjoy any true peace or comfort; but will be like the prodigal, that in vain endeavoured to be satisfied with the husks that the

swine did eat. The wrath of God will abide upon, and misery will attend you, wherever you go, which you never will be able to escape. Christ gives peace to the most sinful and miserable that come to him. He heals the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. But it is impossible that they should have peace, while they continue in their sins. [Isaiah lviii. 19, 20, 21.](#) There is no peace between God and them; for, as they have the guilt of sin remaining in their souls, and are under its dominion, so God's indignation continually burns against them, and therefore they travail in pain all their days. While you continue in such a state, you live in dreadful uncertainty what will become of you, and in continual danger. When you are in the enjoyment of things most pleasing to you, where your heart is best suited, and most cheerful, yet you are in a slate of condemnation. You hang over the infernal pit, with the sword of divine vengeance hanging over your head, having no security one moment from utter and remediless destruction. What reasonable peace can any one enjoy in such a state as this. What though you clothe him in gorgeous apparel, or set him on a throne, or at a prince's table, and feed him with the rarest dainties the earth affords? How miserable is the ease and cheerfulness that such have! what a poor kind of comfort and joy is it that such take in their wealth and pleasures for a moment, while they are the prisoners of divine justice, and wretched captives of the devil! They have none to befriend them, being without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world!

I invite you now to a better portion. There are better things provided for the sinful, miserable children of men. There is a surer comfort and more durable peace: comfort that you may enjoy in a state of safety, and on a sure foundation: a peace and rest that you may enjoy with reason, and with your eyes open. You may have all your sins forgiven, your greatest and most aggravated transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and buried as in the depths of the sea, that they may never be found more. And being not only forgiven, but accepted to favour, you become the objects of God's complacency and delight; being taken into God's family and made his children, you may have good evidence that your names were written on the heart of Christ before the world was made, and that you have an interest in that covenant of grace that is well ordered in all things and sure; wherein is promised no less than life and immortality, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, a crown of glory that fades not away. Being in such circumstances, nothing shall be able to prevent your being happy to all eternity; having for the foundation of your hope, that love of God which is from eternity to eternity; and his promise and oath, and his omnipotent power, things infinitely firmer than mountains of brass. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, yea, the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, yet these things will never be abolished.

In such a state as this you will have a foundation of peace and rest through all changes, and in times of the greatest uproar and outward calamity be defended from all storms, and

dwell above the floods; [Psalm xxxii. 6, 7](#). And you shall be at peace with every thing, and God will make all his creatures throughout all parts of his dominion, to befriend you; [Job v. 19-24](#). You need not be afraid of any thing that your enemies can do unto you, [Psal. iii. 5, 6](#). Those things that now are most terrible to you, *viz.* death, judgment, and eternity, will then be most comfortable, the most sweet and pleasant objects of your contemplation, at least there will be reason that they should be so.

Hearken therefore to the friendly counsel that is given you this day, turn your feet into the way of peace, forsake the foolish and live; forsake those things which are no other than the devil's baits, and seek after this excellent peace and rest of Jesus Christ, that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Taste and see; never was any disappointed that made a trial. [Prov. xxiv. 13,14](#). You will not only find those spiritual comforts that Christ offers you to be of a surpassing sweetness for the present, but they will be to your soul as the dawning light that shines more and more to the perfect day; and the issue of all will be your arrival in heaven, that land of rest, those regions of everlasting joy, where your peace and happiness will be perfect, without the least mixture of trouble or affliction, and never be interrupted nor have an end.

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S E R M O N X I I I . <sup>77</sup>

THE PERPETUITY AND CHANGE OF THE SABBATH.

1 COR. xvi. 1, 2.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

WE find in the New Testament often mentioned a certain collection, which was made by the Grecian churches, for the brethren in Judea, who were reduced to pinching want by a dearth which then prevailed, and was the heavier upon them by reason of their circumstances, they having been from the beginning oppressed and persecuted by the unbelieving Jews. This collection or contribution is twice mentioned in the [Acts. chap. xi. 28-30.](#) and [xxiv. 17.](#) It is also noticed in several of the epistles; as [Rom. xv. 26.](#) and [Gal. ii. 10.](#) But it is most largely insisted on, in these two epistles to the Corinthians; in this first epistle, [chap. xvi.](#) and in the second epistle, [chap. viii. and ix.](#)—The apostle begins the directions, which in this place he delivers concerning this matter, with the words of the text;—wherein we may observe,

1. What is the thing to be done concerning which the apostle gives them direction,—the exercise and manifestation of their charity towards their brethren, by communicating to them, for the supply of their wants; which was by Christ and his apostles often insisted on, as one main duty of the Christian religion, and is expressly declared to be so by the apostle James, [chap. i. 27.](#) “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.”

2. We may observe the time on which the apostle directs that this should be done, *viz.* “on the first day of the week.” By the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he insists upon it, that it be done on such a particular day of the week, as if no other day would do so well as that, or were so proper and fit a time for such a Work.—Thus, although the inspired apostle was not for making that distinction of days in gospel times, which the Jews made, as appears by [Gal. iv. 10.](#) “Ye observe days, and months,” &c. yet, here he gives the preference to one day of the week, before any other, for the performance of a certain great duty of Christianity.

3. It may be observed, that the apostle had given to other churches, that were concerned in the same duty, to do it on the first day of the week: <sup>78</sup> “As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.” Whence we may learn, that it was nothing peculiar in the circumstances of the Christians at Corinth, which was the reason why the Holy Ghost

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77 N O T D A T E D .

78 1 Cor. xvi. 1.



insisted that they should perform this duty on this day of the week. The apostle had given the like orders to the churches of Galatia.

Now Galatia was far distant from Corinth; the sea parted them, and there were several other countries between them. Therefore it cannot be thought that the Holy Ghost directs them to this time upon any secular account, having respect to some particular circumstances of the people in that city, but upon a religious account. In giving the preference to this day for such work, before any other day, he has respect to something which reached all Christians throughout the wide world.

And by other passages of the New Testament, we learn that the case was the same as to other exercises of religion; and that the first day of the week was preferred before any other day, in churches immediately under the care of the apostles, for an attendance on the exercises of religion in general. [Acts xx. 7.](#) “Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.”—It seems by these things to have been among the primitive Christians in the apostles’ days, with respect to the first day of the week, as it was among the Jews, with respect to the seventh.

We are taught by Christ, that the doing of alms and showing of mercy are proper works for the sabbath-day. When the Pharisees found fault with Christ for suffering his disciples to pluck the ears of corn, and eat on the sabbath, Christ corrects them with that saying, “I will have mercy and not sacrifice;” [Matt. xii. 7.](#) And Christ teaches that works of mercy are proper to be done on the sabbath, [Luke xiii. 15, 16.](#) and [xiv. 5.](#)—These works used to be done on sacred festivals and days of rejoicing, under the Old Testament, as in Nehemiah’s and Esther’s time; [Neh. viii. 10.](#) and [Esth. ix. 19, 22.](#)—And Josephus and Philo, two very noted Jews, who wrote not long after Christ’s time, give an account that it was the manner among the Jews on the sabbath, to make collections for sacred and pious uses.

### DOCTRINE.

It is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be especially set apart among Christians, for religious exercises and duties.

That this is the doctrine which the Holy Ghost intended to teach us, by this and some other passages of the New Testament, I hope will appear plainly by the sequel. This is a doctrine that we have been generally brought up in by the instructions and examples of our ancestors; and it has been the general profession of the Christian world, that this day ought to be religiously observed and distinguished from other days of the week. However, some deny it. Some refuse to take notice of the day, as different from other days. Others own, that it is a laudable custom of the Christian church, into which she fell by agreement, and by appointment of her ordinary rulers, to set apart this day for public worship. But they deny any other original to such an observation of the day, than prudential human appointment—Others religiously observe the Jewish sabbath, as of perpetual obligation, and that

we want a foundation for determining that that is abrogated, and another day of the week is appointed in the room of the seventh.

All these classes of men say, that there is no clear revelation that it is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be observed as a day to be set apart for religious exercises, in the room of the ancient sabbath; which there ought to be in order to the observation of it by the Christian church, as a divine institution. They say, that we ought not to go upon the tradition of past ages, or upon uncertain and far-fetched inferences from some passages of the history of the New Testament, or upon some obscure and uncertain hints in the apostolic writings; but that we ought to expect a plain institution; which, they say, we may conclude God would have given us, if he had designed that the whole Christian church, in all ages, should observe another day of the week for a holy sabbath, than that which was appointed of old by plain and positive institution.

So for it is undoubtedly true, that if this be the mind and will of God, he hath not left the matter to human tradition; but hath so revealed his mind about it, in his word, that there is to be found good and substantial evidence that it is his mind: and doubtless, the revelation is plain enough for them that have ears to hear; that is, for them that will justly exercise their understandings about what God says to them. No Christian, therefore, should rest till he has satisfactorily discovered the mind of God in this matter. If the Christian sabbath be of divine institution, it is doubtless of great importance to religion that it be well kept; and therefore, that every Christian be well acquainted with the institution.

If men take it only upon trust, and keep the first day of the week because their parents taught them so, or because they see others do it, they will never be likely to keep it so conscientiously and strictly, as if they had been convinced by seeing for themselves, that there are good grounds in the word of God for their practice. Unless they do see thus for themselves, whenever they are negligent in sanctifying the sabbath, or are guilty of profaning it, their consciences will not have that advantage to smite them for it, as otherwise they would.—And those who have a sincere desire to obey God in all things, will keep the sabbath more carefully and more cheerfully, if they have seen and been convinced that therein they do what is according to the will and command of God, and what is acceptable to him; and will also have a great deal more comfort in the reflection upon their having carefully and painfully kept the sabbath.

Therefore, I design now, by the help of God, to show, that it is sufficiently revealed in the Scriptures, to be the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be distinguished in the Christian church from other days of the week, as a sabbath, to be devoted to religious exercises.

In order to this, I shall here premise, that the mind and will of God, concerning any duty to be performed by us, may be sufficiently revealed in his word, without a particular precept in so many express terms, enjoining it. The human understanding is the ear to which

the word of God is spoken; and if it be so spoken, that that ear may plainly hear it, it is enough. God is sovereign as to the manner of speaking his mind, whether he will speak it in express terms, or whether he will speak it by saying several other things which imply it, and from which we may, by comparing them together, plainly perceive it. If the mind of God be but revealed, if there be but sufficient means for the communication of his mind to our minds, that is sufficient; whether we hear so many express words with our ears, or see them in writing with our eyes; or whether we see the thing that he would signify to us, by the eye of reason and understanding.

Who can positively say, that if it had been the mind of God, that we should keep the first day of the week, he would have commanded it in express terms, as he did the observation of the seventh day of old? Indeed, if God had so made our faculties, that we were not capable of receiving a revelation of his mind in any other way; then there would have been some reason to say so. But God hath given us such understandings, that we are capable of receiving a revelation, when made in another manner. And if God deals with us agreeably to our natures, and in a way suitable to our capacities, it is enough. If God discovers his mind in any way whatsoever, provided it be according to our faculties, we are obliged to obedience; and God may expect our notice and observance of his revelation, in the same manner as if he had revealed it in express terms.

I shall speak upon this subject under these two general propositions.

1. It is sufficiently clear, that it is the mind of God, that one day of the week should be devoted to rest, and to religious exercises, throughout all ages and nations.

2. It is sufficiently clear, that under the gospel-dispensation, this day is the first day of the week.

I. Prop. It is sufficiently clear, that it is the mind of God, that one day of the week should be devoted to rest, and to religious exercises, throughout all ages and nations; and not only among the ancient Israelites, till Christ came, but even in these gospel times, and among all nations professing Christianity.

1. From the consideration of the nature and state of mankind in this world, it is most consonant to human reason, that certain fixed parts of time should be set apart, to be spent by the church wholly in religious exercises, and in the duties of divine worship. It is a duty incumbent on all mankind, in all ages alike, to worship and serve God. His service should be our great business. It becomes us to worship him with the greatest devotion and engagedness of mind; and therefore to put ourselves, at proper times, in such circumstances, as will most contribute to render our minds entirely devoted to this work, without being diverted or interrupted by other things.

The state of mankind in this world is such, that we are called to concern ourselves in secular business and affairs, which will necessarily, in a considerable degree, take up the thoughts and engage the attention of the mind. However some particular persons may be

in circumstances more free and disengaged; yet the state of mankind is such, that the bulk of them, in all ages and nations, are called ordinarily to exercise their thoughts about secular affairs, and to follow worldly business, which, in its own nature, is remote from the solemn duties of religion.

It is therefore most meet and suitable, that certain times should be set apart, upon which men should be required to throw by all other concerns, that their minds may be the more freely and entirely engaged in spiritual exercises, in the duties of religion, and in the immediate worship of God; and that their minds being disengaged from common concerns, their religion may not be mixed with them.

It is also suitable that these times should be fixed and settled, that the church may agree therein, and that they should be the same for all, that men may not interrupt one another; but may rather assist one another by mutual example: for example has a great influence in such cases. If there be a time set apart for public rejoicing, and there be a general manifestation of joy, the general example seems to inspire men with a spirit of joy; one kindles another. So, if it be a time of mourning, and there be general appearances and manifestations of sorrow, it naturally affects the mind, it disposes it to depression, it casts a doom upon it, and does as it were dull and deaden the spirits.—So, if a certain time be set apart as holy time, for general devotion, and solemn religious exercises, a general example tends to render the spirit serious and solemn.

2. Without doubt, one proportion of time is better and fitter than another for this purpose. One proportion is more suitable to the state of mankind, and will have a greater tendency to answer the ends of such times, than another. The times may be too far asunder. I think human reason is sufficient to discover, that it would be too seldom for the purposes of such solemn times, that they should be but once a year. So, I conclude, nobody will deny, but that such times may be too near together to agree with the state and necessary affairs of mankind.

Therefore, there can be no difficulty in allowing, that some certain proportion of time, whether we can exactly discover it or not, is really fittest and best—considering the end for which such times are kept, and the condition, circumstances, and necessary affairs of men; and considering what the state of man is, taking one age and nation with another—more convenient and suitable than any other; which God may know and exactly determine, though we, by reason of the scantiness of our understandings, cannot.

As a certain frequency of the returns of these times may be more suitable than any other, so one length or continuance of the times themselves may be fitter than another, to answer the purposes of such times. If such times, when they come, were to last but an hour, it would not well answer the end; for then worldly things would crowd too nearly upon sacred exercises, and there would not be that opportunity to get the mind so thoroughly free and disengaged from other, things, as there would be if the times were longer. Being so

short, sacred and profane things would be as it were mixed together. Therefore, a certain distance between these times, and a certain continuance of them when they come, is more proper than others; which God knows and is able to determine, though perhaps we cannot.

3. It is unreasonable to suppose any other, than that God's working six days, and resting the seventh, and blessing and hallowing it, was to be of general use in determining this matter, and that it was written, that the practice of mankind in general might some way or other be regulated by it. What could be the meaning of God's resting the seventh day, and hallowing and blessing it, which he did, before the giving of the fourth commandment, unless he hallowed and blessed it with respect to mankind? For he did not bless and sanctify it with respect to himself, or that he within himself might observe it: as that is most absurd. And it is unreasonable to suppose that he hallowed it only with respect to the Jews, a particular nation, which rose up above two thousand years after.

So much therefore must be intended by it, that it was his mind, that mankind should, after his example, work six days, and then rest, and hallow or sanctify the next following; and that they should sanctify every seventh day, or that the space between rest and rest, one hallowed time and another, among his creatures here upon earth, should be six days.—So that it hence appears to be the mind and will of God, that not only the Jews, but men in all nations and ages, should sanctify one day in seven: which is the thing we are endeavouring to prove.

4. The mind of God in this matter is clearly revealed in the fourth commandment. The will of God is there revealed, not only that the Israelitish nation, but that all nations, should keep every seventh day holy; or, which is the same thing, one day after every sixth. This command, as well as the rest, is doubtless everlasting and of perpetual obligation, at least, as to the substance of it, as is intimated by its being engraven on the tables of stone. Nor is it to be thought that Christ ever abolished any command of the ten; but that there is the complete number ten yet, and will lie to the end of the world.

Some say, that the fourth command is perpetual, but not in its literal sense; not as designing any particular proportion of time to be set apart and devoted to literal rest and religious exercises. They say, that it stands in force only in a mystical sense, *viz.* as that weekly rest of the Jews typified spiritual rest in the Christian church; and that we under the gospel are not to make any distinction of one day from another, but are to keep all time holy, doing every thing in a spiritual manner.

But this is an absurd way of interpreting the command, as it refers to Christians. For if the command be so far abolished, it is entirely abolished. For it is the very design of the command, to fix the time of worship. The first command fixes the object, the second the means, the third the manner, the fourth the time. And, if it stands in force now only as signifying a spiritual, Christian rest, and holy behaviour at all times, it doth not remain as one of the ten commands, but as a summary of all the commands.

The main objection against the perpetuity of this command is, that the duty required is not moral. Those laws whose obligation arises from the nature of things, and from the general state and nature of mankind, as well as from God's positive revealed will, are called moral laws. Others, whose obligation depends merely upon God's positive and arbitrary institution, are not moral; such as the ceremonial laws, and the precepts of the gospel, about the two sacraments. Now, the objectors say, they will allow all that is moral in the decalogue to be of perpetual obligation; but this command, they say, is not moral.

But this objection is weak and insufficient for the purpose for which it is brought, or to prove that the fourth command, as to the substance of it, is not of perpetual obligation. For,

(1.) If it should be allowed that there is no morality belonging to the command, and that the duty required is founded merely on arbitrary institution, it cannot therefore be certainly concluded that the command is not perpetual. We know that there may be commands in force under the gospel, and to the end of the world, which are not moral: such are the institutions of the two sacraments. And why may there not be positive commands in force in all ages of the church? If positive, arbitrary institutions are in force in gospel-times, what is there which concludes that no positive precept given before the times of the gospel can yet continue in force? But,

(2.) As we have observed already, the thing in general, that there should be certain fixed parts of time set apart to be devoted to religious exercises, is founded in the fitness of the thing, arising from the nature of things, and the nature and universal state of mankind. Therefore, there is as much reason that there should be a command of perpetual and universal obligation about this, as about any other duty whatsoever. For if the thing in general, that there be a time fixed, be founded in the nature of things, there is consequent upon it a necessity, that the time be limited by a command; for there must be a proportion of time fixed, or else the general moral duty cannot be observed.

(3.) The particular determination of the proportion of time in the fourth commandment, is also founded in the nature of things, only our understandings are not sufficient absolutely to determine it of themselves. We have observed already, that without doubt one proportion of time is in itself fitter than another, and a certain continuance of time fitter than any other, considering the universal state and nature of mankind, which God may see, though our understandings are not perfect enough absolutely to determine it. So that the difference between this command and others, doth not lie in this, that other commands are founded in the fitness of the things themselves, arising from the universal state and nature of mankind, and this not; but, only that the fitness of other commands is more obvious to the understandings of men, and they might have seen it of themselves; but this could not be precisely discovered and positively determined without the assistance of revelation.

So that the command of God, that every seventh day should be devoted to religious exercises, is founded in the universal state and nature of mankind, as well as other commands;

only man's reason is not sufficient, without divine direction, so exactly to determine it: though perhaps man's reason is sufficient to determine, that it ought not to be much seldomer, nor much oftener, than once in seven days.

5. God appears in his word laying abundantly more weight on this precept concerning the sabbath, than on any precept of the ceremonial law. It is in the decalogue, one of the ten commands, which were delivered by God with an audible voice. It was written with his own finger on the tables of stone in the mount, and was appointed afterwards to be written on the tables which Moses made. The keeping of the weekly sabbath is spoken of by the prophets, as that wherein consists a great part or holiness of life; and is inserted among moral duties, *Isa. lviii. 13, 14.* "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

6. It is foretold, that this command should be observed in gospel-times; as in at the beginning, where the due observance of the sabbath is spoken of as a great part of holiness of life, and is placed among moral duties. It is also mentioned as a duty that should be most acceptable to God from his people, even where the prophet is speaking of gospel-times; as in the foregoing chapter, and in the first verse of this chapter. And, in the third and fourth verses, the prophet is speaking of the abolition of the ceremonial law in gospel-times, and particularly of that law, which forbids eunuchs to come into the congregation of the Lord. Yet, here the man is pronounced blessed, who keeps the sabbath from polluting it, *ver. 2.* And even in the very sentence where the eunuchs are spoken of as being free from the ceremonial law, they are spoken of as being yet under obligation to keep the sabbath, and actually keeping it, as that which God lays great weight upon: "For thus saith the Lord, unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off<sup>79</sup>."

Besides, the strangers spoken of in the sixth and seventh verses, are the Gentiles, that should be called in the times of the gospel, as is evident by the *last clause in the seventh, and by the eighth verse*: "For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides those that are gathered unto him." Yet it is represented here as their duty to keep the sabbath: "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love

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79 *Isa. lvi. 4*

the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.”

7. A further argument for the perpetuity of the sabbath, we have in [Matt. xxiv. 20](#). “Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day.” Christ is here speaking of the flight of the apostles and other Christians out of Jerusalem and Judea, just before their final destruction, as is manifest by the whole context, and especially by the [16th verse](#): “Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.” But this final destruction of Jerusalem was after the dissolution of the Jewish constitution, and after the Christian dispensation was fully set up. Yet, it is plainly implied in these words of our Lord, that even then Christians were bound to a strict observation of the sabbath.

Thus I have shown, that it is the will of God, that every seventh day be devoted to rest and to religious exercises.

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S E R M O N   X I V .

THE PERPETUITY AND CHANGE OF THE SABBATH.

1 COR. xvi. 1, 2.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

The *doctrine* founded on these words was this, that it is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be especially set apart among Christians for religious exercises and duties.

I proposed to discourse upon this doctrine under two propositions; and having already, under the first, endeavoured to prove, That one day of the week is, throughout all ages, to be devoted to religious exercises; I proceed now to the

II. Prop. That it is the will of God, that under the gospel dispensation, or in the Christian church, this day should be the first day of the week.

In order to the confirmation of this, let the following things be considered.

1. The words of the fourth commandment afford no objection against this being the day that should be the sabbath, any more than against any other day. That this day, which, according to the Jewish reckoning, is the first of the week, should be kept as a sabbath, is no more opposite to any sentence or word of the fourth command, than that the seventh of the week should be the day. The words of the fourth command do not determine which day of the week we should keep as a sabbath; they merely determine, that we should rest and keep as a sabbath every seventh day, or one day after every six. It says, "Six days thou shalt labour, and the seventh thou shalt rest; which implies no more, than that after six days of labour, we shall, upon the next to the sixth, rest and keep it holy. And this we are obliged to do for ever. But the words no way determine where those six days shall begin, and so where the rest or sabbath shall fall. There is no direction in the fourth command how to reckon the time, *i. e.* where to begin and end it; but that is supposed to be determined otherwise.

The Jews did not know, by the fourth command, where to begin their six days, and on which particular day to rest; this was determined by another precept. The fourth command does indeed suppose a particular day appointed; but it does not appoint any. It requires us to rest and keep holy a seventh day, one after every six of labour, which particular day God either had or should appoint. The particular day was determined for that nation in another place, *viz.* in [Exod. xvi. 23, 25, 26](#). "And he said unto them, this is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake, to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And Moses said, Eat that today; for to-day is a sabbath unto the

Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none." This is the first place where we have any mention made of the sabbath, from the first sabbath on which God rested.

It seems that the Israelites, in the time of their bondage in Egypt, had lost the true reckoning of time by the days of the week, reckoning from the first day of the creation. They were slaves, and in cruel bondage, and had in a great measure forgotten the true religion: for we are told, that they served the gods of Egypt. And it is not to be supposed, that the Egyptians would suffer their slaves to rest from their work every seventh day. Now, they having remained in bondage for so long a time, had probably lost the weekly reckoning; therefore, when God had brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness, he made known to them the sabbath, on the occasion and in the manner recorded in the text just now quoted. Hence, we read in Nehemiah, that when God had led the children of Israel out of Egypt, &c. he made known unto them his holy sabbath; [Neh. ix. 14.](#) "And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath." To the same effect, we read in [Ezek. xx. 10, 12.](#) "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. Moreover also, I gave them my sabbaths."

But they never would have known where the particular day would have fallen by the fourth command. Indeed, the fourth command, as it was spoken to the Jews, did refer to their Jewish sabbath. But that doth not prove, that the day was determined and appointed by it. The precept in the fourth command is to be taken generally of such a seventh day as God should appoint, or had appointed. And because such a particular day had been already appointed for the Jewish church; therefore, as it was spoken to them, it did refer to that particular day. But this doth not prove, but that the same words refer to another appointed seventh day, now in the Christian church. The words of the fourth command may oblige the church, under different dispensations, to observe different appointed seventh days, as well as the fifth command may oblige different persons to honour different fathers and mothers.

The Christian sabbath, in the sense of the fourth command, is as much the seventh day, as the Jewish sabbath; because it is kept after six days of labour as well as that; it is the seventh, reckoning from the beginning of our first working-day, as well as that was the seventh from the beginning of their first working day. All the difference is, that the seven days formerly began from the day after God's rest from the creation, and now they begin the day after that. It is no matter by what names the days are called: if our nation had, for instance, called Wednesday the first of the week, it would have been all one as to this argument.

Therefore, by the institution of the Christian sabbath, there is no change from the fourth command; but the change is from another law, which determined the beginning and ending of their working days. So that those words of the fourth command, *viz.* "Six days shalt thou



labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; <sup>80</sup>” afford no objection against that which is called the Christian sabbath; for these words remain in full force. Neither does any just objection arise from the words following, *viz.* <sup>81</sup> “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it.” These words are not made insignificant to Christians, by the institution of the Christian sabbath: they still remain in their full force as to that which is principally intended by them. They were designed to give us a reason why we are to work but six days at a time, and then rest on the seventh, because God hath set us the example. And taken so, they remain still in as much force as ever they were. This is the reason still, as much as ever it was, why we may work but six days at a time. What is the reason that Christians rest every seventh, and not every eighth, or every ninth, or tenth day? It is because God worked six days and rested the seventh.

It is true, these words did carry something further in their meaning, as they were spoken to the Jews, and to the church before the coming of Christ: it was then also intended by them, that the seventh day was to be kept in commemoration of the work of creation. But this is no objection to the supposition, that the words, as they relate to us, do not import all that they did, as they related to the Jews. For there are other words which were written upon those tables of stone with the ten commandments, which are known and allowed not to be of the same import, as they relate to us, and as they related to the Jews, *viz.* these words, in the preface to the ten commands, “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”—These words were written on the tables of stone with the rest, and are spoken to us, as well as to the Jews: they are spoken to all to whom the commandments themselves are spoken; for they are spoken as an enforcement of the commandments. But they do not now remain in all the signification which they had, as they respected the Jews. For we never were brought out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, except in a mystical sense.—The same may be said of those words which are inserted in the commandments themselves, “And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day.” So that all the arguments of those who are against the Christian sabbath, drawn from the fourth command, which are all their strength, come to nothing.

2. That the ancient church was commanded to keep a seventh day in commemoration of the work of creation, is an argument for the keeping of a weekly sabbath in commemoration of the work of redemption, and not any reason against it.

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80 [Deut. v. 13, 14.](#)

81 [Exod. xx. 11.](#)

We read in Scripture of two creations, the old and the new: and these words of the fourth command are to be taken as of the same force to those who belong to the new creation, with respect to that new creation, as they were to those who belonged to the old creation, with respect to that. We read, That “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” and the church of old were to commemorate that work. But when God creates a new heaven and a new earth, those that belong to this new heaven and new earth, by a like reason, are to commemorate the creation of their heaven and earth.

The Scriptures teach us to look upon the old creation as destroyed, and as it were annihilated by sin; or, as being reduced to a chaos again, without form and void, as it was at first. “They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void: and the heavens, and they had no light!” *i. e.* they were reduced to the same-state in which they were at first; the earth was without form and void, and there was no light, but darkness was upon the face of the deep.

The Scriptures further teach us to call the gospel-restoration and redemption, a creation of a new heaven and a new earth; “For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.” And [Isa li. 16.](#) “And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.” And chap. [lxvi. 22.](#) “For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make,” &c—In these places we are not only told of a new creation, or new heavens and a new earth, but we are told what is meant by it, *viz.* The gospel renovation, the making of Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy; saying unto Zion, “Thou art my people,” &c. The prophet, in all these places, is prophesying of the gospel-redemption.

The gospel-state is every where spoken of as a renewed state of things, wherein old things are passed away, and all things become new: we are said to be created unto Christ Jesus unto good works: all things are restored and reconciled whether in heaven or in earth, and God hath caused light to shine out of darkness, as he did at the beginning; and the dissolution of the Jewish state was often spoken of in the Old Testament as the end of the world.—But we who belong to the gospel-church, belong to the new creation; and therefore there seems to be at least as much reason, that we should commemorate the work of this creation, as that the members of the ancient Jewish church should commemorate the work of the old creation.

3. There is another thing which confirms it, that the fourth command teaches God’s resting from the new creation, as well as from the old: which is that the Scriptures expressly speak of the one, its parallel with the other, *i. e.* Christ’s resting from the work of redemption, is expressly spoken of as being parallel with God’s resting from the work of creation. “For

he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”

Now, Christ rested from his works when he rose from the dead, on the first day of the week. When he rose from the dead, then he finished his work of redemption; his humiliation was then at an end; he then rested, and was refreshed. When it is said, “There remaineth a rest to the people of God;” in the original, it is, a sabbatism, or the keeping of a sabbath: and this reason is given for it, “For he that entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.” These three things at least we are taught by these words:

(1.) To look upon Christ’s rest from his work of redemption, as parallel with God’s rest from the work of creation; for they are expressly compared together, as parallel one with the other.

(2.) They are spoken of as parallel, particularly in this respect, *viz.* The relation which they both have to the keeping of a sabbath among God’s people, or with respect to the influence which these two rests have, as to sabbatizing in the church of God: for it is expressly with respect to this that they are compared together. Here is an evident reference to God’s blessing and hallowing the day of his rest from the creation to be a sabbath, and appointing a sabbath of rest in imitation of him. For the apostle is speaking of this, [ver. 4.](#) “For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.” Thus far is evident; whatever the apostle has respect to by this keeping of a sabbath by the people of God, whether it be a weekly sabbatizing on earth, or a sabbatizing in heaven.

(3.) It is evident in these words, that the preference is given to the latter rest, *viz.* The rest of our Saviour from his works, with respect to the influence it should have, or relation it bears, to the sabbatizing of the people of God, now under the gospel, evidently implied in the expression, “There remaineth therefore a sabbatism to the people of God. For he that entered into his rest,” &c- For, in this expression, There remaineth, it is intimated that the old sabbatism appointed in remembrance of God’s rest from the work of creation, doth not remain, but ceases; and that this new rest, in commemoration of Christ’s resting from his works, remains in the room of it.

4. The Holy Ghost hath implicitly told us, that the Sabbath which was instituted in commemoration of the old creation, should not be kept in gospel-times. [Isa. lxxv. 17, 18.](#) There we are told, that when God should create new heavens and a new earth, the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind. If this be so, it is not to be supposed, that we are to keep a seventh part of time, on purpose to remember it, and call it to mind.

Let us understand this which way we will, it will not be well consistent with the keeping of one day in seven, in the gospel-church, principally for the remembrance and calling to mind of the old creation. If the meaning of the place be only this, that the old creation shall

not be remembered nor come into mind in comparison with the new that the new will be so much more remarkable and glorious, will so much more nearly concern us, so much more notice will be taken of it, and it will be thought so much more worthy to be remembered and commemorated, that the other will not be remembered, nor come into mind it is impossible that it should be more to our purpose. For then hereby the Holy Ghost teaches us, that the Christian church has much more reason to commemorate the new creation than the old; insomuch, that the old is worthy to be forgotten in comparison with it.

And as the old creation was no more to be remembered, nor come into mind; so, in the following verse, the church is directed for ever to commemorate the new creation: "But be you glad, and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy;" *i. e.* Though you forget the old, yet for ever to the end of the world, keep a remembrance of the new citation.

5. It is an argument that the Jewish sabbath was not to be perpetual, that the Jews were commanded to keep it in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt. One reason why it was instituted was, because God thus delivered them, as we are expressly told, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day." Now, can any person think, that God would have all nations under the gospel, and to the end of the world, keep a day every week, which was instituted in remembrance of the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt.

6. The Holy Ghost hath implicitly told us, that instituted memorials of the Jews' deliverance from Egypt should be no longer upheld in gospel-times, [Jer. xvi. 14, 15](#). The Holy Ghost, speaking of gospel-times, says, "Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their own land." They shalt no more say, The Lord liveth that *brought &c. i. e.* at least they shall keep up no more any public memorials of it.

If there be a sabbath kept up in gospel-times, as we have shown there must be, it is more just from these words to suppose, that it should be as a memorial of that which is spoken of in the latter verse, the bringing up of the children of Israel from the land of the north: that is, the redemption of Christ, and his bringing home the elect, not only from Judea, but from the north, and from all quarters of the world. See [Isa. xliii. 16-20](#).

7. It is no more than just to suppose, that God intended to intimate to us, that the sabbath ought by Christians to be kept in commemoration of Christ's redemption, in that the Israelites were commanded to keep it in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt; because that deliverance out of Egypt is an evident, known, and allowed type of it. It was ordered of God, on purpose to represent it; every thing about that deliverance was typical of this redemption,

and much is made of it, principally for this reason, because it is so remarkable a type of Christ's redemption. And it was but a shadow, the work in itself was nothing in comparison with the work of redemption. What is a petty redemption of one nation from a temporal bondage, to the eternal salvation of the whole church of the elect in all ages and nations, from eternal damnation, and the introduction of them, not into a temporal Canaan, but into heaven, into eternal glory and blessedness? Was that shadow so much to be commemorated, as that a day once a week was to be kept on the account of it; and shall not we much more commemorate that great and glorious work of which it was designed on purpose to be a shadow.

Besides, the words in the fourth commandment, which speak of the deliverance out of Egypt, can be of no significancy unto us, unless they are to be interpreted of the gospel-redemption: but the words of the decalogue are spoken to all nations and ages. Therefore, as the words were spoken to the Jews, they referred to the type or shadow; as they are spoken to us, they are to be interpreted of the antitype and substance, for the Egypt from which we under the gospel are redeemed, is the spiritual Egypt; the house of bondage from which we are redeemed, is a state of spiritual bondage. Therefore the words, as spoken to us, are to be thus interpreted, Remember, thou wast a servant to sin and Satan, and the Lord thy God delivered thee from this bondage, with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day.

As the words in the preface to the ten commandments, about the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt, are interpreted in our catechism, and as they have respect to us, must be interpreted, of our spiritual redemption, so, by an exact identity of reason, must these words in Deuteronomy, annexed to the fourth command, be interpreted of the same gospel-redemption.

The Jewish sabbath was kept on the day that the children of Israel came up out of the Red sea. For we are told in [Deut. v. 15](#). that this holy rest of the sabbath was appointed in commemoration of their coming up out of Egypt. But the day of their going through the Red sea was the day of their coming up out of Egypt; for till then they were in the land of Egypt. The fled sea was the boundary of the land of Egypt. The Scripture itself tells us, that the day on which they sung the song of Moses, was the day of their coming up out of the land of Egypt; "And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt;" referring plainly to that triumphant song which Moses and the children of Israel sang when they came up out of the Red Sea.

The Scripture tells us, that God appointed the Jewish sabbath in commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel from their task-masters, the Egyptians, and of their rest from their hard bondage and slavery under them; "That thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a



stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to Keep the sabbath-day.” But the day that the children of Israel were delivered from their task-masters and had rest from them, was the day when the children of Israel came up out of the Red sea. They had no rest from them till then. For though they were before come forth on their journey to go out of the land of Egypt; yet they were pursued by the Egyptians, and were exceedingly perplexed and distressed. But on the morning that they came up out of the Red sea, they had complete and final deliverance; then they had full rest from their task-masters. Then God said to them, [Exod. xiv. 13](#). Then they enjoyed a joyful day of rest, a day of refreshment. Then they sang the song of Moses; and on that day was their sabbath of rest.

But this coming up of the children of Israel out of the Red sea, was only a type of the resurrection of Christ. That people was the mystical body of Christ, and Moses was a great type of Christ himself; and besides, on that day Christ went before the children of Israel in the pillar of cloud and of fire, as their Saviour and Redeemer. On that morning Christ, in this pillar of cloud and fire, rose out of the Red sea, as out of great waters; which was a type of Christ’s rising from a state of death, and from that great humiliation which he suffered in death.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is in Scripture represented by his coming up out of deep waters. So it is in Christ’s resurrection, as represented by Jonah’s coming out of the sea; [Matt. xii. 40](#). It is also compared to a deliverance out of deep waters, [Psalm lxix. 1, 2, 3](#), and [verse 14, 15](#). These things are spoken of Christ, as is evident from this, that many things in this Psalm are in the New Testament expressly applied to Christ.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, as the Jewish sabbath was appointed on the day on which the pillar of cloud and fire rose out of the Red sea, and on which Moses and the church, the mystical body of Christ, came up out of the same sea, which is a type of the resurrection of Christ; it is a great confirmation that the Christian sabbath should be kept on the day of the rising of the real body of Christ from the grave, which is the antitype. For surely the Scriptures have taught us, that the type should give way to the antitype, and that the shadow should give way to the substance.

8. I argue the same thing from [Psalm cxviii. 22, 23, 24](#). There we are taught, that the day of Christ’s resurrection is to be celebrated with holy joy by the church. “The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing, it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.”<sup>83</sup> The stone spoken of is Christ; he was refused and rejected by the builders, especially when he was put to death. That making him the head of the corner, which is the Lord’s doing, and so marvellous in our eyes, is Christ’s exaltation, which began with his re-

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82 Compare [verse 4](#). with [John xv. 25](#). and [ver. 9](#). with [John ii. 17](#). and [ver. 2](#). with [Matt xxvii. 34, 48](#). and [Mark xv. 23](#). and [John xix. 29](#) and [ver. 2](#). with [Rom. xi. 9, 10](#). and [ver. 25](#). with [Acts i. 20](#).

83 [Psalm cxviii. 22, 23](#).



surrection. While Christ lay in the grave, he lay as a stone cast away by the builders. But when God raised him from the dead, then he became the head of the corner. Thus it is evident the apostle interprets it, [Acts iv. 10, 11](#). “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead,” &c. “This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner.” And the day on which this was done, we are here taught, God hath made to be the day of the rejoicing of the church.

9. The abolition of the Jewish sabbath seems to be intimated by this, that Christ, the Lord of the sabbath, lay buried on that day. Christ, the author of the world, was the author of that work of creation of which the Jewish sabbath was the memorial. It was he that worked six days and rested the seventh day from all his works, and was refreshed. Yet he was holden in the chains of death on that day. God, who created the world, now in his second work of creation, did not follow his own example, if I may so speak; he remained imprisoned in the grave on that day, and took another day to rest in.

The sabbath was a day of rejoicing; for it was kept in commemoration of God’s glorious and gracious works of creation and the redemption out of Egypt. Therefore we are directed to call the sabbath a delight. But it is not a proper day for the church, Christ’s spouse, to rejoice, when Christ the bridegroom lies buried in the grave, as Christ says, [Matt. ix. 15](#). “That the children of the bride-chamber cannot mourn, while the bridegroom is with them. But the time will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them; then shall they mourn.” While Christ was holden under the chains of death, then the bridegroom was taken from them; then it was a proper time for the spouse to mourn and not rejoice. But when Christ rose again, then it was a day of joy, because we are begotten again to a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

10. Christ hath evidently, on purpose and design, peculiarly honoured the first day of the week, the day on which he rose from the dead, by taking it from time to time to appear to the apostles; and he chose this day to pour out the Holy Ghost on the apostles, which we read of in the second chapter of Acts. For this was on Pentecost, which was on the first day of the week, as you may see by [Levit. xxiii. 15, 16](#). And he honoured this day by pouring out his Spirit on the apostle John, and giving him his visions, [Rev. i. 10](#). “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,” &c. Now doubtless Christ had his meaning in thus distinguishingly honouring this day.

11. It is evident by the New Testament, that this was especially the day of the public worship of the primitive church, by the direction of the apostles. We are told that this was the day that they were wont to come together to break bread: and this they evidently did with the approbation of the apostles, inasmuch as they preached to them on that day; and therefore doubtless they assembled together by the direction of the apostles. [Acts xx. 7](#). “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached

unto them.” So the Holy Ghost was careful that the public contributions should be on this day, in all the churches, rather than on any other day, as appears by our text.

12. This first day of the week is in the New Testament called the lord’s day; see [Rev. i. 10](#). Some say, how do we know that this was the first day of the week? Every day is the Lord’s day. But it is the design of John to tell us when he had those visions. And if by the Lord’s day is meant any day, how doth that inform us when that event took place?

But what is meant by this expression we know, just in the same way as we know what is the meaning of any word in the original of the New Testament, or the meaning of any expression in an ancient language, viz. by what we find to be the universal signification of the expression in ancient times. This expression, *the Lord’s day*, is found by the ancient use of the whole Christian church, by what appears in all the writings of ancient times, even from the apostles’ days, to signify the first day of the week.

And the expression implies in it the holiness of the day. For doubtless the day is called the Lord’s day, as the sacred supper is called the Lord’s supper, which is so called, because it is a holy supper, to be celebrated in remembrance of the Lord Christ, and of his redemption. So this is a holy day, to be kept in remembrance of the Lord Christ, and his redemption.

The first day of the week being in Scripture called the Lord’s day, sufficiently makes it out to be the day of the week that is to be kept holy unto God; for God hath been pleased to call it by his own name. When any thing is called by the name of God in Scripture, this denotes the appropriation of it to God. Thus God put his name upon his people Israel of old; [Numbers vi. 27](#). “And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel.” They were called by the name of God, as it is said, [2 Chron. vii. 14](#). “If my people which are called by my name,” &c. *i. e.* They were called God’s people, or the Lord’s people. This denoted that they were a holy peculiar people above all others. [Deut. vii. 6](#). “Thou art a holy people unto the Lord;” and so in [ver. 14](#). and many other places.

So the city Jerusalem was called by God’s name; [Jer. xxv. 29](#). “Upon the city which is called by my name.” [Dan. ix. 18, 19](#). “And the city which is called by thy name,” &c. This denoted that it was a holy city, a city chosen of God above all other cities for holy uses, as it is often called the holy city, as in [Neh. xi. 1](#). “To dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city;” and in many other places.

So the temple is said to be, a house called by God’s name; [1 Kings viii. 43](#). “This house that is called by my name.” And often elsewhere. That is, it was called God’s house, or the Lord’s house. This denoted that it was called a holy place, a house devoted to holy uses, above all others.

So also we find that the first day of the week is called by God’s name, being called in Scripture God’s day, or the Lord’s day, which denotes that it is a holy day, a day appropriated to holy uses, above all others in the week.



13. The tradition of the church from age to age, though it be no rule, yet may be a great confirmation of the truth in such a case as this is. We find by all accounts, that it has been the universal custom of the Christian church, in all ages, even from the age of the apostles, to keep the first day of the week. We read in the writings which remain of the first, second, and third centuries, of the Christians keeping the Lord's day; and so in all succeeding ages: and there are no accounts that contradict them. This day hath all along been kept by Christians, in all countries throughout the world, and by almost all that have borne the name of Christians, of all denominations, however different in their opinions as to other things.

Now, although this be not sufficient of itself without a foundation in Scripture; yet it may be a confirmation of it, because here is really matter of conviction in it to our reason. Reason may greatly confirm truths revealed in the Scriptures. The universality of the custom throughout all Christian countries, in all ages, by what account we have of them, is a good argument, that the church had it from the apostles: and it is difficult to conceive how all should come to agree to set up such a custom through the world, of different sects and opinions, and we have no account of any such thing.

14. It is no way weakening to these arguments, that there is nothing more plainly said about it in the New Testament, till John wrote his *Revelation*, because there is a sufficient reason to be given for it. . In all probability it was purposely avoided by the Holy Spirit, in the first settling of Christian churches in the world, both among the heathen and among the Jews, but especially for the sake of the Jews, and put of tenderness to the Jewish Christians. For it is evident that Christ and the apostles declared one thing after another to them gradually as they could bear it.

The Jews had a regard for their sabbath above almost any thing in the laws of Moses; and there was that in the Old Testament which tended to uphold them in the observance of this, much more strongly than any thing else that was Jewish. God had made so much of it, had so solemnly, frequently, and carefully commanded it, and had often so dreadfully punished the breach of it, that there was more colour for their retaining this custom than almost any other.

Therefore Christ dealt very tenderly with them in this point. Other things of this nature we find very gradually revealed. Christ had many things to say, as we are informed, which yet he said not, because they could not as yet bear them, and gave this reason for it, that it was like putting new wine into old bottles. They were so contrary to their old customs, that Christ was gradual in revealing them. He gave here a little and there a little, as they could bear; and it was a long time before he told them plainly the principal doctrines of the kingdom of heaven. He took the most favourable opportunities to tell them of his sufferings and death, especially when they were full of admiration at some signal miracle, and were confirmed in it, that he was the Messiah.

He told them many things much more plainly after his resurrection than before. But even then, he did not tell them all, but left more to be revealed by the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. They therefore were much more enlightened after that than before. However, as yet he did not reveal all. The abolition of the ceremonial law about meats and drinks was not fully known till after this.

The apostles were in the same manner careful and tender of those to whom they preached and wrote. It was very gradually that they ventured to teach them the cessation of the ceremonial laws of circumcision and abstinence from unclean meats. How tender is the apostle Paul with such as scrupled, in the fourteenth chapter of Romans! He directs those who had knowledge, to keep it to themselves, for the sake of their weak brethren. [Rom. xiv. 22.](#) But I need say no more to evince this.

However, I will say this, that it is very possible that the apostles themselves at first might not have this change of the day of the sabbath fully revealed to them. The Holy Ghost, at his descent, revealed much to them, yet after that, they were ignorant of much of gospel-doctrine; yea, they were so a great while after they acted the part of apostles, in preaching, baptizing, and governing the church. Peter was surprised when he was commanded to eat meats legally unclean; and so were the apostles in general, when Peter was commanded to go to the Gentiles, to preach to them.

Thus tender was Christ of the church while an infant. He did not feed them with strong meat, but was careful to bring in the observance of the Lord's day by degrees, and therefore took all occasions to honour it, by appearing from time to time of choice on that day; by sending down his Spirit on that day in that remarkable manner at Pentecost; by ordering Christians to meet in order to break bread on that day, and by ordering their contributions and other duties of worship to be holden on it; thus introducing the observance of it by degrees. And though as yet the Holy Ghost did not speak very plainly about it, yet God took special care that there should be sufficient evidences of his will, to be found out by the Christian church, when it should be more established and settled, and should have come to the strength of a man.

Thus I leave it with every one to judge, whether there be not sufficient evidence, that it is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be kept by the Christian church as a sabbath?

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S E R M O N X V .

THE PERPETUITY AND CHANGE OF THE SABBATH.



1 COR. xvi. 1, 2.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

IT is the mind and will of God, that the first day of the week should be especially set apart among Christians for religious exercises and duties.

On this *doctrine* I have already discoursed, under two propositions, showing, *first*, That it is the will of God. that one day of the week be, in all ages, set apart for religious duties; and *secondly*, That under the gospel, this day ought to be the *first* day of the week. I now proceed to the

APPLICATION.

This shall be in a use of *exhortation*.

1. Let us be *thankful* for the institution of the Christian sabbath. It is a thing wherein God hath shown his mercy to us, and his care for our souls. He shows, that he, by his infinite wisdom, is contriving for our good, as Christ teaches us, that the sabbath was made for man; [Mark ii. 27.](#) “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.” It was made for the profit and for the comfort of our souls.

The sabbath is a day of *rest*: God hath appointed that we should, every seventh day, rest from all our worldly labours. Instead of that, he might have appointed the hardest labours for us to go through, some severe hardships for us to endure. It is a day of outward, but especially of *spiritual*, rest. It is a day appointed of God, that his people thereon may find rest unto their souls; that the souls of believers may rest and be refreshed in their Saviour. It is a day of *rejoicing*: God made it to be a joyful day to the church; [Ps. cxviii. 24.](#) ” This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.” They that aright receive and improve the sabbath, call it *a delight and honourable*: it is a pleasant and a joyful day to them; it is an image of the future heavenly rest of the church. [Heb. iv. 9, 10, 11.](#) “There remaineth therefore a rest” (or sabbatism, as it is in the original) “to the people of God. For he that hath entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.”

The Christian sabbath is one of the most precious enjoyments of the visible church. Christ showed his love to his church in instituting it; and it becomes the christian church to be thankful to her Lord for it. The very name of this day, *the Lord's day*, or *Jesus's day*, should endear it to Christians, as it intimates the special relation it has to Christ, and also

the design of it, which is the commemoration of our dear Saviour, and his love to his church in redeeming it.

2. Be exhorted to *keep* this day holy. God hath given such evidences that this is his mind, that he will surely require it of you, if you do not strictly and conscientiously observe it. And if you do thus observe it, you may have this comfort in the reflection upon your conduct, that you have not been superstitious in it, but have done as God hath revealed it to be his mind and will in his word, that you should do; and that in so doing you are in the way of God's acceptance and reward.

Here let me lay before you the following *motives* to excite you to this duty.

(1.) By a strict observation of the sabbath, the name of God is honoured, and that in such a way as is very acceptable to him. *Isa. lviii. 13.* "If thou call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and shalt honour him." God is honoured by it, as it is a visible manifestation of respect to God's holy law, and a reverencing of that which has a peculiar relation to God himself, and that more in some respects than the observance of many other commands. And man may be just, and generous, and yet not so plainly show respect to the revealed mind and will of God, for many of the heathen have been so. But if a person, with evident strictness and care, observe the sabbath, it is a visible manifestation of a conscientious regard to God's declaration of his mind, and so is a visible honour done to his authority.

By a strict observance of the sabbath, the face of religion is kept up in the world. If it were not for the sabbath, there would be but little public and visible appearance of serving, worshipping, and reverencing the supreme and invisible Being. The sabbath seems to have been appointed very much for this end, *viz.* to uphold the visibility of religion in public, or among professing societies of men; and by how much greater the strictness is with which the sabbath is observed, and with how much more solemnity the duties of it are observed among a people; by so much the greater is the manifestation among them of respect to the Divine Being.

This should be a powerful motive with us to the observation of the sabbath. It should be our study above all things to honour and glorify God. It should be the great thing with all that bear the name of Christians, to honour their great God and King, and I hope is a great thing with many that hear me at this time. If it be your inquiry, if it be your desire, to honour God; by this subject you are directed to one way whereby you may do much in that way, *viz.* by honouring the sabbath, and by showing a careful and strict observance of it.

(2.) That which is the business of the sabbath is the greatest business of our lives, *viz.* that of religion. To serve and worship God is that for which we were made, and for which we had our being given us. Other business, which is of a secular nature, and on which we are wont to attend on week days, is but subordinate, and ought to be subservient to the higher purposes and ends of religion. Therefore surely we should not think much of devoting

one seventh part of our time, to be *wholly* spent in this business, and to be set apart to exercise ourselves in the immediate duties of religion.

(3.) Let it be considered, that all our time is God's, and therefore when he challenges of us one day in seven, he challenges his *own*. He doth not exceed his right; he would not have exceeded it, if he had challenged a far greater proportion of our time to be spent in his immediate service. But he hath mercifully considered our state, and our necessities here; and, as he hath consulted the good of our souls in appointing a seventh day for the immediate duties of religion, so he hath considered our outward necessities, and hath allowed us six days for attendance on our outward affairs. What unworthy treatment therefore will it be of God, if we refuse to allow him even the seventh day!

(4.) As the sabbath is a day which is especially set apart for religious exercises, so it is a day wherein God especially confers his grace and blessing. As God hath commanded us to set it apart to have converse with him, so hath he set it apart for himself to have converse with us. As God hath commanded us to observe the sabbath, so God observes the sabbath too. It is with respect to the sabbath, as Solomon prayed that it might be with respect to the temple, [2 Chron. vi. 20](#). His eyes are open upon it: he stands ready then especially to hear prayers, to accept of religious services, to meet his people, to manifest himself to them, to give his Holy Spirit and blessing to those who diligently and conscientiously sanctify it.

That we should sanctify the sabbath, as we have observed, is according to God's institution. God in a sense observes his own institutions; *i. e.* is wont to cause them to be attended with a blessing. The institutions of God are his appointed means of grace, and with his institutions he hath promised his blessing; [Exod. xx. 24](#). "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." For the same reason we may conclude, that God will meet his people and bless them, waiting upon him not only in appointed *places*, but at appointed times and in all appointed ways. Christ hath promised, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them, [Matt. xviii. 20](#). One thing included in the expression, *in his name* is, that it is by his appointment, and according to his institution.

God hath made it our duty, by his institution, to set apart this day for a special seeking of his grace and blessing. From which we may argue, that he will be especially ready to confer his grace on those who thus seek it. If it be the day on which God requires us especially to seek him, we may argue, that it is a day on which especially he will be found. That God is ready on this day especially to bestow his blessing on them that keep it aright, is implied in that expression of God's blessing the sabbath-day. God hath not only hallowed the sabbath-day, but blessed it; he hath given his blessing to it, and will confer his blessing upon all the due observers of it. He hath hallowed it, or appointed that it be kept holy by us, and hath blessed it; he hath determined to give his blessing upon it.



So that here is great encouragement for us to keep holy the sabbath, as we would seek God's grace and our own spiritual good. The sabbath-day is an accepted time, a day of salvation, a time wherein God especially loves to be sought, and loves to be found. The Lord Jesus Christ takes delight in his own day; he delights to honour it; he delights to meet with and manifest himself to his disciples on it, as he showed before his ascension, by appearing to them from time to time on this day. On this day he delights to give his Holy Spirit, as he intimated, by choosing it as the day on which to pour out the Spirit in so remarkable a manner on the primitive church, and on which to give his Spirit to the apostle John.

Of old God blessed the seventh day, or appointed it to be a day whereon especially he would bestow blessings on his people, as an expression of his own joyful remembrance of that day, and of the rest and refreshment which he had on it. *Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.* "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath-day. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." As princes give gifts on their birth-days, on their marriage-days, and the like; so God was wont to dispense spiritual gifts on the seventh day.

But how much more reason has Christ to bless the day of his resurrection, and to delight to honour it, and to confer his grace and blessed gifts on his people on this day. It was a day whereon Christ rested and was refreshed in a literal sense. It was a day of deliverance from the chains of death, the day of his finishing that great and difficult work of redemption, which had been upon his heart from all eternity; the day of his justification by the Father; the day of the beginning of his exaltation, and of the fulfilment of the promises of the Father; the day when he had eternal life, which he had purchased, put into his hands. On this day Christ doth indeed delight to distribute gifts, and blessings, and joy, and happiness, and will delight to do the same to the end of the world.

O therefore, how well is it worth our while to improve this day, to call upon God and seek Jesus Christ! Let awakened sinners be stirred up by these things to improve the sabbath-day, as they would lay themselves most in the way of the Spirit of God. Improve this day to call upon God; for then he is near. Improve it for reading the Holy Scriptures, and diligently attending his word preached; for then is the likeliest time to have the Spirit accompanying it. Let the saints who are desirous of growing in grace, and enjoying communion with Christ, improve the sabbath in order to it.

(5.) The last motive which I shall mention, is the experience of the influence which a strict observance of the sabbath has upon the whole of religion. It may be observed, that in those places where the sabbath is well kept, religion in general will be most flourishing; and that in those places where the sabbath is not much noticed, and much is not made of it, there is no great matter of religion any way. But,

INQ. How ought we to keep the sabbath?



ANS. 1. We ought to be exceedingly careful on this day to abstain from sin. Indeed, all breaches of the sabbath are sinful; but we speak now of those things which are in themselves sinful, or sinful upon other accounts, besides that they are done upon the sabbath. The sabbath being holy time, it is especially defiled by the commission of sin. Sin by being committed on this day becomes the more exceeding sinful. We are required to abstain from sin at all times, but especially on holy time. The commission of immoralities on the sabbath is the worst way of profaning it, that which most provokes God, and brings most guilt upon the souls of men.

How provoking must it be to God, when men do those things on that day which he has sanctified, and set apart to be spent in the immediate exercises of religion which are not fit to be done on common days, which are impure and wicked whenever they are done!

Therefore if any persons be guilty of any such wickedness, as intemperance or any unclean actions, they do in a very horrid manner profane the sabbath. Or if they be guilty of wickedness in speech, of talking profanely, or in an unclean and lascivious manner, or of talking against their neighbours, they do in a dreadful manner profane the sabbath. Yet very commonly those who are used to such things on week-days, have not a conscience to restrain them on the sabbath. It is well if those that live in the indulgence of the lust of uncleanness on week-days, be not some way or other unclean on the sabbath. They will be indulging the same lusts then; they will be indulging their impure flames in their imaginations at least: and it is well if they keep clear while in the house of God, and while they pretend to be worshipping God. The unclean young man gives this account of himself, [Prov. v. 14](#). "I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and the assembly." So those who are addicted to an impure way of talking in the week-time, have nothing to keep them from the same upon the sabbath, when they meet together. But dreadfully is God provoked by such things.

We ought carefully to watch over our own hearts, and to avoid all sinful thoughts on the sabbath. We ought to maintain such a reverence for the sabbath, as to have a peculiar dread of sin, such as shall awe us to a very careful watch over, ourselves.

2. We ought to be careful to abstain from all worldly concerns. The reason, as we have showed, why it is needful and proper, that certain stated parts of time should be set apart to be devoted to religious exercises, is because the state of mankind is such in this world, that they are necessitated to exercise their minds, and employ their thoughts, about secular matters. It is therefore convenient that there should be stated times, wherein all should be obliged to throw by all other concerns, that their minds may the more freely, and with less entanglement, be engaged in religious and spiritual exercises.

We are therefore to do thus, or else we frustrate the very design of the institution of a sabbath. We are strictly to abstain from being outwardly engaged in any worldly thing, either worldly business or recreations. We are to rest in remembrance of God's rest from

the work of creation, and of Christ's rest from the work of redemption. We should be careful that we do not encroach upon the sabbath at its beginning, by busying ourselves about the world after the sabbath is begun. We should avoid talking about worldly matters, and even thinking about them; for whether we outwardly concern ourselves with the world or not, yet if our minds be upon it, we frustrate the end of the sabbath. The end of its separation from other days is, that our minds may be disengaged from worldly things: and we are to avoid being outwardly concerned with the world, only for this reason, that *that* cannot be without taking up our minds. We ought therefore to give the world no place in our thoughts on the sabbath, but to abstract ourselves from all worldly concerns, and maintain a watch over ourselves, that the world do not encroach, as it is very apt to do. *Isa. lviii. 13, 14.*

3. We ought to spend the time in religious exercises. This is the more ultimate end of the sabbath. We are to keep our minds separate from the world, principally for this end, that we may be the more free for religious exercises. Though it be a day of rest, yet it was not designed to be a day of idleness. To rest from worldly employments, without employing ourselves about any thing, is but to lay ourselves so much more in the devil's way. The mind will be employed someway or other; and therefore doubtless the end for which we are to call off our minds from worldly things on the sabbath is, that we may employ them about things that are better.

We are to attend on spiritual exercises with the greatest diligence. That it is a day of rest, doth not hinder us in so doing; for we are to look on spiritual exercises but as the rest and refreshment of the soul. In heaven, where the people of God have the most perfect rest, they are not idle, but are employed in spiritual and heavenly exercises. We should take care therefore to employ our minds on a sabbath-day on spiritual objects by holy meditation; improving for our help therein the Holy Scriptures, and other books that are according to the word of God. We should also employ ourselves outwardly on this day in the duties of divine worship, in public and private. It is proper to be more frequent and abundant in secret duties on this day, than on other days, as we have time and opportunity, as well as to attend on public ordinances.

It is proper on this day, not only especially to promote the exercise of religion in ourselves, but also in others; to be assisting them, and endeavouring to promote their spiritual good, by religious conference. Especially those who have the care of others ought, on this day, to endeavour to promote their spiritual good: heads of families should be instructing and counselling their children, and quickening them in the ways of religion, and should see to it that the sabbath be strictly kept in their houses. A peculiar blessing may be expected upon those families where there is due care taken that the sabbath be strictly and devoutly observed.

4. We are on this day especially to meditate upon and celebrate the work of redemption. We are with special joy to remember the resurrection of Christ; because that was the finishing



of that work. And this is the day whereon Christ rested and was refreshed, after he had endured those extreme labours which he endured for our perishing souls. This was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart; it was the day of his deliverance from the chains of death, and also of our deliverance; for we are delivered in him who is our head. He, as it were, rose with his elect. He is the first-fruits; those that are Christ's will follow. Christ, when he rose, was justified as a public person, and we are justified in him. This is the day of our deliverance out of Egypt.

We should therefore meditate on this with joy; we should have a sympathy with Christ in his joy. As he was refreshed on this day, so we should be refreshed, as those whose hearts are united with his. When Christ rejoices, it becomes all his church every where to rejoice. We are to say of this day, [Ps. 118: 24](#). "This is the day that the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

But we are not only to commemorate the resurrection of Christ, but the whole work of redemption, of which this was the finishing. We keep the day on which the work was finished, because it is in remembrance of the whole work. We should on this day contemplate the wonderful love of God and of Christ, as expressed in the work of redemption; and our remembrance of these things should be accompanied with suitable exercises of soul with respect to them. When we call to mind the love of Christ, it should be with a return of love on our part. When we commemorate this work, it should be with faith in the Saviour. And we should praise God and the Lamb for this work, for the divine glory and love manifested in it, in our private and public prayers, in talking of the wonderful works of God, and in singing divine songs.

Hence it is proper that Christ's disciples should choose this day to come together to break bread, or to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's supper, [Acts xx. 7](#). because it is an ordinance instituted in remembrance of the work of redemption.

5. Works of mercy and charity are very proper and acceptable to Christ on this day. They were proper on the ancient sabbath. Christ was wont to do such works on the sabbath-day. But they especially become the Christian sabbath, because it is a day kept in commemoration of the greatest work of mercy and love towards us that ever was wrought. What can be more proper than that on such a day we should be expressing our love and mercy towards our fellow-creatures, and especially our fellow-Christians. Christ loves to see us show our thankfulness to him in such ways as these. Therefore we find that the Holy Ghost was especially careful, that such works should be performed on the first day of the week in the primitive church, as we learn by our text.

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# SEVEN SERMONS

ON

## IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

104

VIZ.

*THE BEST PORTION.*

*EXCOMMUNICATION.*

*DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.*

*WRATH TO THE UTTERMOST.*

*PARDON FOR SINNERS.*

*WRATH TO THE UTTERMOST. WICKED MEN USEFUL IN THEIR DESTRUCTION ONLY.*

*THE PRAYER-HEARING GOD.*

S E R M O N I . 8 4

### GOD THE BEST PORTION OF THE CHRISTIAN.

[Psa. lxxiii. 25.](#)

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.

IN this Psalm, the Psalmist (Asaph) relates the great difficulty which existed in his own mind, from the consideration of the wicked. He observes, [ver. 2 and 3](#). “As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipt. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” In the [4th.](#) and following verses, he informs us, what in the wicked was his temptation. In the first place, he observed, that they were *prosperous*, and all things went well with them. He then observed their *behaviour* in their prosperity, and the use which they made of it; and that God, notwithstanding such abuse, *continued* their prosperity. Then he tells us by what means he was helped out of this difficulty, *viz.* by going into the *sanctuary*, [ver. 16, 17.](#) and proceeds to inform us what considerations they were which helped him, *viz.*—(1.) The consideration of *the miserable end* of wicked men. However they prosper for the present, yet they come to a woeful end at last, [ver. 18-20.](#)—(2.) The consideration of the *blessed end* of the saints. Although the saints, while they live, may be afflicted, yet they come to a happy end at last, [ver. 21-24.](#)—(3.) The consideration, that the godly have a much *better portion* than the wicked, even though they have no other portion

but God; as in the text and following verse. Though the wicked are in prosperity, and are not in trouble as other men; yet the godly, though in affliction, are in a state infinitely better, because they have God for their portion. They need desire nothing else; he that hath God, hath all. Thus the Psalmist professes the sense and apprehension which he had of things: *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*<sup>85</sup>

In the verse immediately preceding<sup>86</sup>, the Psalmist takes notice how the saints are happy in God, both when they are in this world, and also when they are taken to another. They are blessed in God in this world, in that he *guides them by his counsel*; and when he takes them out of it, they are still happy, in that then *he receives them to glory*. This probably led him, in the text, to declare that he desired *no other portion*, either in this world or in that to come, either in heaven or upon earth.—Whence we learn, *That it is the spirit of a truly godly man, to prefer God before all other things, either in heaven or on earth.*

I. A godly man prefers God before any thing else *in heaven*.

1. He prefers God before any thing else that *actually* is in heaven. Every godly man hath his heart in heaven; his affections are mainly set on what is to be had there. Heaven is his chosen country and inheritance. He hath respect to heaven, as a traveller, who is in a distant land, hath to his own country. The traveller can content himself to be in a strange land for a while, but his own native land is preferred by him to all others: [Heb. xi. 13.](#), &c. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly.”—The respect which a godly person hath to heaven may be compared to the respect which a child, when he is abroad, hath to his father’s house. He can be contented abroad for a little while; but the place to which he desires to return, and in which to dwell, is his own home. Heaven is the true saint’s Father’s house: [John xiv. 2.](#) “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” [John xx. 17.](#) “I ascend to my Father and your Father.”

Now, the main reason why the godly man hath his heart thus to heaven, is because God is there; that is the palace of the Most High. It is the place where God is gloriously present, where his love is gloriously manifested, where the godly may be with him, see him as he is, and love, serve, praise, and enjoy him perfectly. If God and Christ were not in heaven, he would not be so earnest in seeking it, nor would he take so much pains in a laborious travel through this wilderness, nor would the consideration that he is going to heaven when he dies, be such a comfort to him under toils and afflictions. The martyrs would not undergo

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85 [Psa. lxxiii. 25.](#)

86 [Psa. lxiii. 24.](#)

cruel sufferings, from their persecutors, with a cheerful prospect of going to heaven, did they not expect to be with Christ, and to enjoy God there. They would not with that cheerfulness forsake all their earthly possessions, and all their earthly friends, as many thousands of them have done, and wander about in poverty and banishment, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, in hopes of exchanging their earthly for a heavenly inheritance, were it not that they hope to be with their glorious Redeemer and heavenly Father.—The believer's heart is in heaven, because his treasure is there.

2. A godly man prefers God before any thing else that *might be* in heaven. Not only is there nothing *actually* in heaven, which is in his esteem equal with God; but neither is there any of which he can conceive as *possible to be there*, which by him is esteemed and desired equally with God. Some suppose quite different enjoyments to be in heaven, from those which the Scriptures teach us. The Mahometans, for instance, suppose that in heaven are to be enjoyed all manner of sensual delights and pleasures. Many things which Mahomet has feigned are to the lusts and carnal appetites of men the most agreeable that he could devise, and with them he flattered his followers.—But the true saint could not contrive one more agreeable to his inclination and desires, than such as is revealed in the word of God; a heaven of enjoying the glorious God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. There he shall have all sin taken away, and shall be perfectly conformed to God, and shall spend an eternity in exalted exercises of love to him, and in the enjoyment of his love. If God were not to be enjoyed in heaven, but only vast wealth, immense treasures of silver, and gold, great honour of such kind as men obtain in this world, and a fulness of the greatest sensual delights and pleasures; all these things would not make up for the want of God and Christ, and the enjoyment of them there. If it were empty of God, it would indeed be an empty melancholy place.—The godly have been made sensible, as to all creature-enjoyments, that they cannot satisfy the soul; and therefore nothing will content them but God. Offer a saint what you will, if you deny him God, he will esteem himself miserable. God is the centre of his desires; and as long as you keep his soul from its proper centre, it will not be at rest.

II. It is the temper of a godly man to prefer God before all other things *on the earth*.

1. The saint prefers that enjoyment of God, for which he *hopes* hereafter, to any thing in this world. He looketh not so much at the things which are seen and temporal, as at those which are unseen and eternal, [1 Cor. iv. 18](#). It is but a little of God that the saint enjoys in this world; he hath but a little acquaintance with God, and enjoys but a little of the manifestations of the divine glory and love. But God hath promised to give him himself hereafter in a full enjoyment. And these promises are more precious to the saint, than the most precious earthly jewels. The gospel contains greater treasures, in his esteem, than the cabinets of princes, or the mines of the Indies.

2. The saints prefer what of God may be *obtained* in this life before all things in the world. There is a great difference in the present spiritual attainments of the saints. Some

attain to much greater acquaintance and communion with God, and conformity to him, than others. But the highest attainments are very small in comparison with what is future. The saints are capable of making progress in spiritual attainments, and they earnestly desire such further attainments. Not contented with those degrees to which they have already attained, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. It is their desire, to know more of God, to have more of his image, and to be enabled more to imitate God and Christ in their walk and conversation. [Psal. xxvii. 4.](#) "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." [Psal. xlii. 1, 2.](#) "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" [Psal. lxiii. 1, 2.](#) "O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." See also, [Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 3.](#) and [Psal. cxxx.](#) "My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning."

Though every saint has not this longing desire after God to the same degree that the Psalmist had, yet they are all of the same spirit; they earnestly desire to have more of his presence in their hearts. That this is the temper of the godly in general, and not of some particular saints only, appears from [Isa. xxvi. 8, 9.](#) where not any particular saint, but the church in general speaks thus: "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me will I seek thee early." See also [Cant. iii. 1, 2. v. 6, 8.](#)

The saints are not always in the lively exercise of grace: but such a spirit they have, and sometimes they have the sensible exercise of it. They desire God and divine attainments, more than all earthly things; and seek to be rich in grace, more than they do to get earthly riches. They desire the honour which is of God, more than that which is of men, [John v. 44.](#) and communion with him, more than any earthly pleasures. They are of the same spirit which the apostle expresses, [Phil. iii. 8.](#) "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ."

3. The saint prefers *what he hath already of God* before any thing in this world. That which was infused into his heart at his conversion, is more precious to him than any thing which the world can afford. The views which are sometimes given him of the beauty and excellency of God, are more precious to him than all the treasures of the wicked. The relation of a child in which he stands to God, the union which there is between his soul and Jesus Christ, he values more than the greatest earthly dignity. That image of God which is in

stamped on his soul, he values more than any earthly ornaments. It is, in his esteem, better to be adorned with the graces of God's Holy Spirit, than to be made to shine in jewels of gold, and the most costly pearls, or to be admired for the greatest external beauty. He values the robe of Christ's righteousness, which he hath on his soul, more than the robes of princes. The spiritual pleasures and delights which he sometimes has in God, he prefers far before all the pleasures of sin. [Psal. lxxxiv. 10.](#) "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

A saint thus prefers God before all other things in this world—1. As he prefers God before any thing else that he *possesses* in the world. Whatever temporal enjoyments he has, he prefers God to them all. [Psal. xvi. 5, 6.](#) "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." If he be rich, he chiefly sets his heart on his heavenly riches. He prefers God before any earthly friend, and the divine favour before any respect shown him by his fellow-creatures. Although inadvertently these have room in his heart, and too much room; yet he reserves the throne for God; [Luke xiv. 26.](#) "If man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

2. He prefers God before any earthly enjoyment of which he *hath a prospect*. The children of men commonly set their hearts more on some earthly happiness for which they *hope*, and after which they are seeking, than on what they *have* in present possession. But a godly man prefers God to any thing which he has in prospect in this world. He may, indeed, through the prevalence of corruption, be for a season carried away with some enjoyment; however, he will again come to himself; this is not the temper of the man; he is of another spirit.

3. It is the spirit of a godly man to prefer God to any earthly enjoyments of which he *can conceive*. He not only prefers him to any thing which he now possesses; but he sees nothing possessed by any of his fellow-creatures, so estimable. Could he have as much worldly prosperity as he would, could he have earthly things just to his mind, and agreeable to his inclination; he values the portion which he has in God, incomparably more. He prefers Christ to earthly kingdoms.

### APPLICATION.

1. Hence we may learn, that whatever changes a godly man passes through, he is happy; because God, who is unchangeable, is his chosen portion. Though he meet with temporal losses, and be deprived of many, yea, of all his temporal enjoyments; yet God, whom he prefers before all, still remains, and cannot be lost. While he stays in this changeable, troublesome world, he is happy; because his chosen portion, on which he builds as his main foundation for happiness, is above the world, and above all changes. And when he goes into



another world, still he is happy, because that portion yet remains. Whatever he be deprived of, he cannot be deprived of his chief portion; his inheritance remains sure to him.—Could worldly-minded men find out a way to secure to themselves those earthly enjoyments on which they mainly set their hearts, so that they could not be lost nor impaired while they live, how great would they account the privilege, though other things which they esteem in a less degree, were liable to the same uncertainty as they now are! Whereas now, those earthly enjoyments, on which men chiefly set their hearts, are often most fading. But how great is the happiness of those who have chosen the Fountain of all good, who prefer him before all things in heaven or on earth, and who can never be deprived of him to all eternity!

2. Let all by these things examine and try themselves, whether they be saints or not. As this which hath been exhibited is the spirit of the saints, so it is peculiar to them: none can use the language of the text, and say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee,* <sup>87</sup> but the saints. A man's choice is that which determines his state. He that chooses God for his portion, and prefers him to all other things, is a godly man, for *he* chooses and worships him as God. To respect him as God, is to respect him above all other things; and if any man respect him as *his* God, *his God he is*; there is an union and covenant relation between that man and the true God.—Every man is as his God is. If you would know what a man is, whether he be a godly man or not, you must inquire what his God is. If the true God be he to whom he hath a supreme respect, whom he regards above all; he is doubtless a servant of the true God. But if the man have something else to which he pays a greater respect than to Jehovah, he is not a godly man.

Inquire, therefore, how it is with you,—whether you prefer God before all other things. It may sometimes be a difficulty for persons to determine this to their satisfaction; the ungodly may be deluded with false affections; the godly in dull frames may be at a loss about it. Therefore you may try yourselves, as to this matter, several ways; if you cannot speak fully to one thing, yet you may perhaps to others.

1. What is it which *chiefly* makes you desire to go to heaven when you die? Indeed some have no great desire to go to heaven. They do not care to go to hell; but if they could be safe from that, they would not much concern themselves about heaven. If it be not so with you, but you find that you have a desire after heaven, then inquire what it is for. Is the main reason, that you may be with God, have communion with him, and be conformed to him? that you may see God, and enjoy him there? Is this the consideration which keeps your hearts, and your desires, and your expectations towards heaven?

2. If you could avoid death, and might have your free choice, would you choose to live *always* in this world without God, rather than in his time to leave the world, in order to be with him? If you might live here in earthly prosperity to all eternity, but destitute of the

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87 [Psa. lxxiii. 25.](#)

presence of God and communion with him—having no spiritual intercourse between him and your souls, God and you being strangers to each other for ever—would you choose this rather than to leave the world, in order to dwell in heaven, as the children of God, there to enjoy the glorious privileges of children, in a holy and perfect love to God, and enjoyment of him to all eternity?

3. Do you prefer Christ to all others as the *way* to heaven? He who truly chooses God, prefers him in each person of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the Father, as his Father; the Son as his Saviour; the Holy Ghost as his Sanctifier. Inquire, therefore, not only whether you choose the enjoyment of God in heaven as your highest portion and happiness, but also whether you choose Jesus Christ before all others, as your way to heaven; and that in a sense of the excellency of Christ, and of the way of salvation by him, as being that which is to the glory of Christ, and of sovereign grace. Is the way of free grace, by the blood and righteousness of the blessed and glorious Redeemer, the most excellent way to life in your esteem? Doth it add a value to the heavenly inheritance, that it is conferred in this way? Is this far better to you than to be saved by your own righteousness, by any of your own performances, or by any other mediator?

4. If you might go to heaven in what course you please, would you prefer to all others the way of a *strict walk* with God? They who prefer God as hath been represented, choose him, not only in the end, but in the way. They had rather be with God than with any other, not only when they come to the end of their journey; but also while they are in their pilgrimage. They choose the way of walking with God, though it be a way of labour, and care, and self-denial, rather than a way of sin, though it be a way of sloth, and of gratifying their lusts.

5. Were you to spend your eternity in this world, would you choose rather to live in mean and low circumstances with the gracious presence of God, than to live for ever in earthly prosperity without him? Would you rather spend it in holy living, and serving and walking with God, and in the enjoyment of the privileges of his children? God often manifesting himself to you as your Father, discovering to you his glory, and manifesting his love, lifting the light of his countenance upon you! Would you rather choose these things, though in poverty, than to abound in worldly things, and to live in ease and prosperity, at the same time being an alien from the commonwealth of Israel? Could you be content to stand in no child-like relation to God, enjoying no gracious intercourse with him, having no right to be acknowledged by him as his children? Or would such a life as this, though in ever so great earthly prosperity, be esteemed by you a miserable life?

If, after all, there remain with you doubts, and a difficulty to determine concerning yourselves whether you do truly and sincerely prefer God to all other things, I would mention two things which are the surest ways to be determined in this matter, and which seem to be the best grounds of satisfaction in it.

1. The feeling of some particular, strong, and lively *exercise* of such a spirit. A person may have such a spirit as is spoken of in the doctrine, and may have the exercise of it in a low degree, and yet remain in doubt whether he have it or not, and be unable to come to a satisfying determination. But God is pleased sometimes to give such discoveries of his glory, and of the excellency of Christ, as do so draw forth the heart, that they know beyond all doubt, that they feel such a spirit as Paul spake of, when he said, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus his Lord;” and they can boldly say, as in the text, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.<sup>88</sup>” At such times the people of God do not need any help of ministers to satisfy them whether they have the true love of God; they plainly see and feel it; and the Spirit of God then witnesseth with their spirits, that they are the children of God.—Therefore, if you would be satisfied upon this point, earnestly seek such attainments; seek that you may have such clear and lively exercises of this spirit. To this end, you must labour to grow in grace. Though you have had such experiences in times past, and they satisfied you then, yet you may again doubt. You should therefore seek that you may have them more frequently; and the way to that is, earnestly to press forward, that you may have more acquaintance with God, and have the principles of grace strengthened. This is the way to have the exercises of grace stronger, more lively, and more frequent, and so to be satisfied that you have a spirit of supreme love to God.

2. The other way is, To inquire whether you prefer God to all other things in *practice*, *i. e.* when you have occasion to manifest by your practice which you prefer—when you must either cleave to one or the other, and must either forsake other things, or forsake God—whether then it be your manner practically to prefer God to all other things whatever, even to those earthly things to which your hearts are most wedded. Are your lives those of adherence to God, and of serving him in this manner?

He who sincerely prefers God to all other things in his heart, will do it in his practice. For when God and all other things come to stand in competition, that is the proper trial what a man chooses; and the manner of acting in such cases must certainly determine what the choice is in all free agents, or those who act on choice. Therefore there is no sign of sincerity so much insisted on in the Bible as this, that we deny ourselves, sell all, forsake the world, take up the cross, and follow Christ whithersoever he goeth.—Therefore, so run, not as uncertainly; so fight, not as those that beat the air; but keep under your bodies, and bring them into subjection. Act not as though you counted yourselves to have apprehended; but this one thing do, “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.<sup>89</sup>” [2 Pet. i. 5.](#) &c. “And besides this, giving diligence, add to your faith, virtue;

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88 [Psa. lxxiii. 25.](#)

89 [Phil. iii 14-15.](#)

and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

S E R M O N   I I .   9 0

THE SOLE CONSIDERATION, THAT GOD IS GOD, SUFFICIENT TO STILL  
ALL OBJECTIONS.

TO HIS SOVEREIGNTY.

[Psalm xlvi. 10.](#)

Be still, and know that I am God.

THIS Psalm seems to be a song of the church in a time of great revolutions and desolations in the world. Therefore the church glories in God as her refuge, and strength, and present help, even in times of the greatest troubles and overturnings, [ver. 1, 2, 3](#). “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” The church makes her boast of God, not only as being her help, by defending her from the desolations and calamities in which the rest of the world were involved, but also by supplying her, as a never-failing river, with refreshment, comfort, and joy, in the times of public calamities. See [ver. 4, 5](#). “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.”

In the [6th and 8th verses](#). are set forth the terrible changes and calamities which were in the world: “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of God, what desolations he hath made in the earth.” In the verse preceding the text is elegantly set forth the manner in which God delivers the church from these calamities, and especially from the desolations of war, and the rage of their enemies: “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire; <sup>91</sup> ” *i. e.* he maketh wars to cease when they are against his people; he breaketh the bow when bent against his saints.

Then follow the words of the text: “Be still, and know that I am God. <sup>92</sup> ” The great works of God, wherein his sovereignty appeared, had been described in the foregoing verses.

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9 0   D A T E D ,   J U N E ,   1 7 3 5

91   [Psalm xlvi. 9.](#)

92   [Psalm xlvi. 10.](#)

In the awful desolations that he made, and by delivering his people by terrible things, he showed his greatness and dominion. Herein he manifested his power and sovereignty, and so commands all to be still, and know that he is God. For, says he, "I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth."<sup>93</sup>

In the words may be observed,

1. A duty described, to be still before God, and under the dispensations of his providence; which implies that we must be still as to *words*; not speaking against the sovereign dispensations of Providence, or complaining of them; not darkening counsel by words without knowledge, or justifying ourselves, and speaking great swelling words of vanity. We must be still as to *actions* and outward behaviour, so as not to oppose God in his dispensations; and as to *the inward frame of our hearts*, cultivating a calm and quiet submission of soul to the sovereign pleasure of God, whatever it be.

2. We may observe the ground of this duty, *viz. the divinity of God*. His being God is a sufficient reason why we should be still before him, in no wise murmuring, or objecting, or opposing, but calmly and humbly submitting to him.

3. How we must fulfil this duty, of being still before God, *viz. with a sense of his divinity*, as seeing the ground of this duty, in that we know him to be God. Our submission is to be such as becomes rational creatures. God doth not require us to submit contrary to reason, but to submit as seeing the reason and ground of submission. Hence, the bare consideration *that God is God*, may well be sufficient to still all objections and opposition against the divine sovereign dispensations.

This may appear by the following things.

1. In that he is God, he is an absolutely and infinitely *perfect* being; and it is impossible that he should do amiss. As he is eternal, and receives not his existence from any other, he cannot be limited in his being, or any attribute, to any certain determinate quantity. If any thing have bounds fixed to it, there must be some cause or reason why those bounds are fixed just where they are. Whence it will follow, that every limited thing must have some cause; and therefore that being which has no cause must be unlimited.

It is most evident by the works of God, that his understanding and power are infinite; for he that hath made all things out of nothing, and upholds, and governs, and manages all things every moment, in all ages, without growing weary, must be of infinite power. He must also be of infinite knowledge; for if he made all things, and upholds and governs all things continually, it will follow, that he knows and perfectly sees all things, great and small, in heaven and earth, continually at one view; which cannot be without infinite understanding.

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93 [Psalm xlvi. 10.](#)

Being thus infinite in understanding and power, he must also be perfectly holy; for unholiness always argues some defect, some blindness. Where there is no darkness or delusion, there can be no unholiness. It is impossible that wickedness should consist with infinite light. God being infinite in power and knowledge, he must be self-sufficient and all-sufficient; therefore it is impossible that he should be under any temptation to do any thing amiss; for he can have no end in doing it. When any are tempted to do amiss, it is for selfish ends. But how can an all-sufficient Being, who wants nothing, be tempted to do evil for selfish ends? So that God is essentially holy, and nothing is more impossible than that God should do amiss.

2. As he is God, he is so great, that he is infinitely above all comprehension; and therefore it is unreasonable in us to quarrel with his dispensations, because they are mysterious. If he were a being that we could comprehend, he would not be God. It would be unreasonable to suppose any other, than that there should be many things in the nature of God, and in his works and government, to us mysterious, and which we never can fully find out.

What are we? and what do we make of ourselves, when we expect that God and his ways should be upon a level with our understandings? We are infinitely unequal to any such thing, as comprehending God. We may less unreasonably expect that a nut-shell should contain the ocean: [Job xi. 7.](#) &c. “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” If we were sensible of the distance which there is between God and us, we should see the reasonableness of that interrogation of the apostle, [Rom. ix. 20.](#) “Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?”

If we find fault with God’s government, we virtually suppose ourselves fit to be God’s counsellors; whereas it becomes us rather, with great humility and adoration, to cry out with the apostle, [Rom. ix. 33.](#) &c. “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever.” If little children should rise up and find fault with the supreme legislature of a nation, or quarrel with the mysterious administrations of the sovereign, would it not be looked upon that they meddled with things too high for them? And what are we but babes? Our understandings are infinitely less than those of babes, in comparison with the wisdom of God. It becomes us therefore to be sensible of it, and to behave ourselves accordingly. [Psal. cxxxix. 1, 2.](#) “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child.” This consideration alone of the infinite distance between God and us, and between God’s understanding and ours, should be enough



to still and quiet us concerning all that God does, however mysterious and unintelligible to us.—Nor have we any right to expect, that God should particularly explain to us the reason of his dispensations. It is fit that God should not give any account of his matters to us, worms of the dust, that we may be sensible of our distance from him, and adore and submit to him in humble reverence.

Therefore we find, that when Job was so full of difficulty about the divine dispensations, God did not answer him by particularly explaining the reasons of his mysterious providence; but by showing him what a poor worm, what a nothing he was, and how much he himself was above him. This more became God than it would have done, to enter into a particular debate with him, or to unfold the mysterious difficulties. It became Job to submit to God in those things that he could not understand, and to this the reply tended to bring him. It is fit that God should dwell in thick darkness, or in light to which no man can approach, which no man hath seen nor can see. No wonder that a God of infinite glory shines with a brightness too strong and mighty for mortal eyes. For the angels themselves, those mighty spirits, are represented as covering their faces in this light; [Isa. vi.](#)

3. As he is God, all things are his own, and he hath a right to dispose of them according to his own pleasure. All things in this lower world are his; [Job xli. 11.](#) “Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.” Yea, the whole universe is God’s; [Deut. x. 14.](#) “Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord’s; the earth also with all that is therein.” All things are his, because all things are from him; they are wholly from him, and from him alone. Those things which are made by men, are not wholly from them. When a man builds a house, it is not wholly from him: nothing of which the house is made has its being from him. But all creatures are wholly and entirely the fruits of God’s power, and therefore it is fit that they should be subject to, and for, his pleasure. [Prov. xvi. 4.](#)—And as all things are from God, so they are upheld in being by him, and would sink into nothing in a moment, if he did not uphold them. And all things are to him. [Rom. xi. 36.](#) “For by him, and through him, and to him are all things.” [Col. i. 16, 17.](#) “For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” All mankind are his; their lives, and breath, and being; “for in him we live, and move, and have our being.”<sup>94</sup> Our souls and capacities are from him. [Ezek. xviii. 4.](#) “All souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son, is mine.”

4. In that he is God, he is worthy to be sovereign over all things. Sometimes men are the owners of more than they are worthy of. But God is not only the owner of the whole world, as all is from and dependent on him; but such is his perfection, the excellency and

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94 [Acts 17:28.](#)

dignity of his nature, that he is worthy of sovereignty over all. No man ought in the temper of his mind to be opposite to God's exercising the sovereignty of the universe, as if he were not worthy of it; for to be the absolute sovereign of the universe is not a glory or dignity too great for him. All things in heaven and earth, angels and men, are nothing in comparison with him; all are as the drop of the bucket, and as the light dust of the balance. It is therefore fit that every thing should be in his hands, to be disposed of according to his pleasure.—His will and pleasure are of infinitely greater importance than the will of creatures. It is fit that his will should take place, though contrary to the will of all other beings; that he should make himself his own end; and order all things for himself.—God is possessed of such perfections and excellencies as to qualify him to be the absolute sovereign of the world.—Certainly it is more fit that all things be under the guidance of a perfect unerring wisdom, than that they should be left to themselves to fall in confusion, or be brought to pass by blind causes. Yea, it is not fit that any affairs within the government of God should be left without the direction of his wise providence; least of all, things of the greatest importance.

It is absurd to suppose, that God is obliged to keep every creature from sinning and exposing himself to an adequate punishment. For if so, then it will follow, that there can be no such thing as a moral government of God over reasonable creatures; and it would be an absurdity for God to give commands; for he himself would be the party bound to see to the performance, and there could be no use of promises or threatenings. But if God may leave a creature to sin, and to expose himself to punishment, then it is much fitter and better that the matter should be ordered by wisdom, who should justly lie exposed by sin to punishment, and who not; than that it be left to come to pass by confused chance. It is unworthy of the Governor of the world to leave things to chance; it belongs to him to govern all things by wisdom—And as God has wisdom to qualify him to be sovereign, so he has power also to enable him to execute the determination's of wisdom. And he is essentially and invariably holy and righteous, and infinitely good; whereby he is qualified to govern the world in the best manner.—Therefore, when he acts as sovereign of the world, it is fit that we should be still, and willingly submit, and in no wise oppose his having the glory of his sovereignty; but should in a sense of his worthiness, cheerfully ascribe it to him, and say, "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever;<sup>95</sup>" and say with those in [Rev. v. 13](#). "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne."

5. In that he is God, he *will* be sovereign, and will *act* as such. He sits on the throne of his sovereignty, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He will be exalted in his sovereign power and dominion, as he himself declares; [Ps xlvii. 10](#). "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." He will have all men to know, that he is most high over all the earth. He doth according to his will in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of

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95 [Matt. vi. 13](#).



the earth, and none can stay his hand.—There is no such thing as frustrating, or baffling, or undermining his designs; for he is great in counsel, and wonderful in working. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord; whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever; nothing shall be put to it, nor any thing taken from it. He will work, and who shall let it? He is able to dash in pieces the enemy. If men join hand in hand against him, to hinder or oppose his designs, he breaks the bow, he cuts the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.—He kills and he makes alive, he brings down and raises up just as he pleases. *Isa. xlv. 6, 7.* “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none else: I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.”

Great men, and rich men, and wise men cannot hinder God from doing his pleasure. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, he accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor. There are many devices in a man’s heart, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations.—When he gives quietness, who can make trouble? When he hides his face, who can behold him? He breaketh down, and it cannot be built up again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening; when he purposeth, who shall disannul it? And when his hand is stretched out, who shall turn it back?—So there is no hindering God from being sovereign, and acting as such. “He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”<sup>96</sup> “He hath the keys of hell and of death: he openeth, and no man shutteth: he shutteth, and no man openeth.”<sup>97</sup> This may show us the folly of opposing ourselves against the sovereign dispensations of God; and how much more wisely they act who quietly and sweetly submit to his sovereign will.

6. In that he is God, he is able to avenge himself on those who oppose his sovereignty. He is wise of heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against God and prospered? He that will contend with God must answer it. And what a poor creature is man to fight against God! Is he able to make his part good with him? Whoever of God’s enemies deal proudly, he will show that he is above them. They will be but as the chaff before the whirlwind, and shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume into smoke, they shall consume away. *Isa. xxvii. 4.* “Who would set the briers and thorns against him in battle? He would go through them, he would burn them together.”

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96 [Rom. 9:18](#)

97 [Rev. iii. 7.](#)

### APPLICATION.

A manifold improvement might be made of this doctrine, which a little reflection may suggest to each of us. But the improvement which I shall at this time make of it, shall be only in a *use of reproof* to such under convictions of sin, and fears of hell, as are not still, but oppose the sovereignty of God in the disposals of his grace. This doctrine shows the unreasonableness, and dreadful wickedness, of your refusing heartily to own the sovereignty of God in this matter. It shows that you know not *that God is God*. If you knew this, you would be inwardly still and quiet; you would humbly and calmly lie in the dust before a sovereign God, and would see sufficient reason for it.

In objecting and quarrelling about the righteousness of God's laws and threatenings, and his sovereign dispensations towards you and others, you oppose his *divinity*, you show your ignorance of his divine greatness and excellency, and that you cannot bear that he should have divine honour. It is from low, mean thoughts of God, that you do in your minds oppose his sovereignty, that you are not sensible how dangerous your conduct is; and what an audacious thing it is for such a creature as man to strive with his Maker.

What poor creatures are you, that you should set up yourselves for judges over the Most High; that you should take it upon you to call God to an account; that you should say to the great Jehovah, what dost thou? and that you should pass sentence against him! If you knew that he is God, you would not act in this manner; but this knowledge would be sufficient to still and calm you concerning all God's dispensations, and you would say with Eli, in [1 Sam. iii. 18](#). "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his sight."—But here I shall be more particular in several things.

1. It is from *mean thoughts* of God that you are not convinced that you have by your sins deserved his eternal wrath and curse. If you had any proper sense of the infinite majesty, greatness, and holiness of God, you would see, that to be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and there to have no rest day nor night, is not a punishment more than equal to the demerit of sin. You would not have so good a thought of yourselves; you would not be so clean and pure in your own eyes; you would see what vile, unworthy, hell-deserving creatures you are. If you had not little thoughts of God, and were to consider how you have set yourselves against him—how you have slighted him, his commandments and threatenings, and despised his goodness and mercy, how often you have disobeyed, how obstinate you have been, how your whole lives have been filled up with sin against God—you would not wonder that God threatens to destroy you for ever, but would wonder that he hath not actually done it before now.

If you had not mean thoughts of God, you would not find fault with him for not setting his love on you who never exercised any love to him. You would not think it unjust in God not to seek your interest and eternal welfare, who never would be persuaded at all to seek

his glory; you would not think it unjust in him to slight and disregard you, who have so often and so long made light of God. If you had not mean thoughts of God, you never would think him obliged to bestow eternal salvation upon you, who have never been truly thankful for one mercy which you have already received of him.—What do you think of yourselves? what great ideas have you of yourselves? and what thoughts have you of God, that you think he is obliged to do so much for you though you treat him ever so ungratefully for the kindness which he hath already bestowed upon you all the days of your lives? It must be from little thoughts of God, that you think it unjust in him not to regard you when you call upon him; when he hath earnestly called to you, so long and so often, and you would not be persuaded to hearken to him. What thoughts have you of God, that you think he is more obliged to hear what you say to him, than you are to regard what he says to you?

It is from diminutive thoughts of God, that you think he is obliged to show mercy to you when you seek it, though you have been for a long time wilfully sinning against him, provoking him to anger, and presuming that he would show you mercy when you should seek it. What kind of thoughts have you of God, that you think he is obliged, as it were, to yield himself up to be abused by men, so that when they have done, his mercy and pardoning grace shall not be in his own power, but he must be obliged to dispense them at their call?

2. It is from little thoughts of God, that you quarrel against his justice in *the condemnation of sinners*, from the doctrine of original sin. It must be because you do not know him to be God, and will not allow him to be sovereign. It is for want of a sense how much God is above you, that those things in him which are above your comprehension, are such difficulties and stumbling-blocks to you: it is for want of a sense how much the wisdom and understanding of God are above yours, and what poor, short-sighted, blind creatures you are, in comparison with him. If you were sensible what God is, you would see it most reasonable to expect that his ways should be far above the reason of man, and that he dwells in light which no man can approach unto, which no man hath seen, nor can see.—If men were sensible how excellent and perfect a Being he is, they would not be so apt to be jealous of him, and to suspect him in things which lie beyond their understandings. It would be no difficulty with them to trust God out of sight. What horrid arrogance in worms of the dust, that they should think they have wisdom enough to examine and determine concerning what God doth, and to pass sentence on it as unjust! If you were sensible how great and glorious a being God is, it would not be such a difficulty with you to allow him the dignity of such absolute sovereignty, as that he should order as he pleases, whether every single man should stand for himself, or whether a common father should stand for all.

3. It is from mean thoughts of God, that you trust in your *own righteousness*, and think that God ought to respect you for it. If you knew how great a Being he is, if you saw that he is God indeed, you would see how unworthy, how miserable a present it is to be offered to such a Being. It is because you are blind, and know not what a Being he is with whom you



have to do, that you make so much of your own righteousness. If you had your eyes open to see that he is God indeed, you would wonder how you could think to commend yourselves to so great a Being by your gifts, by such poor affections, such broken prayers, wherein is so much hypocrisy, and so much selfishness.—If you had not very mean thoughts of God, you would wonder that ever you could think of purchasing the favour and love of so great a God by your services. You would see that it would be unworthy of God to bestow such a mercy upon you, as peace with him, and his everlasting love, and the enjoyment of himself, for such a price as you have to offer; and that he would exceedingly dishonour himself in so doing.—If you saw what God is, you would exclaim, as Job did, [Job xlii. 5, 6](#). “Now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” And as Isaiah did, [chap. vi. 5](#). “Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

4. It is from mean thoughts of God, that you contend with him, because he bestows grace on some, and not on others. Thus God doth: he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; he takes one, and leaves another, of those who are in like circumstances; as it is said of Jacob and Esau, while they were not yet born, and had done neither good nor evil, [Rom. ix. 10-13](#). With this sinners often quarrel; but they who upon this ground quarrel with God, suppose him to be *bound* to bestow his grace on sinners, for if he be bound to none, then he may take his choice, and bestow it on whom he pleases; and his bestowing it on some brings no obligation on him to bestow it on others. Has God no right to his own grace? is it not at his own disposal? and is God incapable of making a gift or present of it to any man? for a person cannot make a present of that which is not his own, or in his own right. It is impossible to *give a debt*.

But what a low thought of God does this argue! Consider what it is you would make of God. Must he be so tied up, that he cannot use his own pleasure in bestowing his own gifts? Is he obliged to bestow them on one, because it is his pleasure to bestow them on another? Is not God worthy to have the same right to dispose of his gifts, as a man has of his money? or is it because God is not so great, and therefore should be more subject, more under bounds, than men? Is not God worthy to have as absolute a propriety in his goods as man has in his? At this rate, God cannot make a present of any thing; he has nothing of his own to bestow. If he have a mind to show a peculiar favour to some, to lay some under special obligations, he cannot do it, on the supposition, because his favour is not at his own disposal! The truth is, men have low thoughts of God, or else they would willingly ascribe sovereignty to him in this matter. [Matt. xx. 15](#). “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?”

God is pleased to show mercy to his enemies, according to his own sovereign pleasure. And surely it is fit he should. How unreasonable is it to think that God stands bound to his enemies! Therefore consider what you do in quarrelling with God, and opposing his sover-

eignty. Consider with whom it is you contend. Let all who are sensible of their misery, and afraid of the wrath of God, consider these things. Those of you who have been long seeking salvation, but are in great terrors through fear that God will destroy you, consider what you have heard, *be still, and know that he is God*. When God seems to turn a deaf ear to your cries; when he seems to frown upon you; when he shows mercy to others, your equals, or those who are worse, and who have been seeking a less time than you; be still. Consider who he is that disposes and orders these things. You shall consider it; you shall know it: he will make all men to know that he is God. You shall either know it for your good here, by submission, or to your cost hereafter.

S E R M O N   I I I .   9 8

G R E A T   G U I L T   N O   O B S T A C L E   T O   T H E   P A R D O N   O F   T H E   R E T U R N I N G  
S I N N E R .

Psalm xxv. 11.

For thy names sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity; for it is great.

It is evident by some passages in this Psalm, that when it was penned, it was a time of affliction and danger with David. This appears particularly by the [15th and following verses](#): “Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net,” &c. His distress makes him think of his sins, and leads him to confess them, and to cry to God for pardon, as is suitable in a time of affliction. See [ver. 7](#). “Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;” and [verse 18](#). “Look upon mine affliction, and my pain, and forgive all my sins.”

It is observable in the text, what arguments the Psalmist makes use of in pleading for pardon.

1. He pleads for pardon *for God’s name’s sake*. He has no expectation of pardon for the sake of any righteousness or worthiness of his for any good deeds he had done, or any compensation he had made for his sins; though if man’s righteousness could be a just plea, David would have had as much to plead as most. But he begs that God would do it for his own name’s sake, for his own glory, for the glory of his own free grace, and for the honour of his own covenant-faithfulness.

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9 8   N O T   D A T E D .   A L L   T H E   S E R M O N S   I N   T H I S  
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T O   H A V E   B E E N   W R I T T E N   B E F O R E   T H E   Y E A R   1 7 3 3 ,   A S  
F R O M   T H A T   P E R I O D   O U R   A U T H O R   D A T E D   H I S  
S E R M O N S .

2. The Psalmist pleads the *greatness of his sins* as an argument for mercy. He not only doth not plead his own righteousness, or the smallness of his sins; he not only doth not say, Pardon mine iniquity, for I have done much good to counterbalance it; or, Pardon mine iniquity, for it is small, and thou hast no great reason to be angry with me; mine iniquity is not so great, that thou hast any just cause to remember it against me; mine offence is not such but that thou mayest well enough overlook it: but on the contrary he says, *Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great*: he pleads the greatness of his sin, and not the smallness of it; he enforces his prayer with this consideration, that his sins are very heinous.

But how could he make this a plea for pardon? I answer, Because the greater his iniquity was, the more *need* he had of pardon. It is as much as if he had said, Pardon mine iniquity, for it is so great that I cannot bear the punishment; my sin is so great that I am in necessity of pardon; my case will be exceedingly miserable, unless thou be pleased to pardon me. He makes use of the greatness of his sin, to enforce his plea for pardon, as a man would make use of the greatness of calamity in begging for relief. When a beggar begs for bread, he will plead the greatness of his poverty and necessity. When a man in distress cries for pity, what more suitable plea can be urged than the extremity of his case?—And God allows such a plea as this: for he is moved to mercy towards us by nothing in us but the miserableness of our case. He doth not pity sinners because they are worthy, but because they need his pity.

DOCTRINE. *If we truly come to God for mercy, the greatness of our sin will be no impediment to pardon.*—If it were an impediment, David would never have used it as a plea for pardon, as we find he does in the text.—The following things are needful in order that we truly come to God for mercy:

I. That we should see *our misery*, and be *sensible* of our need of mercy. They who are not sensible of their misery cannot truly look to God for mercy; for it is the very notion of divine mercy, that it is the goodness and grace of God to the miserable. Without misery in the object, there can be no exercise of mercy. To suppose mercy without supposing misery, or pity without calamity, is a contradiction: therefore men cannot look upon themselves as proper objects of mercy, unless they first know themselves to be miserable; and so, unless this be the case, it is impossible that they should come to God for mercy. They must be sensible that they are the children of wrath; that the law is against them, and that they are exposed to the curse of it: that the wrath of God abideth on them; and that he is angry with them every day while they are under the guilt of sin.—They must be sensible that it is a very dreadful thing to be the object of the wrath of God; that it is a very awful thing to have him for their enemy; and that they cannot bear his wrath. They must be sensible that the guilt of sin makes them miserable creatures, whatever temporal enjoyments they have; that they can be no other than miserable, undone creatures, so long as God is angry with them; that they are without strength, and must perish, and that eternally, unless God help them. They must see that their case is utterly desperate, for any thing that any one else can do for them;

that they hang over the pit of eternal misery; and that they must necessarily drop into it, if God have not mercy on them.

II. They must be sensible that they *are not worthy* that God should have mercy on them. They who truly come to God for mercy, come as beggars, and not as creditors: they come for mere mercy, for sovereign grace, and not for any thing that is due. Therefore, they must see that the misery under which they lie is justly brought upon them, and that the wrath to which they are exposed is *justly* threatened against them; and that they have deserved that God should *be* their enemy, and should *continue* to be their enemy. They must be sensible that it would be just with God to do as he hath threatened in his holy law, *viz.* make them the objects of his wrath and curse in hell to all eternity.—They who come to God for mercy in a right manner are not disposed to find fault with his severity; but they come in a sense of their own utter unworthiness, as with ropes about their necks, and lying in the dust at the foot of mercy.

III. They must come to God for mercy in and *through Jesus Christ* alone. All their hope of mercy must be from the consideration of what he is, what he hath done, and what he hath suffered; and that there is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we can be saved, but that of Christ; that he is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; that his blood cleanses from all sin, and that he is so worthy, that all sinners who are in him may well be pardoned and accepted.—It is impossible that any should *come* to God for mercy, and at the same time have no *hope* of mercy. Their coming to God for it, implies that they have some hope of obtaining, otherwise they would not think it worth the while to come. But they that come in a right manner have all their hope through Christ, or from the consideration of his redemption, and the sufficiency of it.—If persons thus come to God for mercy, the greatness of their sins will be no impediment to pardon. Let their sins be ever so many, and great, and aggravated, it will not make God in the least degree more backward to pardon them. This may be made evident by the following considerations:

1. *The mercy of God* is as sufficient for the pardon of the greatest sins, as for the least; and that because his mercy is infinite. That which is infinite, is as much above what is great, as it is above what is small. Thus God being infinitely great, he is as much above kings as he is above beggars; he is as much above the highest angel, as he is above the meanest worm. One infinite measure doth not come any nearer to the extent of what is infinite than another.—So the mercy of God being infinite, it must be as sufficient for the pardon of all sin, as of one. If one of the least sins be not beyond the mercy of God, so neither are the greatest, or ten thousand of them.—However, it must be acknowledged, that this alone doth not prove the doctrine. For though the mercy of God may be as sufficient for the pardon of great sins as others; yet there may be other obstacles, besides the want of mercy. The mercy of God may be sufficient, and yet the other attributes may oppose the dispensation of mercy in these cases.—Therefore I observe,

2. That the *satisfaction of Christ* is as sufficient for the removal of the greatest guilt, as the least: [1 John i. 7](#). “The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.” [Acts xiii. 39](#). “By him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” All the sins of those who truly come to God for mercy, let them be what they will, are satisfied for, if God be true who tells us so; and if they be satisfied for, surely it is not incredible, that God should be ready to pardon them. So that Christ having fully satisfied for all sin, or having wrought out a satisfaction that is sufficient for all, it is now no way inconsistent with the glory of the divine attributes to pardon the greatest sins of those who in a right manner come unto him for it.—God may now pardon the greatest sinners without any prejudice to the honour of his holiness. The holiness of God will not suffer him to give the least countenance to sin, but inclines him to give proper testimonies of his hatred of it. But Christ having satisfied for sin, God can now love the sinner, and give no countenance at all to sin, however great a sinner he may have been. It was a sufficient testimony of God’s abhorrence of sin, that he poured out his wrath on his own dear Son, when he took the guilt of it upon himself. Nothing can more show God’s abhorrence of sin than this. If all mankind had been eternally damned, it would not have been so great a testimony of it.

God may, through Christ, pardon the *greatest sinner* without any prejudice to the honour of his majesty. The honour of the divine majesty indeed requires satisfaction; but the sufferings of Christ fully repair the injury. Let the contempt be ever so great, yet if so honourable a person as Christ undertakes to be a Mediator for the offender, and suffers so much for him, it fully repairs the injury done to the Majesty of heaven and earth. The sufferings of Christ fully satisfy justice. The justice of God, as the supreme Governor and Judge of the world, requires the punishment of sin. The supreme Judge must judge the world according to a rule of justice. God doth not show mercy as a judge, but as a sovereign; therefore his exercise of mercy as a sovereign, and his justice as a judge, must be made consistent one with another; and this is done by the sufferings of Christ, in which sin is punished fully, and justice answered. [Rom. iii. 25, 26](#). “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”—The law is no impediment in the way of the pardon of the greatest sin, if men do but truly come to God for mercy: for Christ hath fulfilled the law, he hath borne the curse of it, in his sufferings; [Gal. iii. 13](#). “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

3. Christ *will not refuse* to save the greatest sinners, who in a right manner come to God for mercy; for this is his work. It is his business to be a Saviour of sinners; it is the work upon which he came into the world; and therefore he will not object to it. He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, [Matt. ix. 13](#). Sin is the very evil which he



came into the world to remedy: therefore he will not object to any man, that he is very sinful. The more sinful he is, the more need of Christ.—The sinfulness of man was the reason of Christ's coming into the world; this is the very misery from which he came to deliver men. The more they have of it, the more need they have of being delivered; [Matt. ix. 12.](#) "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,". The physician will not make it an objection against healing a man who applies to him, that he stands in great need of his help. If a physician of compassion comes among the sick and wounded, surely he will not refuse to heal those that stand in most need of healing, if he be able to heal them.

4. Herein doth the *glory of grace* by the redemption of Christ much consist, *viz.* in its sufficiency for the pardon of the greatest sinners. The whole contrivance of the way of salvation is for this end, to glorify the free grace of God. God had it on his heart from all eternity to glorify this attribute; and therefore it is, that the device of saving sinners by Christ was conceived. The greatness of divine grace appears very much in this, that God by Christ saves the greatest offenders. The greater the guilt of any sinner is, the more glorious and wonderful is the grace manifested in his pardon: [Rom. v. 20.](#) "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The apostle, when telling how great a sinner he had been, takes notice of the abounding of grace in his pardon, of which his great guilt was the occasion: [1 Tim. i. 13.](#) "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But I obtained mercy; and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." The Redeemer is glorified, in that he proves sufficient to redeem those who are exceeding sinful, in that his blood proves sufficient to wash away the greatest guilt, in that he is able to save men to the uttermost, and in that he redeems even from the greatest misery. It is the honour of Christ to save the greatest sinners, when they come to him, as it is the honour of a physician that he cures the most desperate diseases or wounds. Therefore, no doubt, Christ will be willing to save the greatest sinners, if they come to him; for he will not be backward to glorify himself, and to commend the value and virtue of his own blood. Seeing he hath so laid out himself to redeem sinners, he will not be unwilling to show, that he is able to redeem to the uttermost.

5. Pardon is as much *offered and promised* to the greatest sinners as any, if they will come aright to God for mercy. The invitations of the gospel are always in universal terms: as, Ho, every one that thirsteth; Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and, Whosoever will, let him come. And the voice of Wisdom is to men in general: [Prov. viii. 4.](#) "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." Not to moral men, or religious men, but to you, O men. So Christ promises, [John vi. 37.](#) Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." This is the direction of Christ to his apostles, after his resurrection, [Mark xvi. 15, 16.](#) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." Which is agreeable to what the apostle saith, that [Col. i. 23.](#) "the gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven,"

### APPLICATION.

The proper *use* of this subject is, to encourage sinners whose consciences are burdened with a sense of guilt, immediately to go to God through Christ for mercy. If you go in the manner we have described, the arms of mercy are open to embrace you. You need not be at all the more fearful of coming because of your sins, let them be ever so black. If you had as much guilt lying on each of your souls as all the wicked men in the world, and all the damned souls in hell; yet if you come to God for mercy, sensible of your own vileness, and seeking pardon only through the free mercy of God in Christ, you would not need to be afraid; the greatness of your sins would be no impediment to your pardon. Therefore, if your souls be burdened, and you are distressed for fear of hell, you need not bear that burden and distress any longer. If you are but *willing*, you may freely come and unload yourselves, and cast all your burdens on Christ, and rest in him.

But here I shall speak to some objections which some awakened sinners may be ready to make against what I now exhort them to.

1. Some may be ready to object, I have spent my youth and all the best of my life in sin, and I am afraid God will not accept of me, when I offer him only mine old age.—To this I would answer,—1. Hath God said any where, that he will not accept of *old sinners* who come to him? God hath often made offers and promises in universal terms; and is there any such exception put in? Doth Christ say, All that thirst, let them come to me and drink, *except* old sinners? Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, except old sinners, and I will give you rest? Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, if he be not an old sinner? Did you ever read any such exception any where in the Bible? and why should you give way to exceptions which you make out of your own heads, or rather which the devil puts into your heads, and which have no foundation in the word of God?—Indeed it is more rare that old sinners are willing to come, than others; but if they do come, they are as readily accepted as any whatever.

2. When God accepts of young persons, it is not for the sake of the service which they are like to do him afterwards, or because youth is better worth accepting than old age. You seem entirely to mistake the matter, in thinking that God will not accept of you because you are old; as though he readily accepted of persons in their youth, because their youth is better worth his acceptance; whereas it is only for the sake of Jesus Christ, that God is willing to accept of any.

You say, your life is almost spent, and you are afraid that the best time for serving God is past; and that therefore God will not now accept of you; as if it were for the sake of the service which persons are like to do him, after they are converted, that he accepts of them. But a self-righteous spirit is at the bottom of such objections. Men cannot get off from the notion, that it is for some goodness or service of their own, either done or expected to be

done, that God accepts of persons, and receives them into favour.—Indeed they who deny God their youth, the best part of their lives, and spend it in the service of Satan, dreadfully sin and provoke God; and he very often leaves them to hardness of heart, when they are grown old. But if they are willing to accept of Christ when old, he is as ready to receive them as any others; for in that matter God hath respect only to Christ and his worthiness.

II. But I am afraid that I have committed sins that are peculiar to reprobates. I have sinned against light, and strong convictions of conscience; I have sinned presumptuously; and have so resisted the strivings of the Spirit of God, that I am afraid I have committed such sins as none of God's elect ever commit. I cannot think that God will ever leave one whom he intends to save, to go on and commit sins against so much light and conviction, and with such horrid presumption.—Others may say, I have had risings of heart against God; blasphemous thoughts, a spiteful and malicious spirit; and have abused mercy and the strivings of the Spirit, trampled upon the Saviour, and my sins are such as are peculiar to those who are reprobated to eternal damnation. To all this I would answer,

1. There is no sin peculiar to reprobates but the sin against the Holy Ghost. Do you read of any other in the word of God? And if you do not read of any there, what ground have you to think any such thing? What other rule have we, by which to judge of such matters, but the divine word? If we venture to go beyond that, we shall be miserably in the dark. When we pretend to go further in our determinations than the word of God, Satan takes us up, and leads us. It seems to you that such sins are peculiar to the reprobate, and such as God never forgives. But what reason can you give for it, if you have no word of God to reveal it? Is it because you cannot see how the mercy of God is sufficient to pardon, or the blood of Christ to cleanse from such presumptuous sins? If so, it is because you never yet saw how great the mercy of God is; you never saw the sufficiency of the blood of Christ, and you know not how far the virtue of it extends. Some elect persons have been guilty of all manner of sins, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; and unless you have been guilty of this, you have not been guilty of any that are peculiar to reprobates.

2. Men may be less likely to believe, for sins which they have committed, and not the less readily pardoned when they do believe. It must be acknowledged that some sinners are in more danger of hell than others. Though all are in great danger, some are less likely to be saved. Some are less likely ever to be converted and to come to Christ: but all who do come to him are alike readily accepted; and there is as much encouragement for one man to come to Christ as another.—Such sins as you mention are indeed exceeding heinous and provoking to God, and do in an especial manner bring the soul into danger of damnation, and into danger of being given to final hardness of heart; and God more commonly gives men up to the judgment of final hardness for such sins, than for others. Yet they are not peculiar to reprobates; there is but one sin that is so, *viz.* that against the Holy Ghost. And notwithstanding the sins which you have committed, if you can find it in our hearts to come

to Christ, and close with him, you will be accepted not at all the less readily because you have committed such sins.—Though God doth more rarely cause some sorts of sinners to come to Christ than others, it is not because his mercy or the redemption of Christ is not as sufficient for them as others, but because in wisdom he sees fit so to dispense his grace, for a restraint upon the wickedness of men; and because it is his will to give converting grace in the use of means, among which this is one, *viz.* to lead a moral and religious life, and agreeable to our light, and the convictions of our consciences. But when once any sinner is willing to come to Christ, mercy is as ready for him as for any. There is no consideration at all had of his sins; let him have been ever so sinful, his sins are not remembered; God doth not upbraid him with them.

III. But had I not better stay till I shall have made myself better, before I presume to come to Christ. I have been, and see myself to be very wicked now; but am in hopes of mending myself, and rendering myself at least not so wicked: then I shall have more courage to come to God for mercy.—In answer to this,

1. Consider how unreasonably you act. You are striving to set up yourselves for your own saviours; you are striving to get something of your own, on the account of which you may the more readily be accepted. So that by this it appears that you do not seek to be accepted only on Christ's account. And is not this to rob Christ of the glory of being your only Saviour? Yet this is the way in which you are hoping to make Christ willing to save you.

2. You can never come to Christ at all, unless you first see that he will not accept of you the more readily for any thing that you can do. You must first see, that it is utterly in vain for you to try to make yourselves better on any such account. You must see that you can never make yourselves any more worthy, or less unworthy, by any thing which you can perform.

3. If ever you truly come to Christ, you must see that there is enough in him for your pardon, though you be no better than you are. If you see not the sufficiency of Christ to pardon you, without any righteousness of your own to recommend you, you never will come so as to be accepted of him. The way to be accepted is to come—not on any such encouragement, that now you have made ourselves better, and more worthy, or not so unworthy, but—on the mere encouragement of Christ's worthiness, and God's mercy.

4. If ever you truly come to Christ, you must come to him to make you better. You must come as a patient comes to his physician, with his diseases or wounds to be cured. Spread all your wickedness before him, and do not plead your goodness; but plead your badness, and your necessity on that account: and say, as the Psalmist in the text, not Pardon mine iniquity, for it is not so great as it was, but, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." <sup>99</sup> "

S E R M O N I V . 1 0 0

THE MOST HIGH A PRAYER-HEARING GOD.

Psalm lxxv. 2.

O thou that hearest prayer.

This Psalm seems to be written, either as a Psalm of praise to God for some remarkable answer of prayer, in the bestowment of some public mercy; or else on occasion of some special faith and confidence which David had that his prayer would be answered. It is probable that this mercy bestowed, or expected to be bestowed, was some great public mercy, for which David had been very earnest and importunate, and had annexed a vow to his prayer; and that he had vowed to God, that if he would grant him his request he would render him praise and glory.—This seems to be the reason why he expresses himself as he does in the first verse of the Psalm: “Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed; <sup>101</sup>” *i.e.* that praise which I have vowed to give thee, on the answer of my prayer, waiteth for thee, to be given thee as soon as thou shalt have answered my prayer; and the vow which I made to thee shall be performed.

In the verse of the text, there is a prophecy of the glorious times of the gospel, when ” all flesh shall come” to the true God, as to *the God who heareth prayer*; which is here mentioned as what distinguishes the true God from the gods to whom the nations prayed and sought, those gods who cannot Wear, and cannot answer their prayer. The time was coming when all flesh should come to that God who *doth hear prayer*.—Hence we gather this doctrine, *That it is the character of the Most High, that he is a God who hears prayer.*

I shall handle this point in the following method:

1. Show that the Most High is a *God that hears prayer*.
2. That he is *eminently* such a God.
3. That herein he is *distinguished* from all false gods.
4. Give the *reasons* of the doctrine.

I. The Most High is a God that *hears prayer*. Though he is infinitely above all, and stands in no need of creatures; yet he is graciously pleased to take a merciful notice of poor worms of the dust. He manifests and presents himself as the object of prayer, appears as sitting on a mercy-seat, that men may come to him by prayer. When they stand in need of any thing,

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101    Psalm lxxv. 1



he allows them to come, and ask it of him; and he is wont to hear their prayers. God in his word hath given many promises that he will hear their prayers; the Scripture is full of such examples; and in his dispensations towards his church, manifests himself to be a God that hears prayer.

Here it may be inquired, What is meant by God's hearing prayer? There are two things implied in it.

1. His *accepting* the supplications of those who pray to him. Their address to him is well taken, he is well pleased with it. He approves of their asking such mercies as they request of him, and approves of their manner of doing it. He accepts of their prayers as an offering to him: he accepts the honour they do him in prayer.

2. He *acts* agreeably to his acceptance. He sometimes manifests his acceptance of their prayers, by special discoveries of his mercy and sufficiency, which he makes to them *in prayer*, or immediately after. While they are praying, he gives them sweet views of his glorious grace, purity, sufficiency, and sovereignty; and enables them, with great quietness, to rest in him, to leave themselves and their prayers with him, submitting to his will, and trusting in his grace and faithfulness. Such a manifestation God seems to have made of himself in prayer to *Hannah*, which quieted and composed her mind, and took away her sadness. We read ([1 Sam. i.](#)) how earnest she was, and how exercised in her mind, and that she was a woman of a sorrowful spirit. But she came and poured out her soul before God, and spake out of the abundance of her complaint and grief; then we read, that she went away, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad, [ver. 13.](#) which seems to have been from some refreshing discoveries which God had made of himself to her, to enable her quietly to submit to his will, and trust in his mercy, whereby God manifested his acceptance of her.—Not that I conclude persons can hence argue, that the particular thing which they ask will certainly be given them, or that they can particularly foretell from it what God will do in answer to their prayers, any further than he has promised in his word; yet God may, and doubtless does, thus testify his acceptance of their prayers, and from hence they may confidently rest in his providence, in his merciful ordering and disposing, with respect to the thing which they ask.—Again, God manifests his acceptance of their prayers, by *doing* for them agreeably to their needs and supplications. He not only inwardly and spiritually discovers his mercy to their souls by his Spirit, but outwardly by dealing mercifully with them in his providence, in consequence of their prayers, and by causing an agreeableness between his providence and their prayers.—I proceed now,

II. To show that the Most High is *eminently* a God that hears prayer. This appears in several things.

1. In his giving such *free access* to him by prayer. God in his word manifests himself ready at all times to allow us this privilege. He sits on a throne of grace; and there is no veil to hide this throne, and keep us from it. The veil is rent from the top to the bottom; the way

is open at all times, and we may go to God as often as we please. Although God be infinitely above us, yet we may come with boldness: [Heb. iv. 14, 16.](#) "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." How wonderful is it that such worms as we should be allowed to come boldly at all times to so great a God!—Thus God indulges all kinds of persons, of all nations, [1 Cor. i 2, 3.](#) Unto all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours; grace he unto you," &c. Yea, God allows the most vile and unworthy; the greatest sinners are allowed to come through Christ. And he not only allows, but encourages, and frequently invites them; yea, manifests himself as delighting in being sought to by prayer: [Prov. xv. 8.](#) "The prayer of the upright is his delight;" and in [Cant. ii. 14.](#) we have Christ saying to the spouse, "O my dove, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice."<sup>102</sup> The voice of the saints in prayer is sweet unto Christ; he delights to hear it. He allows them to be earnest and importunate; yea, to the degree as to take no denial, and as it were to give him no rest, and even encouraging them so to do: [Isa. lxii. 6, 7.](#) "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest." Thus Christ encourages us, in the parable of the importunate widow and the unjust judge, [Luke xviii.](#) So, in the parable of the man who went to his friend at midnight, [Luke xi. 5.,](#) &c.

Thus God allowed Jacob to wrestle with him, yea, to be resolute in it; "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."<sup>103</sup> It is noticed with approbation, when men are violent for the kingdom of heaven, and take it by force. Thus Christ suffered the blind man to be most importunate and unceasing in his cries to him, [Luke xviii. 38, 39.](#) He continued crying, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Others who were present rebuked him, that he should hold his peace, looking upon it as too great a boldness, and an indecent behaviour towards Christ, thus to cry after him as he passed by. But Christ did not rebuke him, but stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him, saying, "What wilt thou that I should do to thee?"<sup>104</sup> And when the blind man had told him, Christ graciously granted his request.—The freedom of access that God gives, appears also in allowing us to come to him by prayer for every thing we need, both temporal and spiritual; whatever evil we need to be delivered from, or good we would obtain: [Phil. iv. 6.](#) "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

2. That God is eminently of this character, appears in his hearing prayer *so readily*. He often manifests his readiness to hear prayer, by giving an answer so speedily, sometimes while they are yet speaking, and sometimes before they pray, when they only have a design

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102 [Cant. ii. 14.](#)

103 [Gen. xxxii. 26.](#)

104 [Luke xviii. 41.](#)

of praying. So ready is God to hear prayer, that he takes notice of the first purpose of praying, and sometimes bestows mercy thereupon: [Isa. lxxv. 24](#). “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” We read, that when Daniel was making humble and earnest supplication, God sent an angel to comfort him, and to assure him of an answer, [Dan. ix. 20-24](#). When God defers for the present to answer the prayer of faith, it is not from any backwardness to answer, but for the good of his people sometimes, that they may be better prepared for the mercy before they receive it, or because another time would be the best and fittest on some other account: and even then, when God seems to delay an answer, the answer is indeed hastened, as in [Luke xviii. 7, 8](#). “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, that he will avenge them speedily.” Sometimes, when the blessing seems to tarry, God is even then at work to bring it about in the best time and the best manner: [Hab. ii. 3](#). “Though it tarry, wait for it; it will come, it will not tarry.”

3. That the Most High is eminently one that hears prayer, appears by his giving *so liberally* in answer to prayer; [Jam. i. 5, 6](#). “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not.” Men often show their backwardness to give, both by the scantiness of their gifts, and by upbraiding those who ask of them. They will be sure to put them in mind of some faults, when they give them any thing; but, on the contrary, God both gives liberally, and upbraids us not with our undeservings. He is plenteous and rich in his communications to those who call upon him: [Psal. lxxxvi. 5](#). “For thou art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon thee;” and [Rom. x. 12](#). “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.”—Sometimes, God not only gives the thing asked, but he gives them more than is asked. So he did to Solomon, [1 Kings iii. 12, 13](#). “Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour; so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days.” Yea, God will give more to his people than they can either ask or think, as is implied in [Ephes. iii. 20](#). “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.”

4. That God is *eminently* of this character, appears by the greatness of the things which he hath often done in answer to prayer. Thus, when Esau was coming out against his brother Jacob, with four hundred men, without doubt fully resolved to cut him off, Jacob prayed and God turned the heart of Esau, so that he met Jacob in a very friendly manner; [Gen. xxxii](#). So in Egypt, at the prayer of Moses, God brought those dreadful plagues, and at his prayer removed them again. When Samson was ready to perish with thirst, he prayed to God, and he brought water out of a dry jaw-bone, for his supply, [Judg. xv. 18, 19](#). And when he prayed, after his strength was departed from him, God strengthened him, so as to



pull down the temple of Dagon on the Philistines: so that those whom he slew at his death were more than all those whom he slew in his life.—Joshua prayed to God, and said, “Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon; <sup>105</sup>” and God heard his prayer, and caused the sun and moon to stand still accordingly. The prophet “Elijah was a man of like passion” with us; [Jam. v. 17, 18](#). “and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit;” as the apostle James observes, So God confounded the army of Zerah, the Ethiopian, of a thousand thousand, in answer to the prayer of Asa, [2 Chron. xiv. 9.](#), &c. And God sent an angel, and slew in one night an hundred and eighty-five thousand men of Sennacherib’s army, in answer to Hezekiah’s prayer, [2 Kings xix. 14-16, 19, 35](#).

5. This truth appears, in that God is, as it were, *overcome* by prayer. When God is displeased by sin, he manifests his displeasure, comes out against us in his providence, and seems to oppose and resist us; in such cases, God is, speaking after the manner of men, overcome by humble and fervent prayer. [Jam. v. 16](#). “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” It has a great power in it; such a prayer-hearing God is the Most High, that he graciously manifests himself as conquered by it. Thus God appeared to oppose Jacob in what he sought of him; yet Jacob was resolute, and overcame. Therefore God changed his name from Jacob to Israel; for, says he, [Gen. xxxii. 28](#). “as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” A mighty prince indeed! [Hos. xii. 4](#). “Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him.”—When his anger was provoked against Israel, and he appeared to be ready to consume them in his hot displeasure, Moses stood in the gap, and by his humble and earnest prayer and supplication averted the stroke of divine vengeance, [Exod. xxxii. 9.](#), &c. and [Numb. xiv. 11.](#), &c.

III. Herein the most high God is *distinguished* from false gods. The true God is the only one of this character; there is no other of whom it may be said, that *he heareth prayer*.

Many of those things that are worshipped as gods are *idols* made by their worshippers; mere stocks and stones that know nothing. They are indeed made with ears; but they hear not the prayers of them that cry to them. They have eyes; but they see not, &c. [Psal. cxv. 5, 6](#).—Others, though not the work of men’s hands, yet are things *without life*. Thus, many worship the sun, moon, and stars, which, though glorious creatures, yet are not capable of knowing any thing of the wants and desires of those who pray to them.—Some worship certain kinds of *animals*, as the Egyptians were wont to worship bulls, which, though not without life, yet are destitute of that reason whereby they would be capable of knowing the requests of their worshippers. Others worship devils instead of the true God: [1 Cor. x. 20](#).

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105 [Josh. lx. 12](#).

“But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils. “These, though beings of great powers, have not knowledge necessary to capacitate them fully to understand the state, circumstances, necessities, and desires of those who pray to them. But the true God perfectly knows the circumstances of every one that prays to him throughout the world. Though millions pray to him at once, in different parts of the world, it is no more difficult for him who is infinite in knowledge, to take notice of all than of one alone. God is so perfect in knowledge, that he doth not need to be informed by us, in order to a knowledge of our wants; for he knows what things we need before we ask him. The worshippers of false gods were wont to lift their voices and cry aloud, lest their gods should fail of hearing them, as Elijah tauntingly bid the worshippers of Baal do, [1 Kings xviii. 27](#). But the true God hears the silent petitions of his people. He needs not that we should cry aloud; yea, he knows and perfectly understands when we only pray in our hearts, as Hannah did, [1 Sam. i. 13](#).

Idols are but vanities and lies; in them is no help. As to power or knowledge, they are nothing; as the apostle says, [1 Cor viii. 4](#). “An idol is nothing in the world.” As to images, they are so far from having power to answer prayer, that they are not able to act, “They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat.<sup>106</sup>” They, therefore, that make them and pray to them, are senseless and sottish, and make themselves, as it were, stocks and stones, like unto them: [Psal. cxv. 7, 8](#). and [Jer. x. 5](#). “They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil; neither also is it in them to do good.” As to the hosts of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, although mankind receive benefit by them, yet they act only by necessity of nature; therefore they have no power to do any thing in answer to prayers. And devils, though worshipped as gods, are not able, if they had disposition, to make those happy who worship them, and can do nothing at all but by divine permission, and as subject to the disposal of Divine Providence. When the children of Israel departed from the true God to idols, and yet cried to him in their distress, he re-proved them for their folly, by bidding them cry to the gods whom they had served, for deliverance in the time of their tribulation. [Josh. x. 14](#). So God challenges those gods themselves, [Isa. xli. 23, 24](#). “Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed and behold it together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought; an abomination is he that chooseth you.”—These false gods, instead of helping those who pray to them, cannot help themselves. The devils are miserable tormented spirits; they are bound in chains of darkness for their rebellion against the true God, and cannot deliver themselves. Nor have they any more disposition to help mankind, than a parcel of hungry wolves or lions would have to protect and help a flock of lambs. And those that worship and pray to them get not their good-will by serving

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106 [Psa. cxv. 7](#).

them: all the reward that Satan will give them for the service which they do him, is to devour them.—I proceed now,

IV. To give the *reasons* of the doctrine; which I would do in answer to these two inquiries: first, Why God requires prayer in order to the bestowment of mercies, and secondly, Why God is so ready to hear the prayers of men?

Inq. I. Why doth God require prayer in order to the bestowment of mercies?

It is not in order that God may be *informed* of our wants or desires. He is omniscient, and with respect to his knowledge unchangeable. God never gains any knowledge by information. He knows what we want, a thousand times more perfectly than we do ourselves, before we ask him. For though, speaking after the manner of men, God is sometimes represented as if he were moved and persuaded by the prayers of his people; yet it is not to be thought that God is properly moved or made willing by our prayers; for it is no more possible that there should be any new inclination or will in God, than new knowledge. The mercy of God is not moved or drawn by any thing in the creature; but the spring of God's beneficence is within himself only; he is self-moved; and whatsoever mercy he bestows, the reason and ground of it is not to be sought for in the creature, but in God's own good pleasure. It is the will of God to bestow mercy in this way, *viz.* in answer to prayer, when he designs beforehand to bestow mercy, yea, when he has promised it; as [Ezek. xxxvi. 35, 37](#). "I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it. Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." God has been pleased to constitute prayer to be antecedent to the bestowment of mercy; and he is pleased to bestow mercy in consequence of prayer, as though he were prevailed on by prayer.—When the people of God are stirred up to prayer, it is the effect of his intention to show mercy; therefore he pours out the spirit of grace and supplication.

There may be two reasons given why God requires prayer in order to the bestowment of mercy; one especially respects God, and the other respects ourselves.

1. With respect to *God*, prayer is but a sensible acknowledgment of our dependence on him to his glory. As he hath made all things for his own glory, so he will be glorified and acknowledged by his creatures; and it is fit that he should require this of those who would be the subjects of his mercy. That we, when we desire to receive any mercy from him, should humbly supplicate the Divine Being for the bestowment of that mercy, is but a suitable acknowledgment of our dependence on the power and mercy of God for that which we need, and but a suitable honour paid to the great Author and Fountain of all good.

2. With respect to *ourselves*, God requires prayer of us in order to the bestowment of mercy, because it tends to prepare us for its reception. Fervent prayer many ways tends to prepare the heart. Hereby is excited a sense of our need, and of the value of the mercy which we seek, and at the same time earnest desires for it; whereby the mind is more prepared to prize it, to rejoice in it when bestowed, and to be thankful for it. Prayer, with suitable con-

fession, may excite a sense of our unworthiness of the mercy we seek; and the placing of ourselves in the immediate presence of God, may make us sensible of his majesty, and in a sense fit to receive mercy of him. Our prayer to God may excite in us a suitable sense and consideration of our dependence on God for the mercy we ask, and a suitable exercise of faith in God's sufficiency, that so we may be prepared to glorify his name when the mercy is received.

Inq. II. Why is God *so ready* to hear the prayers of men?—To this I answer,

1. Because he is a God of infinite grace and mercy. It is indeed a very wonderful thing, that so great a God should be so ready to hear our prayers, though we are so despicable and unworthy: that he should give free access at all times to every one; should allow us to be importunate without esteeming it an indecent boldness; should be so rich in mercy to them that call upon him; that worms of the dust should have such power with God by prayer; that he should do such great things in answer to their prayers, and should show himself, as it were, overcome by them. This is very wonderful, when we consider the distance between God and us, and how we have provoked him by our sins, and how unworthy we are of the least gracious notice. It cannot be from any need that God stands in of us; for our goodness extendeth not to him. Neither can it be from any thing in us to incline the heart of God to us; it cannot be from any worthiness in our prayers, which are in themselves polluted things. But it is because God delights in mercy and condescension. He is herein infinitely distinguished from all other gods: he is the great fountain of all good, from whom goodness flows as light from the sun.

2. We have a glorious Mediator, who has prepared the way, that our prayers may be heard consistently with the honour of God's justice and majesty. Not only has God in himself mercy sufficient for this, but the Mediator has provided that this mercy may be exercised consistently with the divine honour. Through him we may come to God for mercy; he is the way, the truth, and the life; no man can come to the Father but by him. This Mediator hath done three things to make way for the hearing of our prayers.

(1.) He hath by his blood made *atonement* for sin; so that our guilt need not stand in the way, as a separating wall between God and us, and that our sins might not be a cloud through which our prayers cannot pass. By his atonement he hath made the way to the throne of grace open. God would have been infinitely gracious if there had been no Mediator; but the way to the mercy-seat would have been blocked up. But Christ hath removed whatever stood in the way. The veil which was before the mercy-seat "is rent from the top to the bottom," by the death of Christ. If it had not been for this, our guilt would have remained as a wall of brass to hinder our approach. But all is removed by his blood, [Heb. x. 17.](#), &c.

(2.) Christ, by his obedience, has *purchased* this privilege, *viz.* that the prayers of those who believe in him should be heard. He has not only removed the obstacles to our prayers, but has merited a hearing of them. His merits are the incense that is offered with the prayers

of the saints, which renders them a sweet savour to God, and acceptable in his sight. Hence the prayers of the saints have such power with God; hence at the prayer of a poor worm of the dust God stopped the sun in his course for about the space of a whole day; hence Jacob as a prince had power with God, and prevailed. Our prayers would be of no account, and of no avail with God, were it not for the merits of Christ.

(3.) Christ enforces the prayers of his people, by his *intercession* at the right hand of God in heaven. He hath entered for us into the holy of holies, with the incense which he hath provided, and there he makes continual intercession for all that come to God in his name; so that their prayers come to God the Father through his hands, if I may so say; which is represented in [Rev. viii. 3, 4](#). “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel’s hand.”—This was typified of old by the priest’s offering incense in the temple, at the time when the people were offering up their prayers to God; as [Luke i. 10](#). “And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.”

#### APPLICATION.

Hence we may learn how highly we are privileged, in that we have the Most High revealed to us, who is a God that heareth prayer. The greater part of mankind are destitute of this privilege. Whatever their necessities are, whatever their calamities or sorrows, they have no prayer-hearing God to whom they may go. If they go to the gods whom they worship, and cry to them ever so earnestly, it will be in vain. They worship either lifeless things, that can neither help them, nor know that they need help; or wicked cruel spirits, who are their enemies, and wish nothing but their misery; and who, instead of helping them, are from day to day working their ruin, and watching over them as a hungry lion watches over his prey.

How are we distinguished from them, in that we have the true God made known to us; a God of infinite grace and mercy; a God full of compassion to the miserable, who is ready to pity us under all our troubles and sorrows, to hear our cries, and to give us all the relief which we need; a God who delights in mercy, and is rich unto all that call upon him! How highly privileged are we, in that we have the holy word of this same God, to direct us how to seek for mercy! And whatever difficulties or distress we are in, we may go to him with confidence and great encouragement. What a comfort may this be to us! and what reason have we to rejoice in our privileges, to prize them so highly, and to bless God that he hath been so merciful to us, as to give us his word, and reveal himself to us; and that he hath not left us to cry for help to stocks and stones, and devils, as he has left many thousands of others.

Objection. I have often prayed to God for certain mercies, and he has not heard my prayers.—To this I answer,

1. It is no argument, that God is not a prayer-hearing God, if he give not to men *what they ask* of him to consume upon their lusts. Oftentimes when men pray for temporal good things, they desire them for no good end, but only to gratify their pride or sensuality. If they pray for worldly good things chiefly from a worldly spirit; and make an idol of the world; it is no wonder that God doth not hear their prayers: [Jam. iv. 3.](#) “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume it upon your lusts. “If you request him to give you something of which you will make an idol, and set up in opposition to him—or will use as weapons of warfare against him, or as instruments to serve his enemies—no wonder that God will not hear you. If God should hear such prayers, he would act as his own enemy, inasmuch as he would bestow them to serve his enemies.

2. It is no argument that God is not a prayer-hearing God, that he heareth not *insincere* and *unbelieving* prayers. How can we expect that he should have any respect to that which has no sincerity in it? God looketh not at words, but at the heart; and it is fit that he should do so. If men pray only in words, and not in heart, what are their prayers good for? and why should that God who searches the heart, and tries the reins, have any respect to them?—Sometimes men do nothing but dissemble in their prayers; and when they do so, it is no argument that God is the less a prayer-hearing God, that he doth not hear such prayers; for it is no argument of want of mercy. Sometimes they pray for that in words which they really desire not in their hearts; as that he would purge them from sin, when at the same time they show by their practice, that they do not desire to be purged from sin, while they love and choose it, and are utterly averse to parting with it. In like manner, they often dissemble in the pretence and show, which they make in their prayers, of dependence on God for mercies, and of a sense of his sufficiency to supply them. In our coming to God, and praying to him for such and such things, there is a show that we are sensible we are dependent on him for them, and that he is sufficient to give them to us. But men sometimes seem to pray, while not sensible of their dependence on God, nor do they think him sufficient to supply them; for all the while they trust in themselves, and have no confidence in God.—They show in words as though they were beggars; but in heart they come as creditors, and look on God as their debtor. In words they seem to ask for things as the fruit of free grace; but in heart they account it would be hard, unjust, and cruel, if God should deny them. In words they seem humble and submissive, but in heart they are proud and contentious; there is no prayer but in their words.

It doth not render God at all the less a prayer-hearing God, that he distinguishes, as an all-seeing God, between real prayers and pretended ones. Such prayers as those which I have just now been mentioning, are not worthy of the name in the eyes of him who searches the heart, and sees things as they are.—That prayer which is not *of faith*, is insincere; for prayer is a show or manifestation of dependence on God, and trust in his sufficiency and mercy. Therefore, where this trust or *faith* is wanting, there is no prayer in the sight of God. And

however God is sometimes pleased to grant the requests of those who have no faith, yet he has not obliged himself so to do; nor is it an argument of his not being a prayer-hearing God, when he hears them not.

3. It is no argument that he is not a prayer-hearing God, that he exercises *his own wisdom* as to the time and manner of answering prayer. Some of God's people are sometimes ready to think, that he doth not hear their prayers, because he doth answer them at the times when they expected; when indeed God doth hear them, and will answer them, in the time and way to which his own wisdom directs.—The business of prayer is not to direct God, who is infinitely wise, and needs not any of our directions; who knows what is best for us ten thousand times better than we, and knows what time and what way are best. It is fit that he should answer prayer, and, as an infinitely wise God, in the exercise of his own wisdom, and not ours. God will deal as a father with us, in answering our requests. But a child is not to expect that the father's wisdom be subject to his; nor ought he to desire it, but should esteem it a privilege, that the parent will provide for him according to his *own* wisdom.

As to particular temporal blessings for which we pray, it is no argument that he is not a prayer-hearing God, because he bestows them not upon us; for it may be that God sees the things for which we pray not to be best for us. If so, it would be no mercy in him to bestow them upon us, but a judgment. Such things, therefore, ought always to be asked with submission to the divine will. God can answer prayer, though he bestow not the very thing for which we pray. He can sometimes better answer the lawful desires and good end we have in prayer another way. If our end be our own good and happiness, God can perhaps better answer that end in bestowing something else than in the bestowment of that very thing which we ask. And if the main good we aim at in our prayer be attained, our prayer is answered, though not in the bestowment of the individual thing which we sought. And so that may still be true which was before asserted, *that God always hears the prayer* of faith. God never once failed of hearing a *sincere* and *believing* prayer; and those promises for ever hold good, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."<sup>107</sup> "

Another use of this doctrine may be, of reproof to those that neglect the duty of prayer. If we enjoy so great a privilege as to have the prayer-hearing God revealed to us, how great will be our folly and inexcusableness, if we neglect the privilege, or make no use of it, and deprive ourselves of the advantage by not seeking this God by prayer. They are hereby reprov'd who neglect the great duty of secret prayer, which is more expressly required in the word of God than any other kind. What account can those persons give of themselves, who neglect so known a duty? It is impossible that any among us should be ignorant of this

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107 [Matt. vii. 7, 8.](#)

command of God. How during, therefore, is their wickedness who live in the neglect of this duty! and what can they answer to their Judge, when he shall call them to an account for it?

Here I shall briefly say something to an excuse which some may be ready to make for themselves. Some may be ready to say, *If I do pray, my prayer will not be the prayer of faith, because I am in a natural condition, and have no faith.*

This excuses not from obedience to a plain command of God. The command is to all to whom the command shall come. God not only directs godly persons to pray, but others also. In the beginning of the [second chapter of Proverbs.](#), God directs all persons to cry after wisdom, and to lift up their voices for understanding, in order to their obtaining the fear and knowledge of God; and in [Jam. i. 5.](#) the apostle says, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God;" and Peter directed *Simon Magus* to repent, and pray to God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him, [Acts viii. 22.](#) Therefore when God says, do thus or thus, it is not for us to make excuses, but we must do the thing required. Besides,

God is pleased sometimes to answer the prayers of unbelievers. Indeed he hears not their prayers for their goodness or acceptableness, or because of any true respect to him manifested in them, for there is none; nor has he obliged himself to answer such prayers; yet he is pleased sometimes, of his sovereign mercy, to pity wicked men, and hear their cries. Thus he heard the cries of the Ninevites, ([Jonah iii.](#)) and the prayer of Ahab, [1 Kings xxi. 27, 28.](#) Though there be no regard to God in their prayers, yet he, of his infinite grace, is pleased to have respect to their desires of their own happiness, and to grant their requests. He may, and sometimes does, hear the cries of wicked men, as he hears the hungry ravens, when they cry, [Psal. cxlvii. 9.](#) and as he opens his bountiful hand, and satisfies the desires of every living thing, [Psal. cxlv. 16.](#) Besides the prayers of sinners, though they have no goodness in them, yet are made a means of a preparation for mercy.

Finally, Seeing we have such a prayer-hearing God as we have heard, let us be much employed in the duty of prayer: let us pray with all prayer and supplication: let us live prayerful lives, continuing instant in prayer, watching thereunto with all perseverance; praying always, without ceasing, earnestly, and not fainting.

## S E R M O N V .

### THE NATURE AND END OF EXCOMMUNICATION.

#### [1 COR. v. 11.](#)

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

The apostle reproves the church at Corinth for not excommunicating an offending person; and directs them speedily to cast him out from among them; thus delivering him to Satan. He orders them to purge out such scandalous persons, as the Jews were wont to



purge leaven out of their houses when they kept the passover. In the text and two foregoing verses he more particularly explains their duty with respect to such vicious persons, and enjoins it on them not to keep company with such. But then shows the difference they ought to observe in their carriage towards those who were vicious among the heathen, who had never joined with the church, and towards those of the same vicious character who had been their professed brethren; see [ver. 9-12](#). “I wrote unto you, not to company with fornicators. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”

In the words of the text we may observe,

1. The *duty enjoined*; including the behaviour required, negatively expressed, *not to keep company*; and the manner or degree, *no not to eat*.

1. The *object*; a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. We are not to understand merely these particular vices, but also any other gross sins, or visible wickedness. It is evident, that the apostle here, and in the context, intends that we should exclude out of our company all those who are visibly wicked men. For in the foregoing verses he expresses his meaning by this, that we should purge out the old leaven; and, explaining what he means by leaven, he includes all visible wickedness; as in [ver. 8](#). “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Another thing by which the object of this behaviour or dealing is characterized, is, that he be one *that is called a brother*, or one that hath been a professed Christian, and a member of the church.

Doctrine. Those members of the visible Christian church who are become visibly wicked, ought not to be tolerated in the church, but should be excommunicated.

In handling this subject, I shall speak, (1.) Of the nature of excommunication; (2.) Of the subject; and, (3.) Of the ends of it.

I. I shall say something of the *nature* of excommunication. It is a punishment executed in the name and according to the will of Christ, whereby a person who hath heretofore enjoyed the privileges of a member of the visible church of Christ, is cast out of the church and delivered unto Satan. It is a punishment inflicted; it is expressly called a punishment by the apostle, in [2 Cor. ii. 6](#). Speaking of the excommunicated Corinthian, he says, [2 Cor. ii. 6](#). “Sufficient to such a man is this punishment.” For though it be not designed by man for the destruction of the person, but for his correction, and so is of the nature of a castigatory punishment, at least so far as it is inflicted by men; yet it is in itself a great and dreadful calamity, and the most severe punishment that Christ hath appointed in the visible church. Although in it the church is to seek only the good of the person and his recovery from

sin—there appearing, upon proper trial, no reason to hope for his recovery by gentler means—yet it is at God’s sovereign disposal, whether it shall issue in his humiliation and repentance, or in his dreadful and eternal destruction; as it always doth issue in the one or the other. In the definition of excommunication now given, two things are chiefly worthy of consideration; *viz.* Wherein this punishment *consists*, and by *whom* it is inflicted.

First, I would show wherein this punishment consists; and it is observable that there is in it something *privative*, and something *positive*.

*First*, There is something privative in excommunication, which consists in being deprived of a benefit heretofore enjoyed. This part of the punishment, in the Jewish church, was called *putting out of the synagogue*, [John xvi. 2](#). The word *synagogue* is of the same signification as the word *church*. So this punishment in the Christian church is called *casting out of the church*. The apostle John, blaming Diotrephes for inflicting this punishment without cause, says, [3 John 10](#). “He casteth them out of the church.” It is sometimes expressed by the church’s withdrawing from a member, [2 Thess. iii. 6](#). “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye *withdraw* yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.”

The privative part of excommunication consists in being *cut off* from the enjoyment of the privileges of God’s visible people. The whole world of mankind is divided into these two sorts, those that are God’s visible people; and those that are of the visible kingdom of Satan. Now it is a great privilege to be *within* the visible church of Christ. On the other hand, it is very doleful to be *without* this visible kingdom, to be cut off from its privileges, treated as belonging to the visible kingdom of Satan. For,

1. They are cut off from being the objects of that *charity* of God’s people which is due to Christian brethren. They are not indeed cut off from all the charity of God’s people, for all men ought to be the objects of their love. But I speak of the brotherly charity due to visible saints.—Charity, as the apostle represents it, is the bond by which the several members of the church of Christ are united together: and therefore he calls it the bond of perfectness; [Col. iii. 14](#). “Put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” But when a person is justly excommunicated, it is like a physician’s cutting off a diseased member from the body; and then the bond which before united it to the body is cut or broken.—A scandal is the same as a stumbling-block; and therefore while the scandal remains, it obstructs the charity of others: and if it finally remain after proper endeavours to remove it, then it breaks their charity, and so the offender is cut off from the charitable opinion and esteem of the church. It cannot any longer look upon him as a Christian, and so rejects him; therefore excommunication is called a rejection, [Tit. iii. 10](#). “A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, *reject*.” This implies that the church disapproves the person as a Christian: if cannot any longer charitably look upon him as a saint, or fellow-worshipper of God, and can do no other than, on the contrary, esteem him an enemy of God; and so doth openly

withdraw its charity from him, ceasing to acknowledge him as a fellow-Christian, any more than the heathens. He is also cut off from that honour which is due to brethren and fellow-Christians. To be a visible Christian is an honourable character; but excommunicated persons forfeit this honour. Christians ought not to pay that honour and respect to them which they pay to others; but should treat them as unworthy of such honour, that they may be ashamed. Christ tells us, they should ([Matt. xviii. 17.](#)) “be unto us as heathen men and publicans,” which implies a withdrawing from them that common respect which we pay to others. We ought to treat them so as to let them plainly see that we do not count them worthy of it, to put them to shame.

Much love and complacency is due to those whom we are obliged in charity to receive as saints, because they are visible Christians. But this complacency excommunicated persons forfeit. We should still wish well to them, and seek their good. Excommunication itself is to be performed as an act of benevolence. We should seek their good by it; and it is to be used as a means of their eternal salvation. But complacency and delight in them as visible Christians is to be withdrawn; and on the contrary they are to be the objects of displacency, as visibly and apparently wicked. We are to cast them out as an unclean thing which denies the church of God.—In this sense the Psalmist professes a hatred of those who were the visible enemies of God. [Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22.](#) “Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred.” Not that he hated them with a hatred of malice or ill-will, but with displacency and abhorrence of their wickedness. In this respect we ought to be the children of our Father who is in heaven, who, though he loves many wicked men with a love of benevolence, yet cannot love them with a love of complacency. Thus excommunicated persons are cut off from the charity of the church.

2. They are cut off also from the *society* which Christians have together as brethren. Thus we are commanded to *withdraw* from such; [2 Thess. iii, 6.](#) To *avoid* them; [Rom. xvi. 17.](#) To *have no company* with them; [2 Thess. iii. 14.](#) And to *treat them as heathens and publicans*; [Matt. xviii. 17.](#) The people of God are, as much as may be, to withdraw from them as to that common society which is proper to subsist among Christians. Not that they should avoid speaking to them on any occasion. All manner and all degrees of society are not forbidden; but all unnecessary society, or such as is wont to be among those who delight in the company of each other. We should not associate ourselves with them so as to make them our companions. Yea, there ought to be such an avoiding of their company as may show great dislike.

Particularly, we are forbidden such a degree of associating ourselves with them, as there is in making them *our guests* at our tables, or in being *their guests* at their tables; as is manifest in the text, where we are commanded to have no company with them, *no not to eat*. That this respects not eating with them at the Lord’s supper, but a common eating, is

evident by the words, that the eating here forbidden, is one of the *lowest degrees* of keeping company, which are forbidden. Keep no company with such an one, saith the apostle, *no not to eat*: as much as to say, no not in so low a degree as to eat with him. But eating with him at the Lord's supper, is the very highest degree of visible Christian communion. Who can suppose that the apostle meant this, Take heed and have no company with a man, no not so much as in the highest degree of communion that you can have? Besides, the apostle mentions this eating as a way of keeping company which, however, they *might* hold with the heathen. He tells them, not to keep company with fornicators; then he informs them, he means not with fornicators of this world, that is, the heathens; but, saith he, "if any man that is called a *brother* be a fornicator, &c. with such an one keep no company, *no not to eat*.<sup>108</sup>" This makes it most apparent, that the apostle doth not mean eating at the Lord's table; for so, they might not keep company with the heathens, any more than with an excommunicated person. Here naturally arise two questions.

Quest. I. How far are the church to treat excommunicated persons as they would those who never have been of the visible church? I answer, they are to treat them as heathens, excepting in these two things, in which there is a difference to be observed.

1. They are to have a greater concern for their welfare still, than if they never had been brethren, and therefore ought to take more pains, by admonitions and otherwise, to reclaim and save them, than they are obliged to take towards those who have been always heathens. This seems manifest by that of the apostle, [2 Thess. iii. 14, 15](#). "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." "The consideration that he hath been a brother heretofore, and that we have not finally cast him off from that relation, but that we are still hoping and using means for his recovery, obliges us to concern ourselves more for the good of his soul than for those with whom we never had any such connexion; and so to pray for him, and to take pains by admonishing him.—The very reason of the thing shows the same. For this very ordinance of excommunication is used for this end, that we may thereby obtain the good of the person excommunicated. And surely we should be more concerned for the good of those who have been our brethren, and who are now under the operation of means used by us for their good, than for those with whom we never had any special connexion. Thus, there should be more of the love of benevolence exercised towards persons excommunicated, than towards those whenever were members of the church.—But then,

2. On the other hand, as to what relates to the love of complacence, they ought to be treated with greater displacency and disrespect than the heathen. This is plain by the text and context. For the apostle plainly doth not require of us to avoid the company of the

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108 [1 Cor. v. 11](#).

heathen, or the fornicators of the world, but expressly requires us to avoid the company of any brother who shall be guilty of any of the vices pointed out in the text, or any other like them.—This is also plain by the reason of the thing. For those who have once been visible Christians and have apostatized and cast off that visibility, deserve to be treated with more abhorrence than those who have never made any pretensions to Christianity. The sin of such, in apostatizing from their profession, is more aggravated, than the sin of those who never made any profession. They for more dishonour religion, and are much more abhorred of God. Therefore when Christ says, [Matt. xviii. 17.](#) “Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican, “it is not meant that we should treat an excommunicated brother as Christians ought to treat heathens and publicans; for they might eat with them, as Christ himself did; and the apostle gives leave to eat with such, [1 Cor. x. 27.](#) and in the context gives leave to keep company with such; yet forbids to eat with an excommunicated person.—Christ’s meaning must be, that we should treat an excommunicated person as the Jews were wont to treat the heathens and publicans; and as the disciples had been always taught among the Jews, and brought up, and used to treat them. They would by no means eat with publicans and sinners; they would not eat with the Gentiles, or with the Samaritans. Therefore Peter durst not eat with the Gentiles when the Jews were present; [Gal. ii. 12.](#)

Quest. II. What kindness and respect may and ought to be shown to such persons?—I answer, There are some things by which the members of the church are obliged to show kindness to them; and these things are chiefly, to pray for them, and to admonish them.—And the common duties and offices of humanity ought to be performed towards them; such as relieving them when they are sick, or under any other distress; allowing them those benefits of human society, and that help, which are needful for the support and defence of their lives and property.—The duties of natural and civil relations are still to be performed towards them. Excommunication doth not release children from the obligation of duty to their parents, nor parents from parental affection and care toward their children. Nor are husbands and wives released from the duties proper to their relation. And so of all other less relations, whether natural, domestic, or civil.

3. They are cut off from the *fellowship* of the Christian church. The true notion of the *visible church* of Christ, is that part of mankind, which, as his people, is united in upholding his appointed worship. And the notion of a *particular* visible church of Christ, is a particular society of worshippers, or of visible saints, united for the social worship of God according to his institutions or ordinances. One great and main privilege then, which the members of such a church enjoy, is fellowship in the worship which God hath appointed in his church. But they that are excommunicated are cut off from this privilege, they have no fellowship, no communion with the people of God in any part of their worship.

He who is the mouth of the worshipping congregation in offering up public prayers, is the mouth only of the worshipping society; but the excommunicated are cast out of that

society. The church may and ought to pray *for* such; but they cannot have *fellowship* with such in prayer. The minister, when speaking in prayer, doth not speak in *their* name; he speaks only in the name of the *united society* of visible saints or worshippers. If the people of God were to put up prayers in their name, it would imply a receiving of them into charity, or that they charitably looked upon them as the servants or worshippers of God. But, as was observed before, excommunicated persons are in this respect cast out of the charity of the church, and it looks upon them as wicked men and enemies of God, and treats them as such.

So when a congregation of visible saints join in singing the praises of God, as the Psalmist says, [Psal. xxxiv. 3](#). “Let us extol his name together;” they do it only as joining with those who are, in their charitable estimation, fellow-servants and fellow-worshippers of God. They do it not as joining with heathens; nor do the people of God say to the open enemies of God, remaining such, [Psal. xxxiv. 3](#). “Let us extol his name together;” but they say it to their brethren in God’s service. If we ought not to join with excommunicated persons in familiar society, much less ought we to hold fellowship with them in solemn worship, though they may be present.

4. There are privileges of a more *internal* nature, which those who are members of the visible church enjoy, from which excommunicated persons are cut off. They being God’s covenant-people, are in the way of covenant-blessings: and therefore have more encouragement to come to God by prayer for any mercy they need. The visible church is the people among whom God hath set his tabernacle, and among whom he is wont to bestow his blessings. But the excommunicated are, in a sense, cast out of God’s sight, into a land of banishment, as Cain was, though not debarred from common means. [Gen. iv. 14, 16](#). They are not in the way of those smiles of providence, those tokens of God’s favour, and that light of God’s countenance, like those who are within Nor, as they are cast out from among God’s covenant people, have they the divine covenant to plead, as the members of the church have.—Thus far I have considered the *privative* part of the punishment of excommunication.—I now proceed,

*Secondly*, to the *positive* part, which is expressed by being delivered to Satan, in [verse 5](#). By which two things seem to be signified:

1. A being delivered over to the *calamities* to which they are subject, who belong to the visible kingdom of the devil. As they who are excommunicated are thrust out from among the visible people of God; so they are to be looked upon, in most respects at least, as being in the miserable, deplorable circumstances in which those are who are under the visible tyranny of the devil, as the heathens are. And in many respects they doubtless suffer the cruel tyranny of the devil, in a manner agreeable to their condition, being cast out into his visible kingdom.

2. It is reasonable to suppose that God is wont to make the devil the *instrument* of those peculiar, severe chastisements which their apostacy deserves. As they deserve more severe

chastisement than the heathens, and are delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh; so we may well suppose, either that God is wont to let Satan loose, sorely to molest them outwardly or inwardly, and by such severe means to destroy the flesh, and to humble them; or that he suffers the devil to take possession of them dreadfully to harden them, and so to destroy them for ever. For although what men are to aim at, is only the destruction of the flesh, yet whether it shall prove the destruction of the flesh, or the eternal and more dreadful destruction of themselves, is at God's sovereign disposal.—So much for the nature of excommunication.

Secondly, I come to show by whom the punishment is to be inflicted.

1. When it is regularly and duly inflicted, it is to be looked upon as done by *Christ himself*. That is imported in the definition, that it is *according to his will*, and to the directions of his word. And therefore he is to be looked upon as *principal* in it, and we ought to esteem it as really and truly from him, as if he were on earth personally inflicting it.

2. As it is inflicted by men, it is only done *ministerially*. They do not act of themselves in this, any more than in preaching the word. When the word is preached, it is the word of Christ which is spoken, as the preacher speaks in the name of Christ, as his ambassador. So when a church excommunicates a member, the church acts in the name of Christ, and by his authority, not by its own. It is governed by his will, not by its own. Indeed it is only a particular application of the word of Christ.—Therefore it is promised, that when it is duly done, it shall be continued in heaven; *i.e.* Christ will confirm it, by acknowledging it to be his own act; and he will, in his future providence, have regard to what is done thus as done by himself: he will look on the person, and treat him as cast out and delivered to Satan by himself; and if he repent not, will for ever reject him: [Matt. xviii. 18.](#) “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven.” [John xx. 23.](#) “Whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”—I shall now, as was proposed,

II. Endeavour to show who are the proper *subjects* of excommunication. They are those members of the church who are now become visibly wicked; for the very name and nature of the visible church show, that it is a society of visible saints, or visibly holy persons. When any of these visible saints become visibly wicked men, they ought to be cast out of the church. Now, the members of the church become visibly wicked by these two things:

1. By *gross sin*. Saints may be guilty of other sins, and very often are, without throwing any just stumbling-block in the way of public charity, or of the charity of their Christian brethren. The common failures of humanity, and the daily short-comings of the best of men, do not ordinarily obstruct the charity of their brethren; but when they fall into any gross sin, this effect follows; for we naturally argue, that he who hath committed some gross sin hath doubtless much more practised less and more secret sins; and so we doubt concerning the soundness and sincerity of his heart. Therefore all those who commit any gross sin, as they obstruct the charity of their brethren, are proper subjects of discipline: and unless

they confess their sin, and manifest their repentance, are proper subjects of excommunication.—This leads me to say,

2. That the members of the church do especially become visibly wicked, when they remain *impenitent* in their sins, after proper means used to reclaim them. Merely being guilty of any gross sin, is a stumbling-block to charity, unless repentance immediately succeed; but especially when the guilty person remains obstinate and contumacious; in such a case he is most clearly a visibly wicked person, and therefore to be dealt with as such; to be cast out into the wicked world, the kingdom of Satan, where he appears to belong.—Nor is contumacy in *gross* sins only a sufficient ground of excommunication. In the text the apostle commands us to inflict this censure, not only on those who are guilty of the gross sins of fornication, idolatry, and drunkenness, but also on those who are guilty of covetousness, railing, and extortion, which, at least in some degrees of them, are too generally esteemed no very heinous crimes. And in [Rom. xvi. 17.](#) the same apostle commands the church to excommunicate “them who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine they had learned;” and in [2 Thess. iii. 14.](#) to excommunicate every one who should “not obey his word by that epistle.” Now, according to these precepts, every one who doth not observe the doctrine of the apostles, and their word contained in their epistles, and so, by purity of reason, the divine instructions contained in the other parts of Scripture, is to be excommunicated, provided he continue impenitent and contumacious. So that *contumacy* and *impenitence* in any real and manifest sin whatsoever, deserve excommunication.

III. I come to speak of the *ends* of this ecclesiastical censure. The special ends of it are these three.

1. That the church may be kept *pure*, and the ordinances of God not be defiled. This end is mentioned in the context, [verse 6.](#) &c. “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”—When the ordinances of God are defiled by the toleration of wicked men in the church, God the Father, Jesus Christ the head and founder of the church, the religion of the gospel, and the church itself, are dishonoured and exposed to contempt.—And that the other members themselves may not be defiled, it is necessary that they bear a testimony against sin, by censuring it whenever it appears among them, especially in the grosser acts of wickedness. If they neglect so to do, they contract guilt by the very neglect; and not only so, but they expose themselves to learn the same vices which they tolerate in others; for “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”<sup>109</sup> Hence that earnest caution of the apostle, [Heb. xii. 15.](#)

109 1 Cor. v. 6.



“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and *thereby many be defiled.*”

2. That others may be *deterred* from wickedness. As the neglect of proper censure, with respect to visibly wicked church-members, tends to lead and encourage others to commit the same wickedness; so the infliction of proper censure tends to restrain others, not only from the same wickedness, but from sin in general. This therefore is repeatedly mentioned as one end of the punishments appointed to be inflicted by the law of Moses: [Deut. xiii. 11.](#) “And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more such wickedness as this is among you.”

3. That the persons themselves may be *reclaimed*, and that their souls may be saved. When other more gentle means have been used in vain, then it is the duty of the church to use this, which is more severe, in order to bring them to conviction, shame, and humiliation: and that, by being rejected and avoided by the church, and treated with disrespect, they may be convinced how they deserve to be for ever disowned of God; that by being delivered unto Satan, they may learn how they deserve for ever to be delivered up to him; that by his being made the instrument of their chastisement, they may learn how they deserve to be tormented by him, without any rest day or night, for ever and ever.—This, with the counsels and admonitions by which it is to be followed, is the last mean that the church is to use, in order to reclaim those members which are become visibly wicked. If this be ineffectual, what is next to be expected is destruction without remedy.

#### APPLICATION.

I shall apply this subject in a brief use of exhortation to this church, to maintain strictly the proper discipline of the gospel in general, and particularly that part of it which consists in excommunication. To this end I shall just suggest to you the following motives.

1. That if you tolerate visible wickedness in your members, you will greatly *dishonour* God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the religion which you profess, the church in general, and yourselves in particular. As those members of the church who practise wickedness, bring dishonour upon the whole body, so do those who tolerate them in it. The language of it is, that God doth not require holiness in his servants; that Christ doth not require it in his disciples; that the religion of the gospel is not a holy religion; that the church is not a body of holy servants of God; and that this church, in particular, hath no regard to holiness or true virtue.

2. Your *own good* loudly calls you to the same thing. From what hath been already said, you see how liable you, as individuals, will be to catch the contagion, which is easily communicated by reason of the natural depravity, in a degree at least, remaining in the best of men.—Beside, if strict discipline be maintained among you, it will not only tend to prevent the spread of wickedness, but to make you more fruitful in holiness. If you know that the

eyes of your brethren observe all your conduct, it will not only make you more guarded against sin, but more careful “to maintain good works,<sup>110</sup>” and to abound in “the fruits of the Spirit.<sup>111</sup>” Thus you will have more abundant joy and peace in believing.

3. The good of those who are *without* should be another motive. What the apostle saith with reference to another subject, [1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.](#) is perfectly applicable to the case before us: “But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.<sup>112</sup>” If strict discipline, and thereby strict morals, were maintained in the church it would in all probability be one of the most powerful means of conviction and conversion towards those who are without.

4. *Benevolence* towards your offending brethren themselves, calls upon you to maintain discipline in all its parts. Surely, if we love our brethren, it will grieve us to see them wandering from the path of truth and duty; and in proportion as our compassion is moved, shall we be disposed to use all proper means to reclaim and bring them back to the right way. Now, the rules of discipline contained in the gospel are the most proper, and best adapted to this end, that infinite wisdom itself could devise. Even excommunication is instituted for this very end, *the destruction of the flesh, and the salvation of the spirit.* If, therefore, we have any love of benevolence to our offending and erring brethren, it becomes us to manifest it, in executing strictly the rules of gospel-discipline, and even excommunication itself, whenever it is necessary.

5. But the absolute *authority of Christ* ought to be sufficient in this case, if there were no other motive. Our text is only one of many passages in the Scripture, wherein strict discipline is expressly commanded, and peremptorily enjoined. Now, how can you be the true disciples of Christ, if you live in the neglect of these plain positive commands? “If ye love me,” saith Christ, “keep my commandments;”<sup>113</sup> and, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you.<sup>114</sup>” But, “he that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.<sup>115</sup>”<sup>116</sup> “And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” If you strictly follow the rules of discipline instituted by Christ, you have reason to hope for his blessing; for he

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110 [Titus iii. 8](#)

111 [Gal v. 2.](#)

112 [1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.](#)

113 [John xiv. 15](#)

114 [John xv. 14.](#)

115 [John xiv. 24.](#)

116 [Luke vi. 46.](#)

is wont to bless his own institutions, and to smile upon the means of grace which he hath appointed.

S E R M O N V I . 1 1 7

WHEN THE WICKED SHALL HAVE FILLED UP THE MEASURE OF THEIR SIN, WRATH WILL COME UPON THEM TO THE UTMOST.

1 THESS. ii. 16.

To fill up their sins away; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Inverse 14. the apostle commends the Christian Thessalonians that they became the followers of the churches of God in Judea, both in faith and in sufferings; in *faith*, in that they received the word, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God; in *sufferings*, in that they had suffered like things of their own countrymen, as they had of the Jews. Upon which the apostle sets forth the persecuting, cruel, and perverse wickedness of that people, “who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have,<sup>118</sup>” says he, “persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved.” Then come in the words of the text; “To fill up their sins away; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.”<sup>119</sup>

In these words we may observe two things:

1. To what effect was the heinous wickedness and obstinacy of the Jews, *viz. to fill up their sins*. God hath set bounds to every man’s wickedness; he suffers men to live, and to go on in sin, till they have filled up their measure, and then cuts them off. To this effect was the wickedness and obstinacy of the Jews: they were exceedingly wicked, and thereby filled up the measure of their sins a great pace. And the reason why they were permitted to be so obstinate under the preaching and miracles of Christ, and of the apostles, and under all the means used with them, was, that they might fill up the measure of their sins. This is agreeable to what Christ said, [Matt. xxiii. 31, 32](#). “Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.”

2. The punishment of their wickedness: “The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.<sup>120</sup>” There is a connexion between the measure of men’s sin, and the measure of punishment. When they have filled up the measure of their sin, then is filled up the measure of God’s wrath.

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1 1 7 D A T E D , M A Y , 1 7 3 5

118 [1 Thess. ii. 15.](#)

119 [1 Thess. ii. 16.](#)

120 [1 Thess. ii. 16.](#)



The degree of their punishment, is the *uttermost* degree. This may respect both a national and personal punishment. If we take it as a *national* punishment, a little after the time when the epistle was written, wrath came upon the nation of the Jews to the uttermost, in their terrible destruction by the Romans; when, as Christ said, [Matt. xxiv. 21](#). “was great tribulation, such as never was since the beginning of the world to that time,” That nation had before suffered many of the fruits of divine wrath for their sins; but this was beyond all, this was their highest degree of punishment as a nation. If we take it as a *personal* punishment, then it respects their punishment in hell. God often punishes men very dreadfully in this world; but in hell “wrath comes on them to the *uttermost*.<sup>121</sup>”—By this expression is also denoted the *certainty* of this punishment. For though the punishment was then future, yet it is spoken of as present: “The wrath *is* come upon them to the uttermost.” It was as certain as if it had already taken place. God, who knows all things, speaks of things that are not as though they were; for things present and things future are equally certain with him. It also denotes the *near approach* of it. *The wrath IS come; i. e.* it is just at hand; it is at the door; as it proved with respect to that nation; their terrible destruction by the Romans was soon after the apostle wrote this epistle.

Doctrine. When those that continue in sin shall have filled up the measure of their sin, then wrath will come upon them to the uttermost.

I. Prop. There is a *certain measure* that God hath set to the sin of every wicked man. God says concerning the sin of man, as he says to the raging waves of the sea, Hitherto shall thou come, and no further. The measure of some is much greater than of others. Some reprobates commit but a little sin in comparison with others, and so are to endure proportionably a smaller punishment. There are many vessels of wrath; but some are smaller and others greater vessels; some will contain comparatively but little wrath, others a greater measure of it. Sometimes, when we see men go to dreadful lengths, and become very heinously wicked, we are ready to wonder that God lets them alone. He sees them go on in such audacious wickedness, and keeps silence, nor does any thing to interrupt them, but they go smoothly on, and meet with, no hurt. But sometimes the reason why God lets them alone is, because they have not filled up the measure of their sins. When they live in dreadful wickedness, they are but filling up the measure which God hath *limited* for them. This is sometimes the reason why God suffers very wicked men to live so long; because their iniquity is not full: [Gen. xv. 16](#). “The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” For this reason also God sometimes suffers them to live in prosperity. Their prosperity is a snare to them, and an occasion of their sinning a great deal more. Wherefore God suffers them to have such a snare, because he suffers them to fill up a larger measure. So, for this cause, he sometimes

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121 [1 Thess. ii. 16](#).

suffers them to live under great light, and great means and advantages, at the same time to neglect and misimprove all. Every one shall live till he hath filled up his measure.

II. PROP. While men continue in sin, they are filling the measure set them. This is the work in which they spend their whole lives; they begin in their childhood; and if they live to grow old in sin, they still go on with this work. It is the work with which every day is filled up. They may alter their business in other respects; they may sometimes be about one thing, and sometimes about another; but they never change from this work of filling up the measure of their sins. Whatever they put their hands to, they are still employed in this work. This is the first thing that they set themselves about when they awake in the morning, and the last thing they do at night. They are all the while treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. It is a gross mistake of some natural men, who think that when they read and pray they do not add to their sins; but, on the contrary, think they diminish their guilt by these exercises. They think, that instead of adding to their sins, they do something to satisfy for their past offences; but instead of that, they do but add to the measure by their best prayers, and by those services with which they themselves are most pleased.

III. PROP. When once the measure of their sins is filled up, then wrath will come upon them to the uttermost. God will then wait no longer upon them. Wicked men think that God is altogether such an one as themselves, because, when they commit such wickedness, he keeps silence. “Because judgment against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the children of men is fully set in them to do evil.”<sup>122</sup> But when once they shall have filled up the measure of their sins, judgment will be executed; God will not bear with them any longer. Now is the day of grace, and the day of patience, which they spend in filling up their sins; but when their sins shall be full, then will come the day of wrath, the day of the fierce anger of God.—God often executes his wrath on ungodly men, in a less degree, in this world. He sometimes brings afflictions upon them, and that in wrath. Sometimes he expresses his wrath in very sore judgments; sometimes he appears in a terrible manner, not only outwardly, but also in the inward expressions of it on their consciences. Some, before they died, have had the wrath of God inflicted on their souls in degrees that have been intolerable. But these things are only forerunners of their punishment, only slight foretastes of wrath. God never stirs up all his wrath against wicked men while in this world; but when once wicked men shall have filled up the measure of their sins, then wrath will come upon them to the uttermost; and that in the following respects:

1. Wrath will come upon them without any *restraint* or moderation in the degree of it. God doth always lay, as it were, a restraint upon himself; he doth not stir up his wrath; he stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind; he lets not his arm light down on wicked

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122 [Eccl. viii. 11.](#)

men with its full weight. But when sinners shall have filled up the measure of their sins, there will be no caution, no restraint. His rough wind will not be staved nor moderated. The wrath of God will be poured out like fire. He will come forth, not only in anger, but in the fierceness of his anger; he will execute wrath with power, so as to show what his wrath is, and make his power known. There will be nothing to alleviate his wrath; his heavy wrath will lie on them, without any thing to lighten the burden, or to keep off, in any measure, the full weight of it from pressing the soul.—His eye will not spare, neither will he regard the sinner's cries and lamentations, however loud and bitter. Then shall wicked men know that God is the Lord; they shall know how great that majesty is which they have despised, and how dreadful that threatened wrath is which they have so little regarded. Then shall come on wicked men that punishment which they deserve. God will exact of them the uttermost farthing. Their iniquities are marked before him; they are all written in his book; and in the future world he will reckon with them, and they must pay all the debt. Their sins are laid up in store with God; they are sealed up among his treasures; and them he will recompense, even recompense into their bosoms. The consummate degree of punishment will not be executed till the day of judgment; but the wicked are sealed over to this consummate punishment immediately after death; they are cast into hell, and there bound in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day; and they know that the highest degree of punishment is coming upon them. Final wrath will be executed without any mixture; all mercy, all enjoyments will be taken away. God sometimes expresses his wrath in this world; but here good things and evil are mixed together; in the future there will be only evil things.

2. Wrath will then be executed without any *merciful* circumstances. The judgments which God executes on ungodly men in this world, are attended with many merciful circumstances. There is much patience and long-suffering, together with judgment; judgments are joined with continuance of opportunity to seek mercy. But in hell there will be no more exercises of divine patience. The judgments which God exercises on ungodly men in this world are warnings to them to avoid greater punishments; but the wrath which will come upon them, when they shall have filled up the measure of their sin, will not be of the nature of warnings. Indeed they will be effectually awakened, and made thoroughly sensible, by what they shall suffer; yet their being awakened and made sensible will do them no good. Many a wicked man hath suffered very awful things from God in this world, which have been a means of saving good: but that wrath which sinners shall suffer after death will be no way for their good. God will have no merciful design in it; neither will it be possible that they should get any good by that or by any thing else.

3. Wrath will be so executed, as to perfect the work to which wrath tends, *viz. utterly to undo* the subject of it. Wrath is often so executed in this life, as greatly to distress persons, and bring them into great calamity; yet not so as to complete the ruin of those who suffer it; but in another world, it will be so executed, as to finish their destruction, and render them

utterly and perfectly undone: it will take away all comfort, all hope, and all support. The soul will be, as it were, utterly crushed; the wrath will be wholly intolerable. It must sink, and will utterly sink, and will have no more strength to keep itself from sinking, than a worm would have to keep itself from being crushed under the weight of a mountain. The wrath will be so great, so mighty and powerful, as wholly to abolish all manner of welfare: [Matt. xxi. 44.](#) “But on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”

4. When persons shall have filled up the measure of their sin, that wrath will come upon them which is *eternal*. Though men may suffer very terrible and awful judgments in this world, yet those judgments have an end. They may be long continued, yet they commonly admit of relief. Temporal distresses and sorrows have intermissions and respite, and commonly by degrees abate and wear off; but the wrath that shall be executed, when the measure of sin shall have been filled up, will have no end. Thus it will be to the uttermost as to its duration; it will be of so long continuance, that it will be impossible it should be longer. Nothing can be longer than eternity.

5. When persons shall have filled up the measure of their sin, then wrath will come upon them to the uttermost of what is threatened. Sin is an infinite evil; and the punishment which God hath threatened against it is very dreadful. The threatenings of God against the workers of iniquity are very awful; but these threatenings are never fully accomplished in this world. However dreadful things some men may suffer in this life, yet God never fully executes his threatenings for so much as one sin, till they have filled up the whole measure. The threatenings of the law are never answered by any thing that any man suffers here. The most awful judgment in this life doth not answer God’s threatenings, either in degree, or in circumstances, or in duration. If the greatest sufferings that ever are endured in this life should be eternal, it would not answer the threatening. Indeed temporal judgments *belong* to the threatenings of the law; but these are not *answered* by them; they are but foretastes of the punishment. “The wages of sin is death. <sup>123</sup>” No expressions of wrath that are suffered before men have filled up the measure of their sin, are its full wages. But *then*, God will reckon with them, and will recompense into their bosoms the full deserved sum.

#### APPLICATION.

The use I would make of this doctrine is, of warning to natural men, to rest no longer in sin, and to make haste to flee from it. The things which have been said, under this doctrine, may well be awakening, awful considerations to you. It is awful to consider whose wrath it is that abides upon you, and of what wrath you are in danger. It is impossible to express the misery of a natural condition. It is like being in Sodom, with a dreadful storm of fire and brimstone hanging over it, just ready to break forth, and to be poured down upon it. The

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123 [Romans vi. 23.](#)

clouds of divine vengeance are full, and just ready to burst. Here let those who yet continue in sin, in this town, consider particularly,

1. Under what *great means* and advantages you continue in sin. God is now favouring us with very great and extraordinary means and advantages, in that we have such extraordinary tokens of the presence of God among us; his Spirit is so remarkably poured out, and multitudes of all ages, and all sorts, are converted and brought home to Christ. God appears among us in the most extraordinary manner, perhaps, that ever he did in New England. The children of Israel saw many mighty works of God, when he brought them out of Egypt; but we at this day see works more mighty, and of a more glorious nature.

We who live under such light, have had loud calls; but now above all. Now is a day of salvation. The fountain hath been set open among us in an extraordinary manner, and hath stood open for a considerable time: yet you continue in sin, and the calls that you have hitherto had have not brought you to be washed in it. What extraordinary advantages have you lately enjoyed, to stir you up! How hath every thing in the town, of late, been of that tendency! Those things which used to be the greatest hinderances have been removed. You have not the ill examples of immoral persons to be a temptation to you. There is not now that vain worldly talk, and ill company, to divert you, and to be a hinderance to you, which there used to be. Now you have multitudes of good examples set before you; there are many now all around you, who, instead of diverting and hindering you, are earnestly desirous of your salvation, and willing to do all that they can to move you to flee to Christ: they have a thirsting desire for it. The chief talk in the town has of late been about the things of religion, and has been such as hath tended to promote, and not to hinder, your souls' good. Every thing all around you hath tended to stir you up; and will you yet continue in sin?

Some of you have continued in sin till you are far advanced in life. You were warned when you were children; and some of you had awakenings then: however, the time went away. You became men and women; and then you were stirred up again, you had the strivings of God's Spirit; and some of you have fixed the times when you would make thorough work of seeking salvation. Some of you perhaps determined to do it when you should be married and settled in the world; others when you should have finished such a business, and when your circumstances should be so and so altered. Now these times have come, and are past; yet you continue in sin.

Many of you have had remarkable warnings of providence. Some of you have been warned by the deaths of near *relations*; you have stood by, and seen others die and go into eternity; yet this hath not been effectual. Some of you have been near death *yourselves*, have been brought nigh the grave in sore sickness, and were full of your promises how you would behave yourselves, if it should please God to spare your lives. Some of you have very narrowly escaped death by dangerous accidents; but God was pleased to spare you, to give you a further space to repent; yet you continue in sin.





Some of you have seen times of remarkable outpourings of the Spirit of God, in this town, in times past; but it had no good effect on you. *You* had the strivings of the Spirit of God too, as well as others. God did not so pass by your door, but that he came and knocked; yet you stood it out. Now God hath come again in a more remarkable manner than ever before, and hath been pouring out his Spirit for some months, in its most gracious influence; yet you remain in sin until now. In the beginning of this awakening, you were warned to flee from wrath, and to forsake your sins. You were told what a wide door there was open, what an accepted time it was, and were urged to press into the kingdom of God. And many did press in; they forsook their sins, and believed in Christ; *but you, when you had seen it, repented not, that you might believe him.*

Then you were warned again, and still others have been pressing and thronging into the kingdom of God. Many have fled for refuge, and have laid hold on Christ; yet you continue in sin and unbelief. You have seen multitudes of all sorts, of all ages, young and old, flocking to Christ, and many of about your age and your circumstances; but you still are in the same miserable condition in which you used to be. You have seen persons daily flocking to Christ, as doves to their windows. God hath not only poured out his Spirit on this town, but also on other towns around us, and they are flocking in there, as well as here. This blessing spreads further and further; many, far and near, seem to be setting their faces Zionward: yet you who live here, where this work first began, continue behind still; you have no lot or portion in this matter.

2. How *dreadful* the wrath of God is, when it is executed to the uttermost. To make you in some measure sensible of that, I desire you to consider whose wrath it is. The wrath of a king is the roaring of a lion; but this is the wrath of Jehovah, the Lord God Omnipotent. Let us consider, What can we rationally think of it? How dreadful must be the wrath of such a Being, when it comes upon a person to the uttermost, without any pity, or moderation, or merciful circumstances! What must be the uttermost of his wrath, who made heaven and earth by the word of his power; who spake, and it was done, who commanded, and it stood fast! What must his wrath be, who commandeth the sun, and it rises not, and sealeth up the stars! What must his wrath be, who shaketh the earth out of its place, and causeth the pillars of heaven to tremble! What must his wrath be, who rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, who removeth the mountains out of their places, and overturneth them in his anger! What must his wrath be, whose majesty is so awful, that no man could live in the sight of it! What must the wrath of such a Being be, when it comes to the uttermost, when he makes his majesty appear and shine bright in the misery of wicked men! And what is a worm of the dust before the fury and under the weight of this wrath, which the stoutest devils cannot bear, but utterly sink, and are crushed under it.—Consider how dreadful the wrath of God is sometimes in this world, only in a little taste or view of it. Sometimes, when God only enlightens conscience, to have some sense of his wrath, it causes the stout-hearted to cry

out; nature is ready to sink under it, when indeed it is but a little glimpse of divine wrath that is seen. This hath been observed in many cases. But if a slight taste and apprehension of wrath be so dreadful and intolerable, what must it be, when it comes upon persons to the uttermost! When a few drops or little sprinkling of wrath is so distressing and overbearing to the soul, how must it be when God opens the flood-gates, and lets the mighty deluge of his wrath come pouring down upon men's guilty heads, and brings in all his waves and billows upon their souls! How little of God's wrath will sink them! [Psal. ii. 12.](#) "When his wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

3. Consider, you know not what wrath God may be about to execute upon wicked men in *this world*. Wrath may, in some sense, be coming upon them, in the present life, to the uttermost, for ought we know. When it is said of the Jews, <sup>124</sup> "The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost," respect is had, not only to the execution of divine wrath on that people in hell, but that terrible destruction of Judea and Jerusalem, which was then near approaching, by the Romans. We know not but the wrath is now coming, in some peculiarly awful manner, on the wicked world. God seems, by the things which he is doing among us, to be coming forth for some great thing. The work which hath been lately wrought among us is no ordinary thing. He doth not work in his usual way, but in a way very extraordinary; and it is probable, that it is a forerunner of some very great revolution. We must not pretend to say what is in the womb of providence, or what is in the book of God's secret decrees; yet we may and ought to discern the signs of these times.

Though God be now about to do glorious things for his church and people, yet it is probable that they will be accompanied with dreadful things to his enemies. It is the manner of God, when he brings about any glorious revolution for his people, at the same time to execute very awful judgments on his enemies: [Deut. xxxii. 43.](#) "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people." [Isa. iii. 10, 11.](#) "Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well With him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." [Isa. lxv. 13, 14.](#) "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit." We find in Scripture, that where glorious times are prophesied to God's people, there are at the same time awful judgments foretold to his enemies. What God is now about to do, we know not: but this we may know, that there will be no safety to any but those who are in the ark.—Therefore it behoves all to haste and flee for their lives, to get into a safe condition, to get into Christ;

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124 [1 Thess. ii. 16.](#)

then they need not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof: for God will be their refuge and strength; they need not be afraid of evil tidings; their hearts may be fixed, trusting in the Lord.

S E R M O N   V I I .   1 2 5

WICKED MEN USEFUL IN THEIR DESTRUCTION ONLY.

[Ezek. xv. 2-4.](#)

Son of man, What is the vine-tree more than any tree? or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both, the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work?

THE visible church of God is here compared to the vine-tree, as is evident by God's own explanation of the allegory, [inver. 6-8](#). "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As the vine-tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem," &c. And it may be understood of mankind in general. So [Deut. xxxii. 32](#). "Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are grapes of gall" And especially his professing people. [Psal. lxxx. 8](#). "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt;" [ver. 14](#). "Look down from heaven, behold, and visit this vine." And [Cant. ii. 15](#). "The foxes that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." [Isa. v](#). "My beloved hath a vineyard, and he planted it with the choicest vine." [Jer. ii. 21](#). "I had planted thee a noble vine." [Hos. x. 1](#). "Israel is an empty vine." So in [chap. xv. of John.](#), visible Christians are compared to the *branches of a vine*.

Man is very fitly represented by the vine. The weakness and dependence of the vine on other things which support it, well represents to us what a poor, feeble, dependent creature man is, and how, if left to himself, he falls into mischief, and cannot help himself. The visible people of God are fitly compared to a vine, because of the care and cultivation of the husbandman, or vine-dresser. The business of husbandmen in the land of Israel was very much about vines; and the care they exercised to fence them, to defend them, to prune them, to prop them up, and to cultivate them, well represented that merciful care which God exercises towards his visible people.

In the words now read is represented, now wholly useless and unprofitable, even beyond other trees, a vine is, in case of unfruitfulness: "What is a vine-tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest?" <sup>126</sup> " *i. e.* if it do not bear fruit. Men make much more of a vine than of other trees; they take great care of it, to wall it in, to dig

about it, to prune it, and the like. It is much more highly esteemed than one of the trees of the forest; they are despised in comparison with it And if it bear fruit, it is indeed much preferable to other trees; for the fruit of it yields a noble liquor; as it is said in Jotham's parable, [Judg. ix. 13.](#) "And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man?"—But if it bear no fruit, it is more unprofitable than the trees of the forest; for the wood of them is good for timber; but the wood of the vine is fit for no work; as in the text, "Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? <sup>127</sup> "—The only thing for which a vine is useful, in case of barrenness, is for fuel: "Beheld, it is cast into the fire for fuel. <sup>128</sup> " It is wholly consumed; no part of it is worth a saving, to make any instrument of it, for any work.

Doctrine. If men bring forth no fruit to God, they are wholly useless, unless in their destruction.

For the proof of this doctrine, I shall show,

1. That there can be but two ways in which man can be useful, *viz.* either in *acting*, or in *being acted upon*.

2. That man can no otherwise be useful *actively* than by bringing forth fruit to God.

3. That if he bring not forth fruit to God, there is no other way in which he can be *passively* useful, but in being destroyed.

4. In that way he may be useful without bearing fruit.

I. There are but two ways in which man can be useful, *viz.* either in acting or being *acted upon*. If man be useful, he must be so either actively or passively; there is no medium. What can be more plain, than that if a man do nothing himself, and nothing be done with him or upon him by any other, he cannot be any way at all useful?—If man do nothing himself to promote the end of his existence, and no other being do any thing with him to promote this end, then nothing will be done to promote this end; and so man must be wholly useless. So that there are but two ways in which man can be useful to any purpose, *viz.* either actively or passively, either in doing something himself, or in being the subject of something done to him.

II. Man cannot be useful *actively*, any otherwise than in bringing forth fruit to God; serving God and living to his glory. This is the only way wherein he can be useful in doing; and that for this *reason*, that the glory of God is the very thing for which man was made, and to which all other ends are subordinate. Man is not an independent being, but he derives his being from another; and therefore hath his end assigned him by that other: and he who gave him his being made him for the end now mentioned. This was the very design and aim of the Author of man, this was the work for which he made him, *viz.* to serve and glorify

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127 [Ezek. xv. 2-4.](#)

128 [Ezek. xv. 2-4.](#)

his Maker.—Other creatures, that are inferior, were made for inferior purposes. But man is the highest, and nearest to God, of any in this lower world; and therefore his business is with God, although other creatures are made for lower ends. There may be observed a kind of gradual ascent, in the order of different creatures, from the meanest clod of earth to man, who hath a rational and immortal soul. A plant, an herb, or tree, is superior in nature to a stone or clod, because it hath a vegetable life. The brute creatures are a degree higher still; for they have sensitive life. But man, having a rational soul, is the highest of this lower creation, and is next to God; therefore his business is with God.

Things without life, as earth, water, &c. are subservient to things above them, as the grass, herbs, and trees. These vegetables are subservient to that order of creatures which is next above them, the brute creation; they are for food to them. Brute creatures, again, are made for the use and service of the order above them; they are made for the service of mankind. But man being the highest of this lower creation, the next step from him is to God. He therefore is made for the service and glory of God. This is the whole work and business of man; it is his highest end, to which all other ends are subordinate.

If it had not been for this end, there never would have been any such creature; there would have been no occasion for it. Other inferior ends may be answered as well, without any such creature as man. There would have been no sort of occasion for making so noble a creature, and enduing him with such faculties, only to enjoy earthly good, to eat, and to drink, and to enjoy sensual things. Brute creatures, without reason, are capable of these things, as well as man: yea, if no higher end be aimed at than to enjoy sensitive good, reason is rather a hinderance than a help. It doth but render man the more capable of afflicting himself with care, fears of death, and other future evils; and of vexing himself with many anxieties, from which brute creatures are wholly free, and therefore can gratify their senses with less molestation. Besides, reason doth but make men more capable of molesting and impeding one another in the gratification of their senses. If man have no other end to seek but to gratify his senses, reason is nothing but an impediment.

Therefore if man be not made to serve and glorify his Creator, it is wholly to no purpose that such a creature is made. Doubtless then, the all-wise God, who doth all things in infinite wisdom, hath made man for this end. And this is agreeable to what he hath taught us in many places in the Scriptures. This is the great end for which man was made, and for which he was made such a creature, having bodily senses and rational powers. For this is he placed in such circumstances, and the earth is given him for a possession. For this he hath dominion given him over the rest of the terrestrial creatures. For this the sun shines and the rain falls on him, and the moon and stars are for signs and seasons to him, and the earth yields him her increase.—All other ends of man are subordinate to this. There are indeed inferior ends for which man was made. Men were made for one another; for their friends and neighbours, and for the good of the public. But all these inferior ends are designed to be subordinate to



the higher end of glorifying God; and therefore man cannot be actively useful otherwise than by actively bringing forth fruit to God. Because, that is not actively useful which doth not actively answer its end: that which doth not *answer its end* is in vain; for that is the meaning of the proposition, that any thing *is in vain*. So that which doth not actively answer its end, is as to its own activity in vain.

That, as to its own activity, is altogether useless, which actively answers only subordinate ends, without answering the ultimate end; because the latter is the end of subordinate ones. Subordinate ends are to no purpose, only as they stand related to the highest end. Therefore these inferior ends are good for nothing, though they be obtained, unless they also obtain *their* end. Inferior ends are not aimed at for their own sake, but only for the sake of that which is *ultimate*. Therefore he that fails of this, is as much to no purpose, as if he did not obtain his subordinate end.

I will illustrate this by two or three examples. The subordinate end of the underpinning of a house, is to support it, and the subordinate end of the windows, is to let in the light. But the ultimate end of the whole, is the benefit of the inhabitants. Therefore, if the house be never inhabited, the whole is in vain. The underpinning is in vain, though it be ever so strong, and support the building ever so well. The windows also are wholly in vain, though they be ever so large and clear, and though they obtain the subordinate end of letting in the light: they are as much in vain, as if they let in no light.

So the subordinate end of the husbandman in ploughing and sowing, and well manuring his field, is, that it may bring forth a crop. But his more ultimate end is, that food may be provided for him and his family. Therefore though his inferior end be obtained, and his field bring forth ever so good a crop, yet if after all it be consumed by fire, or otherwise destroyed, he ploughed and sowed his field as much in vain, as if the seed had never sprung up.—So if man obtain his subordinate ends ever so fully; yet if he altogether fail of his ultimate end, he is wholly an useless creature. Thus if men be very useful in temporal things to their families, or greatly promote the temporal interest of the neighbourhood, or of the public; yet if no glory be brought to God by it they are altogether useless. If men actually bring no glory to God, they are, as to their own activity, altogether useless, how much soever they may promote the benefit of one another. How much soever one part of mankind may subserve another; yet if the end of the whole be not answered, every part is useless.

Thus if the parts of a clock subserve ever so well one another, mutually to assist each other in their motions; one wheel moving another ever so regularly; yet if the motion never reach the hand or the hammer, it is altogether in vain, as much as if it stood still. So one man was made to be useful to another, and one part of mankind to another; but the use of the whole is to bring glory to God the maker, or else all is in vain.

Although a wicked man may, by being serviceable to good men, do what will be an advantage to them to their bringing forth fruit to God; yet that serviceableness is not what he

*aims* at; he doth not look so far for an ultimate end. And however this be obtained, no thanks are due to him: he is only the *occasion*, and not the *designing* cause of it.

The usefulness of such a man, being not designed, is not to be attributed to him, as though it were *his* fruit. He is not useful *as a man*, or as a rational creature, because he is not so designedly. He is useful as things without life may be. Things without life may be useful to put the godly under advantages to bring forth fruit, as the timber and stones with which his house is built, the wool and flax with which he is clothed; but the fruit which is brought forth to God's glory, cannot be said to be the fruit of these lifeless things, but of the godly man who makes use of them. So it is when wicked men put the godly under advantages to glorify God, as Cyrus, and Artaxerxes, and others have done.

III. If men bring not forth fruit to God, there is no other way in which they can be useful *passively*, but in being destroyed. They are fit for nothing else.

1. They are not fit to be suffered to continue *always in this world*. It is not fit that this world should be the constant abode of those who bring forth no fruit to God. It is not fit that the barren tree should be allowed always to stand in the vineyard. The husbandman lets it stand for a while, till he digs about it, dungs it, and proves it to be incurable, or till a convenient time to cut it down come; but it is not fit that they who bring forth no fruit to God, should be suffered to live always in a world which is so full of the divine goodness, or that his goodness should be spent upon them for ever.—This world, though fallen, and under a curse, has many streams of divine goodness. But it is not fit that those who bring forth no fruit to God, should always be continued in partaking of these streams. There are three different states; one, wherein is nothing but good, which is heaven; another, wherein is a mixture of good and evil, which is the earthly state; and the third, wherein is nothing but evil, which is the state of eternal destruction. Now they that bring forth no fruit to God, are not fit for either of the former.

It is not fit that an unprofitable, unfruitful creature, who will not glorify his Creator, should always live here to consume the fruits of divine bounty; to have the good things of this life spent upon him in vain. While a man lives here, the other creatures are subjected to him. The brute creatures serve him with their labour and with their lives. The sun, moon, and stars; the clouds, fields, and trees, all serve him. But why should God always keep his creatures in subjection to that man, who will not be subject to him? Why should the creation be always kept in such bondage, as to be subject to wicked men? The creatures indeed are made subject to vanity, God hath subjected them to wicked men, and given them for their use. This however he would not have done but as it is only for a little while; and the creatures can bear it through the hope of approaching deliverance; otherwise it would have been intolerable. [Rom. viii. 20](#). "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by

reason of him who hath subjected the same *in hope*.”—The creature, as it were, groans by reason of this subjection to wicked men, although it be but for a while, [ver. 22](#). “For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now.” Therefore surely it would be no way fit that wicked men, who do no good, and bring forth no fruit to God, should live here always, to have the various creatures subservient to them, as they are now. The earth can scarcely bear wicked men during that short time for which they stay here. It is no way fit, therefore, that it should be forced to bear them always.

Men who bring forth no fruit to God are cumberers of the ground. [Luke xiii. 7](#). And it is not meet that they should be suffered to cumber the ground *always*. God cannot be glorified in this way of disposing of unfruitful persons. If such men should be suffered to live always in such a state as this, it would be so far from being to the glory of God, that it would be to the disparagement of his *wisdom* to continue them in a state so unsuitable for them. It would also be a disparagement to his *justice*; for this is a world where “all things come alike to all, and there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.”<sup>129</sup> If there were no other state but this for wicked men, justice could not possibly take place. It would also reflect upon the *holiness* of God. For ever to uphold this world for a habitation of such persons, and for ever to continue the communications of his bounty and goodness to them, would appear as though he were disposed to countenance and encourage wickedness.

2. If men do not bring forth fruit to God, they are not fit to be disposed of *in heaven*. Heaven, above all others, is the most improper place for them. Every thing appertaining to that state is unsuitable for them. The *company* is most unsuitable. The original inhabitants of that world are the angels.. But what a disagreeable union would that be, to unite wicked men and angels in the same society! The *employments* of that world are unsuitable. The employments are serving and glorifying God. How unsuitable then would it be to plant barren trees in that heavenly paradise, trees that would bring forth no fruit to the divine glory! The *enjoyments* of heaven are unsuitable. The enjoyments are holy and spiritual, the happiness of beholding the glory of God, and praising his name, and the like. But these enjoyments are as unsuitable as can be to the carnal earthly minds of wicked men. They would be no enjoyments to them; but on the contrary would be most disagreeable, and what they cannot relish, but entirely nauseate. The *design* of heaven is unsuitable to them. The design of God in making heaven was, that it might be a place of holy habitation, for the reward of the righteous, and not a habitation for the wicked. It would greatly reflect on the wisdom of God to dispose of wicked men there; for it would be the greatest confusion. But God is not the author of confusion, [1 Cor. xiv. 33](#). It would be contrary to the holiness of God, to take wicked men so near to himself, into his glorious presence, to dwell for ever in the part of that creation which is, as it were, his own palace, and to sit at his table. We read in [Psal.](#)

129 [Eccl. ix. 2](#).



v. 4. “Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.” Therefore it would be impossible that the end of the existence of wicked men should be answered by placing them in heaven.

IV. Men who bring forth no fruit to God, may yet in suffering destruction be useful. Although they be not useful by any thing they do; yet they may be useful in what they may suffer; just as a barren tree, which is no way useful standing in the vineyard, may be good fuel. God can find use for the most wicked men: he hath his use for vessels of wrath as well as for vessels of mercy: [2 Tim. ii. 20](#). “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour.” [Prov. xvi. 4](#). “The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.” I shall briefly take notice of some ends which God accomplishes by it.

1. Unfruitful persons are of use in their destruction for the glory of God’s *justice*. The vindictive justice of God is a glorious attribute, as well as his mercy; and the glory of this attribute appears in the everlasting destruction and ruin of the barren and unfruitful.—The glory of divine justice in the perdition of ungodly men, appears wonderful and glorious in the eyes of the saints and angels in heaven. Hence we have an account, that they sing praises to God, and extol his justice, at the sight of the awful judgments which he inflicts on wicked men: [Rev. xvi. 5, 6](#). “Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and vast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy:” and [Rev. xix. 1, 2](#). “And after these things I heard a great voice, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.”

2. Unfruitful persons in their destruction are of use for God to glorify his majesty upon them. The awful *majesty* of God remarkably appears in those dreadful and amazing punishments which he inflicts on those who rise up against him. A sense of the majesty of an earthly prince is supported very much by a sense of its being a dreadful thing to affront him. God glorifies his own majesty in the destruction of wicked men; and herein he appears infinitely great, in that it appears to be an infinitely dreadful thing to offend him. How awful doth the majesty of God appear in the dreadfulfulness of his anger! This we may learn to be one end of the damnation of the wicked, from [Rom. ix. 22](#). “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” This is a part of his majesty and glory. God tells Pharaoh, that for this cause he raised him up, that he might show his power in him, and that his name might be declared through all the earth, in his destruction, [Exod. ix. 15, 16](#). and again, [chap. xiv. 17](#). “I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.”

3. The destruction of the unfruitful is of use, to give the saints a *greater sense* of their happiness, and of God's grace to them. The wicked will be destroyed and tormented in the view of the saints, and other inhabitants of heaven. This we are taught in [Rev. xiv. 10](#). "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of his holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." And in [Isa. lxvi. 24](#). "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." When the saints in heaven shall look upon the damned in hell, it will serve to give them a greater sense of their own happiness. When they shall see how dreadful the anger of God is, it will make them the more prize his love. They will rejoice the more, that they are not the objects of God's anger, but of his favour; that they are not the subjects of his dreadful wrath, but are treated as his children, to dwell in the everlasting embraces of his love. The misery of the damned will give them a greater sense of the distinguishing grace and love of God to them, that he should from all eternity set his love on them, and make so great a difference between them and others who are of the same species, and have deserved no worse of God than they. What a great sense will this give them of the wonderful grace of God to them! and how will it heighten their praises! with how much greater admiration and exultation of soul will they sing of the free and sovereign grace of God to them!

When they shall look upon the damned, and see their misery, how will heaven ring with the praises of God's justice towards the wicked, and his grace towards the saints! And with how much greater enlargement of heart will they praise Jesus Christ, their Redeemer, that ever he was pleased to set his love upon them, his dying love! and that he should so distinguish them as to shed his blood, and make his soul an offering to redeem them from that misery, and to bring them to such happiness! With what love and ecstasy will they sing that song in [Rev. v. 9, 10](#). "Thou art worthy: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." One end, which the apostle mentions, why God appointed vessels of wrath, is the more to make known the wonderfulness of his mercy towards the saints. In [Rom. ix. 22, 23](#). there are two ends mentioned: "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" That is one end; another is mentioned immediately after: "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?"<sup>130</sup> »



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130 [Rom. ix. 22, 23](#).

### APPLICATION.

I. Hence we may learn, how just and righteous God is in the destruction of those who bring forth no fruit to him. Seeing there is no other way in which the end of their being can be obtained, certainly it is most just that God should thus dispose of them. Why should he be frustrated of his end through their perverseness! If men will not do the work for which he hath made and fitted them; if they, through a spirit of opposition and rebellion, refuse; why should God suffer himself to be disappointed of his end in making them? It doth not become his infinite greatness and majesty to suffer himself to be frustrated by the wickedness and perverseness of sinful worms of the dust. If God should suffer this, it would seem to argue, either a want of wisdom to fix upon a good end, or a want of power to accomplish it.—God made all men that they might be useful; and if they will not be useful in their conduct and actions, how just is it that God should make them useful in their sufferings! He made all men for his own glory; and if they, contrary to the revealed will of God, refuse to glorify him actively and willingly, how just is it that God should glorify himself upon them!

Men are under no natural necessity of being put to this use of glorifying God in their sufferings. God gives them opportunity of glorifying him in bringing forth fruit, puts them under advantages for it, and uses many means to bring them to it. But if they will not be useful in this way, it is very just that God should make them useful in the only remaining way in which they can be useful, *viz.* in their destruction. God is not forward to put them to this use. He tells us, that he hath [Ezek. xxxiii. 11.](#) “no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live;” He represents the destruction of sinners as a work to which he is backward; yet it is meet that they should be destroyed, rather than that they should be suffered to frustrate the end of their being. Who can blame the husbandman for cutting down and burning a barren tree, after he hath digged about it, and dunged it, and used all proper means to make it fruitful?—Let those among us consider this, who have lived all their lives hitherto unprofitably, and never have brought forth any fruit to God’s glory, notwithstanding all the means that have been used with them. Consider how just it would be if God should utterly destroy you, and glorify himself upon you in that way; and what a wonderful patience it is, that God hath not done it before now.

II. This subject ought to put you upon examining yourselves, whether you be not wholly useless creatures. You have now heard, that those who bring forth no fruit to God, are, as to any good they do, wholly useless. Inquire, therefore, whether you have ever done any thing from a gracious respect to God, or out of love to him? Seeking only your worldly interest, or for you to come to public worship on the sabbath, to pray in your families, and other such things, merely in compliance with the general custom—or that you be sober, moral, and religious, only to be seen of men, or out of respect to your own credit and honour—is not bringing forth fruit to God. How is that for God which is only for the sake of

custom, the esteem of men, or merely from the fear of hell? What thanks are due to you for not loving your own misery, and for being willing to take some pains to escape burning in hell to all eternity? There is not a devil in hell, but would do the same: [Hos. x. 1.](#) “Israel is an *empty* vine; he bringeth forth fruit *unto himself.*”

There is no fruit brought forth to God, where there is nothing done from love, or true respect to him. God looketh at the heart. He doth not stand in need of our services, neither is he benefited by any thing that we can do. He doth not receive any thing of us, but only as a suitable testimony of our love and respect to him. This is the fruit that he seeks. Men themselves will not accept of those shows of friendship, which they think are hypocritical, and come not from the heart. How much less should God, who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men! [John iv. 24.](#) “God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”—Inquire, therefore, whether you ever did the least thing out of love to God? Have you not done all for yourselves? [Zech. vii. 5, 6.](#) “When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?”

III. Another use of this subject may be of *conviction* and *humiliation* to those who never have brought forth any fruit to God. If, upon examination, you find that you have never in all your lives done any thing out of a true respect to God, then it hath been demonstrated, that, as to any thing which you do, you are altogether useless creatures. And consider, what a shameful thing it is for such rational beings as you are, and placed under such advantages for usefulness, yet to be wholly useless, and to live in the world to no purpose! We esteem it a very mean character in any person, that he is worthless and insignificant; and to be called so is taken as a great reproach. But consider seriously, whether you can clear yourselves of this character. Set reason to work; can you rationally suppose, that you do in any measure answer the end for which God gave you your being, and made you of a nature superior to the beasts?—But that you may be sensible what cause you have to be ashamed of your unprofitableness, consider the following things:

1. How much God hath *bestowed* upon you, in the endowments of your nature. God hath made you rational, intelligent creatures, hath endued you with noble powers, those endowments wherein the natural image of God consists. You are vastly exalted in your nature above other kinds of creatures here below. You are capable of a thousand times as much as any of the brute creatures. He hath given you a power of understanding, which is capable of extending itself, of looking back to the beginning of time, and of considering what was before the world, and of looking forward beyond the end of time. It is capable of extending beyond the utmost limits of the universe; and is a faculty whereby you are akin to angels, and are capable even of knowing and contemplating the Divine Being, and his glorious perfections, manifested in his works and in his word. You have souls capable of

being the habitation of the Holy Spirit of God, and his divine grace. You are capable of the noble employments of angels. How lamentable and shameful is it, that such a creature should be altogether useless, and live in vain! How lamentable that such a noble and excellent piece of divine workmanship should fail of its end, and be to no purpose! Was it ever worth while for God to make you such a creature, with such a noble nature, and so much above other kinds of creatures, only to eat, and drink, and gratify your sensual appetites? How lamentable and shameful to you, that such a noble tree should be more useless than any tree of the forest; that man, whom God hath thus set in honour, should make himself more worthless than the beasts that perish!

2. How much God hath *done for you* in the *creation* of the world. He made the earth, and seas, and all their fulness, for the use of man: [Psal. cxv. 16](#). “The earth hath he given to the children of men.” He made the vast variety of creatures for man’s use and service: [Gen. i. 28](#). “Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” For the same purpose he made all the plants, and herbs, and trees of the field: [Gen. i. 29](#). “I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree, yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” He made the sun in the heavens, that glorious luminary, that wonderful globe of light, to give light to man, and to constitute the difference between day and night. He also made the moon, and the vast multitude of stars, to be to him signs and seasons. What great provision hath God made for man! What a vast variety of good things for food and convenience, to put him under advantages to be use fill! How lamentable is it, then, that after all these things he should be an useless creature!

3. How much is done for you in the course of God’s *common providence*! Consider how nature is continually labouring for you. The sun is, as it were, in a ferment for mankind, and spending his rays upon man to put him under advantage to be useful. The winds and clouds are continually labouring for you, and the waters are going in a constant circulation, ascending in the air from the seas, descending in rain, gathering in streams and rivers, returning to the sea, and again ascending and descending for you. The earth is continually labouring to bring forth her fruit for your support. The trees of the field, and many of the poor brute creatures, are continually labouring and spending their strength for you! How much of the fulness of the earth is spent upon you! How many of God’s creatures are devoured by you! How many of the lives of the living creatures of God are destroyed for your sake, for your support and comfort!—Now, how lamentable will it be, if, after all, you be altogether useless, and live to no purpose! What mere cumberers of the ground will you be! [Luke xiii. 7](#). Nature, which thus continually labours for you, will be burdened with you. This seems to be what the apostle means, [Rom. viii. 20, 21, 22](#). where he tells us, that the creation is made subject to vanity, and brought into the bondage of corruption; and that the whole creation groans, and travails in pain, under this bondage.



4. How much is done for you in the use of the *means of grace*. How much hath God done to provide you with suitable means and advantages for usefulness! How many prophets hath he sent into the world, in different ages, inspiring them with his Holy Spirit, and enabling them to work many miracles to confirm their word, whereby you now have his written word to instruct you! How great a thing hath God done for you, to give you opportunity and advantage to be useful, in that he hath sent his own Son into the world! He who is really and truly God, united himself to the human nature, and became man, to be a prophet and teacher to you and other sinners. Yea, he laid down his life to make atonement for sin, that you might have encouragement to serve God with hopes of acceptance.—How many ordinances have been instituted for you! How much of the labour of the ministers of God hath been spent upon you! Is not that true concerning you which is said (*Isa. v.*) of the vineyard planted in a very fruitful hill, and fenced and cultivated with peculiar care and pains, which yet proved unfruitful? How much hath the dresser of the vineyard digged about the barren tree, and dunged it, and yet it remains barren!

5. Consider what a shame it is that you should live in vain, when all the *other creatures*, inferior to you, glorify their Creator, according to their nature. You who are so highly exalted in the world, are more useless than the brute creation; yea, than the meanest worms, or things without life, as earth and stones: for they all answer their end; none of them fail of it. They are all useful in their places, all render their proper tribute of praise to their Creator: while you are mere nuisances in the creation, and burdens to the earth; as any tree of the forest is more useful than the vine, if it bear not fruit.

IV. Let me, in a further application of this doctrine, *exhort* you by all means to bring forth fruit to God. Let it be your constant endeavour to be in this way actively useful in the world.—Here consider three things.

1. What an *honour* it will be to such poor creatures as you are to bring forth fruit to the divine glory. What is such a poor worm as man, that he should be enabled to bring forth any fruit to God! It is the greatest honour of his nature, that God hath given him a capacity of glorifying the great Creator. There is no creature in the visible world that is capable of actively glorifying God, but man.

2. In bringing forth fruit to God, you will be so *profitable* to none as to yourselves. You cannot thereby be profitable to God; *Job xxii. 2.* “Can a man be profitable to God?” And though thereby you may be profitable to your fellow-creatures; yet the fruit which you bring forth to God will be a greater benefit to yourselves than to any one living.—Although you are under a natural obligation to bring forth fruit to God, yet he will richly reward you for it. In requiring you to bring forth fruit to him, he doth but require you to bring forth fruit to your own happiness. You will taste the sweetness of your own fruit. It will be most profitable for you in this world, and the pleasure will be beyond the labour. Beside this, God

hath promised to such a life, everlasting rewards, unspeakable, infinite benefits. So that by it you will infinitely advance your own interest.

3. If you remain thus unprofitable, and be not actively useful, surely God will obtain his end of you, in your destruction. He will say concerning the barren tree, “Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? <sup>131</sup>” Christ, [John xv. 6.](#) tells us, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” This is spoken of the barren branches in the vine. How would you yourselves do in such a case with a barren tree in an orchard, or with weeds and tares in your fields? Doubtless, if it were in your power, you would utterly destroy them.—God will have his end; he will not be frustrated. Though all men and devils unite their endeavours, they cannot frustrate God in any thing; and [Prov. xi. 21.](#) “though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished;” God hath sworn by his great name, that he will have his glory of men, whether they will actively glorify him or no. [Numb. xiv. 21, 22, 23.](#) “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me, see it.”—[Matt. iii. 10.](#) “The axe lieth at the root of the trees; and every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire;” The end of those men who bring forth nothing but briars and thorns, is to be burned, as in [Heb. vi. 7, 8.](#) “For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” So we read of the tares, [Matt. xiii. 30.](#) “Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them;” and in [verses 40, 41, 42.](#) “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”—So it is said of the chaff, [Matt. iii. 12.](#) “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

If you continue not to bring forth any fruit to the divine glory, hell will be the only fit place for you. It is a place prepared on purpose to be a receptacle of such persons. In hell nature ceases to labour any more for sinners. There they will have no opportunity to consume the fruits of divine goodness on their lusts; there they can prejudice or encumber nothing, upon which God sets any value. There no faithful servants and ministers of God will any

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131 [Luke xiii. 7.](#)

longer spend their strength in vain upon them. When the barren tree is in the fire, the servants of the husbandman are freed from any further labour about it.—In hell the fruitless will no more have opportunity to clog and discourage the flourishing of religion, and to destroy much good, as they often do in this world; they will no more have opportunity to corrupt others by their ill example; they will no more have it in their power to offend the godly; they may hurt and torment one another; but the godly will be out of their reach. In hell there will be no ordinances, no sabbaths, no sacraments, no sacred things, for them to profane and defile by their careless and hypocritical attendance; but unceasing woe for their abuse.



**MISCELLANEOUS DISCOURSES**



## MEN NATURALLY ARE GOD'S ENEMIES.

## Romans v. 10.

For if, when were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

The apostle, from the beginning of the epistle, to the beginning of this chapter, had insisted on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. In this chapter he goes on to consider the benefits that are consequent on justification, *viz.* Peace with God, present happiness, and hope of glory. Peace with God is mentioned in the [first verse](#), “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” In the following verses he speaks of present blessedness, and hope of glory. “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>132</sup>”—And concerning this benefit, the hope of glory, the apostle particularly takes notice of two things, *viz.* the blessed nature of this hope, and the sure ground of it.

1. He insists on the *blessed nature* of this hope, in that it enables us to glory in tribulations. This excellent nature of true Christian hope is described in the following words: ([ver. 3-5.](#)) “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” As if he had said, Through hope of a blessed reward, that will abundantly more than make up for all *tribulation*, we are enabled to bear tribulation with *patience.*; patiently bearing, and patiently waiting (or the reward. And patience works *experience*; for when we thus bear tribulation with patient waiting for the reward, this brings experience of the earnest of the reward, *viz.* the earnest of the Spirit, in our feeling the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. So that our hope does not make us ashamed: it is not disappointed; for in the midst of our tribulation, we experience those blessed incomes of the Spirit in our souls, that make even a time of tribulation sweet to us; and is such an earnest as abundantly confirms our hope; and so experience works hope.

2. The apostle takes notice of the *sure ground* there is for this hope; or the abundant evidence we have, that we shall obtain the glory hoped for, in that peace we have with God, by our justification through Christ's blood. For while we were without strength, in due time Christ died for us; even while we were ungodly and sinners, enemies to God and Christ. (See [ver. 6-10.](#)) The apostle's argument is exceeding clear and strong. If God has done already so great a thing for us, as to give us Christ to die and shed his precious blood for us, which was vastly the greatest thing, we need not doubt but that he will bestow life upon us. It is but a small thing for God actually to bestow eternal life, after it is purchased; to what it is for him to give his own Son to die, in order to purchase it. The giving Christ to purchase it,

was virtually all: it included the whole grace of God in salvation. When Christ had purchased salvation at such a dear rate, all the difficulty was got through, all was virtually over and done. It is a small thing, in comparison, for God to bestow salvation, after it has been thus purchased at a full price. Sinners who are justified by the death of Christ, are already virtually saved: the thing is, as it were, done: what remains, is no more than the necessary consequence of what is done. Christ when he died made an end of sin: and when he rose from the dead, he did virtually rise with the elect: he brought them up from death with him, and ascended into heaven with them. And therefore, when this is already done, and we are thus reconciled to God through the death of his Son, we need not fear but that we shall be saved by his life. The love of God appears much more in his giving his Son to die for sinners, than in giving eternal life after Christ's death.

The giving of Christ to die for us is here spoken of as a much greater thing, than the actual bestowment of life; because this is all that has any difficulty in it.—When God did this for us, he did it for us as sinners and enemies. Rut in actually bestowing salvation on us after we are justified, we are not looked upon as sinners, but as perfectly righteous persons: he beholds no iniquity in us. We are no more enemies, but reconciled. When God gave Christ to die for the elect, he looked on them as they are in themselves; but in actually bestowing eternal life, he looks on them as they are in Christ.

There are *three* epithets used in the text and context, as appertaining to sinners as they are in themselves, [ver. 6-8](#).

They are *without strength*, they cannot help themselves.—They are *ungodly* or sinners,—and they are *enemies*:as in the text.—Natural men are God's enemies.

God, though the Creator of all things, yet has some enemies in the world.—Men in general will own, that they are sinners. There are few, if any, whose consciences are so blinded as not to be sensible they have been guilty of sin. And most sinners will own that they have bad hearts. They will own that they do not love God so much as they should do; that they are not so thankful as they ought to be for mercies; and that in many things they fail. And yet few of them are sensible that they are God's enemies. They do not see how they can be truly so called; for they are not sensible that they wish God any hurt, or endeavour to do him any.

But we see that the Scripture speaks of them as enemies to God. So in our text, and elsewhere, “And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works.” [Col. i. 21](#). “The carnal mind is enmity against God.” [Rom. vii. 7](#).—And that all natural or un-regenerate men are indeed such, is what I shall endeavour now particularly to show. Which I propose to do in the following method. Particularly—In what respects they are enemies to God—To how great a degree they are enemies—And why they are enemies. Then I shall answer some objections.

## SECT. I.

In what respects natural men are God's enemies.

1. Their enmity appears in their judgments, their natural relish, their wills, affections, and practice. They have a very mean esteem of God. Men are ready to entertain a good esteem of those with whom they are friends: they are apt to think highly of their qualities, to give them their due praises; and if there be defects, to cover them. But of those to whom they are enemies, they are disposed to have mean thoughts; they are apt to entertain a dishonourable opinion of them: they will be ready to look contemptibly upon any thing that is praiseworthy in them.

So it is with natural men towards God. They entertain very low and contemptible thoughts of God. Whatever honour and respect they may pretend, and make a show of towards God, if their practice be examined, it will show, that they certainly look upon him as a Being that is but little to be regarded. The language of their hearts is, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" [Exod. v. 2.](#) "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" [Job xxi. 15.](#) They count him worthy neither to be loved nor feared. They dare not behave with that slight and disregard towards one of their fellow-creatures, when a little raised above them in power and authority, as they dare, and do, towards God. They value one of their equals much more than God, and are ten times more afraid of offending such, than of displeasing the God that made them. They cast such exceeding contempt on God, as to prefer every vile lust before him. And every worldly enjoyment is set higher in their esteem, than God. A morsel of meat, or a few pence of worldly gain, is preferred before him. God is set last and lowest in the esteem of natural men.

2. They are enemies in the *natural relish* of their souls. They have an inbred distaste and disrelish of God's perfections. God is not such a being as they would have. Though they are ignorant of God; yet from what they hear of him, and from what is manifest by the light of nature, they do not like him. By his being endowed with such attributes as he is, they have an aversion to him. They hear God is an infinitely holy, pure, and righteous Being, and they do not like him upon this account; they have no relish of such qualifications: they take no delight in contemplating them. It would be a mere task, a bondage to a natural man, to be obliged to set himself to contemplate those attributes of God. They see no manner of beauty or loveliness, nor taste any sweetness, in them. And on account of their distaste of these perfections, they dislike all his other attributes. They have greater aversion to him because he is omniscient and knows all things; and because his omniscience is a holy omniscience. They are not pleased that he is omnipotent, and can do whatever he pleases; because it is a holy omnipotence. They are enemies even to his mercy, because it is a holy mercy. They do



not like his immutability, because by this he never will be otherwise than he is, an infinitely holy God.

It is from this disrelish that natural men have of the attributes of God, that they do not love to have much to do with God. The natural tendency of the heart of man is to fly from God, and keep at a distance from him, as far off as possible.—A natural man is averse to communion with God, and is naturally disinclined to those exercises of religion, wherein he has immediately to do with him. It is said of wicked men, [Psal. x. 4.](#) “God is not in all their thoughts.” It is evident, that the mind of man is naturally averse to thinking about God: and hence if any thoughts of him be suggested to the mind, they soon go away; such thoughts are not apt to rest in the minds of natural men. If any thing is said to them of God, they are apt to forget it: it is like seed that falls upon the hard path, the fowls of the air soon take it away: or like seed that falls upon a rock. Other things will stick; but divine things rebound: and if they were cast into the mind, they meet with that there which soon thrusts them out again: they meet with no suitable entertainment, but are soon chased away.

Hence also it is, that natural men are with difficulty persuaded to be constant in the duty of secret prayer. They would not be so averse to spending a quarter of an hour, night and morning, in some bodily labour; but it is because they are averse to a work, wherein they have so immediately to do with God; and they naturally love to keep at a distance from him.

3. Their *wills* are contrary to his will. God’s will and theirs are exceeding cross the one to the other, God wills those things that they hate, and are most averse to; and they will those things that God hates. Hence they oppose God in their wills: there is a dreadful, violent, and obstinate opposition of the will of natural men to the will of God.

They are very opposite to the commands of God. It is from the enmity of the will, ([Rom. vii. 7.](#)) that “the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Hence natural men are enemies to God’s government. They are not loyal subjects, but enemies to God, considered as Lord of the world. They are entire enemies to God’s authority.

4. They are enemies to God in their *affections*. There is in every natural man a seed of malice against God. And it often dreadfully breaks forth. Though it may in great measure lie hid in secure times, when God lets men alone, and they meet with no great disturbance of body or mind; yet, if God does but touch men in their consciences, by manifesting to them a little of his wrath for their sins, this oftentimes brings out the principle of malice against him. This is exercised in dreadful heart-risings, inward wranglings and quarrelings, and blasphemous thoughts; wherein the heart is like a viper, hissing and spitting poison at God. And however free from it the heart may seem to be, when let alone and secure, yet a very little thing will set it in a rage. Temptations will show what is in the heart. The alteration of a man’s circumstances will often discover the heart. Pharaoh had no more natural enmity against God than other men; and if other natural men had been in Pharaoh’s circumstances,

the same corruptions would have put forth themselves in as dreadful a manner. The scribes and Pharisees had naturally no more malice in their hearts against Christ, than other men, and other natural men would, in their case, and having as little restraint, exercise as much malice against Christ as they did. When wicked men come to be cast into hell, then their malice against God will appear. Then their hearts will appear as full of malice, as hell is full of fire. But when wicked men come to be in hell, there will be no new corruptions put into their heart; but only old ones will then break forth without restraint. That is all the difference between a wicked man on earth, and a wicked man in hell, that in hell there will be more to stir up the exercise of corruption, and less to restrain it, than on earth: but there will be no new corruption put in. A wicked man will have no principle of corruption in hell, but what he carried to hell with him. There are now the seeds of all the malice that will be exercised then. The malice of damned spirits is but a branch of the root, that is in the hearts of natural men now. A natural man has a heart like the heart of a devil; only corruption is more under restraint in man than in devils.

5. They are enemies in their *practice*. *They walk contrary to him*. In their enmity against God, they are exceeding active. They are engaged in war against God. Indeed they cannot injure God, he is so much above them; but yet they do what they can. They oppose themselves to his honour and glory: they oppose themselves to the interest of his kingdom in the world: they oppose themselves to the will and command of God: and oppose him in his government. They oppose God in his works, and in his declared designs; while he is doing one work, they are doing the contrary. God seeks one thing, and they seek directly the contrary. They list under Satan's banner, and are his willing soldiers in opposing the kingdom of God.

## SECT. II.

The degree of men's natural enmity to God.

I NOW proceed to say something with respect to the *degree* of this enmity: tending in some measure to show, how great enemies to God are natural men.

1. They have no *love* to God; their enmity is mere enmity without any mixture of love. A natural man is wholly destitute of any principle of love to God, and therefore never had the least exercise of this love. Some natural men have better tempers than others; and some are better educated than others; and some live a great deal more soberly than others: but one has no more love to God than another; for none have the least spark of that. The heart of a natural man is as destitute of love to God, as a dead, stiff, cold corpse is of vital heat. [John v. 43.](#) "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

2. *Every faculty* and *principle* of action is wholly under the dominion of enmity against God. The nature of man is wholly infected with this enmity against God. He is tainted with it throughout, in all his faculties and principles. And not only so, but every faculty is entirely and perfectly subdued under it, and enslaved to it. This enmity against God, has the absolute possession of the man. The apostle Paul, speaking of what he was naturally, says, "I am carnal, sold under sin."<sup>133</sup> "

The *understanding* is under the reigning power of this enmity against God, so that it is entirely darkened and blinded with regard to the glory and excellency of God. The *will* is wholly under the reigning power of it. All the *affections* are governed by enmity against God: there is not one affection, nor one desire, that a natural man has, or that he is ever stirred up to act from, but what contains in it enmity against God. A natural man is as full of enmity against God, as any viper, or any venomous beast, is full of poison.

3. The power of the enmity of natural men against God, is so great, that it is *insuperable* by any *finite* power. It has too great and strong a possession of the heart, to be overcome by any created power. Indeed, a natural man never sincerely strives to root out his enmity against God; his endeavours are hypocritical; he delights in his enmity, and chooses it. Neither can others do it, though they sincerely, and to their utmost, endeavour to overcome this enmity. If godly friends and neighbours labour to persuade them to cast away their enmity, and become friends to God, they cannot persuade them to it. Though ministers use never so many arguments and entreaties, and set forth the loveliness of God; tell them of the goodness of God to them, hold forth God's own gracious invitations, and entreat them never so earnestly to cast off their opposition, and be reconciled; yet they cannot overcome it: still they will be as bad enemies to God, as ever they were.—The tongue of men or of angels cannot persuade them to relinquish their opposition to God. Miracles will not do it.—How

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133 [Rom. vii. 14.](#)

many miracles did the children of Israel see in the wilderness! yet their enmity against God remained; as appeared by their often murmuring. And how often did Christ use miracles to this end without effect, but the Jews obstinately stood out. [Matt. xxiii. 37](#). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, now often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.” And how great did the enmity of these people appear to be after all; how spiteful and venomous were their hearts towards Christ, as appears by their cruel treatment of him, in his last sufferings!

4. They are *mortal* enemies to God; *i. e.* They have that enmity in their hearts, that strikes at the life of God. A man may be no friend to another, and may have an ill spirit towards him; and yet not be his mortal enemy: his enmity will be satisfied with something short of the death of the person. But it is not so with natural men, with respect to God: they are mortal enemies. Their imbecility is no argument that this is not the tendency of the principle.

Natural men are enemies to the dominion of God; and their nature shows their goodwill to dethrone him if they could! Yea, they are enemies to the being of God, and would be glad if there was no God. And therefore it necessarily follows, that they would cause that there should be none, if they could. [Psal. xiv. 1](#). “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” This implies, not only an aptness to question the being of God; but, that he inclines it should be so. His *heart* says, *i. e.* his *inclination* says. The words in the original are, “The fool hath said in his heart, No God.” That is, I would have none, I do not desire any, I wish there was none; that would suit my inclination best. Let the world be emptied of a God, he stands in my way. And hence he is an atheist in his heart.

The viper’s poison is deadly poison; and when he bites he seeks the precious life. And men are in this respect a generation of vipers. Their poison, which is enmity against God, seeks the life of God. [Matt. iii. 7](#). “O generation of vipers.” [Psal. lviii. 3, 4](#). “The wicked are estranged from the womb—Their poison is like the poison of a serpent.” [Deut. xxxii. 32, 33](#). “For their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are the grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their vine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.” The divine nature being immortal, and infinitely out of our reach, there is no other trial possible, whether the enmity that is naturally in the heart against God, be mortal or no, but only for God to take on him the human nature, and become man; so as to come within man’s reach. There can be no other experiment. And what has been the event? Why, when once God became man, and came down to dwell here, among such vipers as fallen men, they hated and persecuted him; and never desisted till they had imbrued their hands in his blood. There was a multitude of them that appeared combined in this design. Nothing would do, but he must be put to death. All cry out, *Crucify him, crucify him. Away with him.* They had rather Barabbas, who greatly deserved death, should live, than he should not die. Nothing would restrain them from it; even all his preaching, and all his miracles:



but they would kill him. And it was not the ordinary kind of execution that would satisfy them; but it must be the most cruel and most ignominious they possibly could invent. And they aggravated it as much as they could, by mocking him, and spitting on him, and scourging him. This shows what the nature and tendency of man's enmity against God is; here it appeared in its true colours.

5. Natural men are greater enemies to God than they are to any other being whatsoever. Natural men may be very great enemies to their fellow-creatures; but not so great as they are to God. There is no other being that so much stands in sinners' way, in those things that they chiefly set their hearts upon, as God. Men are wont to hate their enemies in proportion to two things, *viz.* their opposition to what they look upon to be their interest,—and their power and ability. A great and powerful enemy will be more hated, than one who is weak and impotent. But none is so powerful as God.

Man's enmity to others may be got over: time may wear it out, and they may be reconciled. But natural men, without a mighty work of God to change their hearts, will never get over their enmity against God. They are greater enemies to God, than they are to the devil. Yea, they treat the devil as their friend and master, and join with him against God. [John viii. 44.](#) "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning."

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## SECT. III.

On what account men are enemies to God.

the general reason is, That God is opposite to them in the worship of their idols. The apostacy of man summarily consists in departing from the true God, to idols; forsaking his Creator, and setting up other things in his room. When God at first created man, he was united to his Creator; the God that made him was his God. The true God was the object of his highest respect, and had the possession of his heart. Love to God was the principle in his heart, that ruled over all other principles; and every thing in the soul was wholly in subjection to it. But when man fell, he departed from the true God, and the union that was between his heart and his Creator was broken: he wholly lost his principle of love to God. And henceforward man clave to other gods. He gave that respect to the creature, which is due to the Creator.—When God ceased to be the object of his supreme love and respect, other things of course became the objects of it.

Man will necessarily have something that he respects as his god. If man do not give his highest respect to the God that made him, there will be something else that has the possession of it. Men will either worship the true God, or some idol: it is impossible it should be otherwise: something will have the heart of man. And that which a man gives his heart to, may be called his god: and therefore when man *by* the fall extinguished all love to the true God, he set up the creature in his room. For having lost his esteem and love of the true God, and set up other gods in his room, and in opposition to him; and God still demanding their worship, and opposing them; enmity necessarily follows.

That which a man chooses for his god, he sets his heart mainly upon. And nothing will so soon excite enmity, as opposition in that which is dearest. A man will be the greatest enemy to him who opposes him in what he chooses for his god: he will look on none as standing so much in his way, as he that would deprive him of his god. [Judg. xviii. 24.](#) “Ye have taken away my gods; and what have I more?” A man, in this respect, cannot serve two masters, that stand in competition for his service. And not only, if he serves one, he cannot serve the other; but if he cleaves to one, he will necessarily hate the other. [Matt. vi. 24.](#) “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” And this is the very reason that men hate God. In this case it is, as when two kings set up in one kingdom, in opposition one to the other; and they both challenge the same throne, and are competitors for the same crown: they who are loyal, hearty subjects to the one, will necessarily be enemies to the other. As that which is a man’s god, is the object of his highest love; so that God who chiefly opposes him in it, must be the object of his greatest hatred.

The gods which a natural man worships, instead of the God that made him, are himself and the world. He has withdrawn his esteem and honour from God, and proudly exalts

himself. As Satan was not willing to be in subjection; and therefore rebelled, and set up himself; so a natural man, in the proud and high thoughts he has of himself, sets up himself upon God's throne. He gives his heart to the world, worldly riches, worldly pleasures, and worldly honours: they have the possession of that regard which is due to God. The apostle sums up all the idolatry of wicked men in their love of the world. [1 John ii. 15, 16](#). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." And the apostle James observes, that a man must necessarily be the enemy of the true God, if he be a friend of the world. "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." [James iv. 4](#).

All the sin that men commit, is what they do in the service of their idols: there is no one act of sin, but what is an act of service to some false god. And therefore wherein soever God opposes sin in them, he is opposite to their worship of their idols: on which account they are his enemies. God opposes them in their service of their idols, in the following respects:

1. He manifests his utter *abhorrence* of their attachment to their idols. Their idols are what they love above all things: they would by no means part with them. This wickedness is sweet unto them. [Job xx. 12](#). If you take them away, what have they more? If they lose their idols, they lose their all.—To rend away their idols from them, would be more grievous to them, than to rend body and soul asunder: it is like rending their heart in twain. They love their idolatry: but God does not approve of it, but exceedingly hates it: he will by no means be reconciled to it; and therefore they hate him. God declares an infinite hatred of every act they do, in the service of their false gods. He declares himself to be a holy and a jealous God; a God who is very jealous of his own honour; and that greatly abhors giving that honour to another.

2. He utterly *forbids* their cleaving to those idols, and all the service that they do to them. He not only shows that he dislikes it, but he utterly forbids it; and demands that they should worship him; serve him only, and give their hearts wholly to him: without tolerating any competitor. He allows them to serve their idols in no degree; but requires them to cast them away *utterly, and* pay no more worship to them, at any time. He requires a *final* parting with their idols. Not only that they should refrain from them for a while, but cast them away for ever; and never gratify their idolatrous respect to them any more. This is so exceeding contrary to them, and what they are so averse to, that they are enemies to God for it. They cannot endure God's commands, because they forbid all that in which their hearts are so engaged. And as they hate God's commands, so they hate Him whose commands they are.

3. He *threatens* them with everlasting damnation for their service of their idols. He threatens them for their *past* idolatry. He threatens them with his eternal wrath, for their having departed from him, and their having chosen to themselves other gods. He threatens

them for that *disposition* they have in their hearts to cleave to other gods: he threatens the least decrees of that respect which they have in their hearts to their idols. He manifests that he will not tolerate any regard to them, but has fixed eternal death, as the wages of every degree of it. And he will not release them from their guilt; he holds them to their obligations; and he will accept of no atonement that they can make. He will not forgive them for whatever they do in religion; whatever pains they take; whatever tears they shed. He will accept of no money or price that they have to offer.

And he threatens every *future* act of their idolatry. He not only forbids them ever to be guilty of the least act, but forbids them on pain of eternal damnation. So strictly does God prohibit them from the service of their beloved idols! He threatens them with everlasting wrath for all exercises of inordinate love of worldly profit; for all manifestations of inordinate regard to worldly pleasures, or worldly honours. He threatens them with everlasting torments for their self-exaltation. He requires them to deny and renounce themselves, and to abase themselves at his feet, on pain of bearing his wrath to all eternity.

The strictness of God's law is a principal cause of man's enmity against God. If God were one that did not so much hate sin; if he would allow them in the gratification of their lusts in some degree, and his threatenings were not so awful against all criminal indulgence; if his threatenings were not so absolute; if his displeasure could be appeased by a few tears, a little reformation, or the like; they would not be so great enemies, nor hate him so much as they do. But God shows himself to be an implacable enemy to their idols, and has threatened everlasting wrath, infinite calamity, for all that they do in the service of their lusts; and this makes them irreconcilable enemies to him.

For this reason, the scribes and Pharisees were such bitter enemies to Christ; because he showed himself to be such an enemy to their pride, conceit of their own wisdom, self-righteousness, and inordinate affectation of their own honour, which was their god. Natural men are enemies to God, because he is so opposite to them, in that in which they place their all. If you go to take away that which is very dear to a man, nothing will provoke him more. God is infinitely opposite to that in which natural men place all their delight, and all their happiness. He is an enemy to that which natural men value as their greatest honour and highest dignity; and to which they wholly trust; *viz.* their own righteousness.

Hence natural men are greater enemies to God, than they are to any other being. Some of their fellow-creatures may stand very much in their way, with regard to some things on which they set their hearts; but God opposes them with respect to all their idols, and his opposition to them is infinitely great. None of our fellow-creatures ever oppose us in any of our interests so much as God opposes wicked men in their idolatry. His infinite opposition is manifested by his threatening an infinite punishment, *viz.* his dreadful wrath to all eternity, misery without end. Hence we need not wonder that natural men are enemies to God.

## SECT. IV

The objection, that men are not conscious of this enmity, answered.

Natural men do not generally conceive themselves to be so bad; they have not this notion of themselves, that they are enemies to God. And therefore when they hear such doctrine as this taught them, they stand ready to make objections. Some may be ready to say, "I do not know, I am not sensible, that I hate God, and have a mortal enmity against him. I feel no such thing in myself, and if I have such enmity, why do not I feel it? If I am a mortal enemy, why should not I know it better than any body else? How can others see what is in my heart better than I myself? If I hate one of my fellow-creatures, I can feel it inwardly working." To such an objection I would answer,

If you do but observe yourself, and search your own heart, unless you are strangely blinded, you may be sensible of those things, wherein enmity does fundamentally consist. Particularly, you may be sensible that you have at least had a low and contemptible estimation of God; and that, in your esteem, you set the trifles and vanities of this world far above him; so as to regard the enjoyment of these things far before the enjoyment of God, and to value these things better than his love.—And you may be sensible that you despise the *authority* of God, and value his commands and his honour but very little. Or if by some means you have blinded yourself, so as to think you do regard them now, doubtless you can look back and see that you have not regarded them. You may be sensible that you have had a disrelish and aversion towards God; an opposition to thinking of him; so that it would have been a very uncomfortable task to have been confined to that exercise for any time. The vanities of the world, at the same time, have been very pleasing to you; and you have been all swallowed up in them, while you have been averse to the things of religion. If you look into your heart, it is there plain to be seen, that there is an enmity in your *will*, that it is contrary to God's will, for you have been opposing the will of God all your life long.—These things are plain; it is nothing but some great delusion that can hide them from you. These are the foundation of all enmity: and if these things be in you, all the rest that we have spoken of will follow of course.

2. One reason why you have not more sensibly felt the exercises of malice against God, is that your enmity is now exercised partly in your unbelief of God's being; and this prevents its appearing in other ways. Man has naturally a principle of atheism in him; an indisposition to realize God's being, and a disposition to doubt of it. The being of God does not ordinarily seem real to natural men. All the discoveries that there are of God's being in his works, will not overcome the principle of atheism in the heart. And though they seem in some measure to be rationally convinced, yet it does not appear real; the conviction is feint, there is no strong conviction impressed on the mind, that there is a God: and oftentimes they are ready to think that there is none. Now this will prevent the exercise of this enmity, which otherwise

would be felt; particularly, it may be an occasion of there not being sensible exercises of hatred.

It may in some measure be thus illustrated: if you had a rooted malice against another man, a principle that had been long established there, and if you should hear that he was dead, the sensible workings of your malice would not be felt, as when you realized it that he was alive. But if you should afterwards hear the news contradicted, and perceive that your enemy was still alive; you would feel the same workings of hatred that you did before. And thus your not realizing the fact, that God has a being, may prevent those sensible workings of hatred, that otherwise you would have. If wicked men in this world were sensible of the reality of God's being, as the wicked are in another, they would feel more of that hatred which men in another world do. The exercise of corruption in one way, may, and often does, prevent it working in other ways. As covetousness may prevent the exercise of pride, so atheism may prevent malice; and yet it may be no argument of there being any less enmity in the heart; for it is the same enmity, working in another way. The same enmity that in this world works by atheism, will in another world, where there will be no room for atheism, work by malice and blasphemy. The same mortal enmity which, if you saw there was a God, might make you to *wish* there were none, may now dispose and incline you to think there *is* none. Men are very often apt to think things are as they would have them to be. The same principle disposes you to think God has no existence, which, if you knew he had, would dispose you, if it were possible, to dispossess him of it.

3. If you think that there is a God, yet you do not realize it, that he is such a God as he really is. You do not realize it, that he is so holy as he is; that he has such a hatred of sin as indeed he has; that he is so just a God as he is, who will by no means clear the guilty. But that in the Psalms is applicable to you: "these things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." [Psalm 1. 21](#). So that your atheism appears in this, as well as in thinking there is no God. So that your objection arises from this, that you do not find such a sensible hatred against that god which you have formed, to suit yourself; a god that you like better than the true God. But this is no argument that you have not bitter enmity against the true God; for it was your enmity against the true God, and your not liking him, that has put you upon forming up another in your imagination, that you like better. It is your enmity against those attributes of God's holiness and justice, and the like, that has put you upon conceiving another, who is not so holy as he is, and does not hate sin so much, and will not be so strictly just in punishing it; and whose wrath against sin is not so terrible.

But if you were sensible of the vanity of your own conceits, and that God was not such an one as you have imagined; but that he is, as he is indeed, an infinitely holy, just, sin hating and sin revenging God, who will not tolerate nor endure the worship of idols, you would be much more liable to feel the sensible exercises of enmity against him, than you are now.

And this experience confirms. For we see that when men come to be under convictions, and to be made sensible that God is not as they have heretofore imagined; but that he is such a jealous, sin hating God, and whose wrath against sin is so dreadful, they are much more apt to have sensible exercises of enmity against him than before.

4. Your having always been taught that God is infinitely above you, and out of your reach, has prevented your enmity” being exercised in those ways, that otherwise it would have been. And hence your enmity has not been exercised in revengeful thoughts; because revenge has never found any room here; it has never found any handle to take hold of: there has been no conception of any such thing, and hence it has lain still. A serpent will not bite, or spit poison, at that which it sees at a great distance; which if it saw near, would do it immediately. Opportunity often shows what men are, whether friends or enemies. Opportunity to do puts men in mind of doing; wakens up such principles as lay dormant before. Opportunity stirs up desire to do, where there was before a disposition, that without opportunity would have lain still. If a man has had an old grudge against another, and has a fair opportunity to be revenged, this will revive his malice, and waken up a desire of revenge.

If a great and sovereign prince injures a poor man, and what he does is looked upon as very cruel, that will not ordinarily stir up passionate revenge, because he is so much above him, and out of his reach. Many a man has appeared calm and meek, when he has had no power in his hands, and has not appeared, either to himself or others, to have any disposition to cruel acts; yet afterwards, when he came to have opportunity by unexpected advancement, or otherwise, has appeared like a ravenous wolf, or devouring lion. So it was with Hazael. “And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing! And Elisha answered, the Lord hath showed me that thou shall be king over Syria,” [2 Kings viii. 12, 13](#). Hazael was then a servant; he had no power in his hands to do as he pleased; and so his cruel disposition had lain hid, and he did not himself imagine that it was there: but afterwards, when he became King of Syria, and was absolute, having none to control him; then it broke out and appeared, and he did as the prophet had foretold. He committed those very acts of cruelty, that he thought it was not in his heart to do. It was want of opportunity that made the difference. It was all in his heart before; he was such a dog *then as* to do this thing, but only had not opportunity. And therefore when he seems surprised that the prophet should say so of him, all the reason the prophet gives is, “The Lord hath showed me that thou shall be king over Syria. <sup>134</sup>”



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134 [2 Kings viii.13](#).

Some natural men are such “dogs” as to do things, if they had opportunity, which they do not imagine it is in their hearts to do. You object against your having a moral hatred against God; that you never felt any desire to dethrone him. But one reason has been, that it has always been conceived so impossible by you. But if the throne of God were within your reach, and you knew it, it would not be safe one hour. Who knows what thoughts would presently arise in your heart by such an opportunity, and what disposition would be raised up in your heart. Who would trust your heart, that there would not presently be such thoughts as these, though they are enough to make one tremble to mention them? “Now I have opportunity to set myself at liberty—that I need not be kept in continual slavery by the strict law of God.—Then I may take my liberty to walk in that way I like best, and need not be continually in such slavish fear of God’s displeasure. And God has not done well by me in many instances. He has done most unjustly by me, in holding me bound to destruction for unbelief, and other things which I cannot help.—He has shown mercy to others, and not to me. I have now an opportunity to deliver myself, and there can be no danger of my being hurt for it. There will be nothing for us to be terrified about, and so keep us in slavery.”

Who would trust your heart, that such thoughts would not arise? or others much more horrid and too dreadful to be mentioned? And therefore I forbear. Those natural men are foolishly insensible of what is in their own hearts, who think there would be no danger of any such workings of heart, if they knew they had opportunity.

5. You little consider, how much your having no more of the sensible exercises of hatred to God, is owing to a being restrained by fear. You have always been taught what a dreadful thing it is to hate God, and how terrible his displeasure; that God sees the heart and knows all the thoughts; and that you are in his hands, and he can make you as miserable as he pleases, and as soon as he pleases. And these things have restrained you: and the fear that has risen from them, has kept you from appearing what you are; it has kept down your enmity, and made that serpent afraid to show its head, as otherwise it would do. If a wrathful man were wholly under the power of an enemy, he would be afraid to exercise his hatred in outward acts, unless it were with great disguise. And if it be supposed that such an enemy, in whose power he was, could see his heart, and know all his thoughts; and apprehended that he would put him to a terrible death, if he saw the workings of malice there, how greatly would this restrain! He would be afraid so much as to believe himself, that he hated his enemy: but there would be all manner of disguise and hypocrisy, and feigning even of thoughts and affections.

Thus your enmity has been kept under *restraint*; and thus it has been from your infancy. You have grown up in it, so that it is become an *habitual* restraint. You dare not so much as think you hate God. If you do exercise hatred, you have a disguise for it, whereby you endeavour even to hide it from your own conscience; and so have all along deceived yourself. Your deceit is very old and habitual: there has been only restraint; not mortification.



There has been an enmity against God in its full strength It has been only restrained, like an enemy that durst not rise up and show himself.

6. One reason why you have not felt more sensible hatred to God may be, because you have not had much trial of what is in your heart. It may be God has hitherto, in a great measure, let you alone. The enmity that is in men's hearts against God, is like a serpent, which, if it be let alone lies still: but if any body disturbs it, will soon hiss, and be enraged, and show its serpentine spiteful nature.

Notwithstanding the good opinion you have of yourself, yet a little trial would show you to be a viper, and your heart would be set all on rage against God. One thing that restrains you now is your hope. You hope to receive many things from God. Your own interest is concerned. So that both hope and fear operate together, to restrain your enmity from sensible exercises. But if once hope were gone, you would soon show what you were; you would feel your enmity against God in a rage.

7. If you pretend that you do not feel enmity against God, and yet act as an enemy, you may certainly conclude that it is not because you are no enemy, but because you do not know your own heart. Actions are the best interpreters of the disposition: they show, better than any thing else, what the heart is. It must be because you do not observe your own behaviour, that you question whether you are an enemy to God.

What other account can you give of your own carriage, but only your being God's enemy? What other account can be given of your opposing God in your ways; walking so exceeding contrary to him, contrary to his counsels, contrary to his commands, and contrary to his glory? What other account can be given of your casting so much contempt upon God; your setting him so low; your acting so much against his authority, and against his kingdom and interest in the world? What other account can be given of your so setting your will in opposition to God's will, and that so obstinately, for so long a time, against so many warnings as you have had? What other account can be given of your joining so much with Satan, in the opposition he is making to the kingdom of God in the world? And that you will join with him against God, though it be so much against your own interest, and though you expose yourself by it to everlasting misery?

Such like behaviour in one man towards another, would be sufficient evidence of enmity. If he should be seen to behave thus, and that it was his constant manner, none would want better evidence that he was an enemy to his neighbour. If you yourself had a servant that carried it towards you, as you do towards God, you would not think there was need of any greater evidence of his being your enemy. Suppose your servant should manifest much contempt of you; and disregard your commands as much as you do the commands of God; should go directly contrary, and in many ways act the very reverse of your commands; should seem to set himself in ways that were contrary to your will obstinately and incorrigibly, without any amendment from your repeated calls, warnings, and threatenings; and should

act so cross to you day and night, as you do to God; would he not be justly deemed your enemy? Suppose, further, when you sought one thing, he would seek the contrary; when you did any work, he would, as much as in him lay, undo and destroy that work; and suppose he should continually drive at such ends, as tended to overthrow the ends you aimed at: when you sought to bring to pass any design, he would endeavour to overthrow your design; and set himself as much against your interest, as you do yourself against God's honour. And suppose you should moreover see him, from time to time, with those who were your declared mortal enemies; making them his counsellors, and hearkening to their counsels, as much as you do to Satan's temptations: should you not think you had sufficient evidence that he was your enemy?—Therefore consider seriously your own ways, and weigh your own behaviour, "How canst thou say, I am not polluted?—see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done." [Jer. ii. 23.](#)

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## SECT. V.

The objections, that they show respect to God, and experience some religious affections, answered.

natural men may be ready to object, the *respect* they show to God, from time to time. This makes many to think that they are far from being such enemies to God. They pray to him in secret, and attend on public worship, and take a great deal of pains to do it in a decent manner. It seems to them that they show God a great deal of respect: they use many very respectful terms in their prayer: they are respectful in their manner of speaking, their voice, gestures, and the like.—But to this I answer, That all this is done in mere hypocrisy. All this seeming respect is feigned, there is no sincerity in it: there is external respect, but none in the heart: there is a show, and nothing else. You only cover your enmity with a painted veil. You put on the disguise of a friend, but in your heart you are a mortal enemy. There is external honour, but inward contempt; there is a show of friendship and regard, but inward hatred. You do but deceive yourself with your show of respect; and endeavour to deceive God; not considering that God looks not on the outward appearance, but on the heart.—Here consider particularly,

1. That much of that seeming respect which natural men show to God, is owing to their education. They have been taught from their infancy that they ought to show great respect to God. They have been taught to use respectful language, when speaking about God, and to behave with solemnity, when attending on those exercises of religion, wherein they have to do with him. From their childhood, they have seen that this is the manner of others, when they pray to God, to use reverential expressions, and a reverential behaviour before him.

Those who are brought up in places where they have, commonly from their infancy, heard men take the name of God in vain, and swear and curse, and blaspheme; they learn to do the same; and it becomes habitual to them. And it is the same way, and no other, that you have learned to behave respectfully towards God: not that you have any more respect to God than they; but they have been brought up one way, and you another. In some parts of the world, men are brought up in the worship of idols of silver, and gold, and wood, and stone, made in the shape of men and beast. “They say of them, Let the men that sacrifice, kiss the calf.” [Hos. xiii. 2](#). In some parts of the world, they are brought up to worship serpents, and are taught from their infancy to show great respect to them. And in some places, they are brought up in worshipping the devil, who appears to them in a bodily shape; and to behave with a show of great reverence and honour towards him. And what respect you show to God has no better foundation; it comes the same way, and is worth no more.

2. That show of respect which you make is forced. You come to God, and make a great show of respect to him, and use very respectful terms, with a reverential tone and manner of speaking; and your countenance is grave and solemn: you put on an humble aspect; and use humble, respectful postures, out of fear. You are afraid that God will execute his wrath



upon you, and so you feign a great deal of respect, that he may not be angry with you. "Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee." [Psal. lxvi. 3.](#) In the original it is, *shall thine enemies lie to thee*. It is rendered therefore in the margin, *shall yield feigned obedience to thee*. All that you do in religion is forced and feigned. Through the greatness of God's power, you yield feigned obedience. You are in God's power, and he is able to destroy you; and so you feign a great deal of respect to him, that he might not destroy you. As one might do towards an enemy that had taken him captive, though he at the same time would gladly make his escape, if he could, by taking away the life of him who had taken him captive.

3. It is not real respect that moves you to behave so towards God: you do it because you hope you shall get by it. It is respect to yourself, and not respect to God, that moves you. You hope to move God by it to bestow the rewards of his children. You are like the Jews who followed Christ, and called him Rabbi, and would make him a king. Not that they honoured him so much in their hearts, as to think him worthy of the honour of a king; or that they had the respect of sincere subjects; but they did it for the sake of the loaves. "Jesus perceived that they would come and make him a king. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, how camest thou hither? Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." [John vi. 15, 25, 26.](#)

These things do not argue but that you are implacable enemies to God. If you examine your prayers and other duties, your own consciences will tell you, that the seeming respect which you have shown to God in them, has been only in hypocrisy. Oftentimes you have set forth in your prayers, that God was a great, a glorious, and an infinitely holy God, as if you greatly honoured him on the account of these attributes; and, at the same time, you had no sense in your heart of the greatness and glory of God, or of any excellency in his holiness. Your own consciences will tell you, that you have often pretended to be thankful; you have told God, that you thanked him you was alive, and thanked him for various mercies, when you have not found the least jot of thankfulness in your heart. And so you have told God of your own unworthiness, and set forth what a vile creature you was; when you have had no humble sense of your own unworthiness.

If these forementioned restraints were thrown off, you would soon throw off all your show of respect. Take away fear, and a regard to your own interest, and there would soon be an end to all those appearances of love, honour, and reverence, which now you make. All these things are not at all inconsistent with the most implacable enmity. The devil himself made a show of respect to Christ, when he was afraid that he was going to torment him; and when he hoped to persuade Christ to spare him longer. "When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not." [Luke viii. 28.](#)

Some may perhaps object against this doctrine of their being God's enemies, the *religions affections* they have sometimes experienced. They may be ready to say, That when they have come before God in prayer, they have not only used respectful terms and gestures, but they have prayed with affection; their prayers have been attended with tears, which they are ready to think showed something in the heart. But to this it is answered, that these affections have risen from other causes, and not from any true respect to God.

1. They have risen from self-love, and not love to God. If you have wept before God, from the consideration of your own pitiful case; that has been because you loved yourself, and not because you had any respect to God. If your tears have been from sorrow for your sins; you have mourned for your sins, because you have sinned against yourself, and not because you have sinned against God. "When ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me?" [Zech. vii. 5.](#)

2. Pride, and a good thought of themselves, very commonly has a great hand in the affections of natural men. They have a good opinion of what they are doing when they are praying; and the reflection on that affects them: they are affected with their own goodness. Men's self-righteousness often occasions tears. A high opinion of themselves before God, and an imagination of their being persons of great account with him, has affected them in their transactions with God. There is commonly abundance of pride in the midst of tears; and often pride is in a great measure the source of them. And then they are so far from being an argument that you are not an enemy to God, that on the contrary, they are an argument, that you are. In your very tears, you are, in a vain conceit of yourself, exalting yourself against God.

3. The affections of natural men often arise from wrong notions they have of God. They conceive of God after the manner they do of men, as though he were a being liable to be wrought upon in his affections. They conceive of him as one whose heart could be drawn, whose affections can be overcome, by what he sees in them. They conceive of him as being taken with them, and their performances; and this works on their affections; and thus one tear draws another, and their affections increase by reflection. And oftentimes they conceive of God as one "that loves them, and is a friend to them: and such a mistake may work much on their affections. But such affections that arise towards God, as they conceit him to be, is no argument that they have not the same implacable hatred towards God, considered as he really is. There is no concluding that men are not enemies, because they are affected and shed tears in their prayers, and the like. Saul was very much affected when David expostulated with him about pursuing after him, and seeking to kill him. David's words wrought exceedingly upon Saul's affections. "And it came to pass when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? and Saul lift up his voice and wept." [1 Sam. xxiv. 16. chap. xxvi. 1.](#) &c. He was so affected that he wept aloud, and called David his son, though he was but just before seeking his life. But this affection

of Saul was no argument that he did not still continue in his enmity against David. He was David's mortal enemy before, and sought his life; and so he did afterwards, it was but a pang: his enmity was not mortified or done away. The next news we hear of Saul is, that he was pursuing David, and seeking his life again.

SECT. VI.

Restraining grace a great privilege.

If natural men are God's enemies; then hence we may learn, how much we are indebted to God for his restraining grace. If all natural men are God's enemies, what would they not do, if they were not restrained! For what has one that is an enemy in his disposition, to restrain him from acting against him to whom he is an enemy? Hatred will not restrain a man from acting any thing against him that is hated. Nothing is too bad for hatred, if it be mere hatred and no love. Hatred shows no kindness either in doing, or forbearing; it will never make a man forbear to act against God; for the very nature of hatred is to seek evil. But wicked men, as has been shown, are mere enemies to God; they have hatred, without any love at all. And hence natural men have nothing within them, in their own nature, to restrain them from any thing that is bad; and therefore their restraint must not be owing to nature, but to restraining grace. And therefore whatever wickedness we have been kept from, it is not because we have not been bad enough to commit it; but it is God has restrained us, and kept us back from sin. There can be no worse principle, than a principle of hatred to God. And there can be no principle that will go further in wickedness than this, if it be neither mortified nor restrained. But it is not mortified in natural men; and therefore all that keeps them from any degree of wickedness, is restrained. If we have seen others do things that we never did; and if they have done worse than we, this is owing to restraining grace. If we have not done as bad as Pharaoh, it is owing to divine restraints. If we have not done as bad as Judas, or as the scribes and Pharisees, or as bad as Herod, or Simon Magus, it is because God has restrained our corruption. If we have ever heard or read of any that have done worse than we; if we have not gone the length in sinning, that the most wicked pirates or carnal persecutors have gone, this is owing to restraining grace. For we are all naturally the enemies of God as much as they. If we have not committed the unpardonable sin, it is owing to restraining grace. There is no worse principle in exercise in that sin, than enmity against God. There is the entire fountain, and all the foundation of the sin against the Holy Ghost, in that enmity against God that naturally reigns in us.

It is not we that restrain ourselves from the commission of the greatest imaginable wickedness; for enmity against God reigns in us and over us; we are under its power and dominion, and are sold under it. We do not restrain that which reigns over us. A slave, as long as he continues a mere slave, cannot control his master. "He that committeth sin, is the servant of sin." [John viii. 34](#). So that the restraint of this our cruel tyrant, is owing to God, and not to us. What does a poor, impotent subject do to restrain the absolute Lord, that has him wholly under his power? How much will it appear that the world is indebted to the restraining grace of God, if we consider that the world is full of enemies to God. The world is full of inhabitants; and almost all are God's enemies, his implacable and mortal

enemies. What therefore would they not do, what work would they not make, if God did not restrain them?

God's work in the restraint that he exercises over a wicked world, is a glorious work. God's holding the reins upon the corruptions of a wicked world, and setting hounds to their wickedness, is a more glorious work, than his ruling the raging of the sea, and setting bounds to its proud waves, and saying, Hitherto shall thou come, and no further. In hell, God lets the wickedness of wicked spirits have the reins, to rage without restraint; and it would be in a great measure upon earth as it is in hell, did not God restrain the wickedness of the world. But in order to the better understanding how it is owing to the restraining grace of God, that we are kept and withheld from the highest acts of sin, I would here observe several things.

1. Whenever men are withheld from sinning by the common influence of God's Spirit, they are withheld by restraining grace. If sinners are awakened, and are made sensible of the great guilt that sin brings, and that it exposes to a dreadful punishment; under such circumstances they dare not allow themselves in wilful sin: God restrains them by the convictions of his Spirit; and therein their being kept from sin, is owing to restraining grace. And unawakened sinners that live under the gospel, who are in a great measure secure, commonly have some degrees of the influence of God's Spirit, with his ordinances influencing natural conscience. And though they be not sufficient thoroughly to rouse them out of security, or make them reform; yet they keep them from going such lengths in sin, as otherwise they might do. And this is restraining grace. They are indeed very stupid and sottish: yet they would be a great deal more so, if God should let them wholly alone.

2. All the restraints that men are under from the word and ordinances, is from grace. The word and ordinances of God might have some degree of influence on men's natural principles of self-love, to restrain them from sin, without any degree of the influence of God's Spirit: but this would be the restraining grace of God; for God's goodness and mercy to a sinful world appears in his giving his word to be a restraint on the wickedness of the world. When men are restrained by fear of those punishments that the word of God threatens; or by the warnings, the offers, and promises of it; when the word of God works upon hope, or fear, or natural conscience, to restrain men from sin, this is the restraining grace of God, and is owing to his mercy. It is an instance of God's mercy that he has revealed hell, to restrain men's wickedness; and that he has revealed a way of salvation, and a possibility of eternal life. This which has great influence on men to keep them from sin, is the restraining grace of God.

3. When men are restrained from sin, by the light of nature, this also is of grace. If men are destitute of the light of God's word, yet the light of natural conscience teaches that sin brings guilt, and exposes to punishment. The light of nature teaches that there is a God who governs the world, and will reward the good and punish the evil. God is the author of the



light of nature, as well as the light of revelation. He in mercy to mankind makes known many things by natural light to work upon men's fear and self-love, in order to restrain their corruptions.

4. When God restrains men's corruptions by his providence, this is from grace. And that whether it be his general providence in ordering the state of mankind; or his providential disposals towards them in particular.

(1.) God greatly restrains the corruption of the world, by ordering the state of mankind. He hath set them here in a *mortal* state, and in a state of *probation* for eternity; and that is a great restraint to corruption. God hath "so ordered the state of mankind, that ordinarily many kinds of sin and wickedness are *disgraceful*, and what tend to the hurt of a man's character and reputation amongst his fellow-men; and that is a great restraint. He hath so disposed the world, that many kinds of wickedness are many ways very contrary to men's temporal *interest*; and mankind are led to prohibit many kinds of wickedness by human laws; and that is a great restraint. God hath set up a church in the world, made up of those who, if they are answerable to their profession, have the fear and love of God in their hearts; and they by holding forth revealed light, by keeping up the ordinances of God, and by warning others, are a great restraint to the wickedness of the world.

In all these things, the restraining grace of God appears.—It is God's mercy to mankind, that he has so ordered their state, that they should have so many things, by fear and a regard to their own interest, to restrain their corruptions. It is God's mercy to the world, that the state of mankind here differs from the state of the damned in hell; where men will have none of these things to restrain them. The wisdom of God, as well as the attributes of his grace, greatly appear in thus disposing things for the restraining of the wickedness of men.

(2.) God greatly restrains the corruptions of men by his providence towards particular persons; by placing men in such circumstances as to lay them under restraints. And to this it is often owing that some natural men never go such lengths in sinning, or are never guilty of such atrocious wickedness, as some others, that Providence has placed them in different circumstances. If it were not for this, many thousands of natural men, who now live sober and orderly lives, would do as Pharaoh did. The reason why they do not, is, that Providence has placed them in different circumstances. If they were in the same circumstances as Pharaoh was in, they would do as he did. And so, if in the same circumstances as Manassah, as Judas, or Nero. But Providence restrains their corruptions, by putting them in such circumstances, as not to open such a door or outlet for their corruption, as he did to them. So some do not perpetrate such horrid things, they do not live such horribly vicious lives, as some others, because Providence has restrained them, by ordering that they should have a better education than others. Providence has ordered that they should be the children of pious parents, it may be, or should live where they should enjoy many means of grace; and

so Providence has laid them under restraints. Now this is restraining grace; or the attribute of God's grace exercised in thus restraining persons.

And oftentimes God restrains men's corruptions by particular events of providence. By particular afflictions they are brought under, or by particular occurrences, whereby God does, as it were, block up men's way in their course of sin, or in some wickedness that they had devised, and that otherwise they would perpetrate. Or something happens unexpected to hold men back from that which they were about to commit. Thus God restrained David by his providence from shedding blood, as he intended to do. "Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing *the Lord hath withholden* thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand,—” [1 Sam. xxv. 26](#). God withheld him from it no otherwise, than by ordering it so in his providence that Abigail should come, and by her wisdom should cool, pacify, and persuade him to alter his purpose. See [ver. 32, 33, 34](#).

5. Godly persons are greatly indebted to restraining grace, in keeping them from dreadful acts of sin. So it was in that instance of David, just mentioned. Even godly persons, when God has left, and has not restrained them, have fallen into dreadful acts of sin. So did David, in the case of Uriah; and Lot, and Peter. And when other godly persons are kept from falling into such sins, or much worse sins than these, it is owing to the restraining grace of God. Merely having a principle of grace in their hearts, or merely their being godly persons, without God's presence to restrain them, will not keep them from great acts of sin. That the godly do not fall into the most horrid sins that can be conceived of, is owing not so much to any inconsistency between their falling into such sins, and the having a principle of grace in the heart, as it is owing to the covenant mercy of God, whereby he has promised never to leave nor forsake his people; and that he will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able; but with the temptation will make a way for them to escape. If saving grace restrains men from great acts of sin, that is owing to God who gives such exercises of grace at that time when the temptation comes, that they are restrained.

Let not the godly therefore be insensible of their obligations to the restraining grace of God. Though they cannot be said to be enemies to God, because a principle of enmity does not reign; yet they have the very same principle and seed of enmity in them, though it be mortified. Though it be not in reigning power, yet it has great strength; and is too strong for them, without God's almighty power to help them against it. Though they be not enemies to God, because they have a principle of love; yet their old man, the body of sin and death that yet remains in them, is a mortal enemy to God. Corruption in the godly, is not better than it is in the wicked; but is of as bad a nature every whit, as that which is in a mortal enemy to God. And though it be not in reigning power; yet it would dreadfully rage, were it not for God's restraining grace.

God gives his restraining grace to both natural and godly men; but there is this difference; he gives his restraining grace to his children in the way of covenant mercy: it is part of the mercy promised in his covenant. God is faithful, and will not leave them to sin in like manner as wicked men do; otherwise they would do every whit as bad.—Let not therefore the godly attribute it to themselves, or merely to their own goodness, that they are not guilty of such horrid crimes as they hear of in others; let them consider it as not owing to them, but to God's restraints. Thus all, both godly and ungodly, may learn from this doctrine, their great obligations to the restraining grace of God.

## SECT. VII.

Why natural men are not willing to come to Christ, and their dreadful condition.

Hence we may learn the reason why natural men will not come to Christ: they *do* not come because they *will* not come. “Ye *will* not come to me, that ye might have life.” [John v. 40](#). When we say that natural men are not willing to come to Christ, it is not meant that they are not willing to be delivered from hell; for without doubt, no natural man is willing to go to hell. Nor is it meant, that they are not willing that Christ should keep them from going to hell. Without doubt, natural men under awakenings often greatly desire this. But this does not argue that they are willing to come to Christ: for, notwithstanding their desire to be delivered from hell, their hearts do not close with Christ, but are averse to him. They see nothing in Christ wherefore they should desire him; no beauty nor comeliness to draw their hearts to him. And they are not willing to take Christ as he is; they would fain divide him. There are some things in him that they like, and others that they greatly dislike; but consider him as he is, and as he is offered to them in the gospel, and they are not willing to accept of Christ; for in doing so, they must of necessity part with all their sins; they must sell the world, and part with their own righteousness. But they had rather, for the present, run the venture of going to hell, than do that.

When men are *truly* willing to come to Christ, they are *freely* willing. It is not what they are forced and driven to by threatenings; but they are willing to come, and choose to come without being driven. But natural men have no such free willingness; but on the contrary have an aversion. And the ground of it is that which we have heard, *viz.* That they are enemies to God. Their having such a reigning enmity against God, makes them obstinately refuse to come to Christ. If a man is an enemy to God, he will necessarily be an enemy to Christ too; for Christ is the Son of God; he is infinitely near to God, yea, has the nature of God, as well as the nature of man. He is a Saviour appointed of God; he anointed him, and sent him into the world. And in performing the work of redemption, he wrought the works of God; always did those things that pleased him; and all that he does as a Saviour, is to his glory. And one great thing he aimed at in redemption, was to deliver them from their idols, and bring them to God. The case being so, and sinners being enemies to God, they will necessarily be opposite to coming to Christ; for Christ is of God, and as a Saviour seeks them to bring them to God only: but natural men are not of God, but are averse to him.

Hence we see, how dreadful is the condition of natural men. Their state is a state of enmity with God. If we consider what God is, and what men are, it will be easy for us to conclude that such men as are God’s enemies, must be miserable. Consider, ye that are enemies to God, how great he is. He is the eternal God who fills heaven and earth, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain. He is the God that made you; in whose hand your

breath is, and whose are all your ways; the God in whom you live, and move, and have your being; who has your soul and body in his hands every moment.

You would look on yourself as in very unhappy circumstances, if your neighbours were all your enemies, and none of your fellow-creatures were your friends. If every body were set against you, and all despised and hated you, you would be ready to think, you had better be out of the world than in it. But if it be such a calamity to have enmity maintained between you and your fellow-creatures, what is it, when you and the almighty God are enemies? What avails either the friendship or enmity of your neighbours, poor worms of the dust, in comparison of the friendship or enmity of the great God of heaven and earth?—Consider,

1. If you continue in your enmity a little longer, there will be a mutual enmity between God and you to all eternity. God will appear to be your dreadful and irreconcilable enemy. If you should die an enemy to God, there will be no such thing as any reconciliation after death. God will then appear to you in hatred, without any love, any pity, and any mercy at all. As you hate God, he will hate you. And that will be verified of you: “My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred me.” [Zech. xi. 8](#). And then God will be your enemy for ever. If you be not reconciled so as to become his friend in this life, God never will become your friend after death. If you continue an enemy to God till death, God will continue an enemy to you to all eternity. You will have no mediator offered you; there will be no day’s-man betwixt you. So that it becomes you to consider what it will be to have God your enemy to all eternity, without any possibility of being reconciled.

Consider, What will it be to have this enmity to be mutual, and maintained for ever on both sides? For as God will for ever continue an enemy to you, so you will for ever continue an enemy to God. If you continue God’s enemy until death, you will always be his enemy. And after death your enmity will have no restraint, but it will break out and rage without control. When you come to be a fire-brand of hell, you will be so in two respects, *viz.* As you will be full of the fire of God’s wrath; and as you will be all on a blaze with spite and malice towards God. You will be as full of the fire of malice, as you will with the fire of divine vengeance, and both will make you full of torment. Then you will appear as you are, a viper indeed. You are now under great disguise; a wolf in sheep’s clothing; but then your mask will be pulled off; you shall loose your garments, and walk naked. [Rev. xvi. 15](#). Then will you vent your rage and malice in fearful blasphemies. That same tongue, to cool which you will wish for a drop of water, will be eternally employed in cursing and blaspheming God and Christ. And that not from any new corruption being put into your heart; but only from God’s withdrawing his hand from restraining your old corruption. And what a miserable way will this be of spending your eternity!

2. Consider, What will be the consequence of a mutual enmity between God and you, if it be continued? Though hitherto you have met with no very great changes, yet they will come. After a little while, dying time will come; and then what will be the consequence of

this enmity? God, whose enemy you are, has the frame of your body in his hands. Your times are in his hand; and he it is that appoints your bounds. And when he sends death to arrest you, to change your countenance, to dissolve your frame, and to take you away from all your earthly friends, and from all that is dear and pleasant to you in the world; what will be the issue? Will not you then stand in need of God's help? Would not he be the best friend in such a case, worth more than ten thousand earthly friends? If God be your enemy, then to whom will you betake yourself for a friend? When you launch forth into the boundless gulf of eternity, then you will need some friend to take care of you, but if God be your enemy, where will you betake yourself? Your soul must go naked into another world, in eternal separation from all worldly things; and your soul will not be in its own power, to defend or dispose of itself. Will you not then need to have God for a friend, into whose hands you may commend your spirit? But how dreadful will it be, to have God your enemy!

The time is coming when the frame of this world shall be dissolved. Christ shall descend in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father; and you, with all the rest of mankind, must stand before his judgment-seat. Then what will be the consequence of this mutual enmity between God and you? If God be your enemy, who will stand your friend? Now, it may be, it does not appear to be very terrible to you to have God for your enemy; but when such changes *as* these are brought to pass, it will greatly alter the appearance of things. Then God's favour will appear to you of infinite worth. They, and they only, will then appear happy, who have the love of God: and then you will know that God's enemies are miserable.—But under this head, consider more particularly several things.

(1.) What God can do to his enemies. Or rather, what can he not do? How miserable can he who is almighty make his enemies! Consider, you that are enemies to God, whether or no you shall be able to make your part good with him. “Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? [1 Cor. x. 22](#). Have you such a conceit of your own strength, as that you think to try it out with God? Do you intend to run the risk of an encounter with him? Do you imagine that your hands can be strong, or your heart can endure? Do you think you shall be well able to defend yourself, or to escape out of his hand? Do you think that you shall be able to uphold your spirits, when God acts as an enemy towards you? If so, then gird up your loins, and see what the event will be. Therefore thus will I do unto thee?—“and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God.”—[Amos iv. 12](#). Is it not in vain to set the briers and thorns in battle array against devouring flames; which though they seemed to be armed with natural weapons, yet the fire will pass through them, and burn them together? See [Isa. xxvii. 4](#).

And if you endeavour to support yourself under God's wrath, cannot God lay you under such misery, *as* to cause your spirit quite to fail; so that you shall find no strength to resist him, or to uphold yourself? Why should a worm think of supporting himself against an omnipotent adversary? Consider, God has made your soul; and he can fill it with misery:

he made your body, and can bring what torments he will upon it. God who made you, has given you a capacity to bear torment; and he has that capacity in his hands. How dreadful must it be to fall into the hands of such an enemy! Surely, “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” [Heb. x. 31.](#)

(2.) If God be your enemy, you may rationally conclude that he will act as such in his dealings with you. We have already observed that you have enmity without any love or true respect. So, if you continue to be so, God will appear to be your mere enemy; and will be so for ever, without being reconciled. But if it be so, he will doubtless act as such. If he eternally hates you, he will act in his dealings with you, as one that hates you without any love or pity. The proper tendency and aim of hatred is the misery of the object hated; so that you may expect God will make you miserable, and that you will not be spared.—Now, God does not act as your mere enemy: if he corrects you, it is in measure. He now exercises abundance of mercy to you. He threatens you now; but it is in a way of warning, and so in a merciful way. He now calls, invites, and strives with you, and waits to be gracious to you. But hereafter there will be an end to all these things: in another world God will cease to show you mercy.

(3.) If you will continue God’s enemy, you may rationally conclude that God will deal with you so as to make it appear how dreadful it is to have God for an enemy. It is very dreadful to have a mighty prince for an enemy. “The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion.” [Prov. xix. 12.](#) But if the wrath of a man, a fellow-worm, be so terrible, what is the wrath of God! And God will doubtless show it to be immensely more dreadful. If you will be an enemy, God will act so as to glorify those attributes which he exercises as an enemy; which are his majesty, his power, and justice. His great majesty, his awful justice, and mighty power, shall be showed upon you. “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” [Rom. ix. 22.](#)

(4.) Consider, What God has said he will do to his enemies. He has declared that they shall not escape; but that he will surely punish them. “Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out all those that hate thee.” [Ps. xxi. 8.](#) “And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.” [Deut. vii. 10.](#) “The Lord shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.” [Ps. lxxviii. 21.](#)

Yea, God hath sworn that he will be avenged on them; and that in a most awful and dreadful manner. “For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, (and my sword shall devour flesh,) and that with the blood of the slain—from the beginning of revenges on the enemy.” [Deut. xxxii. 40, 41, 42.](#) The terribleness of the threatened destruction is here variously set forth. God [Deut. xxxii. 41.](#) “whets his glittering sword,” as one that

prepares himself to do some great execution. “His hands take hold on judgment,” to signify that he will surely reward them as they deserve. “He will render vengeance to his enemies, and reward them that hate him.” *i. e.* He will render their full reward. [Deut. xxxii. 42.](#) “I will make mine arrows drunk with blood.” This signifies the greatness of the destruction. It shall not be a little of their blood that shall satisfy; but his arrows shall be glutted with their blood. “And his sword shall devour flesh.” That is, it shall make dreadful waste of it. This is the terrible manner in which God will one day rise up and execute vengeance on his enemies!

Again, the completeness of their destruction is represented in the following words: “The wicked shall perish, the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs, they shall consume: into smoke shall they consume away.” [Ps. xxxvii. 20.](#) The fat of lambs, when it is burnt in the fire, burns all up; there is not so much as a cinder left; it all consumes into smoke. This represents the perfect destruction of God’s enemies in his wrath. So God hath promised Christ; that he would make his enemies his footstool. [Ps. cx. 1.](#) *i. e.* He would pour the greatest contempt upon them, and as it were tread them under foot. Consider, that all these things will be executed on you, if you continue God’s enemies.



## SECT. VIII.

God may justly withhold mercy.

If natural men are God's enemies, hence we may learn, how justly God may refuse to show you mercy. For is God obliged to show mercy to his enemies? Is God bound to set his love on them that have no love to him; but hate him with perfect hatred? Is he bound to come and dwell with them that have an aversion to him, and choose to keep at a distance from him, and fly from him as one that is hateful to them? Even should you desire the salvation of your soul, is God bound to comply with your desires, when you always resist and oppose his will? Is God bound to put honour upon you, and to advance you to such dignity as to be a child of the King of kings, and the heir of glory, while at the same time you set him too low to have even the lowest place in your heart?

This doctrine affords a strong argument for the absolute sovereignty of God, with respect to the salvation of sinners. If God is pleased to show mercy to his haters, it is certainly fit that he should do it in a sovereign way, without acting as any way obliged. God will show mercy to his mortal enemies; but then he will not be bound, he will have his liberty to choose the objects of his mercy; to show mercy to what enemy he pleases, and to punish and destroy which of his haters he pleases. And certainly this is a fit and reasonable thing. It is fit that God should distribute saving blessings in this way, and in no other, *viz.* in a sovereign and arbitrary way. And that ever any body thought of or devised any other way for God to show mercy, than to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, must arise from ignorance of their own hearts, whereby they were insensible what enemies they naturally are to God. But consider here the following things:

1. How *causelessly* you are enemies to God. You have no manner of reason for it, either from what God is, or from what he has done. You have no reason for this *from what he is*. For he is an infinitely lovely and glorious Being; the fountain of all excellency, all that is amiable and lovely in the universe, is originally and eminently in him. Nothing can possibly be conceived of that could be lovely in God, that is not in him, and that in the greatest possible degree.

And you have no reason for this, *from what God has done*. For he has been a good and bountiful God to you. He has exercised abundance of kindness to you; has carried you from the womb, preserved your life, taken care of you, and provided for you, all your life long. he has exercised great patience and long-suffering towards you. If it had not been for the kindness of God to you, what would have become of you? What would have become of your body? And what, before this time, would have become of your soul? And you are now, every day and hour, maintained by the goodness and bounty of God. Every new breath you draw, is a new gift of his to you. How causelessly then are you such dreadful enemies to God! And

how justly might he for it eternally deprive you of all mercy, seeing you do thus requite God for his mercy and kindness to you!

2. Consider, how you *would resent* it, if others were such enemies to you, as you are to God. If they had their hearts so full of enmity to you; if they treated you with such contempt, and opposed you, as you do God; how would you resent it! Do you not find that you are apt greatly to resent it, when any oppose you, and show an ill spirit towards you? And though you excuse your own enmity against God from your corrupt nature that you brought into the world with you, which you could not help; yet you do not excuse others for being enemies to you from their corrupt nature that they brought into the world, which they could not help; but are ready bitterly to resent it notwithstanding.

Consider therefore, if you, a poor, unworthy, unlovely creature, do so resent it, when you are hated, how may God justly resent it when you are enemies to him, an infinitely glorious Being; and a Being from whom you have received so much kindness!

3. How *unreasonable* is it for you to imagine that you can oblige God to have respect to you by any thing that you can do, continuing still to be his enemy. If you think you have prayed, and read, and done something considerable for God; yet who cares for the seeming kindness of an enemy? What value would you yourself set upon a man making a show of friendship, when you knew at the same time, that he was inwardly your mortal enemy? Would you look upon yourself obliged for such respect and kindness? Would you not rather abhor it? Would you count such respect to be valued, as Joab's towards Amasa, who took him by the beard, and kissed him, and said, Art thou in health, my brother? And smote him at the same time under the fifth rib, and killed him! What if you do pray to God? Is he obliged to hear the prayers of an enemy? What if you have taken a great deal of pains, is God obliged to give heaven for the prayers of an enemy? He may justly abhor your prayers, and all that you do in religion, as the flattery of a mortal enemy.

SECT. IX.

Practical Improvement.

Hence we may learn,

1. How wonderful is the love that is manifested in giving Christ to die for us. For this is love to enemies. [Rom. v. 10.](#) “While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.” How wonderful was the love of God the Father, in giving such a gift to those who not only could not be profitable to him, but were his enemies, and to so great a degree! They had great enmity against him; yet so did he love them, that he gave his own Son to lay down his life, in order to save their lives. Though they had enmity that sought to pull God down from his throne; yet he so loved them, that he sent down Christ from heaven, from his throne there, to be in the form of a servant; and instead of a throne of glory, gave him to be nailed to the cross, and to be laid in the grave, that so we might be brought to a throne of glory.

How wonderful was the love of Christ, in thus exercising dying love towards his enemies! He loved those that hated him, with hatred that sought to take away his life, so as voluntarily to lay down his life, that they might have life through him. [1 John. iv. 10.](#) “Herein is love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and laid down his life for us.”

2. If we are all naturally God’s enemies, hence we may learn what a spirit it becomes us as Christians to possess towards our enemies. Though we are enemies to God, yet we hope that God has loved us, that Christ has died for us, that God has forgiven or will forgive us; and will do us good, and bestow infinite mercies and blessings upon us, so as to make us happy for ever. All this mercy we hope has been, or will be, exercised towards us.

Certainly then, it will not become us to be bitter in our spirits against those that are enemies to us, and have injured and ill treated us; and though they have yet an ill spirit towards us. Seeing we depend so much on God’s forgiving us, though enemies, we should exercise a spirit of forgiveness towards our enemies. And therefore our Saviour inserted it in that prayer, which he dictated as a general directory to all; “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” to enforce the duty upon us, and to show us how reasonable it is. And we ought to love them even while enemies; for so we hope God hath done to us. We should be the children of our Father, who is kind to the unthankful and evil. [Luke vi. 35.](#)

If we refuse thus to do, and are of another spirit, we may justly expect that God will deny us his mercy, as he has threatened! “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” [Matt. vi. 14, 15.](#) The same we have in the parable of the man, who owed his lord ten thousand talents. [Matt. xviii. 23-35.](#)

THE  
**WISDOM OF GOD,**  
DISPLAYED IN THE WAY OF SALVATION.

[Ephesians iii. 10.](#)

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church  
the manifold wisdom of God.

## INTRODUCTION.

The apostle is speaking in the context of the glorious doctrine of the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ; and how it was in a great measure kept hid in the past ages of the world. It was a mystery that before they did not understand, but now it was in a glorious manner brought to light. (Ver. 3-5.)—“By revelation he made known unto me the mystery, (as I wrote afore in few words; whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets, by the Spirit” And (ver. 8, 9.) “Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

And the apostle in the text informs us, that what Christ had accomplished towards his church, in the work of redemption, had not only in a great measure unveiled the mystery to the church in this world; but God had more clearly and fully opened it to the understanding even of the angels themselves; and that this was one end of God in it, to discover the glory of his wisdom to the angels. “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”<sup>135</sup>

One end of revealing God’s counsels concerning the work of redemption, is making known Gods *wisdom*. It is called *manifold* wisdom; because of the manifold glorious ends that are attained by it. The excellent designs, hereby accomplished, are very manifold. The wisdom of God in this is of vast extent. The contrivance is so manifold, that one may spend an eternity in discovering more of the excellent ends and designs accomplished by it; and the multitude and vast variety of things that are, by divine contrivance, brought to conspire to the bringing about those ends.

We may observe, *to whom* it is that God would manifest this his wisdom, by revealing the mystery of our redemption;—and they are not only men, but the *angels*.<sup>136</sup> “To the intent that now unto the *principalities* and *powers in heavenly places* might be known—the manifold wisdom of God.” The angels are often called principalities and powers, because of the exalted dignity of their nature. The angels excel in strength and wisdom. Those who are the *wise men* of the earth are called *princes* in the style of the apostle, 1 Cor. ii. 6. “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world”—ver. 8. “Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” So the angels are called principalities for their great wisdom. They may also be so called for the honour God his put upon them,

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135 Eph. iii. 10.

136 Ibid

in employing them as his ministers and instruments, wherewith he governs the world: and therefore are called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, [Col. i. 16](#).

They are called principalities and powers in *heavenly* places, as distinguishing them from those that are in places of *earthly* power and dignity. The offices or places of dignity and power that the angels sustain, are not earthly, but *heavenly*. They are in places of honour and power in the *heavenly city* and the *heavenly kingdom*.

One end of God in revealing his design or contrivance for redemption, as he hath so fully and gloriously done by Jesus Christ, is that the angels in heaven may behold the glory of his wisdom by it. Though they are such bright intelligencies, and do always behold the face of God the Father, and know so much; yet here is matter of instruction for them. Here they may see more of the divine wisdom than ever they had seen before. It was a new discovery of the wisdom of God to them.

The *time* when this display of the wisdom of God was especially made to the angels is, when Christ introduced the gospel-dispensation, implied in those words, “To the intent that *now* unto the principalities,” &c. When Christ came into the world and died, and actually performed the work of redemption—when he had fully and plainly revealed the counsels of God concerning it; and accordingly introduced the evangelical dispensation, and erected the gospel-church—then the angels understood more of the mystery of man’s redemption, and the manifold designs and counsels of divine wisdom, than ever they had done before.

In the foregoing verse the apostle, after speaking of revealing this wisdom of God to man, “And to make all *men* see, what is the fellowship of this mystery,<sup>137</sup>” &c. speaks of this mystery as a thing from the beginning kept hid till now, “The mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God—that now,<sup>138</sup>” &c. In this verse he mentions another end, *viz.* that he may, at the same time, make the *angels* also see God’s wisdom in his glorious scheme of redemption.—“Now at this time,” implies that it was before a mystery kept hid from them in comparison of what it is now. And here is room enough for the angels to discover more and more to all eternity of the wisdom of God in this work.

Observe the *medium* by which the angels come by this knowledge, *viz.* the church.—“That now unto principalities—might be known *by the church*”—*i. e.* by the things they see done *in* the church, or *towards* the church: and by what they see *concerning* the church. So hath it pleased the sovereign God, that the angels should have the most glorious discoveries of divine wisdom by his doings towards his church, a sort of beings much inferior to themselves. It hath pleased God to put this honour upon us.

*The wisdom appearing in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, is far above the wisdom of the angels.* For here it is mentioned as one end of God in revealing the contrivance of our

137 [Eph. iii. 9](#).

138 [Eph. iii. 9](#).

salvation, that the angels thereby might see and know how great and manifold the wisdom of God is; to hold forth the divine wisdom to the angels' view and admiration. But why is it so, if this wisdom be not higher than their own wisdom? It never would have been mentioned as one end of revealing the contrivance of redemption, that the angels might see how manifold God's wisdom is; if all the wisdom to be seen in it was no greater than their own. It is mentioned as a wisdom such as they had never seen before, not in God, much less in themselves. That *now* might be known how manifold the wisdom of God is; now, four thousand years since the creation.—In all that time the angels had always beheld the face of God; and had been studying God's works of creation; yet they never, till that day, had seen any thing like that; never knew how *manifold* God's wisdom is, as now they knew it by the church.

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## SECT. I.

Wonderful things done, by which salvation is procured.

Such is the choice of the person chosen to be our redeemer,—the substituting of him in our room;—his incarnation—his life—his death—and exaltation. And,

1. We will consider the *choice of the person* to be our redeemer. When God designed the redemption of mankind, his great wisdom appears in that he pitched upon his own, his only-begotten, Son, to be the person to perform the work. He was a redeemer of God's own choosing, and therefore he is called in Scripture, God's *elect*, ([Isa. lxii. 1.](#)) The wisdom of choosing this person to be the redeemer, appears in his being every way a *fit* person for this undertaking. It was necessary, that the person that is the redeemer, should be a *divine* person.—None but a *divine* person was sufficient for this great work. The work is infinitely unequal to any creature. It was requisite, that the redeemer of sinners, should be himself infinitely *holy*. None could take away the infinite evil of sin, but one that was infinitely far from and contrary to sin himself. Christ is a fit person upon this account.

It was requisite, that the person, in order to be sufficient for this undertaking, should be one of infinite *dignity* and worthiness, that he might be capable of meriting infinite blessings. The Son of God is a fit person on this account. It was necessary, that he should be a person of infinite *power* and *wisdom*; for this work is so difficult, that it requires such an one. Christ is a fit person also upon this account. It was requisite, that he should be a person infinitely *dear* to God the Father, in order to give an infinite value to his transactions in the Father's esteem, and that the Father's love to him might balance the offence and provocation by our sins. Christ is a fit person upon this account. Therefore called *the beloved*, ([Eph. i. 6.](#)) He hath made us accepted in the *beloved*.

It was requisite, that the person should be one that could act in this as *of his own absolute right*: one that, in himself, is not a servant or subject; because, if he is one that cannot act of his own right, he cannot merit any thing. He that is a servant, and that can do no more than he is bound to do, cannot merit. And then he that has nothing that is absolutely his own, cannot pay any price to redeem another. Upon this account Christ is a fit person; and none but a divine person can be fit.—And he must be a person also of infinite *mercy* and *love*; for no other person but such an one would undertake a work so difficult, for a creature so unworthy as man. Upon this account also Christ is a fit person.—It was requisite that he should be a person of unchangeable perfect *truth* and faithfulness; otherwise he would not be fit to be depended on by us in so great an affair. Christ is also a fit person upon this account.

The wisdom of God in choosing his eternal Son, appears, not only in that he is a fit person; but in that he was the *only* fit person of all persons, whether created or uncreated. No *created* person, neither man, nor angel, was fit for this undertaking; for we have just now shown, that he must be a person of *infinite* holiness—dignity—power—wisdom; infin-



itely dear to God—of infinite love and mercy; and one that may act of his own absolute right. But no creature, how excellent soever, has any one of these qualifications.—There are three *uncreated* persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and Christ alone of these was a suitable person for a redeemer. It was not meet, that the redeemer should be God the *Father*; because he, in the divine economy of the persons of the Trinity, was the person that holds the rights of the Godhead, and so was the person offended, whose justice required satisfaction; and was to be appeased by a mediator. It was not meet it should be the *Holy Ghost*, for in being mediator between the Father and the saints, he is in some sense so between the Father and the Spirit. The saints, in all their spiritual transactions with God, act by the Spirit: or rather, it is the Spirit of God that acts in them; they are the temples of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit dwelling in them, is their principle of action, in all their transactings with God. But in these their spiritual transactings with God, they act by a *mediator*. These spiritual and holy exercises cannot be acceptable, or avail any thing with God, as from a fallen creature, but by a mediator. Therefore Christ, in being mediator between the Father and the saints, may be said to be mediator between the Father and the Holy Spirit, that acts in the saints. And therefore it was meet, that the mediator should not be either the Father or the Spirit, but a middle person between them both. It is the Spirit in the saints, that seeks the blessing of God, by faith and prayer; and, as the apostle says, with groanings that cannot be uttered, (Rom. viii. 26.) “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.” The Spirit in the saints seeks divine blessings of God, by and through a mediator; and therefore that mediator must not be the Spirit, but another person.

It shows a divine wisdom, to *know* that he was a fit person. No other but one of *divine* wisdom could have known it. None but one of infinite wisdom could have thought of him to be a redeemer of sinners. For he, as he is God, is one of the persons offended by sin; against whom man by his sin had rebelled. Who but God infinitely wise could ever have thought of *him* to be a redeemer of sinners; against whom they had sinned, to whom they were enemies, and of whom they deserved infinitely ill? Who would ever have thought of him as one that should set his heart upon man, and exercise infinite love and pity to him, and exhibit infinite wisdom, power, and merit in redeeming him? We proceed,

2. To consider the *substituting* of this person in our room. After choosing the person to be our redeemer, the next step of divine wisdom is, to contrive the way how he should perform this work. If God had declared who the person was, that should do this work, and had gone no further; no creature could have thought which way this person could have performed the work. If God had told them, that his own Son must be the redeemer; and that he alone was a fit person for the work; and that he was a person every way fit and sufficient for it,—but had proposed to *them* to contrive a way how this fit and sufficient person

should proceed,—we may well suppose that all created understandings would have been utterly at a loss.

The first thing necessary to be done, is, that this Son of God should become our representative and surety; and so be substituted in the sinner's room. But who of created intelligences would have thought of any such thing as the eternal and infinitely beloved Son of God being substituted in the room of sinners? his standing in stead of a sinner, a rebel, an object of the wrath of God? Who would have thought of a person of infinite glory representing sinful worms, that had made themselves by sin infinitely provoking and abominable?

For, if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's room, then his sin must be charged upon him: he will thereby take the guilt of the sinner upon himself; he must be subject to the same law that man was, both as to the commands, and threatenings: but who would have thought of any such thing concerning the Son of God? But we proceed,

3. To consider the *incarnation* of Jesus Christ. The next step of divine wisdom in contriving how Christ should perform the work of redeeming sinners, was in determining his incarnation. Suppose God had revealed his counsels thus far to created understandings, that his own Son was the person chosen for this work, that he had substituted him in the sinner's room, and appointed him to take the sinner's obligations and guilt on himself? and had revealed no more, but had left the rest to them to find out; it is no way probable, that even then they could ever have thought of a way, whereby this person might actually have performed the work of redemption. For if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's stead, then he takes the sinners' obligations on himself. For instance, he must take the obligation the sinner is under to perform *perfect obedience* to the divine law. But it is not probable, that any creature could have conceived how that could be possible.—How should a person who is the eternal Jehovah, become a servant, be under law, and perform obedience even to the law of man?

And again, if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's stead, then he comes under the sinner's obligation to suffer the punishment which man's sin had deserved. And who could have thought that to be possible? For how should a divine person, who is essentially, unchangeably, and infinitely happy, suffer pain and torment? And how should he who is the object of God's infinitely dear love, suffer the wrath of his Father? It is not to be supposed, that created wisdom ever would have found out a way how to have got over these difficulties. But divine wisdom hath found out a way, *viz.* by the incarnation of the Son of God. That the Word should be made flesh, that he might be both God and man, in one person: what created understanding could have conceived that such a thing was possible? Yet these things could never be *proved to be impossible*. This distinction duly considered will show the futility of many Socinian objections.

And if God had revealed to them, that it was possible, and even that it should be, but left them to find out *how* it should be; we may well suppose that they would all have been

puzzled and confounded, to conceive of a way for so uniting a man to the eternal Son of God, that they should be but one person: that one who is truly a man in all respects, should indeed be the very same Son of God, that was with God from all eternity. This is a great mystery to us. Hereby, a person that is infinite, omnipotent, and unchangeable, is become, in a sense, a finite, a feeble man; a man subject to our sinless infirmities, passions, and calamities! The great God, the sovereign of heaven and earth, is thus become a worm of the dust. (Psal. xxii. 6.) “I am a worm, and no man.” He that is eternal and self-existent, is by this union born of a woman! He who is the great original Spirit, is clothed with flesh and blood like one of us! He who is independent, self-sufficient, and all-sufficient, now is come to stand in need of food and clothing: he becomes poor,<sup>139</sup> “has not where to lay his head;”—stands in need of the charity of men; and is maintained by it! It is far above us, to conceive *how* it is done. It is a great wonder and mystery to us; but it was no mystery to divine wisdom.

4. The next thing to be considered is, the *life* of Christ in this world. The wisdom of God appears in the circumstances of his life—and in the work and business of his life.

(1.) The *circumstances* of his life. If God had revealed that his own Son should be incarnate, and should live in this world in the human nature; and it had been left to men to determine what circumstances of life would have been most suitable for him, human wisdom would have determined, that he should appear in the world in a most magnificent manner; with very extraordinary outward ensigns of honour, authority, and power, far above any of the kings of the earth: that here he should reign in great visible pomp and splendour over all nations.—And thus it was that men’s wisdom *did* determine, before Christ came. The wise, the great men among the Jews, scribes and Pharisees, who are called “Princes of this world,<sup>140</sup>” *did* expect that the Messiah would thus appear. But the wisdom of God chose quite otherwise: it chose that when the Son of God became man, he should begin his life in a stable; for many years dwell obscurely in a family of low degree in the world; and be in low outward circumstances: that he should be poor, and not have where to lay his head: that he should be maintained by the charity of some of his disciples; that he should “Grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground,” (Isa. liii. 2.) “That he should not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets,” (Isa. xlii. 2.) That he should come to Zion in a lowly manner, “riding on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.<sup>141</sup>”—“That he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.<sup>142</sup>”

139 [Matt. viii. 20.](#)

140 [1 Cor. ii. 6.](#)

141 [Matt. xxi. 5.](#)

142 [Isa. liii. 3.](#)

And now the divine determination in this matter is made known, we may safely conclude that it is far the most suitable; and that it would not have been at all suitable for God, when he was manifest in flesh, to appear with earthly pomp, wealth, and grandeur. No! these things are infinitely too mean and despicable, for the Son of God to show as if he affected or esteemed them. Men, if they had this way proposed to them, would have been ready to condemn it, as foolish and very unsuitable for the Son of God. "But the foolishness of God is wiser than men," (1 Cor. i. 25.) "And God hath brought to nought the wisdom of this world, and the princes of this world," (1 Cor. ii. 6.) Christ, by thus appearing in mean and low outward circumstances in the world, has poured contempt upon all worldly wealth and glory; and has taught us to despise it. And if it becomes mean men to despise them, how much more did it become the Son of God! And then Christ hereby hath taught us to be lowly in heart. If he who was infinitely high and great, was thus lowly; how lowly should we be, who are indeed so vile!

(2.) The wisdom of God appears in the *work* and business of the life of Christ. Particularly, that he should perfectly obey the law of God, under such great temptations: that he should have conflicts with, and overcome for us, in a way of obedience, the powers of earth and hell: that he should be subject to, not only the *moral* law, but the *ceremonial* also, that heavy yoke of bondage. Christ went through the time of his public ministry, in delivering to us divine instructions and doctrine. The wisdom of God appears in giving us such an one to be our prophet and teacher, who is a divine person: who is himself the very wisdom and word of God; and was from all eternity in the bosom of the Father. His word is of greater authority and weight than if delivered by the mouth of an ordinary prophet. And how wisely ordered that the same should be our teacher and Redeemer; in order that his relations and offices, as Redeemer, might the more sweeten and endear his instructions to us. We are ready to give heed to what is said by those who are dear to us. Our love to their persons makes us to delight in their discourse. It is therefore wisely ordered, that he who has done so much to endear himself to us, should be appointed our great prophet, to deliver to us divine doctrine.

5. The next thing to be considered is the death of Christ. This is a means of salvation for poor sinners, that no other but divine wisdom would have pitched upon; and when revealed, it was doubtless greatly to the surprise of all the hosts of heaven, and they never will cease to wonder at it. How astonishing is it, that a person who is blessed for ever, and is infinitely and essentially happy, should endure the greatest sufferings that ever were endured on earth! That a person who is the supreme Lord and judge of the world, should be arraigned, and should stand at the judgment-seat of mortal worms, and then be condemned. That a person who is the living God, and the fountain of life, should be put to death. That a person who created the world, and gives life to all his creatures, should be put to death by his own creatures. That a person of infinite majesty and glory, and so the object of the love, praises,

and adorations of angels, should be mocked and spit upon by the vilest of men. That a person, infinitely good, and who is love itself, should suffer the greatest cruelty. That a person who is infinitely beloved of the Father, should be put to inexpressible anguish under his own Father's wrath. That he who is King of heaven, who hath heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footstool, should be buried in the prison of the grave. How wonderful is this! And yet this is the way that God's wisdom hath fixed upon, as the way of sinners' salvation; as neither unsuitable nor dishonourable to Christ.

6. The last thing done to procure salvation for sinners, is Christ's *exaltation*. Divine wisdom saw it needful, or most expedient, that the same person who died upon the cross, should sit at his right hand, on his own throne, as supreme Governor of the world; and should have particularly the absolute disposal of all things relating to man's salvation, and should be the judge of the world. This was needful, because it was requisite that the same person who purchased salvation, should have the bestowing of it; for it is not fit, that God should at all transact with the fallen creature in a way of mercy, but by a mediator. And this is exceedingly for the strengthening of the faith and comfort of the saints, that he who hath endured so much to purchase salvation for them, has all things in heaven and in earth delivered unto him; that he might bestow eternal life on them for whom he purchased it. And that the same person that loved them so greatly as to shed his precious blood for them, was to be their final judge.

This then was another thing full of wonders, that he who was man as well as God; he who was a servant, and died like a malefactor; should be made the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, angels and men; the absolute disposer of eternal life and death; the supreme judge of all created intelligent beings, for eternity: and should have committed to him all the governing power of God the Father; and that, not only as God, but as God-man, not exclusive of the human nature.

As it is wonderful, that a person who is truly *divine* should be humbled so as to become a servant, and to suffer as a malefactor; so it is in like manner wonderful, that he who is God-man, not exclusive of the manhood, should be exalted to the power and honour of the great God of heaven and earth. But such wonders as these has infinite wisdom contrived, and accomplished in order to our salvation.

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## SECT. II.

In this way of salvation God is greatly glorified.

God has greatly glorified himself in the work of creation and providence. All his works praise him, and his glory shines brightly from them all: but as some stars differ from others in glory, so the glory of God shines brighter in some of his works than in others. And amongst all these, the work of redemption is like the sun in his strength. The glory of the author is abundantly the most resplendent in this work.

I. Each *attribute* of God is glorified in the work of redemption. How God has exceedingly glorified his *wisdom*, may more fully appear before we have done with this subject. But more particularly,

1. God hath exceedingly glorified his *power* in this work.—It shows the great and inconceivable power of God to unite natures so infinitely different, as the divine and human nature, in one person. If God can make one who is truly God, and one that is truly man, the self-same person, what is it that he cannot do? This is a greater and more marvellous work than creation.

The power of God most gloriously appears in man's being actually saved and redeemed in this way. In his being brought out of a state of sin and misery, into a conformity to God; and at last to the full and perfect enjoyment of God. This is a more glorious demonstration of divine power, than creating things out of nothing, upon two accounts. One is, the *effect is greater and more excellent*. To produce the new creature is a more glorious effect, than merely to produce a creature.—Making a holy creature, a creature in the spiritual image of God, in the image of the divine excellencies, and a partaker of the divine nature—is a greater effect than merely to give being. And therefore as the effect is greater, it is a more glorious manifestation of power.

And then, in this effect of the actual redemption of sinners, *the term from which, is more distant from the term to which*, than in the work of creation. The term from which, in the work of creation, is *nothing*, and the term to which, is *being*. But the term from which, in the work of redemption, is a state *infinitely worse than nothing*; and the term to which, *a holy and a happy being*, a state infinitely better than mere being. The terms in the production of the last, are much more remote from one another, than in the first.

And then the production of this last effect, is a more glorious manifestation of power, than the work of creation; because, though in creation, the terms are very distant—as *nothing* is very remote from *being*—yet there is no opposition. Nothing makes no opposition to the creating power of God.—But in redemption, the divine power meets with and overcomes great opposition. There is great opposition in a state of sin to a state of grace. Men's lusts and corruptions are exceedingly opposite to grace and holiness; and greatly resist the production of the effect. But this opposition is completely overcome in actual redemption.

Besides, there is great opposition from Satan. The power of God is very glorious in this work, because it therein conquers the strongest and most powerful enemies. Power never appears more illustrious than in conquering. Jesus Christ, in this work, conquers and triumphs over thousands of devils, strong and mighty spirits, uniting all their strength against him. [Luke xi. 21.](#) “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil.” [Col. ii. 15.](#) “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in the cross.”

2. The *justice* of God is exceedingly glorified in this work. God is so strictly and immutably just, that he would not spare his beloved Son when he took upon him the guilt of men’s sins, and was substituted in the room of sinners. He would not abate him the least mite of that debt which justice demanded. Justice should take place, though it cost his infinitely dear Son his precious blood; and his enduring such extraordinary reproach, and pain, and death in its most dreadful form.

3. The *holiness* of God is also exceedingly glorious in this work. Never did God so manifest his hatred of sin as in the death and sufferings of his only-begotten Son. Hereby he showed himself unappeasable to sin, and that it was impossible for him to be at peace with it.

4. God hath also exceedingly glorified his *truth* in this way, both in his threatenings and promises. Herein is fulfilled the threatenings of the law, wherein God said, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”<sup>143</sup> And cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.<sup>144</sup> God showed hereby, that not only heaven and earth should pass away, but, which is more, that the blood of him who is the eternal Jehovah should be spilt, rather than one jot or tittle of his word should fail, till all be fulfilled.

5. And lastly, God has exceedingly glorified his *mercy* and love in this work. The mercy of God was an attribute never seen before in its exercises, till it was seen in this work of redemption, or the fruits of it. The goodness of God appeared towards the angels in giving them being and blessedness. It appeared glorious towards man in his primitive state, a state of holiness and happiness. But now God hath shown that he can find in his heart to love sinners, who deserve his infinite hatred. And not only hath he shown that he can love them, but love them so as to give them more and do greater things for them than ever he did for the holy angels, that never sinned nor offended their Creator. He loved sinful men so as to give them a greater gift than ever he gave the angels; so as to give his own Son, and not only to give him to be their possession and enjoyment, but to give him to be their sacrifice. And

143 [Gen. ii. 17.](#)

144 [Col 3:10.](#)

herein he has done more for them, than if he had given them all the visible world; yea, more than if he had given them all the angels, and all heaven besides. God hath loved them so, that hereby he purchased for them deliverance from eternal misery, and the possession of immortal glory.

II. Each *person* of the Trinity is exceedingly glorified in this work. Herein the work of redemption is distinguished from all the other works of God. The attributes of God are glorious in his other works; but the three persons of the Trinity are distinctly glorified in no work as in this of redemption. In this work every distinct person has his distinct parts and offices assigned him. Each one has his particular and distinct concern in it, agreeable to their distinct, personal properties, relations, and economical offices. The redeemed have an equal concern with and dependence upon each person, in this affair, and owe equal honour and praise to each of them.

The Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and accepts the price of redemption. The Son is the Redeemer and the price. He redeems by offering up himself. The Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased; yea, and he is the good purchased. The sum of what Christ purchased for us is holiness and happiness. But the Holy Ghost is the great principle both of all holiness and happiness. The Holy Ghost is the sum of all that Christ purchased for men. [Gal. iii. 13, 14](#). “He was made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, through faith.”

The blessedness of the redeemed consists in partaking of Christ’s fulness, which consists in partaking of that Spirit, which is given not by measure unto him. This is the oil that was poured upon the head of the church, which ran down to the members of his body; to the skirts of his garment. Thus we have an equal concern with and dependence upon each of the persons of the Trinity, distinctly; upon the Father, as he provides the Redeemer, and the person of whom the purchase is made;—the Son as the purchaser, and the price; the Holy Ghost, as the good purchased.

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SECT. III.

The good attained by salvation is wonderfully various and exceeding great.

Here we may distinctly consider—the *variety*—and the *greatness*—of the good procured for men.

I. The good procured by salvation is wonderfully *various*. Here are all sorts of good procured for fallen man, that he *does* or *can* really need, or is *capable* of. The wisdom of God appears in the way of salvation, in that it is most worthy of an infinitely wise God, because every way perfect and sufficient. We, in our fallen state, are most necessitous creatures, full of wants: but they are here all answered. Every sort of good is here procured; whatever would really contribute to our happiness, and even many things we could not have thought of, had not Christ purchased them for us, and revealed them to us. Every demand of our circumstances, and craving of our natures, is here exactly answered.—For instance,

1. We stand in need of *peace* with God. We had provoked God to anger, his wrath abode upon us, and we needed to have it appeased. This is done for us in this way of salvation; for Christ, by shedding his blood, has fully satisfied justice, and appeased God's wrath, for all that shall believe in him. By the sentence of the law we were condemned to hell; and we needed to have our sins pardoned that we might be delivered from hell. But in this work, pardon of sin and deliverance from hell, is fully purchased for us.

2. We needed not only to have God's wrath appeased, and our sins pardoned; but we needed to have the *favour* of God. To have God, not only not our enemy, but our friend. Now God's favour is purchased for us by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

3. We needed not only to be delivered from hell, but to have some *satisfying happiness* bestowed. Man has a natural craving and thirst after happiness; and will thirst and crave, till his capacity is filled. And his capacity is of vast extent; and nothing but an infinite good can fill and satisfy his desires. But, notwithstanding, provision is made in this way of salvation to answer those needs, there is a satisfying happiness purchased for us; that which is fully answerable to the capacity and cravings of our souls.

Here is food procured to answer all the appetites and faculties of our souls. God has made the soul of man of a spiritual nature; and therefore he needs a corresponding happiness; some spiritual object, in the enjoyment of which he may be happy. Christ has purchased the enjoyment of God, who is the great and original Spirit, as the portion of our souls. And he hath purchased the Spirit of God to come and dwell in us as an eternal principle of happiness.

God hath made man a rational, intelligent creature; and man needs some good that shall be a suitable object of his understanding, for him to contemplate; wherein he may have full and sufficient exercise for his capacious faculties, in their utmost extent. Here is an object that is great and noble, and worthy of the exercise of the noblest faculties of the rational

soul.—God himself should be theirs, for them for ever to behold and contemplate; his glorious perfections and works are most worthy objects; and there is room enough for improving them, and still to exercise their faculties to all eternity.—What object can be more worthy to exercise the understanding of a rational soul, than the glories of the Divine Being, with which the heavenly intelligences, and even the infinite understanding of God himself is entertained?

Our souls need some good that shall be a suitable object of the will and affections; a suitable object for the choice, the acquiescence, the love, and the joy of the rational soul. Provision is made for this also in this way of salvation. There is an infinitely excellent Being offered to be chosen, to be rested in, to be loved, to be rejoiced in, by us: even God himself, who is infinitely lovely, the fountain of all good; a fountain that can never be exhausted, where we can be in no danger of going to excess in our love and joy: and here we may be assured ever to find our joy and delight in enjoyments answerable to our love and desires.

4. There is all possible enjoyment of this object, procured in this way of salvation. When persons entirely set their love upon another, they naturally desire to *see* that person: merely to hear of the person, does not satisfy love. So here is provision made that we should see God, the object of our supreme love. Not only that we should hear and read of him in his word, but that we should see him with a spiritual eye here: and not only so, but that we should have the satisfaction of seeing God face to face hereafter. This is promised, ([Matt. v. 8.](#)) “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” It is promised, that we shall not see God, as through a glass darkly, as we do now, but face to face. [1 Cor. xiii. 12.](#) That we shall see Christ as he is. [1 John iii. 2.](#)

We naturally desire not only to see those whom we love, but to *converse with* them. Provision is made for this also, that we should have spiritual conversation with God while in this world; and that we should be hereafter admitted to converse with Christ in the most intimate manner possible. Provision is made in this way of salvation, that we should converse with God much more intimately, than otherwise it would have been possible for us; for now Christ is incarnate, is in our nature: he is become one of us, whereby we are under advantages for an immensely more free and intimate converse with him, than could have been, if he had remained only in the divine nature; and so in a nature infinitely distant from us.—We naturally desire not only to converse with those whom we greatly love, but to *dwell* with them. Provision, through Christ, is made for this. It is purchased and provided that we should dwell with God in his own house in heaven, which is called our Father’s house.—To dwell for ever in God’s presence, and at his right hand.

We naturally desire to have a *right* in that person whom we greatly love. Provision is made, in this way of salvation, that we should have a right *in* God; a right *to* him. This is the promise of the covenant of grace, “That he will be our God.” God, with all his glorious perfections and attributes, with all his power and wisdom, and with all his majesty and glory,



will be ours; so that we may call him our inheritance, and the portion of our souls: what we can humbly claim by faith, having this portion made over to us by a firm instrument; by a covenant ordered in all things and sure.—And we may also hereby claim a right to Jesus Christ. Love desires that the right should be *mutual*. The lover desires, not only to have a right to the beloved, but *that the beloved should also have a right to him*: he desires to be his beloved's, as well as his beloved should be his. Provision is also made for this, in this wise method of salvation, that God should have a special propriety in the redeemed, that they should be in a distinguishing manner *his*, that they should be his *peculiar* people. We are told that God sets apart the godly for himself, [Psal. iv. 3](#). They are called God's jewels. The spouse speaks it with great satisfaction and rejoicing, [Cant. ii. 16](#). "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

Love desires to stand in some *near relation* to the beloved. Provision is made by Christ, that we should stand in the nearest possible relation to God; that he should be our Father, and we should be his children. We are often instructed in the Holy Scriptures, that God is the Father of believers, and that they are his family.—And not only so, but they stand in the nearest relation to Christ Jesus. There is the closest union possible. The souls of believers are married to Christ. The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Yea, there is yet a nearer relation than can be represented by such a similitude. Believers are as the very members of Christ, and of his flesh and of his bones, [Eph. v. 30](#). Yea, this is not near enough yet, but *they are one spirit*, [1 Cor. vi. 17](#).

Love naturally inclines to a *conformity* to the beloved. To have those excellencies, upon the account of which he is beloved, copied in himself. Provision is made in this way of salvation, that we may be conformed to God; that we shall be transformed into the same image. [2 Cor. iii. 18](#). "We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."—And that hereafter we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

It is the natural desire of love to *do something* for the beloved, either for his pleasure or honour. Provision is made for this also in this way of salvation; that we should be made instruments of glorifying God, and promoting his kingdom, here, and of glorifying him to all eternity.

5. In this way of salvation, provision is made for our having *every sort of good* that man naturally craves; as honour, wealth, and pleasure.—Here is provision made that we should be brought to the highest *honour*. This is what God has promised, *that those that honour him, he will honour*. And that true Christians shall be kings and priests unto God.—Christ has promised, *that as his Father has appointed unto him a kingdom, so he will appoint unto them, that they may eat and drink at his table in his kingdom*. He has promised to crown them with a crown of glory, and that *they shall sit with him in his throne. That he will confess*

*their names before his Father, and before his angels. That he will give them a new name; and that they shall walk with him in white.*

Christ has also purchased for them the *greatest wealth*. All those that are in Christ are rich. They are *now* rich. They have the *best* riches; being rich in faith, and the graces of the Spirit of God. They have gold tried in the fire. They have durable riches and righteousness. They have treasure in heaven, where neither thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth. An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. They are possessors of all things.

Christ has also purchased *pleasure* for them; pleasures that are immensely preferable to all the pleasures of sense, most exquisitely sweet, and satisfying. He has purchased for them fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at God's right hand; and they shall drink of the river of God's pleasure.

6. Christ has purchased all needed good *both for soul and body*. While we are here, we stand in need of these earthly things; and of these Christ has purchased all that are best for us. He has purchased for the body that God should feed, and clothe us. [Matt. vi. 26](#). "How much more shall he *feed* you, O ye of little faith!" How much more shall he *clothe* you! Christ has purchased, that God should take care of us, and provide what is needed of these things, as a father provides for his children. [1 Pet. v. 7](#). "Casting your care upon him, for he careth for you."

7. Christ has purchased good that is suitable for his people *in all conditions*. There is, in this way of salvation, respect had to, and provision made for, all circumstances that they can be in. Here is provision made, for a time of affliction—for a time of poverty and pinching want—for a time of bereavement and mourning—for spiritual darkness—for a day of temptation—for a time of persecution—and for a time of death. Here is such a provision made that is sufficient to carry a person above death, and all its terrors; and to give him a complete triumph over that king of terrors. Here is enough to sweeten the grave, and make it cease to seem terrible. Yea, enough to make death in prospect to seem desirable; and in its near approach to be not terrible but joyful.

8. There is provision made in this way of salvation for the life and blessedness of soul and body *to all eternity*. Christ has purchased, that we should be delivered from a state of temporal death, as well as *spiritual* and *eternal*. The bodies of the saints shall be raised to life. He has purchased all manner of perfection for the body of which it is capable. It shall be raised a spiritual body in incorruption and glory, and be made like Christ's glorious body, to shine as the sun in the kingdom of his Father, and to exist in a glorified state in union with the soul to all eternity.

9. But man in his fallen state still needs something else in order to his happiness, than that these fore-mentioned blessings should be purchased for him, *viz.* He needs to be *qualified* for the possession and enjoyment of them. In order to our having a title to *these* blessings of the covenant of grace, [so that we can scripturally *claim* an interest in them,] there is a

certain condition must be performed by us. We must *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, and *accept* of him as offered in the gospel for a Saviour. But, as we cannot do this of ourselves, Christ has purchased this also for all the elect. He has purchased, that they shall have faith given them; whereby they shall be [actively] united to Christ, and so have a [pleadable] title to his benefits.

But still something further is necessary for man, in order to his coming to the actual possession of the inheritance. A man, as soon as he has believed, has a title to the inheritance: but in order to come to the actual possession of it, he must *persevere* in a way of holiness. There is not only a gate that must be entered; but there is a narrow way that must be travelled, before we can arrive at heavenly blessedness; and that is a way of universal and persevering holiness. But men, after they have believed, cannot persevere in a way of holiness, of themselves. But there is sufficient provision made for this also, in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. The matter of a saint's perseverance is sufficiently secured by the purchase that Christ has made.

But still there is something else needful in order to qualify a person for the actual entering upon the enjoyments and employments of a glorified estate, *viz.* that he should be made *perfectly holy*; that all remainders of sin should be taken away; for there cannot any sin enter into heaven. No soul must go into the glorious presence of God, with the least degree of the filth of sin. But there is provision made: for Christ has purchased that all sin shall be taken away out of the hearts of believers at death; and that they should be made perfectly holy: whereby they shall be fully and perfectly qualified to enter upon the pleasures and enjoyments of the new Jerusalem.

Christ has purchased all, both objective and inherent good: not only a portion to be enjoyed by us; but all those inherent qualifications necessary to our enjoyment of it. He has purchased not only justification, but sanctification and glorification; both holiness and happiness.—Having considered the good attained in the way of salvation as *manifold* and various, I now proceed, as proposed,

II. To consider the good attained for us by this way of salvation, as *exceeding great*.

There is not only every sort of good we need, but of every sort in *that degree*, so as to answer the extent of our capacity, and the greatest stretch of our desires, and indeed of our conceptions. They are not only greater than our conceptions are here, but also greater than ever they could be, were it not that God's relation, and our own experience, will teach us. They are greater than the tongue of angels can declare, the *deliverance* that we have in it is exceeding great; it is deliverance from guilt, from sin itself, from the anger of God, and from the miseries of hell.

How great is the *good conferred*! The objective good is the infinite God, and the glorious Redeemer, Jesus Christ. How great is the love of the Father, and the Son! And how near the

relation between them and the true believer! How close the union, how intimate the communion, and ultimately how clear will be the vision in glory!

There are great *communications* made to the believing soul on earth, but how much greater in heaven! Then their conformity to God will be perfect, their enjoyment of him will be full, their honour great and unsullied, and the glory of body and soul ineffable. The riches of the Christian are immense; all things are included in his treasure. Pleasures unspeakably and inconceivably great await him; rivers of delight, fulness of joy; and all of infinite duration.

The benefit procured for us, is *doubly* infinite. Our deliverance is an infinite benefit, because the evil we are delivered from is infinite; and the positive good bestowed is eternal; *viz.* the full enjoyment of all those blessings merited.

## SECT. IV.

*How angels are benefited by the salvation of men.*

So hath the wisdom of God contrived this affair, that the benefit of what he has done therein should be so extensive, as to reach the elect angels. It is for men that the work of redemption is wrought out; and yet the benefit of the things done in this work is not confined to them, though all that is properly called *redemption*, or included in it, is confined to men. The angels cannot partake in this, having never fallen; yet they have great indirect benefit by it.—God hath so wisely ordered, that what has been done in this directly and especially for men, should redound to the exceeding benefit of all intelligent creatures who are in favour with God. The benefit of it is so diffusive as to reach heaven itself. So great and manifold is the good attained in this work, that those glorious spirits who are so much above us, and were so highly exalted in happiness before, yet should receive great addition hereby.—I will show *how* in some particulars.

1. The angels hereby see great and wonderful manifestation of the glory of God. The happiness of angels as well as of men consists very much in beholding the glory of God. The excellency of the Divine Being is a most delightful subject of contemplation to the saints on earth; but much more to the angels in heaven. The more holy any being is, the more sweet and delightful will it be to him to behold the glory and beauty of the Supreme Being.—Therefore the beholding of the glory of God must be ravishing to the holy angels, who are perfect in holiness, and never had their minds leavened with sin. The manifestations of the glory of God, are as it were the food that satisfies the angels; they live thereon. It is their greatest happiness.

It is without doubt much of their employment to behold the glory of God appearing in his works. Therefore this work of redemption greatly contributes to their happiness and delight, as the glory of God is so exceedingly manifested by it. For what is done, is done in the sight of the angels, as is evident by many passages of Holy Scripture. And they behold the glory of God appearing herein with entertainment and delight, as it is manifest by [1 Pet. i. 12](#). “Which things the angels desire to look into.”

The angels have this advantage, that now they may behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, where it shines with a peculiar lustre and brightness. [1 Tim. iii. 5](#). “Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels.” Perhaps all God’s attributes are more gloriously manifested in this work, than in any other that ever the angels saw. There is certainly a fuller manifestation of some of his attributes, than ever they saw before; as is evident by the text. And especially, it is so with respect to the mercy of God, that sweet and endearing attribute of the divine nature. The angels of heaven never saw so much grace manifested before, as in the work of redemption; nor in any measure equal to it. How full of joy doth it fill the hearts of the angels, to see such a

boundless and bottomless ocean of love and grace in their God. And therefore with what rejoicing do all the angels praise Christ for his being slain! [Rev. v. 11, 12.](#) “And I beheld and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

2. They have this benefit by it, that hereby Jesus Christ, God-man, is become their head. God, subsisting in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was the king of angels, and would have been, if it had not been for our redemption. But it was owing to what is done in this work, that Jesus Christ, as God-man, becomes the head of the angels. Christ is now not only the head of angels simply as God, but as God-man. [Col. ii. 10.](#) “And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.” [Eph. i. 20-22.](#) “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.”

This is a part of the exaltation and glory of Christ which God confers on him as his reward. And not only so, but it is greatly to the angels’ benefit. It is God’s manner in his dealings with his elect creatures, in the same works wherein he glorifies himself, or his Son, greatly to benefit them. The same dealings of his that are most for his glory, shall be most for their good.—That Christ, God-man, should be made the head of the angels, is greatly to their benefit several ways.

(1.) Because they become hereby more nearly *related* to so glorious a person, the Son of God, than otherwise they would have. The angels esteem it a great honour done them to be related to such a person as Jesus Christ, God-man, who is an infinitely honourable person.

The angels, by Christ becoming their head, are with the saints gathered together in one in Christ, [Eph. i. 10.](#) They by virtue hereof, though Christ be not their Redeemer as he is ours, have a right and propriety in this glorious person, as well as we. He is theirs: though not their Saviour, yet he is their head of government, and head of influence.

(2.) Again, this is greatly to their *benefit*; as they are under advantages for a far more intimate converse with God. The divine nature is at an infinite distance from the nature of angels, as well as from the nature of man. This distance forbids a familiarity and intimacy of intercourse.—It is therefore a great advantage to the angels, that God is come down to them in a created nature; and in that nature is become their head; so that their intercourse and enjoyment may be more intimate. They are invited by the similar qualifications of the created nature, with which the Son of God is invested.

(3.) It is for the benefit of the angels, as hereby the elect of mankind are gathered into their society. Christ, by the work of redemption, gathers in the elect of mankind to join the



angels of heaven. [Eph. i. 10.](#) “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.” Men are brought in to join with the angels in their work of praising God; to partake with them of their enjoyments. The angels greatly rejoice at this. They rejoice when but one person is gathered in, as Christ teaches us, [Luke xv. 10.](#) “Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” The heavenly society is made more complete by this accession of the saints to it; they contribute to the happiness of each other. The angels rejoice that others are added to join them and assist them in praising God.—And thus the vacancy by the fall of angels is filled up.

(4.) It tends to make the angels to prize their happiness the more, when they see how much it cost to purchase the same happiness for man. Though they knew so much, yet they are not incapable of being taught more and more the worth of their own happiness. For when they saw how much it cost to purchase the same happiness for man; even the precious blood of the Son of God; this tended to give them a great sense of the infinite value of their happiness. They never saw such a testimony of the value of the eternal enjoyment of God before.

Thus we have shown, how the wisdom of God appears in the work of redemption in the good ends attained thereby, with respect to God, men, and good angels.

But are there any good ends obtained with respect to *bad* angels, God’s grand enemies? Undoubtedly there are, as may appear from the few following considerations. Satan and his angels rebelled against God in heaven, and proudly presumed to try their strength with his. And when God by his almighty power overcame the strength of Satan, and sent him like lightning from heaven to hell with all his army, Satan still hoped to get the victory by subtlety. Though he could not overcome by power, yet he hoped to succeed by craft; and so by his subtlety to disappoint God of his end in creating this lower world.—God therefore has shown his great wisdom in overthrowing Satan’s design. He has disappointed the devices of the crafty, so that they cannot perform their enterprise; he has carried their counsel headlong.

1. Satan thought to have disappointed God of his glory, which he designed in creating this lower world; and to make mankind be for his own glory, in setting up himself god over them. Now Christ, by what he has done in the work of redemption, has overthrown Satan; and utterly frustrated him as to this end. God is exceedingly glorified in the elect, to the surprise of angels and devils. God by redemption has all the glory that he intended, and more than either men, angels, or devils imagined that God intended. God might have glorified his justice in the destruction of all mankind. But it was God’s design in creating the world, to glorify his goodness and love; and not only to be glorified eventually, but to be served and glorified actually by men. Satan intended to frustrate God of this end; but, by the redemption of Jesus Christ, his design is confounded.

2. Another design of the devil, was to gratify his envy in the utter destruction of mankind. But, by the redemption of Jesus Christ, this malicious design of Satan is crossed: because all the elect are brought to their designed happiness; which is much greater than ever Satan thought it was in God's heart to bestow on man. And though some of mankind are left to be miserable, yet that does not answer Satan's end; for this also is ordered for God's glory. No more are left miserable than God saw meet to glorify his justice upon.

One end why God suffered Satan to do what he did in procuring the fall of man, was that his Son might be glorified in conquering that strong, subtle, and proud spirit, and triumphing over him. How glorious doth Christ Jesus appear in baffling and triumphing over this proud king of darkness, and all the haughty confederate rulers of hell. How glorious a sight is it to see the meek and patient Lamb of God leading that proud, malicious, and mighty enemy in triumph! What songs doth this cause in heaven! It was a glorious sight in Israel to see David carrying the head of Goliath in triumph to Jerusalem. It appeared glorious to the daughters of Israel, who came out with timbrels and with dances, and sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."<sup>145</sup> But how much more glorious to see the Son of David, the Son of God, carrying the head of the spiritual Goliath, the champion of the armies of hell, in triumph to the heavenly Jerusalem! It is with a principal view to this, that Christ is called, "the Lord of hosts, or armies, and a man of war," [Exod. xv. 3](#). And [Psal. xxiv. 8](#). "Who is this king of glory! The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."

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145 [1 Sam. xxvii. 7](#).

## SECT. V.

*In this way of salvation wonderful glory redounds to God, as the effect of divine wisdom.*

1. By this contrivance for our redemption, God's greatest dishonour is made an *occasion* of his greatest glory. Sin is a thing by which God is greatly dishonoured; the nature of its principle is enmity against God, and contempt of him. And man, by his rebellion, has greatly dishonoured God. But this dishonour, by the contrivance of our redemption, is made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's glory that ever was. Sin, the greatest evil, is made an occasion of the greatest good. It is the nature of a principle of sin that it seeks to dethrone God: but this is hereby made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's royal majesty and glory that ever was. By sin, man has slighted and despised God: but this is made an occasion of his appearing the more greatly honourable. Sin casts contempt upon the authority and law of God: but this, by the contrivance of our redemption, is made the occasion of the greatest honour done to that same authority, and to that very law. It was a greater honour to the law of God that Christ was subject to it, and obeyed it, than if all mankind had obeyed it. It was a greater honour to God's authority that Christ showed such great respect, and such entire subjection to it, than the perfect obedience of all the angels in heaven. Man by his sin showed his enmity against the holiness of God: but this is made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's holiness. The holiness of God never appeared to so great a degree, as when God executed vengeance upon his own dear Son.

2. So has the wisdom of God contrived that those attributes are glorified in man's salvation, whose glory seemed to require his *destruction*. When man had fallen, several attributes of God seemed to require his destruction. The justice of God requires, that sin be punished as it deserves: but it deserves no less than eternal destruction. God proclaims it as a part of the glory of his nature, that he will in no wise clear the guilty, [Exod. xxxiv. 7](#). The holiness of God seemed to require man's destruction; for God by his holiness infinitely hates sin. This seemed to require therefore that God should manifest a proportionable hatred of the sinner; and that he should be for ever an enemy unto him. The truth of God seemed also to require man's destruction; for eternal death was what God had threatened for sin, one jot or tittle of which threatening cannot by any means pass away. But yet so has God contrived, that those very attributes not only allow of man's redemption, and are not inconsistent with it, but they are glorified in it. Even vindictive justice is glorified in the death and sufferings of Christ. The holiness of God, or his holy hatred of sin, that seemed to require man's damnation, is seen in Christ's dying for sinners. So herein also is manifested and glorified the truth of God, in the threatenings of the law.

3. Yea, it is so ordered now that the glory of these attributes *requires* the salvation of those that believe. The justice of God that required man's damnation, and seemed inconsistent with his salvation, now as much requires the salvation of those that believe in Christ, as

ever before it required their damnation. Salvation is an absolute debt to the believer from God, so that he may in justice demand it, on account of what his surety has done. For Christ has satisfied justice fully for his sin; so that it is but a thing that may be challenged, that God should now release the believer from the punishment; it is but a piece of justice, that the creditor should release the debtor, when he has fully paid the debt. And again, the believer may demand eternal life, because it has been merited by Christ, by a merit of condignity. So is it contrived, that that justice that seemed to require man's destruction, now requires his salvation.

So the truth of God that seemed to require man's damnation, now requires his salvation. At the same time that the threatening of the law stands good, there is a promise of eternal life to many who have broken the law. They both stand good at the same time; and the truth of God requires that both should be fulfilled. How much soever they seemed to clash, yet so is the matter contrived in this way of salvation, that both are fulfilled, and do not interfere one with another.

At the very time that God uttered the threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; <sup>146</sup>" and at the time that Adam had first eaten the forbidden fruit; there was then an existing promise, that many thousands of Adam's race should obtain eternal life. This promise was made to Jesus Christ, before the world was. What a difficulty and inconsistency did there seem to be here? But it was no difficulty to the wisdom of God, that the promise and the threatening should be both fully accomplished to the glory of God's truth in each of them. [Psal. lxxxv. 10.](#) "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

4. Those very attributes which seemed to require man's destruction, are *more glorious* in his salvation, than they would have been in his destruction. The revenging justice of God is a great deal more *manifested* in the death of Christ, than it would have been if all mankind had been sufferers to all eternity. If man had remained under the guilt and imputation of sin, the justice of God would not have had such a *trial*, as it had, when his own Son was under the imputation of sin. If all mankind had stood guilty, and justice had called for vengeance upon them, that would not have been such a trial of the inflexibleness and unchangeableness of the justice of God, as when his own Son, who was the object of his infinite love, and in whom he infinitely delighted, stood with the imputation of guilt upon him.

This was the greatest trial that could be, to manifest whether God's justice was perfect and unchangeable, or not; whether God was so just that he would not upon any account abate of what justice required; and whether God would have any respect to persons in judgment.

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146 [Gen. ii. 17.](#)

So the *majesty* of God appears much more in the sufferings of Christ than it would have done in the eternal sufferings of all mankind. The majesty of a prince appears greater in the just punishment of great personages under the guilt of treason, than of inferior persons. The sufferings of Christ have this advantage over the eternal sufferings of the wicked, for impressing upon the minds of the spectators a sense of the dread majesty of God, and his infinite hatred of sin; *viz.* that the eternal sufferings of the wicked never will be seen actually accomplished, and finished; whereas they have seen that which is equivalent to those eternal sufferings actually fulfilled and finished in the sufferings of Christ.

5. Such is the wisdom of this way of salvation, that the more any of the elect have dishonoured God, the more is God glorified in this redemption. Such wonders as these are accomplished by the wisdom of this way of salvation. Such things as these, if they had been proposed to any created intelligence, would have seemed strange and unaccountable paradoxes, till the counsels of divine wisdom concerning the matter were unfolded.

So sufficient is this way of salvation, that it is not inconsistent with any of God's attributes to save the chief of sinners. However great a sinner any one has been, yet God can, if he pleases, save without any injury to the glory of any one attribute. And not only so, but the more sinful any one has been, the more doth God glorify himself in his salvation. The more doth he glorify his power, that he can redeem one in whom sin so abounds, and of whom Satan hath such strong possession.—The greater triumph has Christ over his grand adversary, in redeeming and setting at liberty from his bondage those that were his greatest vassals. The more doth the sufficiency of Christ appear, in that it is sufficient for such vile wretches.

The more is the sovereignty and boundless extent of the mercy of God manifested, in that it is sufficient to redeem those that are most undeserving. [Rom. v. 20.](#) "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

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SECT. VI.

How the wisdom of God appears in the manner and circumstances of obtaining the good intended.

WE now come to take notice of some wonderful circumstances of the attainment of our good, hereby; which shows the great wisdom of this contrivance.

1. So hath God contrived in this way, that a sinful creature should become not guilty; and that he who has no righteousness of his own, should become righteous. These things, if they had been proposed, would have appeared contradictory to any but the divine understanding.

If it had been proposed to any created intelligence, to find out a way in which a *sinful* creature should not be a *guilty* creature, how impossible would it have been judged, that there should be any way at all. It would doubtless have been judged impossible but that he who has committed sin, must stand guilty of the sin he has committed; and if sin necessarily obliges to punishment, it must oblige him who has committed it. If punishment and sin be inseparable, then that punishment and the sinner are inseparable. If the law denounces death to the person who is guilty of sin, and if it be impossible that the law should not take place, then he who has committed sin must die. Thus any created understanding would have thought.

And if it had been proposed, that there should be some way found out, wherein man might be righteous without fulfilling righteousness himself; so that he might reasonably and properly be looked upon and accepted as a righteous person, and adjudged to the reward of righteousness, and yet have no righteousness of his own, but the contrary—that he should be righteous by the righteousness of the law, by a perfect righteousness, and yet have broken the law, and done nothing else but break it—this doubtless would have been looked upon as impossible and contradictory.

But yet the wisdom of God has truly accomplished each of these things. He hath accomplished that men, though sinners, should be without guilt, in that he hath found out a way that the threatenings of the law should truly and properly be fulfilled, and punishment be executed on sin, and yet not on the sinner. The sufferings of Christ answer the demands of the law, with respect to the sins of those who believe in him; and justice is truly satisfied thereby. And the law is fulfilled and answered by the obedience of Christ, so that his righteousness should properly be our righteousness. Though not performed by us, yet it is properly and reasonably accepted for us, as much as if we had performed it ourselves. Divine wisdom has so contrived, that such an interchanging of sin and righteousness should be consistent, and most agreeable with reason, with the law, and God's holy attributes. For Jesus Christ has so united himself to us, and us to him, as to make himself ours, our head. The love of Christ to the elect is so great, that God the Father looks upon it proper and suitable to account Christ and the elect as one; and accordingly to account what Christ does and

suffers, as if they *did* and *suffered* it.—That love of Christ which is so great as to render him willing to put himself in the stead of the elect, and to bear the misery that they deserved, does, in the Father's account, so unite Christ and the elect, that they may be looked upon as legally one.

2. It shows wonderful wisdom that our good should be procured by such seemingly unlikely and opposite means, as the humiliation of the Son of God. When Christ was about to undertake that great work of redemption, he did not take that method that any creature-wisdom would have thought the most proper. Creature-wisdom would have determined that in order to his effectually and more gloriously accomplishing such a great work, he should rather have been exalted higher, if it had been possible, rather than humbled so low.—Earthly kings and princes, when they are about to engage in any great and difficult work, will put on their strength, and will appear in all their majesty and power, that they may be successful.—But when Christ was about to perform the great work of redeeming lost world, the wisdom of God took an opposite method, and determined that he should be humbled and abased to a mean state, and appear in low circumstances. He did not deck himself with glory, but laid it aside. He emptied himself. [Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.](#) “Being in the form of God—he made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”—Creature-wisdom would have thought that Christ, in order to perform this great work, should deck himself with all his strength; but divine wisdom determined, that he should be made weak, or put on the infirmities of human nature.

And why did divine wisdom determine that he should become thus weak? It was that he might be subject to want, and to suffering, and to the power and malice of his enemies. But then what advantage could it be to him in this work, to be subject to the power and malice of his enemies? It was the very design on which he came into the world, to overcome his enemies. Who would have thought that this was the way to overthrow them, that he should become weak and feeble, and for that very end that he might be subject to their power and malice. But this is the very means by which God determined, that Christ should prevail against his enemies, even that he should be subject to their power, that they might prevail against him, so as to put him to disgrace, and pain, and death.

What other but divine wisdom could ever have determined, that this was the way to be taken in order to being successful in the work of our redemption. This would have appeared to creature-wisdom the most direct course to be frustrated that could be devised. But it was indeed the way to glorious success, and the only way. “The foolishness of God is wiser than men.” [1 Cor. i. 25.](#) God has brought strength out of weakness, glory out of ignominy and reproach. Christ's shame and reproach are the only means by which a way is made to our eternal honour.

The wisdom of God hath made Christ's humiliation the means of our exaltation; his coming down from heaven is that which brings us to heaven. The wisdom of God hath made life the fruit of death. The death of Christ was the only means by which we could have eternal life. The death of a person who was God, was the only way by which we could come to have life in God.—Here favour is made to arise out of wrath; our acceptance into God's favour out of God's wrath upon his Son. A blessing rises out of a curse; our everlasting blessedness, from Christ being made a curse for us. Our righteousness is made to rise out of Christ's imputed guilt. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God. [2 Cor. v. 21](#). By such wonderful means hath the wisdom of God procured our salvation.

3. Our sin and misery, by this contrivance, are made an occasion of our greater blessedness. This is a very wonderful thing. It would have been a very wonderful thing if we had been merely restored from sin and misery, to be as we were before; but it was a much more wonderful thing that we should be brought to a higher blessedness than ever; and that our sin and misery should be the occasion of it, and should make way for it.

(1.) It was wonderful that *sin* should be made the occasion of our greater blessedness; for sin deserves misery. By our sin we had deserved to be everlastingly miserable; but this is so turned by divine wisdom, that it is made an occasion of our being more happy.—It was a strange thing that sin should be the occasion of any thing else but misery: but divine wisdom has found out a way whereby the sinner might not only escape being miserable, but that he should be happier than before he sinned; yea, than he would have been if he had never sinned at all. And this sin and unworthiness of his, are the occasion of this greater blessedness.

(2.) It was a wonderful thing that man's own *misery* should be an occasion of his greater happiness. For happiness and misery are contraries; and man's misery was very great. He was under the wrath and curse of God, and condemned to everlasting burnings.—But the sin and misery of man, by this contrivance, are made an occasion of his being more happy, not only than he was before the fall, but than he would have been if he never had fallen.

Our first parents, if they had stood and persevered in perfect obedience, till God had given them the fruit of the tree of life as a seal of their reward, would probably have been advanced to higher happiness: for they before were but in a state of probation for their reward. And it is not to be supposed but that their happiness was to have been greater after they had persisted in obedience, and had actually received the reward, than it was while they were in a state of trial for it. But by the redemption of Christ, the sin and misery of the elect are made an occasion of their being brought to a higher happiness than mankind would have had if they had persisted in obedience till they had received the reward.—For,

1st, Man is hereby brought to a greater and nearer *union* with God. If man had never fallen, God would have remained man's friend; he would have enjoyed God's favour, and



so would have been the object of Christ's favour, as he would have had the favour of all the persons of the Trinity.—But now Christ becoming our surety and Saviour, and having taken on him our nature, occasions between Christ and us an union of a quite different kind, and a nearer relation than otherwise would have been. The fall is the occasion of Christ's becoming our head, and the church his body. And believers are become his brethren, and spouse, in a manner that otherwise would not have been. And by our union with Christ we have a greater union with God the Father. We are sons by virtue of our union with the natural Son of God. [Gal. iv. 4-6](#). “When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” And therefore Christ has taught us, in all our addresses to God, to call him our Father, in like manner as he calls him Father, [John xx. 17](#). “Go tell my brethren, behold I ascend to my Father, and your Father.”

This is one of the wonderful things brought about by the work of redemption, that thereby our separation from God, is made an occasion of a greater union than was before, or otherwise would have been.—When we fell, there was a dreadful separation made betwixt God and us, but this is made an occasion of a greater union. [John xvii. 20-23](#). “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

2dly, Man now has greater *manifestations* of the *glory* and *love* of God, than otherwise he would have had. In the manifestations of these two things, man's happiness principally consists. Now, man by the work of redemption, has greater manifestation of both, than otherwise he would have had. We have already spoken particularly of the glory of God, and what advantages even the angels have by the discoveries of it in this work; but if *they* have such advantages, much more will *man* who is far more directly concerned in this affair than they.—Here are immediately greater displays of the love of God, than man had before he fell; or, as we may well suppose, than he would have had, if he had never fallen. God now manifests his love to his people, by sending his Son into the world, to die for them. There never would have been any such testimony of the love of God, if man had not fallen.

Christ manifests his love, by coming into the world, and laying down his life. This is the greatest testimony of divine love that can be conceived. Now surely the greater discoveries God's people have of his love to them, the more occasion will they have to rejoice in that love. Here will be a delightful theme for the saints to contemplate to all eternity, which they never could have had, if man never had fallen, *viz.* the dying love of Christ. They will have occasion now to sing that song for ever, [Rev. i. 5, 6](#). “Unto him that loved us, and



washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.”

3dly, Man now has greater *motives* offered him to love God than otherwise he ever would have had. Man’s happiness consists in mutual love between God and man; in seeing God’s love to him, and in reciprocally loving God. And the more he sees of God’s love to him, and the more he loves God, the more happy must he be. His love to God is as necessary in order to his happiness, as the seeing of God’s love to him; for he can have no joy in beholding God’s love to him, any otherwise than as he loves God.—This makes the saints prize God’s love to them; for *they love him*. If they did not love God, to see his love to them would not make them happy. But the more any person loves another, the more will he be delighted in the manifestations of that other’s love.—There is provision therefore made for both in the work of redemption. There are greater *manifestations* of the love of God to us, than there would have been if man had not fallen; and also there are greater *motives* to love him than otherwise there would have been. There are greater *obligations* to love him, for God has done more for us to win our love. Christ hath died for us.

Again, man is now brought to a more universal and immediate and *sensible dependence* on God, than otherwise he would have been. All his happiness is now *of him, through him, in him*. If man had not fallen, he would have had all his happiness of God by his own righteousness; but now it is by the righteousness of Christ. He would have had all his holiness of God, but not so sensibly; because then he would have been holy from the beginning, as soon as he received his being; but now, he is first sinful and universally corrupt, and afterwards is made holy. If man had held his integrity misery would have been a stranger to him; and therefore happiness would not have been so sensible a derivation from God, as it is now, when man looks to God from the deeps of distress, cries repeatedly to him, and waits upon him. He is convinced by abundant experience, that he has no place of resort but God, who is graciously pleased, in consequence of man’s earnest and persevering suit, to appear to his relief, to take him out of the miry clay and horrible pit, set him upon a rock, establish his goings, and put a new song into his mouth.—By man’s having thus a more immediate, universal, and sensible dependence, God doth more entirely secure man’s undivided respect. There is a greater motive for man to make God his all in all,—to love him and rejoice in him as his only portion.

4thly, By the contrivance for our salvation, man’s sin and misery are but an occasion of his being brought to a more full and free *converse* with and *enjoyment* of God than otherwise would have been. For as we have observed already, the union is greater; and the greater the union, the more full the communion, and intimate the intercourse.—Christ is come down to man in his own nature; and hereby he may converse, with Christ more intimately, than the infinite distance of the divine nature would allow. This advantage is more than what the angels have. For Christ is not only in a *created* nature, but he *is in man’s own nature*.—We

have also advantages for a more full *enjoyment* of God. By Christ's incarnation, the saints may see God with their bodily eyes, as well as by an intellectual view. The saints, after the day of judgment, will consist of both body and soul; they will have outward as well as spiritual sight. It is now ordered by divine wisdom, that God himself, or a divine person, should be the principal entertainment of both these kinds of sight, spiritual and corporal: and the saints in heaven shall not only have an intellectual sight of God, but they shall see a divine person as they see one another; not only spiritually, but outwardly.—The body of Jesus Christ will appear with that transcendent visible majesty and beauty, which is exceedingly expressive of the divine majesty, beauty, and glory. The body of Christ shall appear with the glory of God upon it, as Christ tells us, [Matt. xvi. 27](#). "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father." Thus to see God will be a great happiness to the saints. Job comforted himself that he should see God with his bodily eyes, [Job xix. 26](#). "And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

*5thly*, Man's sin and misery is made an occasion of his greater happiness, as he has now a greater relish of happiness, by reason of his knowledge of both. In order to happiness, there must be two things, *viz.* union to a proper object—and a relish of the object. Man's misery is made an occasion of increasing both these by the work of redemption. We have shown already, that the union is increased; and so is the relish too, by the knowledge man now has of evil. These contraries, good and evil, heighten the sense of one another. The forbidden tree was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil; of *evil*, because by it we came to the experience of evil; of *good*, because we should never have known so well what good was, if it had not been for that tree. We are taught the value of good, by our knowledge of its contrary, evil. This teaches us to prize good, and makes us the more to relish and rejoice in it. The saints know something what a state of sin and alienation from God is. They know something what the anger of God is, and what it is to be in danger of hell. And this makes them the more exceedingly to rejoice in the favour and in the enjoyment of God.

Take two persons; one who never knew what evil was, but was happy from the first moment of his being, having the favour of God, and numerous tokens of it; another who is in a very doleful and undone condition. Let there be bestowed upon these two persons the same blessings, [subjectively,] the same good things; and let them be objectively in the same glorious circumstances,—and which will rejoice most? Doubtless he that was brought to this happiness out of a miserable and doleful state. So the saints in heaven will for ever the more rejoice in God, and in the enjoyment of his love, for their being brought to it out of a most lamentable state and condition.

## SECT. VII.

Some wonderful circumstances of the overthrow of Satan.

The wisdom of God greatly and remarkably appears in so exceedingly baffling and confounding all the subtlety of the old serpent. Power never appears so conspicuous as when opposed and conquering opposition. The same may be said of wisdom; it never appears so brightly, and with such advantage, as when opposed by the subtlety of some very crafty enemy; and in baffling and confounding that subtlety.—The devil is exceeding subtle. The subtlety of the serpent is emblematical of his, [Gen. iii. 1](#). He was once one of the brightest intelligences of heaven, and one of the brightest, if not the very brightest, of all. And all the devils were once morning stars, of a glorious brightness of understanding. They still have the same faculties, though they ceased to be influenced and guided by the Holy Spirit of God; and so their heavenly wisdom is turned into hellish craft and subtlety.—God in the work of redemption hath wondrously baffled the utmost craft of the devils, and though they are all combined to frustrate God's designs of glory to himself, and goodness to men.—The wisdom of God appears very glorious herein. For,

1. Consider the weak and seemingly despicable means and weapons that God employs to overthrow Satan. Christ poured the greater contempt upon Satan in the victory that he obtained over him, by reason of the means of his preparing himself for it, and the weapons he hath used. Christ chooses to encounter Satan in the human nature, in a poor, frail, afflicted state. He did as David did. David when going against the Philistine refused Saul's armour, a helmet of brass, a coat of mail, and his sword. No, he puts them all off. Goliath comes mightily armed against David, with a helmet of brass upon his head, a coat of mail weighing five thousand shekels of brass, greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders; a spear, whose staff was like a weaver's beam; and the spear's head weighing six hundred shekels of iron. And besides all this, he had one bearing a shield before him. But David takes nothing but a staff in his hand, and a shepherd's bag and a sling; and he goes against the Philistine. So the weapons that Christ made use of were his poverty, afflictions and reproaches, sufferings and death. His principal weapon was his cross: the instrument of his own reproachful death. These were seemingly weak and despicable instruments, to wield against such a giant as Satan. And doubtless the devil disdained them as much as Goliath did David's staves and sling. But with such weapons as these has Christ in a human, weak, mortal nature overthrown and baffled all the craft of hell.

Such disgrace and contempt has Christ poured upon Satan. David had a more glorious victory over Goliath for his conquering him with such mean instruments; and Samson over the Philistines, for killing so many of them with such a despicable weapon as the jaw-bone of an ass. It is spoken of in Scripture as a glorious triumph of Christ over the devil, that he should overcome him by such a despicable weapon as his cross. [Col. ii. 14, 15](#). "Blotting out

the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”—God shows his great and infinite wisdom in taking this method, to confound the wisdom and subtlety of his enemies. He hereby shows how easily he can do it, and that he is infinitely wiser than they. [1 Cor. i. 27-29](#). “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty: and the base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are.”

2. God has thereby confounded Satan with his own weapons. It is so contrived in the work of redemption, that our grand enemy should be made a means of his own confusion; and that, by those very things whereby he endeavours to rob God of his glory, and to destroy mankind, he is made an instrument of frustrating his own designs. His most subtle and powerful endeavours for accomplishing his designs are made a means of confounding them, and of promoting the contrary. Of this, I will mention but two instances. *First*, His procuring man’s fall is made an occasion of the contrary to what he designed. Indeed he has hereby procured the ruin of multitudes of mankind, which he aimed at. But in this he does not frustrate God’s design from all eternity to glorify himself; and the misery of multitudes of mankind will prove no content to him, but will enhance his own misery.

What Satan did in tempting man to fall, is made an occasion of the contrary to what he intended, in that it gave occasion for God to glorify himself the more; and giveth occasion for the elect being brought to higher happiness. The happy state of man was envied by Satan. That man who was of earthly original should be advanced to such honours, when he who was originally of a so much more noble nature should be cast down to such disgrace, his pride could not bear. How then would Satan triumph, when he had brought him down!

The devil tempted our first parents with this, that if they would eat of the forbidden fruit, they should be as gods.—It was a lie in Satan’s mouth; for he aimed at nothing else but to fool man out of his happiness, and make him his own slave and vassal, with a blinded expectation of being like a god.—But little did Satan think that God would turn it so, as to make man’s fall an occasion of God’s becoming man; and so an occasion of our nature being advanced to a state of closer union to God.

By this means it comes to pass, that one in man’s nature now, sits at the right hand of God, invested with divine power and glory, and reigns over heaven and earth with a God-like power and dominion. Thus is Satan disappointed in his subtlety. As he intended that saying, *Ye shall be as gods* <sup>147</sup>, it was a lie, to decoy and befool man. Little did he think, that it would be in such manner verified, by the incarnation of the Son of God. And this is the

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147 [Gen. iii. 5](#).

occasion also of all the elect being united to this divine person, so that they become one with Christ. Believers are as members and parts of Christ. Yea, the church is called Christ. Little did Satan think, that his telling that lie to our first parents, “Ye shall be as gods,<sup>148</sup>” would be the occasion of their being members of Christ the Son of God.

Again, Satan is made a means of his own confusion in this:—It was Satan’s design, in tempting man to sin, to make man his captive and slave forever; to have plagued, and triumphed over him. And this very thing is a means to bring it about, that man instead of being his vassal should be his judge. The elect, instead of being his captives, to be for ever tormented and triumphed over by him, shall sit as judges to sentence him to everlasting torment. It has been the means, that one in man’s nature, should be his supreme Judge. It was man’s nature that Satan so envied, and sought to make a prey of. But Jesus Christ at the last day shall come in man’s nature; and the devils shall be all brought to stand trembling at his bar: and he shall judge, and condemn them, and execute the wrath of God upon them. And not only shall Christ in the human nature judge the devils, but all the saints shall judge them with Christ as assessors with him in judgment. [1 Cor. vi. 3](#). “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?”

*Secondly*, In another instance Satan is made a means of his own confusion; that is, in his procuring the death of Christ. Satan set himself to oppose Christ as soon as he appeared.—He sought, by all means, to procure his ruin. He set the Jews against him. He filled the minds of the scribes and Pharisees with the most bitter persecuting malice against Christ. He sought by all means to procure his death; and that he might be put to the most ignominious death. We read “that Satan entered into Judas, and tempted him to betray him.” [Luke xxii. 3](#). And Christ speaks of his sufferings as being the effects of the power of darkness, [Luke xxii. 53](#). “When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour and the power of darkness.”—But Satan hereby overthrows his own kingdom. Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. And this was the very thing that did it, *viz.* the blood and death of Christ. The cross was the devil’s own weapon; and with this weapon he was overthrown: as David cut off Goliath’s head with his own sword.

Christ thus making Satan a means of his own confusion was typified of old by Samson’s getting honey out of the carcass of the lion. There is more implied in Samson’s riddle, “Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness,<sup>149</sup>” than ever the Philistines explained. It was verified by Christ in a far more glorious manner. God’s enemies and ours are taken in the pit which they themselves have digged: and their own soul is taken

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148 Ibid

149 [Jud. xiv. 14](#).

in the net which they have laid. Thus we have shown, in some measure, the wisdom of this way of salvation by Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_\_

SECT. VIII.

The superiority of this wisdom to that of the angels.



The wisdom of this contrivance appears to have been above the wisdom of the angels by the following things.

1. It appears that the angels did not fully comprehend the contrivance, till they saw it accomplished. They knew that man was to be redeemed, long before Christ came into the world: but yet they did not fully comprehend it until they saw it. This is evident by the expression in the text. *That now might be known unto the principalities—the manifold wisdom of God. i. e.* Now the work is actually accomplished by Jesus Christ. Which implies that it was now new to them.—If they understood no more of it now, than they had all along, the apostle would never have expressed himself so; for he is speaking of it as a mystery, in a measure kept hid until now.

Now it is to be considered, that the angels had four thousand years to contemplate this affair; and they did not want inclination and desire to understand and look into it, as the Scripture teaches us. They had also a great deal to put them upon an attentive contemplation of it. For when it was made known that God had such a design, it must appear a new and wonderful thing to them. They had seen their fellow-angels destroyed without mercy; and this redeeming of the fallen sinful creature, was quite a new thing. It must needs be astonishing to them, when God had revealed this design of mercy to them presently after the fall; and had given an intimation of it, in saying, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” They knew that God had such a design; for they were, from the beginning, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those that were the heirs of salvation.—They were present at the institution of the typical dispensation, that was so full of shadows of gospel-truth. [Psal. lxxix. 17.](#)

The angels contemplating the contrivance of our redemption was typified by the posture of the cherubims over the mercy-seat, which was the lid of the ark. These emblems were made bending down towards the ark and mercy-seat.—This is what the apostle Peter is thought to have some reference to, [1 Peter i. 12.](#) Yet the angels, though for four thousand years they had been studying this contrivance, did not fully comprehend it till they saw it accomplished. This shows that the wisdom of it was far above theirs; for if they could not fully comprehend it after it had been revealed that there was such a design—and after much of it had already been made known in the Old Testament—how much less could they have found it out of themselves.

Consider for what end this wisdom of God was made known unto the angels, *viz.* that they might admire and prize it. It was made known to them, that they might see how manifold, how great and glorious, it is; that they might see the unspeakable “depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God,” as the apostle expresses it, [Rom. xi. 33.](#)—It was



manifested to them that they might see the glory of God in it, and how great and wonderful the mystery was. [1 Tim. iii. 16.](#) “Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels.” Now if the wisdom of it were not far above their own understandings, this would not be shown them for the express purpose that they might admire and praise God for it.

3. It appears to be above the wisdom of the angels because they are still contemplating it; and endeavouring to see more and more of it. Indeed there is room for their faculties to employ themselves to all eternity. It is evident from [1 Pet. i. 12.](#) that they are still employing themselves in endeavouring to see more and more of God’s wisdom appearing in the work of redemption, “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.<sup>150</sup>” They still desire to look into it, after they have seen it accomplished. They do not so perfectly comprehend all the wisdom that is to be seen in it; but they are contemplating, looking into it, that they may see more and more; but there will still be room enough in this work to employ the angelical understandings.

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## SECT. IX.

The subject improved.

I. Hence we may learn the blindness of the world, that the wisdom appearing in the work of redemption is no more admired in it. God has revealed this his glorious design and contrivance to the world; sends forth his gospel, and causes it to be preached abroad, in order to declare to the world that his infinite wisdom has been engaged for man's salvation. But how little is it regarded! There are some who have their eyes opened to behold the wondrous things of the gospel, who see the glory of God in, and admire the wisdom of it. But the greater part are wholly blind to it. They see nothing in all this that is any way glorious and wonderful. Though the angels account it worthy of their most engaged and deep contemplation; yet the greater part of men take little notice of it. It is all a dull story and dead letter to many of them. They cannot see any thing in it above the wisdom of men. Yea, the gospel to many seems foolishness.

Though the light that shines in the world be so exceeding glorious, yet how few are there that do see it. The glory of God's wisdom in this work is surpassing the brightness of the sun: but so blind is the world that it sees nothing. It does not know that the Sun of righteousness shines. Thus it has been in all ages, and wherever the gospel has been preached, ministers of the word of God in all ages have had occasion to say, [Isaiah liii. 1](#). Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Thus the prophets were sent to many with that errand, [Isa. vi. 9, 10](#). "Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."

When Christ that glorious prophet came, and more fully revealed the counsels of God concerning our redemption, how many were then blind! how much did Christ complain of them! How blind were the scribes and Pharisees, the most noted sect of men among the Jews for wisdom; they beheld no glory in that gospel which Christ preached unto them; which gave him occasion to call them fools and blind, [Matt. xxiii. 17](#).—So it was again in the apostles' times. In all places where they preached, some believed, and some believed not, [Acts xxviii. 24](#). "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," [chap. xiii. 48](#). "The election obtained, but the rest were blinded," [Rom. xi. 7](#). And so it is still in those places where the gospel is preached. There are a few who see the glory of the gospel. God has a small number whose eyes he opens, who are called out of darkness into marvellous light, and who have an understanding to see the wisdom and fitness of the way of life. But how many are there who sit under the preaching of the gospel all their days, yet never see any divine wisdom or glory in it! To their dying day they are unaffected with it. When they hear it, they see nothing to attract their attention, much less excite any admiration. To preach

the gospel to them will serve very well to lull them asleep: but produces very little other effect upon them. This shows the exceeding wickedness of the heart of man. How affecting the thought, that infinite wisdom should be set on work, so as to surprise the angels, and to entertain them from age to age;—and that to men, though so plainly set before them, it should appear foolishness! [1 Cor. i. 18.](#) “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.”

II. This is a great confirmation of the truth of the gospel. The gospel stands in no need of external evidences of its truth and divinity. It carries its own light and evidence with it.—There is that in its nature that sufficiently distinguishes it, to those who are spiritually enlightened, from all the effects of human invention. There are evident appearances of the divine perfections; the stamp of divine glory, of which this of the divine wisdom is not the least part.

There is as much in the gospel to show that it is no work of men, as there is in the sun in the firmament. As persons of mature reason who look upon the sun, and consider the nature of it, its wonderful height, its course, its brightness and heat, may know that it is no work of man; so, if the gospel be duly considered, if the true nature of it be seen, it may be known that it is no work of man, and that it must be from God. And if the *wisdom* appearing in the gospel be duly considered, it will be seen as much to excel all human wisdom, as the sun’s light excels the light of fires of our own kindling.—The contrivance of our salvation is of such a nature that no one can rationally conclude that man had any hand in it. The nature of the contrivance is such, so out of the way of all human thoughts, so different from all human inventions; so much more sublime, excellent, and worthy, that it does not savour at all of the craft or subtlety of man: it savours of God only.

If any are ready to think man might have found out such a way of salvation for sinners—so honourable to God, to his holiness and authority—they do not well consider the scantiness of human understanding. Mankind were of a poor capacity for any such undertaking; for, till the gospel enlightened the world, they had but miserable notions of what was honourable to God. They could have but poor notions of what way would be suitable to the divine perfections; for they were woefully in the dark about these divine perfections themselves, till the gospel came abroad in the world. They had strange notions about a Deity. Most of them thought there were many gods. “They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things,” [Rom. i. 23.](#) They attributed vices to God. Even the philosophers, their wisest men, entertained but imperfect notions of the Supreme Being. How then should men find out a way so glorious and honourable to God, and agreeable to his perfections, who had not wisdom enough to get any tolerable notions of God, till the gospel was revealed to them. They groped in the dark. Their notions showed the infinite insufficiency of man’s blind understanding

for any such undertaking, as the contriving of a way of salvation every way honourable to God, and suitable to the needs of a fallen creature.

But since the gospel has told what God's counsels are, and how he has contrived a way for our salvation, men are ready to despise it, and foolishly to exalt their own understanding; and to imagine they could have found out as good a way themselves. When, alas! men, of themselves, had no notion of what was honourable to God, and suitable for a Divine Being.—They did not so much as think of the necessity of God's law being answered, and justice satisfied. And if they had, how dreadfully would they have been puzzled to have found out the way how! Who would have thought of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; and that one should sustain the rights of the Godhead; and another should be the Mediator; and another should make application of redemption? Who would have thought of such a thing as three distinct persons, and yet but one God? all the same Being, and yet three persons! Who would have thought of this, in order to have found out a way for satisfying justice? Who would have thought of a way for answering the law that threatened eternal death, without the sinner's suffering eternal death? And who would have thought of any such thing as a divine person *suffering the wrath of God*? And if they had, who would have contrived a way *how* he should suffer, since the divine nature cannot suffer?

Who would have thought of any such thing as God becoming man; two natures and but one person? These things are exceedingly out of the way of human thought and contrivance. It is most unreasonable to think that the world, who, till the gospel enlightened them, were so blind about the nature of God and divine things, should contrive such a way that should prove thus to answer all ends; every way to suit what the case required; most glorious to God, and answerable to all man's necessities. Every thing is so fully provided for, and no absurdity to be found in the whole affair, but all speaking forth the most perfect wisdom. That there should be no infringement upon holiness or justice; nothing dishonourable to the majesty of God; no encouragement to sin, all possible motives to holiness; all manner of happiness provided; and Satan so confounded and entirely overthrown; how truly wonderful!

And if we suppose that all this notwithstanding was the invention of men, whose invention should it be? Who should be pitched upon as the most likely to invent it? It was not the invention of the Jews; for they were the most bitter enemies to it. The wise men among them, when they first heard of it, conceived malice against it, and persecuted all that held this doctrine. It was not the invention of the heathen; for they knew nothing about it, till the apostles preached it to them; and it appeared a very foolish doctrine to the wise men among them. The doctrine of Christ crucified was not only to the Jews a stumbling-block, but also to the Greeks foolishness, [1 Cor. i. 23](#). Besides, it was contrary to all their notions about a Deity, and they knew nothing about the fall of man, and the like, till the gospel revealed it to them.

It was not the invention of the apostles; for the apostles, of themselves, were no way capable of any such learned contrivance. They were poor fishermen and publicans, an obscure and illiterate sort of men, till they were extraordinarily taught. They were all surprised when they first heard of it. When they heard that Christ must die for sinners, they were offended at it; and it was a long while before they were brought fully to receive it.

There is but one way left; and that is, to suppose, that Christ was a mere man, a very subtle crafty man, and that he invented it all: but this is as unreasonable as the rest; for it would have been all against himself, to invent a way of salvation by his own crucifixion, a most tormenting and ignominious death.

III. How great a sin they are guilty of who despise and reject this way of salvation! When God has manifested such unsearchable riches of wisdom; when all the persons of the Trinity have as it were held a consultation from all eternity in providing a way of salvation for us sinful miserable worms;—a way that should be sufficient and every way suitable for us;—a way that should be in all things complete, whereby we might have not only full pardon of all our sins, and deliverance from hell; but also full blessedness in heaven for ever:—how must God needs be provoked, when, after all, men reject this way of salvation!

When salvation comes to be preached, and is offered to them in this way; when they are invited to accept of its benefits, and yet they despise and refuse it; they thus practically deny it to be a wise way, and call this wisdom of God foolishness.—How provoking it must be, when such a poor creature as man shall rise up, and find fault with that wisdom which is so far above the wisdom of angels! This is one thing wherein consists the heinousness of the sin of unbelief, that it implies a rejecting and despising of divine wisdom in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ.—Unbelief finds fault with the wisdom of God in the choice of the person, for performing this work. It dislikes the person of Christ. It sees no form nor comeliness in him, nor beauty wherefore it should desire him.

That person whom the wisdom of God looked upon as the fittest person of any, the *only* fit person, is despised and rejected by unbelief—Men, through unbelief, find fault with the salvation itself that Christ has purchased; they do not like to be saved as Christ would save. They do not like to be made holy, and to have such a happiness as is to be had in God for a portion.

It may not be amiss here to mention two or three ways whereby persons are guilty of a provoking contempt of the wisdom of God in the way of salvation.

1. They are guilty of a provoking contempt, who live in a *careless neglect* of their salvation; they who are secure in their sins, and are not much concerned about either salvation or damnation. This is practically charging God with folly.—Its language is, that all is in vain, and to no purpose; that God hath contrived and consulted for our salvation, when there was no need of it. They are well enough as they are. They do not see any great necessity of

a Saviour. They like that state they are in, and do not much desire to be delivered out of it.—They do not thank him for all his consultation and contrivance, and think he might have spared his cost. God has greatly minded that, which they do not think worth minding; and has contrived abundantly for that which they do not trouble their heads about.

2. They are guilty of a provoking contempt of the wisdom of this way of salvation, who go about to *contrive ways of their own*. They who are not content with salvation by the righteousness of Christ, which God has provided, are for contriving some way of being saved by their own righteousness.—These find fault with the wisdom of God's way, and set up their own wisdom in opposition to it. How greatly must God be provoked by such conduct!

3. Those that entertain discouraged and *despairing apprehensions* about their salvation, cast contempt on the wisdom of God. They think that because they have been such great sinners, God will not be willing to pardon them; Christ will not be willing to accept of them. They fear that Christ, in the invitations of the gospel, does not mean such wicked creatures as they are; that because they have committed so much sin, they have sinned beyond the reach of mercy. They think it is in vain for them to seek for salvation.—These cast contempt on the wisdom of God in the way of salvation, as though it were not all-sufficient:—as though the wisdom of God had not found out a way that was sufficient for the salvation of great sinners.



SECT. X.

The misery of unbelievers.

Unbelievers have no portion in this matter. There is a most glorious way of salvation, but you, who are unbelievers, have no interest in it. The wisdom of God hath been gloriously employed for the deliverance of men from a miserable, doleful state; but you are never the better for it, because you reject it. If you continue in that state, this wisdom will do you no good.

Christ is a glorious person; every way fit to be a Saviour of sinners; a person who has power sufficient, wisdom sufficient, merit sufficient, and love sufficient for perfecting this work. And he is the *only* fit person; but you have no right in him; you can lay claim to no benefit by his power, wisdom, love, or merits.—This wisdom of God hath found out a way whereby this Saviour might satisfy justice, and fulfil the law for us; a way whereby he might be capable or suffering for us: but you have no lot in the incarnation, death, and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

The wisdom of God hath contrived a way of salvation that there should be procured for us perfect and everlasting happiness. Here is that happiness procured which is most suitable to our nature, and answerable to the salvation of our souls. Here is a most glorious portion, *viz.* The Divine Being himself, with his glorious perfections. Here it is purchased, that we should see God face to face;—that we should converse and dwell with God in his own glorious habitation;—that we should be the children of God, and be conformed to him.—Here are the highest honours, the most abundant riches, the most substantial satisfying pleasures for evermore.—Here we have prepared all needed good, both for the souls and bodies of sinners: all needed earthly good things, while here; and glory, for both body and soul hereafter, for ever.

But you are never the better for all this. You have no lot nor portion in any of it. Notwithstanding all this rich provision, you remain in the same miserable state and condition, in which you came into the world. Though the provision of the gospel be so full, yet your poor soul remains in a famishing, perishing state. You remain dead in trespasses and sins; under the dominion of Satan; in a condemned state, having the wrath of God abiding on you, and being daily exposed to the dreadful effects of it in hell. Notwithstanding all this provision, you remain wretched and miserable, poor and blind and naked. O that you might turn to God through Jesus Christ, be numbered among his disciples and faithful followers, and so be entitled to their privileges! They have an interest in this glorious Saviour, and are entitled to all the ineffable blessedness of his kingdom, so far as their capacities will admit: but you remain without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, having no well-grounded hope, and without God in the world.—Further consider a few things.

*First*, It argues the *great misery* of sinners, that the wisdom of God should be exercised to such a degree in order to find out a way to deliver them from it. Their case surely was most deplorable, since it required infinite wisdom to find out a way for their deliverance. The wisdom of angels was not sufficient: nothing but divine wisdom could reach and remedy their case. And all the persons of the Trinity did enter into a consultation about it. If man's misery were not very great, divine wisdom would not have been exercised for his deliverance from it. God would not contrive and do things so wonderful in a trivial affair. If the salvation of a sinner were not a great salvation, from an exceeding great misery, it is not to be supposed, that God's wisdom should be more signalized in this affair than in any other whatever.

But so it is; this contrivance seems to be spoken of in Scripture as the master-piece of divine wisdom. This work of redemption is represented as most wonderful, and spoken of in Scripture in the most exalted manner of any work of God.—Doubtless therefore salvation is a great thing; and consequently the misery that sinners are saved from, is a great and unspeakable misery. Now this is the misery that you are all in, who remain in a natural condition. This is the condemnation you lie under. This is the wrath of God that abides upon you. The wisdom of God knew it to be a very doleful thing for a person to be in a natural state, and therefore did so exercise itself to deliver miserable sinners out of it. But this is the state that many among us do yet remain in.

*Secondly*. Consider, that if you continue in the state you are in, you will be so far from being the better for this contrivance, that you will be much *more miserable* for it. The justice and wisdom of the way of salvation will be your condemnation. “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.” [John iii. 19](#). If you continue in the state that you are now in, it would have been better for you, if Christ had never died for sinners; if God had left all mankind to perish, as he did the fallen angels. Your punishment then would have been light in comparison of what it will be now. You will have greater sins by far to answer for; and all your sins will be abundantly the more aggravated.

Since I have been upon this subject, I have observed, that the work of redemption is an occasion of the elect being brought to greater happiness than man could have had, if he had not fallen. And it is also true as to reprobates, that it will be an occasion of their having greater misery than they would have had, if there had been no redemption. [2 Cor. ii. 15](#). “For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are a savour of death unto death; and to the other we are a savour of life unto life.” If you perish at last, you will be the more miserable for the benefits of the gospel being so glorious, and that because your crime in rejecting and despising them will be the more heinous. [Heb. ii. 3](#). “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.”

*Thirdly*, Whilst you continue an unbeliever, *the more you hear* of this way of salvation, your condition will become the more miserable. The longer you sit under the preaching of



the gospel, the more doleful does your case grow. Your guilt continually increases. For your refusals of the gospel, and your rejections of this way of salvation, are so much the oftener repeated. Every time you hear the gospel preached, you are guilty of a renewed rejection of it, the guilt of which therefore you will have lying upon you. And the more you hear of the suitableness and glory of this way, the greater is your guilt who still continue to reject it. Every new illustration of the wisdom and grace of God in redemption, adds to your guilt, [Matt. xxiii. 37](#). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem—how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!”—What adds to your misery is, that as long as it continues, it is a growing evil.

*Fourthly*, Consider the danger there is, that you will never have any lot or portion in this matter; seeing there are but few that have. Christ has told us that strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. There have been but few in all ages of the world. Many seek; and many hope that they shall obtain. There are but few that intend to be damned; while many hope that they shall some way or other find means to escape eternal misery. But after all, there are but few saved; or obtain the benefits of redemption.



## SECT. XI.

Exhortation to come to Christ.

I conclude with an use of exhortation to come to Christ, and accept of salvation in this way. You are invited to come to Christ, heartily to close with him, and trust in him for salvation: and if you do so, you shall have the benefit of this glorious contrivance. You shall have the benefit of all; as much as if the whole had been contrived for you alone. God has already contrived every thing that is needful for your salvation; and there is nothing wanting but your consent. Since God has taken this matter of the redemption of sinners into his own hand, he has made thorough work of it; he has not left it for you to finish. Satisfaction is already made, righteousness is already wrought out: death and hell are already conquered. The Redeemer has already taken possession of glory, and keeps it in his hands to bestow on them who come to him. There were many difficulties in the way, but they are all removed. The Saviour has already triumphed over all, and is at the right hand of God, to give eternal life to his people.

Salvation is ready brought to your door; and the Saviour stands, knocks, and calls that you would open to him, that he might bring it in to you. There remains nothing but your consent. All the difficulty now remaining is with your own heart. If you perish now, it must be wholly at your door. It must be because you would not come to Christ that you might have life; and because you virtually choose death rather than life, [Prov. viii. 36](#). “He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”—All that is now required of you, is, that your heart should close with Christ as a Saviour. Here consider,

1. That the wisdom of God hath so contrived, that he hath forestalled all your *objections*. If you make objections against Christ and the way of salvation, they must be all unreasonable. You cannot reasonably object that your sins are of such a nature, that God’s honour will not allow of your pardon. It is true God insists upon his own honour. He is a God that will be honoured, and his majesty shall be vindicated: and when sinners cast contempt upon him, his honour requires vengeance. But God has so contrived this way, that his honour may be repaired by the punishment of sin without the sinner’s suffering, how great soever the sin be. Herein the wisdom of this way appears, that there is a sufficiency for the greatest and most heinous transgressors.

You cannot object that God the Father will not be willing to accept you, for the Mediator’s sake; for he hath chosen his own Son to be a mediator, to cut off any such objections. So you may be sure that God will receive you if you go to him through Christ.—You cannot object that God the Father has not given sufficient assurance of salvation to believers; for the principal things, those which would have been most difficult to believe, are already fulfilled: God hath already given his Son to die for us. This, before it was accomplished, was much more strange, and difficult to believe, than that he should give eternal life to sinners

after Christ died for them. [Rom. viii. 32.](#) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things.”

There is no room to doubt but that if we accept of Christ, God will give eternal life; for he hath given it already into the hands of our Saviour for us. He hath intrusted him with the whole affair. He hath given all things into his hands, that he might give eternal life to as many as should come to him. The Father hath appointed him who died for believers, to be their judge, to have the whole determination of the matter, and the disposal of the reward, in his own hand. And you cannot doubt but that Christ will be willing to bestow eternal life on them for whom he purchased it. For if he is not willing to bestow it, surely he never would have died to purchase it. Who can think that Christ would be so desirous of sinners being saved, as to undergo so much for it; and not be willing to let them have it, when he had obtained it for them.—Consider,

2. The wisdom of God hath contrived that there should be in the *person* of the Saviour all manner of attractives to draw us to him. He has in him all possible excellency. He is possessed of all the beauty and glory of the God-head.—So that there can be no manner of excellency, nor degree of excellency that we can devise, but what is in the person of the Saviour.—But yet so redundant has the wisdom of God been, in providing attractives in order that we should come to Christ, it hath so ordered that there should also be all human excellencies in him. If there be any thing attractive in this consideration, that Christ is one in our own nature, one of us; this is true of Christ. He is not only in the divine, but in the human nature. He is truly a man, and has all possible human excellencies. He was of a most excellent spirit; wise and holy, condescending and meek, and of a lowly, benign, and benevolent disposition.

Again: The wisdom of God hath chosen a person of great love to sinners, and who should show that love in the most endearing manner possible. What more *condescending* love can there be, than the love of a divine person to such worms of the dust? What *freer* love can there be than love to enemies? What *greater* love can there be, than dying love? And what more endearing *expression* of love, than dying for the beloved? And the wisdom of God hath so contrived, that Christ shall sustain that office which should most tend to endear him to us, and draw us to him: the office of a redeemer, a redeemer from eternal misery, and the purchaser of all happiness.

And if all this be not enough to draw us, the wisdom of God hath ordered more; it hath provided us a Saviour that should offer himself to us in the most endearing relation. He offers to receive us as friends. To receive us to an union to himself, to become our spiritual husband and portion for ever.—And the wisdom of God has provided us a Saviour that woos in a manner that has the greatest tendency to win our hearts. His word is most attractive. He stands at our door and knocks. He does not merely command us to receive him: but he

condescends to apply himself to us in a more endearing manner. He entreats and beseeches us in his word and by his messengers.

3. The wisdom of God hath contrived that there should be all manner of attractives in the *benefits* that Christ offers you. There are not only the excellencies of the person of Christ to draw you to him, but the desirable benefits he offers. Here is what is most suitable to the cravings of the human nature. Men when distressed and burdened, long for ease and *rest*: here it is offered to us in Christ. “Come unto me,” says he, “all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”<sup>151</sup>—Men when in fear of danger, long for *safety*: here it is provided for us in Christ. God promises that he will become a shield and buckler, a strong rock and high tower to those that trust in him.—Those that mourn need *comfort*: Christ tells us that “he came to comfort those that mourn,” [Isa. lxi. 2.](#)—The blind need to have their eyes opened. The light is sweet to men: Christ offers to anoint our eyes with eye-salve that we may see glorious light. He will be our sun, and the light of God’s countenance.—What is more dear to men than *life*? Christ hath purchased for men, that they should live for ever, [Psal. xxi. 4.](#) “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever.”—How greatly is a crown prized and admired by the children of men! And Christ offers this;—not a corruptible crown, but an incorruptible and far more glorious crown than any worn by earthly kings: a crown of glory, the lustre of which shall never fade, nor decay; with an everlasting kingdom.—Do men love *pleasures*? Here are pleasures for evermore. What could there be more to draw our hearts to Jesus Christ, and to make us willing to accept of him for our Saviour, with all his unspeakable benefits?

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151 [Matt. xi. 28.](#)

**CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE :**

*OR, THE*

**IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGE OF A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF  
DIVINE TRUTH.**



**HEB. v. 12.**

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

These words are a complaint, which the apostle makes against the Christian Heb., for their want of such proficiency in the knowledge of the Doctrine and mysteries of religion, as might have been expected of them. The apostle complains, that they had not made that progress in their acquaintance with the things taught in the oracles of God, which they ought to have made. And he means to reprove them, not merely for their deficiency in *spiritual* and *experimental* knowledge of divine things, but for their deficiency in a *doctrinal* acquaintance with the principles of religion, and the truths of Christian divinity; as is evident by the manner in which the apostle introduces this reproof. The occasion of his introducing it is this: In the next verse but one preceding, he mentions Christ as being “Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek.”<sup>152</sup> In the Old Testament, the oracles of God, Melchizedek was held forth as an eminent type of Christ; and the account we there have of him contains many gospel mysteries. These mysteries the apostle was willing to point out to the Christian Heb.; but he apprehended, that through their weakness in knowledge, they would not understand him; and therefore breaks off for the present from saying any thing about Melchizedek, thus, (**ver. 11.**) “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered; seeing ye are all dull of hearing;” *i.e.* there are many things concerning Melchizedek which contain wonderful gospel-mysteries, and which I would take notice of to you, were it not that I am afraid, that through your dulness, and backwardness in understanding these things, you would only be puzzled and confounded by my discourse, and so receive no benefit; and that it would be too hard for you, as meat that is too strong.

Then come in the words of the text: “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”<sup>153</sup> As much as to say, Indeed it might have been expected of you, that you should have known enough of the Holy Scriptures, to be able to understand and digest such mysteries: but it is not so with you. The apostle speaks of their proficiency in such knowledge as is conveyed by *human* teaching: as appears by that expression,<sup>154</sup> “When for the time ye ought to be teachers;” which includes not only a practical and experimental, but also a *doctrinal, knowledge* of the truths and mysteries of religion.

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152 [Heb. v. 10.](#)

153 [Heb. v. 12.](#)

154 [Heb. v.12](#)

Again, the apostle speaks of such knowledge, whereby Christians are enabled to understand those things in divinity which are more abstruse and difficult to be understood, and which require great skill in things of this nature. This is more fully expressed in the two next verses: “For every one that useth milk, is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”<sup>155</sup> It is such knowledge, that proficiency in it shall carry persons beyond the first principles of religion. As here; “Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.”<sup>156</sup> Therefore the apostle, in the beginning of the next chapter, advises them “to leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to go on unto perfection.”<sup>157</sup>

We may observe that the fault of this defect appears, in that they had not made *proficiency* according to their time.—For the time, they ought to have been teachers. As they were Christians, their business was to learn and gain Christian knowledge. They were scholars in the school of Christ; and if they had improved their time in learning, as they ought to have done, they might, by the time when the apostle wrote, have been fit to be teachers in this school. To whatever business any one is devoted, it may be expected that his perfection in it shall be answerable to the time he has had to learn and perfect himself.—Christians should not always remain babes, but should grow in Christian knowledge; and leaving the food of babes, they should learn to digest strong meat.

doctrine. Every Christian should make a business of endeavouring to grow in knowledge in divinity.—This is indeed esteemed the business of divines and ministers: it is commonly thought to be their work, by the study of the Scriptures, and other instructive books, to gain knowledge; and most seem to think that it may be left to them, as what belongeth not to others. But if the apostle had entertained this notion, he would never have blamed the Christian Heb. for not having acquired knowledge enough to be teachers. Or if he had thought, that this concerned Christians in general only as a thing by the by, and that their time should not in a considerable measure be taken up with this business; he never would have so much blamed them, that their proficiency in knowledge had not been answerable to the time which they had had to learn.

In handling this subject, I shall show—what is intended by *divinity*? what kind of *knowledge* in divinity is intended? *why* knowledge in divinity is *necessary*.

And why all Christians should make a business of endeavouring to *grow* in this knowledge.

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155 [Heb. v.13-14.](#)

156 [Ibid.](#)

157 [Heb. 6:1](#)

SECT. I.

What is intended by divinity, as the object of Christian knowledge.

Various definitions have been given of this subject by those who have treated on it. I shall not now stand to inquire which, according to the rules of art, is the most accurate definition; but shall so define or describe it, as I think has the greatest tendency to convey a proper notion of it.—It is that science or doctrine which comprehends all those truths and rules which concern the great business of religion.

There are various kinds of arts and sciences taught and learned in the schools, which are conversant about various objects; about the works of nature in general, as philosophy; or the visible heavens, as astronomy; or the sea, as navigation; or the earth, as geography; or the body of man, as physic and anatomy; or the soul of man, with regard to its natural powers and qualities, as logic and pneumatology; or about human government, as politics and jurisprudence. But one science, or kind of knowledge and doctrine, is above all the rest; as it treats concerning God and the great business of religion. *Divinity* is not learned, as other sciences, merely by the improvement of man's natural reason, but is taught by God himself in a book full of instruction, which he hath given us for that end. This is the rule which God hath given to the world to be their guide in searching after this kind of knowledge, and is a summary of all things of this nature needful for us to know. Upon this account divinity is rather called a doctrine, than an art or science.

Indeed there is what is called *natural religion*. There are many truths concerning God, and our duty to him, which are evident by the light of nature. But *Christian divinity*, properly so called, is not evident by the light of nature; it depends on revelation. Such are our circumstances now in our fallen state, that nothing which it is needful for us to know concerning God, is manifest by the light of nature, in the manner in which it is necessary for us to know it. For the knowledge of no truth in divinity is of significance to us, any otherwise than as it some way or other belongs to the gospel-scheme, or as it relates to a Mediator. But the light of nature teaches us no truth in this matter. Therefore it cannot be said, that we come to the knowledge of any part of Christian truth by the light of nature. It is only the word of God, contained in the Old and New Testament, which teaches us christian divinity.

This comprehends all that is taught in the Scriptures, and so all that we need know, or is to be known, concerning God and Jesus Christ, concerning our duty to God, and our happiness in God. Divinity is commonly defined, *the doctrine of living to God*; and by some who seem to be more accurate, *the doctrine of living to God by Christ*. It comprehends all Christian Doctrine as they are in Jesus, and all christian rules directing us in living to God by Christ. There is no one doctrine, no promise, no rule, but what some way or other relates to the Christian and divine life, or our living to God by Christ. They all relate to this, in two respects, *viz.* as they tend to promote our living to God here in this world, in a life of faith



*SECTION I. What is intended by divinity, as the object of this knowledg*

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and holiness, and also as they tend to bring us to a life of perfect holiness and happiness, in the full enjoyment of God hereafter.

SECT. II.

What kind of knowledge in divinity, is intended in the doctrine.

There are two kinds of knowledge of divine truth, *viz. speculative* and *practical*, or in other terms, *natural* and *spiritual*. The former remains only in the head. No other faculty but the understanding is concerned in it. It consists in having a natural or rational knowledge of the things of religion, or such a knowledge as is to be obtained by the natural exercise of our own faculties, without any special illumination of the Spirit of God. The latter rests not entirely in the head, or in the speculative ideas of things; but the heart is concerned in it: it principally consists in the sense of the heart. The mere intellect, without the will or the inclination, is not the seat of it. And it may not only be called seeing, but feeling or tasting. Thus there is a difference between having a right speculative notion of the Doctrine contained in the word of God, and having a due sense of them in the heart. In the former consists the speculative or natural knowledge, in the latter consists the spiritual or practical knowledge of them.

Neither of these is intended in the doctrine exclusively of the other: but it is intended that we should seek the former *in order* to the latter. The latter, or the spiritual and practical, is of the greatest importance; for a speculative without a spiritual knowledge, is to no purpose, but to make our condemnation the greater. Yet a speculative knowledge is also of infinite importance in this respect, that without it we can have no spiritual or practical knowledge.

I have already shown, that the apostle speaks not only of a spiritual knowledge, but of such as can be acquired, and communicated from one to another. Yet it is not to be thought, that he means this exclusively of the other. But he would have the Christian Heb. seek the one, in order to the other. Therefore the former is first and most *directly* intended; it is intended that Christians should, by reading and other proper means, seek a good *rational knowledge* of the things of divinity: while the latter is more *indirectly* intended, since it is to be sought by the other. But I proceed to

SECT. III.

The usefulness and necessity of the knowledge of divine truths.

There is no other way by which any means of grace whatsoever can be of any benefit, but by knowledge. All teaching is in vain, without learning. Therefore the preaching of the gospel would be wholly to no purpose, if it conveyed no knowledge to the mind. There is an order of men which Christ has appointed on purpose to be teachers in his church. But they teach in vain, if no knowledge in these things is gained by their teaching. It is impossible that their teaching and preaching should be a mean of grace, or of any good in the hearts of their hearers, any otherwise than by knowledge imparted to the understanding. Otherwise it would be of as much benefit to the auditory, if the minister should preach in some unknown tongue. All the difference is, that preaching in a known tongue conveys something to the understanding, which preaching in an unknown tongue doth not. On this account, such preaching must be unprofitable. In such things men receive nothing, when they understand nothing; and are not at all edified, unless some knowledge be conveyed; agreeable to the apostle's arguing, [1 Cor. xiv. 2-6](#).

No speech can be a mean of grace, but by conveying knowledge. Otherwise the speech is as much lost as if there had been no man there, and if he that spoke, had spoken only into the air; as it follows in the passage just quoted, [ver. 6-10](#). God deals with man as with a rational creature; and when faith is in exercise, it is not about something he knows not what. Therefore hearing is absolutely necessary to faith; because hearing is necessary to understanding, [Rom x. 14](#). "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" In like manner, there can be no love without knowledge. It is not according to the nature of the human soul, to love an object which is entirely unknown. The heart cannot be set upon an object of which there is no idea in the understanding. The reasons which induce the soul to love, must first be understood, before they can have a reasonable influence on the heart.

God hath given us the Bible, which is a book of instructions. But this book can be of no manner of profit to us, any otherwise than as it conveys some knowledge to the mind: it can profit us no more than if it were written in the Chinese or Tartarian language, of which we know not one word. So the sacraments of the gospel can have a proper effect no other way, than by conveying some knowledge. They represent certain things by visible signs. And what is the end of signs, but to convey some knowledge of the things signified? Such is the nature of man, that no object can come at the heart but through the door of the understanding: and there can be no spiritual knowledge of that of which there is not first a rational knowledge. It is impossible that any one should see the truth or excellency of any doctrine of the gospel, who knows not what that doctrine is. A man cannot see the wonderful excellency and love of Christ in doing such and such things for sinners, unless his understanding

be first informed how those things were done. He cannot have a taste of the sweetness and excellency of divine truth, unless he first have a notion that there is such a thing.

Without knowledge in divinity, none would differ from the most ignorant and barbarous heathens. The heathens remain in gross darkness, because they are not instructed, and have not obtained the knowledge of divine truths.

If men have no knowledge of these things, the faculty of reason in him will be wholly in vain. The faculty of reason and understanding was given for *actual* understanding and knowledge. If a man have no actual knowledge, the faculty or capacity of knowing is of no use to him. And if he have actual knowledge, yet if he be destitute of the knowledge of those things which are the last end of his being, and for the sake of the knowledge of which he had more understanding given him than the beasts; then still his faculty of reason is in vain; he might as well have been a beast as a man. But divine subjects are the things, to know which we had the faculty of reason given us. They are the things which appertain to the end of our being, and to the great business for which we are made. Therefore a man cannot have his faculty of understanding to any good purpose, further than he hath knowledge of divine truth.

So that this kind of knowledge is absolutely necessary.—Other kinds of knowledge may be very useful. Some other sciences, such as astronomy, natural philosophy, and geography, may be very excellent in their kind. But the knowledge of this divine science is infinitely more useful and important than that of all other sciences whatever.



SECT. IV.

Why all Christians should make a business of endeavouring to grow in the knowledge of divinity.

Christians ought not to content themselves with such degrees of knowledge of divinity as they have already obtained. It should not satisfy them, as they know as much as is absolutely necessary to salvation, but should seek to make progress.

This endeavour to make progress in such knowledge ought not to be attended to as a thing by the bye, but all Christians should make a business of it. They should look upon it as a part of their daily business, and no small part of it neither. It should be attended to as a considerable part of the work of their high calling.—For,

1. Our business should doubtless much consist in employing those faculties, by which we are distinguished from the beasts, about those things which are the main end of those faculties. The reason why we have faculties superior to those of the brutes given us, is, that we are indeed designed for a superior employment. That which the Creator intended should be our main employment, is something above what he intended the beast for, and therefore hath given us superior powers. Therefore, without doubt, it should be a considerable part of our business to improve those superior faculties. But the faculty by which we are chiefly distinguished from the brutes, is the faculty of understanding. It follows then, that we should make it our chief business to improve this faculty, and should by no means prosecute it as a business by the bye. For us to make the improvement of this faculty a business by the bye, is in effect for us to make the faculty of understanding itself a *by-faculty*, if I may so speak, a faculty of less importance than others: whereas indeed it is the highest faculty we have.

But we cannot make a business of the improvement of our intellectual faculty, any otherwise than by making a business of improving ourselves in actual knowledge. So that those who make not this very much their business; but instead of improving their understanding to acquire knowledge, are chiefly devoted to their inferior power—to please their senses, and gratify their animal appetites—not only behave themselves in a manner not becoming Christians, but also act as if they had forgotten that they are men, and that God hath set them above the brutes, by giving them understanding.

God hath given to man some things in common with the brutes, as his outward senses, his bodily appetites, a capacity of bodily pleasure and pain, and other animal faculties: and some things he hath given him superior to the brutes, the chief of which is a faculty of understanding and reason. Now God never gave man these faculties to be subject to those which he hath in common with the brutes.

This would be great confusion, and equivalent to making man to be a servant to the beasts. On the contrary, he has given those inferior powers to be employed in subserviency to man's understanding; and therefore it must be a great part of man's principal business to improve his understanding by acquiring knowledge. If so, then it will follow, that it should

be a main part of his business to improve his understanding in acquiring *divine* knowledge, or the knowledge of the things of divinity: for the knowledge of these things is the principal end of this faculty. God gave man the faculty of understanding, chiefly, that he might understand divine things.

The wiser heathens were sensible that the main business of man was the improvement and exercise of his understanding. But they knew not the object about which the understanding should chiefly be employed. That science which many of them thought should chiefly employ the understanding, was philosophy; and accordingly they made it their chief business to study it. But we who enjoy the light of the gospel are more happy; we are not left, as to this particular, in the dark. God hath told us about what things we should chiefly employ our understandings, having given us a book full of divine instructions, holding forth many glorious objects about which all rational creatures should chiefly employ their understandings. These instructions are accommodated to persons of all capacities and conditions, and proper to be studied, not only by men of learning, but by persons of every character, learned and unlearned, young and old, men and women. Therefore the acquisition of knowledge in these things should be a main business of all those who have the advantage of enjoying the Holy Scriptures.

2. The truths of divinity are superlative excellency, and are worthy that all should make a business of endeavouring to grow in the knowledge of them. They are as much above those things which are treated of in other sciences, as heaven is above the earth. God himself, the eternal Three in one, is the chief object of this science; and next Jesus Christ, as God-man and Mediator, and the glorious work of redemption, the most glorious work that ever was wrought: then the great things of the heavenly world, the glorious and eternal inheritance purchased by Christ, and promised in the gospel; the work of the Holy Spirit of God on the hearts of men; our duty to God, and the way in which we ourselves may become like angels, and like God himself in our measure. All these are objects of this science.

Such things as these have been the main subject of the study of the holy patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and the most excellent men that ever existed; and they are also the subject of study to the angels in heaven; [1 Pet. i. 10-12](#).—They are so excellent and worthy to be known, that the knowledge of them will richly pay for all the pains and labour of an earnest seeking of it. If there were a great treasure of gold and pearls accidentally found, and opened with such circumstances that all might have as much as they could gather; would not every one think it worth his while to make a business of gathering while it should last? But that treasure of divine knowledge, which is contained in the Scriptures, and is provided for every one to gather to himself as much of it as he can, is far more rich than any one of gold and pearls. How busy are all sorts of men, all over the world, in getting riches! But this knowledge is a far better kind of riches, than that after which they so diligently and laboriously pursue.

3. Divine truths not only concern ministers, but are of infinite importance to all Christians. It is not with the doctrine of divinity as it is with the doctrine of philosophy and other sciences. These last are generally speculative points, which are of little concern in human life; and it very little alters the case as to our temporal or spiritual interests, whether we know them or not. Philosophers differ about them, some being of one opinion, and others of another. And while they are engaged in warm disputes about them, others may well leave them to dispute among themselves, without troubling their heads much about them; it being of little concern to them, whether the one or the other be in the right.—But it is not thus in matters of divinity. The doctrine of this nearly concern every one. They are about those things which relate to every man's eternal salvation and happiness. The common people cannot say, Let us leave these matters to ministers and divines; let them dispute them out among themselves as they can; they concern not us: for they are of infinite importance to every man. Those doctrine which relate to the essence, attributes, and subsistences of God, concern all; as it is of infinite importance to common people, as well as to ministers, to know what kind of being God is. For he is a Being who hath made us all, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being;<sup>158</sup>" who is the Lord of all; the Being to whom we are all accountable; is the last end of our being, and the only fountain of our happiness.

The doctrine also which relate to Jesus Christ and his mediation, his incarnation, his life and death, his resurrection and ascension, his sitting at the right hand of the Father, his satisfaction and intercession, infinitely concern common people as well as divines. They stand in as much need of this Saviour, and of an interest in his person and offices, and the things which he hath done and suffered, as ministers and divines.—The same may be said of the doctrine which relate to the manner of a sinner's justification, or the way in which he becomes interested in the mediation of Christ. They equally concern all; for all stand in equal necessity of justification before God. That eternal condemnation, to which we are all naturally exposed, is equally dreadful. So with respect to those doctrine which relate to the work of the Spirit of God on the heart, in the application of redemption in our effectual calling and sanctification, all are equally concerned in them. There is no doctrine of divinity whatever, which doth not some way or other concern the eternal interest of every Christian.

4. We may argue in favour of the same position, from the great things which God hath done in order to give us instruction in these things. As to other sciences, he hath left us to ourselves, to the light of our own reason. But divine things being of infinitely greater importance to us, he hath not left us to an uncertain guide; but hath himself given us a revelation of the truth in these matters, and hath done very great things to convey and confirm it to us; raising up many prophets in different ages, immediately inspiring them with this Holy Spirit, and confirming their doctrine with innumerable miracles or wonderful works out of



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158 [Acts 17:28](#)

the established course of nature. Yea, he raised up a succession of prophets, which was upheld for several ages.

It was very much for this end that God separated the people of Israel, in so wonderful a manner, from all other people, and kept them separate; that to them he might commit the oracles of God, and that from them they might be communicated to the world. He hath also often sent angels to bring divine instructions to men; and hath often himself appeared in miraculous symbols or representations of his presence: and now in these last days hath sent his own Son into the world, to be his great prophet, to teach us divine truth [Heb. i. 1.](#), & God hath given us a book of divine instructions, which contains the sum of divinity. Now, these things hath God done, not only for the instruction of ministers and men of learning; but for the instruction of all men, of all sorts, learned and unlearned, men, women, and children. And certainly if God doth such great things to *teach* us, we ought to do something to *learn*.

God giving instructions to men in these things, is not a business by the by; but what he hath undertaken and prosecuted in a course of great and wonderful dispensations, as an affair in which his heart hath been greatly engaged; which is sometimes in Scripture signified by the expression of God's rising early to teach us, and to send us prophets and teachers. [Jer. vii. 25.](#) "Since that day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt, unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them." And [ver. 13.](#) "I spake unto you, rising up early, and speaking." This is a figurative speech, signifying, that God hath done this as a business of great importance, in which he took great care, and had his heart much engaged; because persons are wont to rise early to prosecute such business as they are earnestly engaged in.—If God hath been so engaged in teaching, certainly we should not be negligent in learning; but should make growing in knowledge a great part of the business of our lives.

5. It may be argued from the abundance of the instructions which God hath given us, from the largeness of that book which God hath given to teach us divinity, and from the great variety that is therein contained. Much was taught by Moses of old, which we have transmitted down to us; after that, other books were from time to time added; much is taught us by David and Solomon; and many and excellent are the instructions communicated by the prophets: yet God did not think all this enough, but after this sent Christ and his apostles, by whom there is added a great and excellent treasure to that holy book, which is to be our rule in the study of this important subject.

This book was written for the use of all; all are directed to search the Scriptures, [John v. 39.](#) "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that testify of me;" and [Isa. xxxiv. 16.](#) "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read." They that read and understand are pronounced blessed, [Rev. i. 3.](#) "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that understand the words of this prophecy." If this be true of that particular book of the



*Revelation*, much more is it true of the Bible in general. Nor is it to be believed that God would have given instructions in such abundance, if he had intended that receiving instruction should be only a bye concern with us.

It is to be considered, that all those abundant instructions which are contained in the Scriptures were written that they might be understood: otherwise they are not instructions. That which is not given that the learner may understand it, is not given for the learner's instruction; unless we endeavour to grow in the knowledge of divinity, a very great part of those instructions will to us be in vain; for we can receive benefit by no more of the Scriptures than we understand. We have reason to bless God that he hath given us such various and plentiful instruction in his word; but we shall be hypocritical in so doing, if we after all content ourselves with but little of this instruction.

When God hath opened a very large treasure before us, for the supply of our wants, and we thank him that he hath given us so much; if at the same time we be willing to remain destitute of the greatest part of it. because we are too lazy to gather it, this will not show the sincerity of our thankfulness. We are now under much greater advantages to acquire knowledge in divinity, than the people of God were of old, because since that time the canon of Scripture is much increased. But if we be negligent of our advantages, we may be never the better for them, and may remain with as little knowledge as they.

6. However diligent we apply ourselves, there is room enough to increase our knowledge in divine truth. None have this excuse to make for not diligently applying themselves to gain knowledge in divinity, that they already know all; nor can they make this excuse, that they have no need diligently to apply themselves, in order to know all that is to be known. None can excuse themselves for want of business in which to employ themselves. There is room enough to employ ourselves for ever in this divine science, with the utmost application. Those who have applied themselves most closely, have studied the longest, and have made the greatest attainments in this knowledge, know but little of what is to be known. The subject is inexhaustible. That divine Being, who is the main subject of this science, is infinite, and there is no end to the glory of his perfections. His works at the same time are wonderful, and cannot be found out to perfection; especially the work of redemption, about which the science of divinity is chiefly conversant, is full of unsearchable wonders.

The word of God, which is given for our instruction in divinity, contains enough in it to employ us to the end of our lives, and then we shall leave enough uninvestigated to employ the heads of the ablest divines to the end of the world. The psalmist found an end to the things that are human; but he could never find an end to what is contained in the word of God: [Psal. cxix. 96.](#), "I have seen an end to all perfection; but thy command is exceeding broad." There is enough in this divine science to employ the understandings of saints and angels to all eternity.

7. It doubtless concerns every one to endeavour to excel in the knowledge of things which pertain to his profession, or principal calling. If it concerns men to excel in any thing, or in any wisdom or knowledge at all, it certainly concerns them to excel in the affairs of their main profession and work. But the calling and work of every Christian is to live to God. This is said to be his *high calling*, [Phil. iii. 14](#). This is the business, and, if I may so speak, the *trade* of a Christian, his main work, and indeed should be his only work. No business should be done by a Christian, but as it is some way or other a part of this. Therefore certainly the Christian should endeavour to be well acquainted with those things which belong to this work, that he may fulfil it, and be thoroughly furnished to it.

It becomes one who is called to be a soldier, to excel in the art of war. It becomes a mariner, to excel in the art of navigation. It becomes a physician, to excel in the knowledge of those things which pertain to the art of physic. So it becomes all such as profess to be Christians, and to devote themselves to the practice of Christianity, to endeavour to excel in the knowledge of divinity.

8. It may be argued hence, that God hath appointed an order of men for this end, to assist persons in gaining knowledge in these things. He hath appointed them to be teachers, [1 Cor. xii. 28](#). and God hath set some in the church; first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers: [Eph. iv. 11, 2](#). “He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” If God hath set them to be teachers, making that their business, then he hath made it their business to impart knowledge. But what kind of knowledge? not the knowledge of philosophy, or of human laws, or of mechanical arts, but of divinity.

If God have made it the business of some to be teachers, it will follow, that he hath made it the business of others to be learners; for teachers and learners are correlates, one of which was never intended to be without the other. God hath never made it the duty of some to take pains to teach those who are not obliged to take pains to learn. He hath not commanded ministers to spend themselves, in order to impart knowledge to those who are not obliged to apply themselves to receive it.

The name by which Christians are commonly called in the New Testament is disciples, the signification of which word is scholars or learners. All Christians are put into the school of Christ, where their business is to learn, or receive knowledge from Christ, their common master and teacher, and from those inferior teachers appointed by him to instruct in his name.

9. God hath in the Scriptures plainly revealed it to be his will, that all Christians should diligently endeavour to excel in the knowledge of divine things. It is the revealed will of God, that Christians should not only have some knowledge of things of this nature, but that they should be enriched with all knowledge: [1 Cor. i. 4, 5](#). “I thank my God always on your



behalf, for the grace of God that is given you by Jesus Christ, that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in *all knowledge*,” So the apostle earnestly prayed, that the Christian Philippians might abound more and more, not only in love, but in christian *knowledge*; [Phil. i. 9.](#) “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in *knowledge*, and in *all judgment*.” So the apostle Peter advises to “give all diligence to add to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge,” [2 Pet. i. 5.](#) and the apostle Paul, in the next chapter to that wherein is the text, counsels the Christian Heb., leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, to go on to perfection. He would by no means have them always to rest only in those fundamental Doctrine of repentance, and faith, and the resurrection from the dead, and the eternal judgment, in which they were instructed when baptized, at their first initiation in Christianity. (See [Heb. vi.](#) &c.)

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## SECT. V.

An exhortation that all may diligently endeavour to gain Christian knowledge.

Consider yourselves as scholars or disciples, put into the school of Christ; and therefore be diligent to make proficiency in Christian knowledge. Content not yourselves with this, that you have been taught your catechism in your childhood, and that you know as much of the principles of religion as is necessary to salvation; else you will be guilty of what the apostle warns against, *viz.* going no further than laying the foundation of repentance from dead works, &c.

You are all called to be Christians, and this is your profession. Endeavour, therefore, to acquire knowledge in things which pertain to your profession. Let not your teachers have cause to complain, that while they spend and are spent, to impart knowledge to you, you take little pains to learn. It is a great encouragement to an instructor, to have such to teach as make a business of learning, bending their minds to it. This makes teaching a pleasure, when otherwise it will be a very heavy and burdensome task.

You all have by you a large treasure of divine knowledge, in that you have the Bible in your hands; therefore be not contented in possessing but little of this treasure. God hath spoken much to you in the Scriptures; labour to understand as much of what he saith as you can. God hath made you all reasonable creatures; therefore let not the noble faculty of reason or understanding lie neglected. Content not yourselves with having so much knowledge as is thrown in your way, and receive in some sense unavoidably by the frequent inculcation of divine truth in the preaching of the word, of which you are obliged to be hearers, or accidentally gain in conversation; but let it be very much your business to search for it, and that with the same diligence and labour with which men are wont to dig in mines of silver and gold.

Especially I would advise those who are young to employ themselves in this way. Men are never too old to learn; but the time of youth is especially the time for learning; it is peculiarly proper for gaining and storing up knowledge.—Further, to stir up all, both old and young, to this duty, let me entreat you to consider,

1. If you apply yourselves diligently to this work, you will not want employment, when you are at leisure from your common secular business. In this way, you may find something in which you may profitably employ yourselves. You will find something else to do, besides going about from house to house, spending one hour after another in unprofitable conversation, or, at best, to no other purpose but to amuse yourselves, to fill up and wear away your time. And it is to be feared that very much of the time spent in evening visits, is spent to a much worse purpose than that which I have now mentioned. Solomon tells us, [Prov. x. 19](#). “That in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin.” And is not this verified in

those who find little else to do but to go to one another's houses, and spend the time in such talk as comes next, or such as any one's present disposition happens to suggest?

Some diversion is doubtless lawful; but for Christians to spend so much of their time, so many long evenings, in no other conversation than that which tends to divert and amuse, if nothing worse, is a sinful way of spending time, and tends to poverty of soul at least, if not to outward poverty: [Prov. xiv. 23](#). "In all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lips tendeth only to *penury*." Besides, when persons for so much of their time have nothing else to do, but to sit, and talk, and chat, there is great danger of falling into foolish and sinful conversation, venting their corrupt dispositions, in talking against others, expressing their jealousies and evil surmises concerning their neighbours; not considering what Christ hath said, [Matt. xii. 36](#). "Of every idle word that men shall speak, shall they give account in the day of judgment."

If you would comply with what you have heard from this doctrine, you would find something else to employ your time besides contention, or talking about those public affairs which tend to contention. Young people might find something else to do, besides spending their time in vain company; something that would be much more profitable to themselves, as it would really turn to some good account; something, in doing which they would both be more out of the way of temptation, and be more in the way of duty, and of a divine blessing. And even aged people would have something to employ themselves in, after they are become incapable of bodily labour. Their time, as is now often the case, would not lie heavy upon their hands, as they would with both profit and pleasure be engaged in searching the Scriptures, and in comparing and meditating upon the various truths which they should find there.

2. This would be a *noble* way of spending your time.—The Holy Spirit gives the Bereans this epithet, because they diligently employed themselves in this business: [Acts xvii. 11](#). "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Similar to this is very much the employment of heaven. The inhabitants of that world spend much of their time in searching into the great things of divinity, and endeavouring to acquire knowledge in them, as we are told of the angels, [1 Pet. i. 12](#). "Which things the angels desire to look into." This will be very agreeable to what you hope will be your business to all eternity, as you doubtless hope to join in the same employment with the angels of light. Solomon says, [Prov. xxv. 2](#). "It is the honour of kings to search out a matter;" and certainly, above all others, to search out divine matters. Now, if this be the honour even of kings, is it not equally if not much more your honour?

3. This is a pleasant way of improving time. Knowledge is pleasant and delightful to intelligent creatures, and above all, the knowledge of divine things; for in them are the most excellent truths, and the most beautiful and amiable objects held forth to view. However

tedious the labour necessarily attending this business may be, yet the knowledge once obtained will richly requite the pains taken to obtain it. "When wisdom entereth the heart, knowledge is pleasant to the soul." [Prov. ii. 10.](#)

4. This knowledge is exceedingly *useful* in Christian practice. Such as have much knowledge in divinity have great means and advantages for spiritual and saving knowledge; for no means of grace have a saving effect, otherwise than by the knowledge they impart. The more you have of a rational knowledge of divine things, the more opportunity will there be, when the Spirit shall be breathed into your heart, to see the excellency of these things, and to taste the sweetness of them. The heathens, who have no rational knowledge of the things of the gospel, have no opportunity to see the excellency of them; and therefore the more rational knowledge of these things you have, the more opportunity and advantage you have to see the divine excellency and glory of them.

Again, The more knowledge you have of divine things, the better will you know your duty; your knowledge will be of great use to direct you as to your duty in particular cases. You will also be the better furnished against the temptations of the devil. For the devil often takes advantage of persons' ignorance to ply them with temptations which otherwise would have no hold of them. By having much knowledge, you will be under greater advantages to conduct yourselves with prudence and discretion in your Christian course, and so to live much more to the honour of God and religion. Many who mean well, and are full of a good spirit, yet for want of prudence, conduct themselves so as to wound religion. Many have a zeal of God, which doth more hurt than good, because it is not according to knowledge, [Rom. x. 2.](#) The reason why many good men behave no better in many instances, is not so much that they want grace, as that they want knowledge. Beside, an increase of knowledge would be a great help to profitable conversation. It would supply you with matter for conversation when you come together, or when you visit your neighbours: and so you would have less temptation to spend the time in such conversation as tends to your own and others' hurt.

5. Consider the advantages you are under to grow in the knowledge of divinity. We are under far greater advantages to gain much of this knowledge now, than God's people under the Old Testament, both because the canon of Scripture is so much enlarged since that time, and also because evangelical truths are now so much more plainly revealed. So that common men are now in some respects under advantages to know more, than the greatest prophets were then. Thus that saying of Christ is in a sense applicable to us, [Luke x. 23, 24.](#) "Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." We are in some respects under far greater advantages for gaining knowledge, now in these latter ages of the church, than Christians were formerly; especially by reason of the art of printing, of which God hath given us the

benefit, whereby Bibles and other books of divinity are exceedingly multiplied, and persons may now be furnished with helps for the obtaining of Christian knowledge, at a much easier and cheaper rate than they formerly could.

6. We know not what opposition we may meet with in the religious principles which we hold. We know that there are many adversaries to the gospel and its truths. If therefore we embrace those truths, we must expect to be attacked by the said adversaries; and unless we be well informed concerning divine things, how shall we be able to defend ourselves? Beside, the apostle Peter enjoins it upon us, always to be ready to give an answer to every man who asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us. But this we cannot expect to do without considerable knowledge in divine things.

SECT. VI.

Directions for the acquisition of Christian knowledge.

1. Be assiduous in reading the Holy Scriptures. This is the fountain whence all knowledge in divinity must be derived. Therefore let not this treasure lie by you neglected. Every man of common understanding who can read, may, if he please, become well acquainted with the Scriptures. And what an excellent attainment would this be!

2. Content not yourselves with only a cursory reading, without regarding the sense. This is an ill way of reading, to which, however, many accustom themselves all their days. When you read, observe what you read. Observe how things come in. Take notice of the drift of the discourse, and compare one scripture with another. For the Scripture, by the harmony of its different parts, casts great light upon itself.—We are expressly directed by Christ, to *search* the Scriptures, which evidently intends something more than a mere cursory reading. And use means to find out the meaning of the Scripture. When you have it explained in the preaching of the word, take notice of it; and if at any time a scripture that you did not understand be cleared up to your satisfaction, mark it, lay it up, and if possible remember it.

3. Procure, and diligently use, other books which may help you to grow in this knowledge. There are many excellent books extant, which might greatly forward you in this knowledge, and afford you a very profitable and pleasant entertainment in your leisure hours. There is doubtless a great defect in many, that through a lothness to be at a little expense, they furnish themselves with no more helps of this nature. They have a few books indeed, which now and then on sabbath-days they read; but they have had them so long, and read them so often, that they are weary of them, and it is now become a dull story, a mere task to read them.

4. Improve conversation with others to this end. How much might persons promote each other's knowledge in divine things, if they would improve conversation as they might; if men that are ignorant were not ashamed to show their ignorance, and were willing to learn of others; if those that have knowledge would communicate it, without pride and ostentation; and if all were more disposed to enter on such conversation as would be for their mutual edification and instruction.

5. Seek not to grow in knowledge chiefly for the sake of applause, and to enable you to dispute with others; but seek it for the benefit of your souls, and in order to practice.—If applause be your end, you will not be so likely to be led to me knowledge of the truth, but may justly, as often is the case of those who are proud of their knowledge, be led into error to your own perdition. This being; your end, if you should obtain much rational knowledge, it would not be likely to be of any benefit to you, but would puff you up with pride: [1 Cor. viii. 1.](#) “Knowledge puffeth up.”

6. Seek to God, that he would direct you, and bless you, in this pursuit after knowledge. This is the apostle's direction, [Jam. i. 5.](#) “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who



giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not.” God is the fountain of all divine knowledge: [Prov. ii. 6.](#) “The Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” Labour to be sensible of your own blindness and ignorance, and your need of the help of God, lest you be led into error, instead of true knowledge: [1 Cor. iii. 18.](#) “If any man would be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”

7. Practise according to what knowledge you have. This will be the way to know more. The psalmist warmly recommends this way of seeking knowledge in divine truth, from his own experience: [Psal. cxix. 100.](#) “I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.” Christ also recommends the same: [John vii. 17.](#) “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

**CHRISTIAN CHARITY :**

*OR, THE*

**DUTY OF CHARITY TO THE POOR, EXPLAINED AND ENFORCED.**

**DEUT. xv: 7-11.**

If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

## SECT. I.

The words explained.

The duty here enjoined, is giving to the poor: “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:—Thou shalt surely give him.” Here by *thy poor brother* is to be understood the same as in other places is meant by *neighbour*. It is explained in [Levit. 25: 35.](#) to mean not only those of their own nation, but even strangers and sojourners: “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a *stranger, or a sojourner.*” The Pharisees indeed interpreted it to signify only one of their own nation; but Christ condemns this interpretation, [Luke x 29.](#) &c. and teaches, in contradiction to their opinion, that the rules of charity, in the law of Moses, are to be extended to the Samaritans, who were not of their nation, and between whom and the Jews there was the most bitter enmity, and who were a people very troublesome to the Jews.

God gives us direction *how* we are to give in such a case, *viz. bountifully, and willingly.* We should give *bountifully* and *sufficiently* for the supply of the poor’s need: [ver. 7, 8.](#) “Thou shalt not shut up thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.” And again, in [ver. 11.](#) “Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” Again, we should give *willingly* and *without grudging:* [ver. 7.](#) “Thou shalt not harden thine heart from thy poor brother;” and [ver. 10.](#) “And thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest him.”

We may also observe how peremptorily this duty is here enjoined, and how much it is insisted on. It is repeated over and over again, and enjoined in the strongest terms; [ver. 7.](#) “Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother;” [ver. 8.](#) “But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him;” [ver. 10.](#) “Thou shalt surely give him;” [ver. 11.](#) “I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy.”

Moreover, God strictly warns against objections, [ver. 9.](#) “Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.” The matter concerning the seventh year, or year of release, was thus: God had given Israel a law, that every seventh year should be a year of release; that if any man had lent any thing to any of his poor neighbours, if the latter had not been able to repay it before that year, the former should release it, and should not exact it of his neighbour, but give it to him. Therefore God warns the children of Israel against making of this an objection to helping their poor neighbours, that the year of release was near at hand; and it was not likely that they would be able to refund it again before that time,

and then they should lose it wholly, because then they would be obliged to release it. God foresaw that the wickedness of their hearts would be very ready to make such an objection; but very strictly warns them against it, that they should not be the more backward to supply the wants of the needy for that, but should be willing to give him: “Thou shalt be willing to lend, expecting nothing again.”

Men are exceedingly apt to make objections against such duties, which God speaks of here as a manifestation of the wickedness of their hearts: “Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, <sup>159</sup>” &c. The warning is very strict. God doth not only say, Beware that thou do not actually refuse to give him, but, Beware that thou have not one objecting thought against it, arising from a backwardness to liberality. God warns against the beginnings of uncharitableness in the heart, and against whatever tends to a forbearance to give: “And thou give him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. <sup>160</sup>” God warns them, from the guilt which they would be liable to bring upon themselves hereby.

We may observe here several *enforcements* of this duty. There is a reason of this duty implied in God’s calling him that is needy, *our brother*: “Thou shalt not shut thine hand from thy poor *brother*,” and [ver. 9](#). “Beware that thine eye be not evil against thy poor *brother*,” and [ver. 11](#). “Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy *brother*.” We are to look upon ourselves as related to all mankind, but especially to those who are of the visible people of God. We are to look upon them as brethren, and to treat them accordingly. We shall be base indeed, if we be not willing to help a *brother* in want.—Another enforcement of this duty is the *promise* of God, that for this thing he will bless us in all our works, and in all that we put our hands unto; a promise that we shall not lose, but gain by it, ([ver. 10](#)).—Another is, that we shall never want proper objects of our charity and bounty: [ver. 11](#). “For the poor shall never cease out of thy land.” This God saith to the Jewish church; and the like Christ saith to the Christian church, [Matt. xxvi. 11](#). “The poor ye have always with you.” This is to cut off an excuse that uncharitable persons would be ready to make for not giving, that they could find nobody to give to, that they saw none who needed. God cuts off such an excuse, by telling us, that he would so order it in his providence, that his people every where, and in all ages, shall have occasion for the exercise of that virtue.

From this account the doctrine is obvious, that it is the absolute and indispensable duty of the people of God, to give bountifully and willingly for supplying the wants of the needy.—But more particularly,

1. It is the duty of the people of God, to give *bountifully* for the aforesaid purpose. It is commanded once and again in the text, “Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy poor brother. <sup>161</sup>” Merely to give something is not sufficient; it answers not the rule, nor comes

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159 [Deut. xv. 9](#).

160 [Deut. xv. 9](#).

161 [Deut. xv. 8](#).

up to the holy command of God; but we must open our hand wide. What we give, considering our neighbour's wants, and our ability, should be such as may be called a *liberal* gift. What is meant in the text by opening the hand wide, with respect to those that are able, is explained in [ver. 8](#). "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his want, in that which he needeth." By lending here, as is evident by the two following verses, and as we have just now shown, is not only meant lending to receive again; the word *lend* in Scripture is sometimes used for giving; as in [Luke vi. 35](#). "Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again."

We are commanded, therefore, to give our poor neighbour what is sufficient for his need. There ought to be none suffered to live in pinching want, among a visible people of God, who are able: unless in case of idleness, or prodigality, or some such case which the word of God excepts.—It is said that the children of Israel should lend to the poor, and in the year of release should release what they had lent, *save when there should be no poor among them*. It is rendered in the margin, *to the end there be no poor among you; i. e.* you should so supply the wants of the needy, that there may be none among you in pinching want. This translation seems the more likely to be the true one, because God says, [ver. 11](#). that there shall be no such time when there shall be no poor, who shall be proper objects of charity.—When persons give very *sparingly*, it is no manifestation of charity, but of a contrary spirit: [2 Cor. ix. 5](#). "Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness." The apostle here calls a very sparing contribution, matter of covetousness.

2. It is the duty of the visible people of God, to give for the supply of the needy, *freely*, and without grudging. It doth not at all answer the rule in the sight of God, if it be done with an inward grudging, or if the heart be grieved, and it inwardly hurt the man to give what he gives: "Thou shalt surely give," says God, "and thine heart shall not be grieved." <sup>162</sup> "God looks at the heart, and the hand is not accepted without it: [2 Cor. ix. 7](#). "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

3. This is a duty to which God's people are under very strict *obligations*. It is not merely a commendable thing for a man to be kind and bountiful to the poor, but our bounden duty, as much a duty as it is to pray, or to attend public worship, or any thing else whatever; and the neglect of it brings great guilt upon any person.

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162 [Deut. xv. 10](#).

SECT. II.

Of the obligation of Christians to perform the duty of charity to the poor.

This duty is absolutely commanded, and much insisted on, in the word of God. Where have we any command in the Bible laid down in stronger terms, and in a more peremptory urgent manner, than the command of giving to the poor? We have the same law in a positive manner laid down in [Levit. xxv. 35.](#) &c. “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee.” And at the conclusion of [ver. 38.](#) God enforces it with saying, *I am the Lord thy God.*

It is mentioned in Scripture, not only as a duty, but a great duty. Indeed it is generally acknowledged to be a duty, to be kind to the needy; but by many it seems not to be looked upon as a duty of great importance. However, it is mentioned in Scripture as one of the greater and more essential duties of religion: [Micah vi. 8.](#) “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, *to love mercy,* and to walk humbly with thy God?” Here *to love mercy* is mentioned as one of the three great things that are the sum of all religion. So it is mentioned by the apostle James, as one of the two things wherein pure and undefiled religion consists: [James i. 27.](#) “Pure religion, and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

So Christ tells us, it is one of the weightier matters of the law: [Matt. xxiii. 23.](#) “Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.” The Scriptures again and again teach us, that it is a more weighty and essential thing than the attendance on the outward ordinances of worship: [Hos. xi. 6.](#) “I desired mercy, and not sacrifice;”. [Matt. ix. 13.](#) and [xii. 7.](#) I know of scarce any duty which is so much insisted on, so pressed and urged upon us, both in the Old Testament and New, as this duty of charity to the poor.

The reason of the thing strongly obliges to it. It is not only very positively and frequently insisted on by God, but it is most reasonable in itself; and so, on this account, there is reason why God should much insist upon it.

1. It is most reasonable, considering the general state and nature of mankind. This is such as renders it most reasonable that we should love our neighbour as ourselves; for men are made in the image of our God, and on this account are worthy of our love. Besides, we are all nearly allied one to another by nature. We have all the same nature, like faculties, like dispositions, like desires of good, like needs, like aversion to misery, and are made of one blood; and we are made to subsist by society and union one with another. God hath made us with such a nature, that we cannot subsist without the help of one another. Mankind in this respect are as the members of the natural body, one cannot subsist alone, without an union with and the help of the rest.

Now, this state of mankind shows how reasonable and suitable it is, that men should love their neighbours; and that we should not look every one at his own things, but every man also at the things of others, [Phil. ii. 4](#). A selfish spirit is very unsuitable to the nature and state of mankind. He who is all for himself, and none for his neighbours, deserves to be cut off from the benefit of human society, and to be turned out among wild beasts, to subsist by himself as well as he can. A private niggardly spirit is more suitable for wolves, and other beasts of prey, than for human beings.

To love our neighbour as ourselves, is the sum of the moral law respecting our fellow-creatures; and to help them, and to contribute to their relief, is the most natural expression of this love. It is vain to pretend to a spirit of love to our neighbours, when it is grievous to us to part with any thing for their help, when under calamity. They who love only in word, and in tongue, and not in deed, have no love in truth. Any profession without it is a vain pretence. To refuse to give to the needy, is unreasonable, because we therein do to others contrary to what we would have others to do to us in like circumstances. We are very sensible of our own calamities; and when we suffer, are ready enough to think, that our state requires the compassion and help of others; and are ready enough to think it hard, if others will not deny themselves in order to help us when in straits.

2. It is especially reasonable, considering our circumstances, under such a dispensation of grace as that of the gospel. Consider how much God hath done for us, how greatly he hath loved us, what he hath given us, when we were so unworthy, and when he could have no addition to his happiness by us. Consider that silver, and gold, and earthly crowns, were in his esteem but mean things to give us, and he hath therefore given us his own Son. Christ loved and pitied us, when we were poor, and he laid out himself to help, and even did shed his own blood for us without grudging. He did not think much to deny himself, and to be at great cost for us vile wretches, in order to make us rich, and to clothe us with kingly robes, when we were naked; to feast us at his own table with dainties infinitely costly, when we were starving; to advance us from the dunghill, and set us among princes, and make us to inherit the throne of his glory, and so to give us the enjoyment of the greatest wealth and plenty to all eternity; agreeably to [2 Cor. viii. 9](#). "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Considering all these things, what a poor business will it be, that those who hope to share these benefits, yet cannot give something for the relief of a poor neighbour without grudging'. that it should grieve them to part with a small matter, to help a fellow-servant in calamity, when Christ did not grudge to shed his own blood for them!

How unsuitable is it for us, who live only by kindness, to be unkind! What would have become of us, if Christ had been so saving of his blood, and loth to bestow it, as many men are of their money or goods? or if he had been as ready to excuse himself from dying for us, as men commonly are to excuse themselves from charity to their neighbour? If Christ would



have made objections of such things, as men commonly object to performing deeds of charity to their neighbour, he would have found enough of them.

Besides, Christ, by his redemption, has brought us into a more near relation one to another, hath made us children of God, children in the same family. We are all brethren, having God for our common Father; which is much more than to be brethren in any other family. He hath made us all one body; therefore we ought to be united, and subserve one another's good, and bear one another's burdens, as is the case with the members of the same natural body. If one of the members suffer, all the other members bear the burden with it, [1 Cor. xii. 26](#). If one member be diseased or wounded, the other members of the body will minister to it, and help it. So surely it should be in the body of Christ: [Gal. vi. 2](#). "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Apply these things to yourselves; and inquire, whether you do not lie under guilt on account of the neglect of this duty, in withholding that charity which God requires of you towards the needy? You have often been put upon examining yourselves, whether you do not live in some way displeasing to God. Perhaps at such times it never came into your minds, whether you do not lie under guilt on this account.—But this neglect certainly brings guilt upon the soul in the sight of God, as is evident by the text: "Beware that thine eye be not evil against thy" poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee," [ver. 9](#). This is often mentioned as one of the sins of Judah and Jerusalem, for which God was about to bring such terrible judgments upon them; and it was one of the sins of Sodom, for which that city was destroyed, that she did not give to supply the poor and needy, [Ezek. xvi. 49](#). "This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness in her, and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

And have we not reason to fear, that much guilt lies upon this land on this very account? We have a high conceit of ourselves for religion: but do not many other countries shame us? Do not the papists shame us in this respect? So far as I can understand the tenor of the Christian religion, and the rules of the word of God, the same are in no measure in this respect answered by the general practice of most people in this land. There are many who make a high profession of religion; but do not many of them need to be informed by the apostle James, what true religion is?

Let every one examine himself, whether he do not lie under guilt in this matter. Have you not forborne to give, when you have seen your brother in want? Have you not shut up the bowels of your compassion towards him, and forborne to deny yourselves a little for his relief? Or when you have given, have you not done it grudgingly? And has it not inwardly hurt and grieved you? You have looked upon what you have given, as lost: so that what you have given, has been, as the apostle expresses it, a matter of covetousness, rather than of bounty. Have not occasions of giving been unwelcome to you? Have you not been uneasy



*SECTION II. Of the obligations of Christians to perform the duty of charity...*

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under them? Have you not felt a considerable backwardness to give? Have you not, from a grudging, backward spirit, been apt to “raise objections against giving, and to excuse yourselves? Such things as these bring guilt upon the soul, and often bring down the curse of God upon the persons in whom these things are found, as we may show more fully hereafter.

SECT. III.

An exhortation to the duty of charity to the poor.

We are professors of Christianity, we pretend to be the followers of Jesus, and to make the gospel our rule. We have the Bible in our houses. Let us not behave ourselves in this particular, as if we had never seen the Bible, as if we were ignorant of Christianity, and knew not what kind of religion it is. What will it signify to pretend to be Christians, and at the same time to live in the neglect of those rules of Christianity which are mainly insisted on in it? But there are several things which I would here propose to your consideration.

I. Consider that what you have is not your own; *i. e.* you have only a subordinate right. Your goods are only lent to you of God, to be improved by you in such ways as he directs. You yourselves are not your own; [1 Cor. vi. 20](#). “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; your body and your spirit are God’s.” And if you yourselves are not your own, so then neither are your possessions your own. Many of you have by covenant given up yourselves and all you have to God. You have disowned and renounced any right in yourselves or in any thing that you have, and have given to God all the absolute right; and if you be true Christians, you have done it from the heart.

Your money and your goods are not your own; they are only committed to you as stewards, to be used for him who committed them to you; [1 Pet. iv. 9, 10](#). “Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” A steward has no business with his master’s goods, to use them any otherwise than for the benefit of his master and his family, or according to his master’s direction. He hath no business to use them, as if he were the proprietor of them; he hath nothing to do with them, only as he is to use them for his master. He is to give every one of his master’s family their portion of meat in due season.

But if instead of that, he hoards up his master’s goods for himself, and withholds them from those of the household, so that some of the family are pinched for want of food and clothing; he is therein guilty of robbing his master and embezzling his substance. And would any householder endure such a steward? If he discovered him in such a practice, would he not take his goods out of his hands, and commit them to the care of some other steward, who should give every one of his family his portion of meat in due season? Remember that all or us must give account of our stewardship, and how we have disposed of those goods which our Master has put into our hands. And if when our Master comes to reckon with us, it be found that we have denied some of his family their proper provision, while we have hoarded up for ourselves, as if we had been the proprietors of our Master’s goods, what account shall we give of this?



II. God tells us, that he shall look upon what is done in charity to our neighbours in want, as done unto him; and what is denied unto them, as denied unto him. [Prov. xix. 17.](#) “He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord.” God hath been pleased to make our needy neighbours his receivers. He in his infinite mercy hath so interested himself in their case, that he looks upon what is given in charity to them, as given to himself; and when we deny them what their circumstances require of us, he looks upon it that we therein rob him of his right.

Christ teaches us, that we are to look upon our fellow-Christians in this case as himself, and that our giving or withholding from them, shall be taken, as if we so behaved ourselves towards him; see [Matt. xxv. 40.](#) There Christ says to the righteous on his right hand, who had supplied the wants of the needy, “In that ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” In like manner he says to the wicked who had not shown mercy to the poor, [ver. 45.](#) “Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.”—Now what stronger enforcement of this duty can be conceived, or is possible, than this, that Jesus Christ looks upon our kind and bountiful, or unkind and uncharitable, treatment of our needy neighbours, as such a treatment of himself?

If Christ himself were upon earth, and dwelt among us in a frail body, as he once did, and were in calamitous and needy circumstances, should we not be willing to supply him? Should we be apt to excuse ourselves from helping him? Should we not be willing to supply him so, that he might live free from distressing poverty? And if we did otherwise, should we not bring great guilt upon ourselves? And might not our conduct justly be very highly resented by God? Christ was once here in a frail body, stood in need of the charity, and was maintained by it; [Luke viii. 2, 3.](#) “And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalen, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.” So he still, in many of his members, needs the charity of others.

III. Consider that there is an absolute necessity of our complying with the difficult duties of religion. To give to the poor in the manner and measure that the gospel prescribes, is a difficult duty, *i. e.* it is very contrary to corrupt nature, to that covetousness and selfishness of which there is so much in the wicked heart of man. Man is naturally governed only by a principle of self-love; and it is a difficult thing to corrupt nature, for men to deny themselves of their present interest, trusting in God to make it up to them hereafter.—But how often hath Christ told us the necessity of doing difficult duties of religion, if we will be his disciples; that we must sell all, take up our cross daily, deny ourselves, renounce our worldly profits and interests, &c. And if this duty seem hard and difficult to you, let not that be an objection with you against doing it; for you have taken up quite a wrong notion of things, if you expect to go to heaven without performing difficult duties; if you expect any other than to find the way to life a narrow way.

IV. The Scripture teaches us, that this very particular duty is necessary. Particularly,

1. The Scripture teaches, that God will deal with us as we deal with our fellow-creatures in this particular, and that with what measure we mete to others in this respect, God will measure to us again. This the Scripture asserts both ways; it asserts that if we be of a merciful spirit, God will be merciful to us: [Matt. v. 7](#). “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” [Ps. xviii. 25](#). “With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful.” On the other hand it tells us, that if we be not merciful, God will not be merciful to us; and that all our pretences to faith and a work of conversion will not avail us, to obtain mercy, unless we be merciful to them that are in want. [James ii. 13-16](#). “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy.—What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed, and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”

2. This very thing is often mentioned in Scripture, as an essential part of the character of a godly man; [Ps. xxxvii. 21](#). “The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth;” and again, [ver. 26](#). “He is ever merciful, and lendeth.” [Psal. cxii. 5](#). “A good man showeth favour, and lendeth;” and [ver. 9](#). “He hath dispersed, and given to the poor.” So [Prov. xiv. 31](#). “He that honoureth God, hath mercy on the poor.” Again, [Prov. xxi. 26](#). and [Isa Lvii. 1](#). A *righteous* man and a *merciful* man are used as synonymous terms: “The *righteous* perisheth, and *merciful* men are taken away,” &c.

It is mentioned in the New Testament as a thing so essential, that the contrary cannot consist with a *sincere* love to God. [1 John iii. 17-19](#). “But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.” So the apostle Paul, when he writes to the Corinthians, and proposes their contributing for the supply of the poor saints, tells them what he doth it for, *viz.* a trial of their sincerity: see [2 Cor. viii. 8](#). “I speak to prove the sincerity of your love.”

3. Christ teaches, that judgment will be past at the great day according to men’s works in this respect. This is taught us by Christ in the most particular account of the proceedings of that day, that we have in the whole Bible; see [Matt. xxv. 34.](#), &c. It is evident that Christ thus represented the proceedings and determinations of this great day, as turning upon this one point, on purpose, and on design to lead us into this notion, and to fix it in us, that a charitable spirit and practice towards our brethren is necessary to salvation.

V. Consider what abundant encouragement the word of God gives, that you shall be no losers by your charity and bounty to them who are in want. As there *is* scarce any duty prescribed in the word of God, which is so much insisted on as this; so there is scarce any

to which there are so many promises of reward made. This virtue especially hath the promises of this life and that which is to come. If we believe the Scriptures, when a man charitably gives to his neighbour in want, the giver has the greatest advantage by it, even greater than the receiver: [Acts xx. 35](#). "I have showed you all things, how (hat so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." He that gives bountifully is a happier man than he that receives bountifully; [Prov. xiv. 21](#). "He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he."

Many persons are ready to look upon what is bestowed for charitable uses as lost. But we ought not to look upon it as lost, because it benefits those whom we ought to love as ourselves. And not only so, but it is not lost *to us*, if we give any credit to the Scriptures. See the advice that *Solomon* gives in [Eccl. xi. 1](#). "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shall find it after many days." By casting our bread upon the waters, *Solomon* means giving it to the poor, as appears by the next words, "Give a portion to seven, and also to eight."<sup>163</sup> Waters are sometimes put for people and multitudes.

What strange advice would this seem to many, to cast their bread upon the waters, which would seem to them like throwing it away! What more direct method to lose our bread, than to go and throw it into the sea? But the wise man tells us, No, it is not lost; you shall find it again after many days. It is not sunk, but you commit it to Providence; you commit it to the winds and waves: however it will come about to you, and you shall find it again after many days. Though it should be many days first, yet you shall find it at last, at a time when you most need it. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord: and God is not one of those who will not pay again what is lent to him. If you lend any thing to God., you commit it into faithful hands. [Prov. xix. 17](#). "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again." God will not only pay you again, but he will pay you with great increase; [Luke vi. 38](#). "Give, and it shall be given you," that is, in "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."

Men do not account that lost, that is let out to use: but what is bestowed in charity is lent to the Lord, and he repays with great increase. [Isa. xxxii. 8](#). "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." Here I would particularly observe,

1. That if you give with a spirit of true charity, you shall be rewarded in what is infinitely more valuable than what you give; even eternal riches in heaven. [Matt. x. 42](#). "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple; verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

Giving to our needy brethren, is in Scripture called laying up treasure in heaven, in bags that wax not old; [Luke xii. 33](#). "Sell what ye have and give alms, provide for yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, nor

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163 [Eccl. xi. 2](#).



moth corrupteth. Men, when they have laid up their money in their chests, do not suppose that they have thrown it away; but, on the contrary, that it is laid up safe. Much less is treasure thrown away, when it is laid up in heaven. What is laid up there is much safer than what is laid up in chests or cabinets.

You cannot lay up treasure on earth, but that it is liable to be stolen, or otherwise to fail. But there no thief approacheth nor moth corrupteth. It is committed to God's care, and he will keep it safely for you; and when you die, you shall receive it with infinite increase. Instead of a part of your earthly substance thus bestowed, you shall receive heavenly riches, on which you may live in the greatest fulness, honour, and happiness, to all eternity; and shall never be in want of any thing. After feeding with some of your bread those who cannot recompense you, you shall be rewarded at the resurrection, and eat bread in the kingdom of God. [Luke xiv. 13-16](#). "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: and thou shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. And when one of them that sat at meat with him, heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

2. If you give to the needy though but in the exercise of moral virtue, you will be in the way greatly to gain by it in your temporal interest. They who give in the exercise of a *gracious* charity, are in the way to be gainers both here and hereafter; and those that give in the exercise of a *moral* bounty and liberality, have many temporal promises made to them. We learn by the word of God, that they are in the way to be prospered in their outward affairs. Ordinarily such do not lose by it, but such a blessing attends their concerns, that they are paid doubly for it: [Prov. xi. 24, 25](#). "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and lie that watereth, shall be watered also himself." And [Prov. xxviii. 27](#). "He that giveth to the poor, shall not lack."

When men give to the needy, they do as it were sow seed for a crop. When men sow their seed, they seem to throw it away; yet they do not look upon it as thrown away; because, though they expect not the same again, yet they expect much more as the fruit of it: and if it be not certain that they shall have a crop, yet they are willing to run the venture of it; for that is the ordinary way wherein men obtain increase. So it is when persons give to the poor; though the promises of gaining thereby, in our outward circumstances, perhaps are not absolute; yet it is as much the ordinary consequence of it, as increase is of sowing seed. Giving to the poor, is in this respect compared to sowing seed, in [Eccl. xi. 6](#). "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." By withholding the hand, the wise man means, not giving to the poor. (See [ver. 1, 2](#).) It intimates, that giving to the poor is as likely a way to obtain prosperity and increase, as sowing seed in a field.

The husbandman doth not look upon his seed as lost, but is glad that he has opportunity to sow it. It grieves him not that he has land to be sown, but he rejoices in it. For the like reason we should not be grieved that we find needy people to bestow our charity upon; for this is as much an opportunity to obtain increase as the other.

Some may think this is strange doctrine; and it is to be feared, that not many will so far believe it as to give to the poor with as much cheerfulness as they sow their ground. However, it is the very doctrine of the word of God, [2 Cor. ix. 6, 7, 8](#). “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”

It is easy with God to make up to men what they give in charity. Many but little consider how their prosperity or ill success in their outward affairs depends upon Providence. There are a thousand turns of Providence, to which their affairs are liable, whereby God may either add to their outward substance, or diminish from it, a great deal more than they are ordinarily called to give to their neighbours. How easy is it with God to diminish what they possess by sickness in their families, by drought, or frost, or mildew, or vermin; by unfortunate accidents, by entanglements in their affairs, or disappointments in their business! And how easy is it with God to increase their substance, by suitable seasons, or by health and strength; by giving them fair opportunities for promoting their interest in their dealings with men; by conducting them in his providence, so that they attain their designs; and by innumerable other ways which might be mentioned! How often is it, that only one act of providence in a man’s affairs either adds to his estate, or diminishes from it, more than he would need to give to the poor in a whole year.

God hath told us, that this is the way to have his blessing attending our affairs. Thus, in the text, [ver. 10](#). “Thou shall surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto;” and [Prov. xxii. 9](#). “He that hath a bountiful eye, shall be blessed.” It is a remarkable evidence how little many men realize the things of religion, whatever they pretend; how little they realize that the Scripture is the word of God, or if it be, that he speaks true; that notwithstanding all the promises made in the Scripture to bounty to the poor, yet they are so backward to this duty, and are so afraid to trust God with a little of their estates. Observation may confirm the same thing which the word of God teaches on this head. God, in his providence, generally smiles upon and prospers those men who are of a liberal, charitable, bountiful spirit.

6. God hath threatened to follow with his curse those who are uncharitable to the poor; as [Prov. xxviii. 27](#). ” He that giveth to the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes,

shall have many a curse.” It is said, *he that hideth his eyes*, because this is the way of uncharitable men; they hide their eyes from seeing the wants of their neighbour. A charitable person, whose heart disposes him to bounty and liberality, will be quick-sighted to discern the needs of others. They will not be at any difficulty to find out who is in want; they will see objects enough of their charity, let them go whither they will.

But, on the contrary, he that is of a niggardly spirit, so that it goes against the grain to give any thing, he will be always at a loss for objects of his charity. Such men excuse themselves with this, that they find not any one to give to. They hide their eyes, and will not see their neighbour’s wants. If a particular object is presented, they will not very readily see his circumstances; they are a long while in being convinced that he is an object of charity. They hide their eyes; and it is not an easy thing to make them sensible of the necessities and distresses of their neighbour, or at least to convince them, that his necessities are such that they ought to give him any great matter.

Other men, who are of a bountiful spirit, can very easily see the objects of charity; but the uncharitable are very unapt both to see the proper objects of charity, and to see their obligations to this duty. The reason is, that they *are* of that sort spoken of here by the wise man, *they hide their eyes*. Men will readily see, where they are *willing* to see; but where they hate to see, they will hide their eyes.

God says, such as hides his eyes in this case shall have many a curse. Such an one is in the way to be cursed in soul and body, in both his spiritual and temporal affairs. We have shown already, how those that are charitable to the poor are in the way of being blessed. There are so many promises of the divine blessing, that we may look upon it as much the way to be blessed in our outward concerns, as sowing-seed in a field is the way to have increase. And to be close and uncharitable, is as much the way to be followed with a curse, as to be charitable is the way to be followed with a blessing. To withhold more than is meet, tends as much to poverty, as scattering tends to increase, [Prov. xi. 24](#). Therefore, if you withhold more than is meet, you will cross your own disposition, and will frustrate your own end. What you seek by withholding from your neighbour, is your own temporal interest and outward estate; but if you believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, you must believe that you cannot take a more direct course to lose, to be crossed and cursed in your temporal interest, than this of withholding from your indigent neighbour.

7. Consider, that you know not what calamitous and necessitous circumstances you yourselves or your children may be in. Perhaps you are ready to bless yourselves in your hearts, as though there were no danger of your being brought into calamitous and distressing circumstances. There is at present no prospect of it; and you hope you shall be able to provide well for your children. But you little consider what a shifting, changing, uncertain world you live in, and how often it hath so happened, that men have been reduced from the greatest





prosperity to the greatest adversity, and how often the children of the rich have been reduced to pinching want.

Agreeable to this is the advice that the wise man gives us, [Eccles. xi. 1, 2.](#) "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shall find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon earth." Thou knowest not what calamitous circumstances thou mayest be in thyself, in this changeable uncertain world. You know not what circumstances you or your children may be brought into by captivity, or other unthought of providences. Providence governs all things. Perhaps you may trust to your own wisdom to continue your prosperity; but you cannot alter what God determines and orders in providence, as in the words immediately following the fore-mentioned text in Ecclesiastes, "If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth; and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north; in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be; <sup>164</sup> " *i.e.* you cannot alter the determinations of Providence. You may trust to your own wisdom for future prosperity; but if God have ordained adversity, it *shall come*: as the clouds when full of rain, empty themselves upon the earth; so what is in the womb of Providence shall surely come to pass. And as Providence casts the tree, whether towards the south, or towards the north, whether for prosperity or adversity, there it shall be, for all that you can do to alter it; agreeably to what the wise man observes in [chap. vii. 13.](#) "Consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?"

This consideration, that you know not what calamity and necessity you may be in yourselves or your children, tends very powerfully to enforce this duty several ways.

1. This may put you upon considering how your hearts would be effected, if it should so be. If it should happen, that you or some of your children should be brought into such circumstances, as those of your neighbours, how grievous would it be to you! Now perhaps you say of this and the other poor neighbour, that they can do well enough; if they *be* pinched a little, they can live. Thus you can make light of their difficulties. But if Providence should so order it, that you or your children should be brought into the same circumstances, would you make light of them then? Would you not use another sort of language about it? Would you not think that your case was such as needed the kindness of your neighbours? Would you not think that they ought to be ready to help you? And would you not take it hardly, if you saw a contrary spirit in them, and saw that they made light of your difficulties?

If one of your children should be brought to poverty by captivity, <sup>165</sup> or otherwise, how would your hearts be affected in such a case? If you should hear that some persons had taken

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<sup>164</sup> [Eccl. xi. 3.](#)

<sup>165</sup> The author repeatedly brings in this idea, doubtless because Northampton, the place where the author lived, was at that time a frontier-town, and suffered much by the incursions of the Indians from Canada, who slaughtered and captivated the people, as they found opportunity.

pity on your child, and had been very bountiful to it, would you not think that they did well? Would you be at all apt to accuse them of folly or profuseness, that they should give so much to it?

2. If ever there should be such a time, your kindness to others now will be but a laying up against such a time. If you yourselves should be brought into calamity and necessity, then would you find what you have given in charity to others, lying ready in store for you. Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shall find it after many days, says the wise man. But when shall we find it? He tells us in the next verse; “Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.<sup>166</sup>” Then is the time when you shall find it, when the day of evil cometh. You shall again find your bread which you have cast upon the waters, when you shall want it most, and land in greatest necessity of it. God will keep it for you against such a time. When other bread shall fail, then God will bring to you the bread which you formerly cast upon the waters; so that you shall not famish. He that giveth to the poor shall not lack.

Giving to the needy is like laying up against winter, or against a time of calamity. It is the best way of laying up for yourselves and for your children. Children in a time of *need* very often find their fathers’ bread, that bread which their fathers had cast upon the waters. [Psal. xxxvii. 25.](#) “I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” Why? what is the reason of it? It follows in the [next verse.](#), “He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed.”

Whether the time will ever come or not, that we or our children shall be in distressing want of bread; yet doubtless evil will be on the earth. We shall have our times of calamity, wherein we shall stand in great need of God’s pity and help, if not of that of our fellow-creatures. And God hath promised that at such a time, he that hath been of a charitable spirit and practice, shall find help, [Psal. xli. 1-4.](#) “Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the earth; and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” Such as have been merciful and liberal to’ others in their distress, God will not forget it, but will so order it, that they shall have help when they are in distress.

Yea, their children shall reap the fruit of it in the day of trouble.

3. God hath threatened uncharitable persons, that if ever they come to be in calamity and distress they shall be left helpless; [Prov. xxi. 3.](#) “Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he shall cry himself and not be heard.”



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166 [Eccl. xi. 2.](#)

#### SECT. IV.

Objections which are sometimes made to the exercise of charity, answered.

I proceed now to answer some objections, which are sometimes made against this duty.

Object. I. I am in a natural condition, and if I should give to the poor, I should not do it with a right spirit, and so should get nothing by it.—To this I answer,

1. We have shown already that a temporal blessing is promised to a moral bounty and liberality. This is the way to be prospered; this is the way to increase. We find in Scripture many promises of temporal blessings to moral virtues; as to diligence in our business, to justice in our dealings, to faithfulness, to temperance,. So there are many blessings promised to bounty and liberality.

1. You may as well make the same objection against any other duty of religion. You may as well object against keeping the sabbath, against prayer, or public worship, or against doing any thing at all in religion; for while in a natural condition, you do not any of these duties with a right spirit. If you say, you do these duties because God hath commanded or required them of you, and you shall sin greatly if you neglect them; you shall increase your guilt; and so expose yourselves to the greater damnation and punishment. The same may be said of the neglect of this duty; the neglect of it is as provoking to God.

If you say that you read, and pray, and attend public worship, because that is the appointed way for you to seek salvation; so is bounty to the poor, as much as those.—The appointed way for us to seek the favour of God and eternal life, is the way of the performance of all known duties, of which giving to the poor is one as much known, and as necessary, as reading the Scriptures, praying, or any other. Showing mercy to the poor does as much belong to the appointed way of seeking salvation, as any other duty whatever. Therefore this is the way in which Daniel directed Nebuchadnezzar to seek mercy, in [Dan. iv. 27](#). “Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by *showing mercy to the poor*.”

Object. II. If I be liberal and bountiful, I shall only make a righteousness of it, and so it will do me more hurt than good. To this I say,

1. The same answer may be made to this, as to the former objection, *viz.* That you may as well make the same objection against doing any religious or moral duty at all. If this be a sufficient objection against deeds of charity, then it is a sufficient objection to prayer; for nothing is more common than for persons to make a righteousness of their prayers. So it is a good objection against your keeping the sabbath, or attending any public worship, or ever reading in the Bible; for of all these things you are in danger of making a righteousness.—Yea, if the objection be good against deeds of charity, then it is as good against acts of justice; and you may neglect to speak the truth, may neglect to pay your debts, may neglect acts of common humanity; for of all those things you are in danger of making a righteousness. So

that if your objection be good, you may throw up all religion, and live like heathens or atheists, and may be thieves, robbers, fornicators, adulterers, murderers, and commit all the sins that you can think of, lest if you should do otherwise, you should make a righteousness of your conduct.

2. Your objection carries it thus, that it is not best for you to do as God commands and counsels you to do. We find many commands in Scripture to be charitable to the poor; the Bible is full of them; and you are not excepted from those commands. God makes no exception of any particular kinds of persons that are especially in danger of making a righteousness of what they do; and God often

directs and counsels persons to this duty. Now will you presume to say that God has not directed you to the best way? He has advised you to do thus; but you think it not best for you, but that it would do you more hurt than good, if you should do it. You think there is other counsel better than God's, and that it is the best way for you to go contrary to God's commands.

Object. III. I have in times past given to the poor, but never found myself the better for it. I have heard ministers preach, that giving to the poor was the way to prosper: but I perceive not that I am more prosperous than I was before.—Yea, I have met with many misfortunes, crosses, and disappointments in my affairs since. And it may be that some will say, That very year, or soon after the very time, I had been giving to the poor, hoping to be blessed for it, I met with great losses, and things went hardly with me; and therefore I do not find what I hear preached about giving to the poor, as being the way to be blessed and prosperous, agreeable to my experience.

To this objection I shall answer several things:

1. Perhaps you looked out for the fulfilment of the promise too soon, before you had fulfilled the condition; as particularly, perhaps you have been so sparing and grudging in your kindness to the poor, that what you have done has been rather a discovery of a covetous, niggardly spirit, than of any bounty or liberality. The promises are not made to every man who gives any thing at all to the poor, let it be ever so little, and after what manner soever given. You mistook the promises, if you understood them so. A man may give something to the poor, and yet be entitled to no promise, either temporal or spiritual. The promises are made to *mercy* and *liberality*. But a man may give something, and yet be so niggardly and grudging in it, that what he gives may be, as the apostle calls it, a matter of covetousness. What he does may be more a manifestation of his covetousness and closeness, than any thing else. But there are no promises made to men's expressing their covetousness.

Perhaps what you gave was not freely given, but as it were of necessity. It was grudgingly; your hearts were grieved when you gave. And if you gave once or twice what was considerable, yet that doth not answer the rule. It may be, for all that, that in the general course of your lives you have been far from being kind and liberal to your neighbours. Perhaps you thought

that because you once or twice gave a few shillings to the poor, that then you stood entitled to the promises of being blessed in all your concerns, and of increasing and being established by liberal things; though in the general you have lived in a faulty neglect of the duty of charity. You raise objections from experience, before you have made trial. To give once, or twice, or thrice, is not to make trial, though you give considerably. You cannot make any trial, unless you become a liberal person, or unless you become such that you may be truly said to be of a liberal and bountiful practice. Let one who is truly such, and has been such in the general course of his life, tell what he hath found by experience.

2. If you have been liberal to the poor, and have met with calamities since, yet how can you tell how much greater calamities and losses you might have met with, if you had been otherwise? You say you have met with crosses, and disappointments, and frowns. If you expected to meet with no trouble in the world, because you gave to the poor, you mistook the matter. Though there be many and great promises made to the liberal, yet God hath nowhere promised, that they shall not find this world a world of trouble. It will be so to all. Man is born to sorrow, and must expect no other than to meet with sorrow here. But how can you tell how much greater sorrow you would have met with, if you had been close and unmerciful to the poor? how can you tell how much greater losses you would have met with? how much more vexation and trouble would have followed you? Have none ever met with greater frowns in their outward affairs, than you have?

3. How can you tell what blessings God hath yet in reserve for you, if you do but continue in well-doing? Although God hath promised great blessings to liberality to the poor, yet he hath not limited himself as to the time of the bestowment. If you have not yet seen any evident fruit of your kindness to the poor, yet the time may come when you shall see it remarkably, and that at a time when you most stand in need of it. You cast your bread upon the waters, and looked for it, and expected to find it again presently. And sometimes it is so; but this is not promised: it is promised, "Thou shall find it again *after many days*." God knows how to choose a time for you, better than you yourselves. You should therefore wait his time. If you go on in well-doing, God may bring it to you when you stand most in need.

It may be that there is some winter a-coming, some day of trouble; and God keeps your bread for you against that time; and then God will give you good measure, and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. We must trust in God's word for the bestowment of the promised reward, whether we can see in what manner it is done or no. Pertinent to the present purpose are those words of the wise man in [Eccles. xi. 4](#). "He that observeth the winds shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." In this context the wise man is speaking of charity to the poor, and comparing it to sowing seed; and advises us to trust Providence for success in that, as we do in sowing seed. He that regardeth the winds and clouds, to prognosticate thence prosperity to seed, and will not trust Providence with it, is not like to sow, nor to have bread-corn. So he that will not trust Providence for



the reward of his charity to the poor, is like to go without the blessing. After the words now quoted, follows his advice, ver. 6. ” In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.”—Therefore, ([Gal. vi. 9.](#)) “Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” You think you have not reaped yet. Whether you have or not, go on still in giving and doing good; and if you do so, you shall reap in due time. God only knows the due time, the best time, for you to reap.

Object. IV. Some may object against charity to such or such particular persons, that they are not obliged to give them any thing; for though they be needy, yet they are not in extremity. It is true they meet with difficulty, yet not so but that they can live, though they suffer some hardships.—But,

It doth not answer the rules of Christian charity, to relieve those only who are reduced to extremity, as might be abundantly shown. I shall at this time mention but two things as evidences of it.

1. We are commanded to love and treat one another as brethren: [1 Pet. iii. 8.](#) “Have compassion one of another; love as brethren; be pitiful.” Now, is it the part of brethren to refuse to help one another, and to do any thing for each other’s comfort, and for the relief of each other’s difficulties, only when they are in extremity? Doth it not become brothers and sisters to have a more friendly disposition one towards another, than this comes to? and to be ready to compassionate one another under difficulties, though they be not extreme?

The rule of the gospel is, that when we see our brother under any difficulty or burden, we should be ready to bear the burden with him: [Gal. vi. 2.](#) “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” So we are commanded, “by love to serve one another,” [Gal. v. 13.](#) The Christian spirit will make us apt to sympathize with our neighbour, when we see him under any difficulty: [Rom. xii. 15.](#) “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” When our neighbour is in difficulty, he is afflicted; and we ought to have such a spirit of love to him, as to be afflicted with him in his affliction. And if we ought to be afflicted with him, then it will follow, that we ought to be ready to relieve him; because, if we are afflicted with him, in relieving him we relieve ourselves. His relief is so far our own relief, as his affliction is our affliction. Christianity teaches us to be afflicted in our neighbour’s affliction; and nature teaches us to relieve ourselves when afflicted.

We should behave ourselves one towards another as brethren that are fellow-travellers; for we are pilgrims and strangers here on earth, and are on a journey. Now, if brethren be on a journey together, and one meet with difficulty in the way, doth it not become the rest to help him, not only in the extremity of broken bones, or the like, but as to provision for the journey if his own fall short? It becomes his fellow-travellers to afford him a supply out of their stores, and not to be over nice, exact, and fearful lest they give him too much: for it is but provision for a journey; and all are supplied when they get to their journey’s end.

2. That we should relieve our neighbour only when in extremity, is not agreeable to the rule of loving our neighbour as ourselves. That rule implies that our love towards our neighbour should work in the same manner, and express itself in the same ways, as our love towards ourselves. We are very sensible of our own difficulties; we should also be readily sensible of theirs. From love to ourselves, when we are under difficulties, and suffer hardships, we are concerned for our relief, are wont to seek relief, and lay ourselves out for it.—And as we would love our neighbour as ourselves, we ought in like manner to be concerned when our neighbour is under difficulty, and to seek his relief. We are wont to be much concerned about our own difficulties, though we be not reduced to extremity, and are willing in those cases to lay ourselves out for our own relief. So, as we would love our neighbour as ourselves, we should in like manner lay out ourselves to obtain relief for him, though his difficulties be not extreme.

Object. V. Some may object against charity to a particular object, because he is an ill sort of person; he deserves not that people should be kind to him; he is of a very ill temper, of an ungrateful spirit, and particularly, because he hath not deserved well of *them*, but has treated them ill, has been injurious to them, and even now entertains an ill spirit against them.

But we are obliged to relieve persons in want, notwithstanding these things, both by the general and particular rules of God's word.

1. We are obliged to do so by the *general* rules of Scripture. I shall mention two.

(1.) That of loving our neighbour as ourselves. A man may be our *neighbour*, though he be an ill sort of man, and even our enemy, as Christ himself teaches us by his discourse with the lawyer, [Luke x. 25.](#), &c. A certain lawyer came to Christ, and asked him, what he should do to inherit eternal life? Christ asked him, how it was written in the law? He answers, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." Christ tells him, that if he shall do thus, he shall live. But then the lawyer asks him, who is his neighbour? because it was a received doctrine among the Pharisees, that no man was their neighbour, but their friends, and those of the same people and religion.—Christ answers him by a parable, or story of a certain man, who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed from him, leaving him half dead. Soon after there came a priest that way, who saw the poor man that had been thus cruelly treated by the thieves; but passed by without affording him any relief. The same was done by a Levite.—But a certain Samaritan coming that way, as soon as he saw the half-dead man, had compassion on him, took him up, bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, earned him to the inn, and took care of him, paying the innkeeper money for his past and future expense; and promising him still more, if he should find it necessary to be at more expense on behalf of the man.

Then Christ asks the lawyer, which of these three, the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan, was neighbour to the man that fell among the thieves. Christ proposed this in such a manner, that the lawyer could not help owning, that the Samaritan did well in relieving the Jew, that he did the duty of a neighbour to him. Now, there was an inveterate enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans. They hated one another more than any other nation in the world; and the Samaritans were a people exceedingly troublesome to the Jews; yet we see that Christ teaches, that the Jews ought to do the part of neighbours to the Samaritans; *i. e.* to love them as themselves; for it was that of which Christ was speaking.

And the consequence was plain. If the Samaritan was neighbour to the distressed Jew, then the Jews, by a parity of reason, were neighbours to the Samaritans. If the Samaritan did well, in relieving a Jew that was his enemy; then the Jews would do well in relieving the Samaritans, their enemies.—What I particularly observe is, that Christ here plainly teaches, that our enemies, those that abuse and injure us, are our neighbours, and therefore come under the rule of loving our neighbour as ourselves.

(2.) Another general rule that obliges us to the same thing, is that wherein we are commanded to love one another, as Christ hath loved us. We have it [John xiii. 34](#). “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” Christ calls it a new commandment with respect to that old commandment of loving our neighbour as ourselves. This command of loving our neighbour as Christ hath loved us, opens our duty to us in a new manner, and in a further degree than that did. We must not only love our neighbour as ourselves, but as Christ hath loved us. We have the same again, [John xv. 12](#). “This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.”

Now, the meaning of this is, not that we should love one another to the same *degree* that Christ loved us; though there ought to be a proportion, considering our nature and capacity; but that we should exercise our love one to another in like *manner*. As, for instance, Christ hath loved us so as to be willing to deny himself, and to suffer greatly, in order to help us; so should we be willing to deny ourselves, in order to help one another. Christ loved us, and showed us great kindness though we were far below him; so should we show kindness to those of our fellow-men who are far below us. Christ denied himself to help us, though we are not able to recompense him; so should we be willing to lay out ourselves to help our neighbour, freely expecting nothing again. Christ loved us, was kind to us, and was willing to relieve us, though we were very evil and hateful, of an evil disposition, not deserving any good, but deserving only to be hated, and treated with indignation; so we should be willing to be kind to those who are of an ill disposition, and are very undeserving. Christ loved us, and laid himself out to relieve us, though we were his enemies, and had treated him ill; so we, as we would love one another as Christ hath loved us, should relieve those who are our enemies, hate us, have an ill spirit toward us, and have treated us ill.





2. We are obliged to this duty by many *particular* rules. We are particularly required to be kind to the unthankful and to the evil; and therein to follow the example of our heavenly Father, who causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. We are obliged, not only to be kind to them that are so to us, but to them that hate, and that despitefully use us. I need not mention the particular places which speak to this effect.

Not but that when persons are virtuous and pious, and of a grateful disposition, and are friendly disposed towards us, they are more the objects of our charity for it, and our obligation to kindness to them is the greater. Yet if things be otherwise, that doth not render them not fit objects of our charity, nor set us free from obligation to kindness towards them.

Object. VI. Some may object from their own circumstances, that they have nothing to spare; they have not more than enough for themselves.—I answer,

1. It must doubtless be allowed that in some cases persons, by reason of their own circumstances, are not obliged to give to others.—For instance, if there be a contribution for the poor, they are not obliged to join in the contribution, who are in as much need as those are for whom the contribution is made. It savours of ridiculous vanity in them to contribute with others for such as are not more needy than they. It savours of a proud desire to conceal their own circumstances, and an affectation of having them accounted above what they in truth are.

2. There are scarcely any who may not make this objection, as they interpret it. There is no person who may not say, he has not more than enough for himself, as he may mean by *enough*. He may intend, that he has not more than he desires, or more than he can dispose of to his own advantage; or not so much, but that, if he had any thing less, he should look upon himself in worse circumstances than he is in now. He will own, that he could live if he had less; but then he will say he could not live so well. Rich men may say, they have not more than enough for themselves, as they may mean by it. They need it all, they may say, to support their honour and dignity, as is proper for the place and degree in which they stand. Those who are poor, to be sure, will say, *they* have not too much for themselves; those who are of the middle sort will say, *they* have not too much for themselves; and the rich will say, *they* have not too much for themselves. Thus there will be none found to give to the poor.

3. In many cases, we may, by the rules of the gospel, be obliged to give to others, when we cannot do it without suffering ourselves; as if our neighbour's difficulties and necessities be much greater than our own, and we see that he is not like to be otherwise relieved, we should be willing to suffer with him, and to take part of his burden on ourselves; else how is that rule of *bearing one another's burdens* fulfilled? If we be never obliged to relieve others' burdens, but when we can do it without burdening ourselves, then how do we bear our neighbour's burdens, when we bear no burden at all? Though we may not have a superfluity,

yet we may be obliged to afford relief to others who are in much greater necessity; as appears by that rule, [Luke iii. 11](#). “He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.”—Yea, they who are very poor may be obliged to give for the relief of others in much greater distress than they. If there be no other way of relief, those who have the lightest burden are obliged still to take some part of their neighbour’s burden, to make it the more supportable. A brother may be obliged to help a brother in extremity, though they are both very much in want. The apostle commends the Macedonian Christians, that they were liberal to their brethren, though they themselves were in deep poverty: [2 Cor. viii. 1, 2](#). “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: how in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”

4. Those who have not too much for themselves are willing to spare seed to sow, that they may have fruit hereafter. Perhaps they need that which they scatter in the-field, and seem to throw away. They may need it for bread for their families; yet they will spare seed to sow, that they may provide for the future, and may have increase. But we have already shown, that giving to the poor is in Scripture compared to sowing seed, and is as much the way to increase as the sowing of seed is. It doth not tend to poverty, but the contrary; it is not the way to diminish our substance, but to increase it. All the difficulty in this matter is in trusting God with what we give, in trusting his promises. If men could but trust the faithfulness of God to his own promises, they would give freely.

Object. VII. Some may object concerning a particular person, that they do not certainly know whether he be an object of charity or not. They are not perfectly acquainted with his circumstances; neither do they know what sort of man he is. They know not whether he be in want as he pretends. Or if they know this, they know not how he came to be in want; whether it were not by his own idleness, or prodigality. Thus they argue that they cannot be obliged, till they certainly know these things.—I reply,

1. This is Nabal’s objection, for which he is greatly condemned in Scripture; see [1 Sam. xxv](#). David in his exiled state came and begged relief of Nabal. Nabal objected, [ver. 10, 11](#). “Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?” His objection was, that David was a stranger to him; he did not know who he was, nor what his circumstances were. He did not know but that he was a runaway: and he was not obliged to support and harbour a runaway. He objected, that he knew not that he was a proper object of charity; that he knew not but that he was very much the contrary.

But Abigail no way countenanced his behaviour herein, but greatly condemned it. She calls him a man of Belial, and says that he was as his name was; Nabal was his name, and folly was with him. And her behaviour was very contrary to his; and she is greatly commended



for it. The Holy Ghost tells us in that chapter, [ver. 3.](#) that " she was a woman of a good understanding." At the same time God exceedingly frowned on Nabal's behaviour on this occasion, as we are informed that about ten days after God smote Nabal that he died; [ver. 38.](#)

This story is doubtless told us partly for this end, to discountenance too great a scrupulosity as to the object on whom we bestow our charity, and the making of this merely an objection against charity to others, that we do not certainly know their circumstances. It is true, when we have opportunity to become certainly acquainted with their circumstances, it is well to embrace it: and to be influenced in a measure by probability in such cases, is not to be condemned. Yet it is better to give to several that are not objects of charity, than to send away empty one that is.

2. We are commanded to be kind to strangers whom we know not, nor their circumstances. This is commanded in many places; but I shall mention only one; [Heb. xiii. 2.](#) "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." By strangers here the apostle means one whom we know not, and whose circumstances we know not; as is evident by these words, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Those who entertained angels unawares, did not know the persons whom they entertained, nor their circumstances: else how could it be unawares?

Object. VIII. Some may say they are not obliged to give to the poor, till they ask. If any man is in necessity, let him come and make known his straits to me, and then it will be time enough for me to give him. Or if he need a public contribution, let him come and ask. I do not know that the congregation or church is obliged to relieve till they ask relief.—I answer,

1. It surely is the most charitable, to relieve the needy in that way wherein we shall do them the greatest kindness. Now it is certain that we shall do them a greater kindness by inquiring into their circumstances, and relieving them, without putting them upon begging. There is none of us but who, if it were their case, would look upon it more kind in our neighbours, to inquire into our circumstances, and help us of their own accord. To put our neighbours upon begging in order to relief, is painful. It is more charitable, more brotherly, more becoming Christians and the disciples of Jesus, to do it without. I think this is self-evident, and needs no proof.

2. This is not agreeable to the character of the liberal man given in Scripture; *viz.* that devises liberal things. [Isa. xxxii. 8.](#) It is not to devise liberal things, if we neglect all liberality till the poor come a begging to us. But to inquire who stand in need of our charity, and to contrive to relieve them in the way that shall do them the greatest kindness; that is to devise liberal things.

3. We should not commend a man for doing so to his own brother. If a man had an own brother or sister in great straits, and he were well able to supply them, under the pretence, that if he or she want any thing, let them come and ask and I will give them; we should

hardly think such an one behaved like a brother. Christians are commanded to love as brethren, to look upon one another as brethren in Christ, and to treat one another as such.

4. We should commend others for taking a method contrary to that which is proposed by the objector. If we should hear or read of a people who were so charitable, who took such care of the poor, and were so concerned that none among them should suffer, who were proper objects of charity; that they were wont diligently to inquire into the circumstances of their neighbours, to find out who were needy, and liberally supplied them of their own accord; I say, if we should hear or read of such a people, would it not appear well to us? Should not we have the better thought of that people, on that account?

Object. IX. He has brought himself to want by his own fault.—In reply, it must be considered what you mean by his fault.

1. If you mean a want of a natural faculty to manage affairs to advantage, that is to be considered as his calamity. Such a faculty is a gift that God bestows on some, and not on others; and it is not owing to themselves. You ought to be thankful that God hath given you such a gift, which he hath denied to the person in question. And it will be a very suitable way for you to show your thankfulness, to help those to whom that gift is denied, and let them share the benefit of it with you. This is as reasonable as that he to whom Providence has imparted sight, should be willing to help him to whom sight is denied, and that he should have the benefit of the sight of others, who has none of his own: or, as that he to whom God hath given wisdom, should be willing that the ignorant should have the benefit of his knowledge.

2. If they have been reduced to want by some oversight, and are to be blamed that they did not consider for themselves better; yet that doth not free us from all obligation to charity towards them. If we should for ever refuse to help men because of that, it would be for us to make their inconsiderateness and imprudent act, an unpardonable crime, quite contrary to the rules of the gospel, which insist so much upon forgiveness.—We should not be disposed so highly to resent such an oversight in any for whom we have a dear affection, as our children, or our friends. We should not refuse to help them in that necessity and distress, which they brought upon themselves by their own inconsiderateness. But we ought to have a dear affection and concern for the welfare of all our fellow-Christians, whom we should love as brethren, and as Christ hath loved us.

3. If they are come to want by a vicious idleness and prodigality; yet we are not thereby excused from all obligation to relieve them, unless they continue in those vices. If they continue not in those vices, the rules of the gospel direct us to forgive them; and if their fault be forgiven, then it will not remain to be a bar in the way of our charitably relieving them. If we do otherwise, we shall act in a manner very contrary to the role of *loving one another as Christ hath loved us*. Now Christ hath loved us, pitied us, and greatly laid out himself to relieve us from that want and misery which we brought on ourselves by our own

folly and wickedness. We foolishly and perversely threw away those riches with which we were provided, upon which we might have lived and been happy to all eternity.

4. If they continue in the same courses still, yet that doth not excuse us from charity to their families that are innocent. If we cannot relieve those of their families without their having something of it, yet that ought not to be a bar in the way of our charity; and that because it is supposed that those of their families are proper objects of charity; and those that are so, we are bound to relieve: the command is positive and absolute. If we look upon that which the heads of the families have of what we give, to be entirely lost; yet we had better lose something of our estate, than suffer those who are really proper objects of charity to remain without relief.

Object. X. Some may object and say, Others do not their duty. If others did their duty, the poor would be sufficiently supplied. If others did as much as we in proportion to their ability and obligation, the poor would have enough to help them out of their straits. Or some may say, it belongs to others more than it does to us. They have relations that ought to help them; or there are others to whom it more properly belongs than to us.

Ans. We ought to relieve those who are in want though brought to it through others' fault. If our neighbour be poor, though others be to blame that it is so, yet that excuses us not from helping him. If it belong to others more than to us, yet if those others will neglect their duty, and our neighbour therefore remains in want, we may be obliged to relieve him. If a man be brought into straits through the injustice of others, suppose by thieves or robbers, as the poor Jew whom the Samaritan relieved; yet we may be obliged to relieve him, though it be not through our fault that he is in want, but through that of other men. And whether that fault be a commission or a neglect alters not the case.

As to the poor Jew that fell among thieves between Jerusalem and Jericho, it more properly belonged to those thieves who brought him into that distress, to relieve him, than to any other person. Yet seeing they would not do it, others were not excused; and the Samaritan did no more than his duty, relieving him as he did, though it properly belonged to others.—Thus if a man have children or other relations, to whom it most properly belongs to relieve him; yet if they will not do it, the obligation to relieve him falls upon others. So for the same reason we should do the more for the relief of the poor, because others neglect to do their proportion, or what belongs to them; and that because by the neglect of others to do their proportion they need the more, their necessity is the greater.

Object. XI. The law makes provision for the poor, and obliges the respective towns in which they live to provide for them; therefore some argue, that there is no occasion for particular persons to exercise any charity this way. They say, the case is not the same with us now, as it was in the primitive church; for then Christians were under a heathen government; and however the charity of Christians in those times be much to be commended, yet now, by reason of our different circumstances, there is no occasion for private charity; be-

cause, in the state in which Christians now are, provision is made for the poor otherwise.—This objection is built upon these two suppositions, both which I suppose are false.

1. That the towns are obliged by law to relieve every one who otherwise would be an object of charity. This I suppose to be false, unless it be supposed that none are proper objects of charity, but those that have no estate left to live upon, which is very unreasonable, and what I have already shown to be false, in answer to the fourth objection, in showing that it doth not answer the rules of Christian charity, to relieve only those who are reduced to extremity.

Nor do I suppose it was ever the design of the law, requiring the various towns to support their own poor, to cut off all occasion for Christian charity: nor is it fit there should be such a law. It is fit that the law should make provision for those that have no estates of their own; it is not fit that persons who are reduced to that extremity should be left to so precarious a source of supply as a voluntary charity. They are in extreme necessity of relief, and therefore it is fit that there should be something sure for them to depend on. But a voluntary charity in this corrupt world is an uncertain thing. Therefore the wisdom of the legislature did not think fit to leave those who are so reduced, upon such a precarious foundation for subsistence. But I suppose not that it was ever the design of the law to make such provision for all that are in want, as to leave no room for Christian charity.

2. This objection is built upon another supposition, which is equally false, *viz.* That there are in fact none who are proper objects of charity, but those that are relieved by the town. Let the design of the law be what it will, yet if there are in fact persons who are so in want, as to stand in need of our charity, then that law doth not free us from obligation to relieve them by our charity. For as we have just now shown, in answer to the last objection, if it more properly belong to others to relieve them than us; yet if they do it not, we are not free. So that if it be true, that it *belongs* to the town to relieve all who are proper objects of charity; yet if the town *in fact* do it not, we are not excused.

If one of our neighbours suffers through the fault of a particular person, of a thief or robber, or of a town, it alters not the case: but if he suffer and be without relief, it is an act of Christian charity in us to relieve him. Now it is too obvious to be denied, that there are in fact persons so in want, that it would be a charitable act in us to help them, notwithstanding all that is done by the town. A man must hide his mental eyes, to think otherwise.

**CHRISTIAN CAUTIONS ;**

*OR,*

**THE NECESSITY OF SELF-EXAMINATION.**



[PSALM cxxxix. 23, 24.](#)

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.\*

## INTRODUCTION.

THIS psalm is a meditation on the omniscience of God, or upon his perfect view and knowledge of every thing, which the psalmist represents by that perfect knowledge which God had of all his *actions*, his downsitting and his uprising; and of his *thoughts*, so that he knew his thoughts afar off; and of his *words*, “There is not a word in my tongue,<sup>167</sup>” says the psalmist, “but thou knowest it altogether.” Then he represents it by the impossibility of fleeing from the divine presence, or of hiding from him; so that if he should go into heaven, or hide himself in hell, or fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, yet he would not be hid from God; or if he should endeavour to hide himself in darkness, yet that would not cover him; but the darkness and light are both alike to him. Then he represents it by the knowledge which God had of him while in his mother’s womb, [ver. 15, 16](#). “My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret; thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written.”

After this the psalmist observes what must be inferred as a necessary *consequence* of this omniscience of God, *viz.* that he will slay the wicked, since he seeth all their wickedness, and nothing of it is hid from him. And last of all, the psalmist improves this meditation upon God’s all-seeing eye, in begging of God that he would search and try him, to see if there were any wicked way in him, and lead him in the way everlasting.

Three things may be noted in the words.

1. The act of mercy which the psalmist implores of God towards himself, *viz.* that God would search him. “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts.”

2. In what respect he desires to be searched, *viz.* “to see if there were any wicked way in him.<sup>168</sup>” We are not to understand by it, that the psalmist means that God should search him for his own information. What he had said before, of God’s knowing all things, implies that he hath no need of that. The psalmist had said, in the second verse, that God understood his thought afar off; *i.e.* it was all plain before him, he saw it without difficulty, or without being forced to come nigh, and diligently to observe. That which is plain to be seen, may be seen at a distance.

Therefore, when the psalmist prays that God would search him, to see if there were any wicked way in him, he cannot mean, that he should search that he himself might see or be informed, but that the *psalmist* might see and be informed. He prays that God would search him by his discovering light; that he would lead him thoroughly to discern himself, and see whether there were any wicked way in him. Such figurative expressions are often used in Scripture. The word of God is said to be a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Not that the word itself discerns, but it searches and opens our hearts to view; so that it en-

167 [Psa. cxxxix. 4.](#)

168 [Psa. cxxxix. 24.](#)



ables us to discern the temper and desires of our hearts. So God is often said to *try* men. He doth not try them for his own information, but for the discovery and manifestation of them to themselves or others.

3. Observe to what end he thus desires God to search him, *viz.* “That he might be led in the way everlasting; <sup>169</sup>” *i.e.* not only in a way which may have a specious show, and appear right to him for a while, and in which he may have peace and quietness for the present; but in the way which will hold, which will stand the test, which he may confidently abide by for ever, and always approve of as good and right, and in which he may always have peace and joy. It is said, that “the way of the ungodly shall perish,” [Psal. i. 6](#). In opposition to this, the way of the righteous is in the text said *to last for ever*.

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169 [Psalm 139. 24.](#)

## SECT. I.

All men should be much concerned to know whether they do not live in some way of sin.

David was much concerned to know this concerning himself: he searched himself, he examined his own heart and ways; but he did not trust to that; he was still afraid lest there might be some wicked way in him, which had escaped his notice: therefore he cries to God to search him. And his earnestness appears in the frequent repetition of the same request in different words: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts.<sup>170</sup>” He was very earnest to know whether there were not some evil way or other in him, in which he went on, and did not take notice of.

1. We ought to be much concerned to know whether we do not live in a *state of sin*. All unregenerate men live in sin. We are born under the power and dominion of sin, are sold under sin; every unconverted sinner is a devoted servant to sin and Satan. We should look upon it as of the greatest importance to us, to know in what state we are, whether we ever had any change made in our hearts from sin to holiness, or whether we be not still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; whether ever sin were truly mortified in us; whether we do not live in the sin of unbelief, and in the rejection of the Saviour. This is what the apostle insists upon with the Corinthians, [2 Cor. xiii. 5](#). “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” Those who entertain the opinion and hope of themselves, that they are godly, should take great care to see that their foundation be right. Those that are in doubt should not give themselves rest till the matter be resolved.

Every unconverted person lives in a *sinful way*. He not only lives in a particular evil practice, but the whole course of his life is sinful. The imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually. He not only doth evil, but he doth no good, [Psal. xiv. 3](#). “They are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no not one.” Sin is an unconverted man’s trade; it is the work and business of his life; for he is the servant of sin. And ordinarily hypocrites, or those who are wicked men, and yet think themselves godly, and make a profession accordingly, are especially odious and abominable to God.

2. We ought to be much concerned to know whether we do not live in *some particular way* which is offensive and displeasing to God: this is what I principally intend. We ought to be much concerned to know whether we do not live in the gratification of some *lust*, either in practice or in our thoughts: whether we do not live in the omission of some *duty*, some thing which God expects we should do; whether we do not go into some practice or manner of behaviour, which is not *warrantable*. We should inquire whether we do not live

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<sup>170</sup> [Psa. cxxxix. 23](#).

in some practice which is against our light, and whether we do not allow ourselves in *known* sins.

We should be strict to inquire whether or no we have not hitherto allowed ourselves in some or other sinful way, through wrong principles and *mistaken notions* of our duty: whether we have not lived in the practice of some things offensive to God, through want of *care* and watchfulness, and observation of ourselves. We should be concerned to know whether we live not in some way which doth not become the *profession* we make; and whether our practice in some things be not *unbecoming Christians*, contrary to christian rules, not suitable for the disciples and followers of the holy Jesus, the Lamb of God. We ought to be concerned to know this, because,

(1.) God requires of us, that we exercise the utmost *watchfulness* and diligence in his service. *Reason* teaches, that it is our duty to exercise the utmost care, that we may know the mind and will of God, and our duty in all the branches of it, and to use our utmost diligence in every thing to do it; because the service of God is the great business of our lives, it is that work which is the end of our beings; and God is worthy, that we should serve him to the utmost of our power in all things. This is what *God* often expressly requires of us; [Deut. iv. 9](#). “Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things that thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life.” And [v. 15, 16](#). “Take ye therefore good heed to yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves.” And [Deut. vi. 17](#). “You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes which he hath commanded thee.” And [Prov. iv. 23](#). “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” So we are commanded by Christ to “watch and pray;” [Matt. xxvi. 41](#). and [Luke xxi. 34, 36](#). “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life.” [Eph. v. 15](#). “See that ye walk circumspectly.” So that if we be found in any evil way whatsoever, it will not excuse us, that it was through inadvertence, or that we were not aware of it; as long as it is through want of that care and watchfulness in us, which we ought to have maintained.

(2.) If we live in any way of sin, we live in a way whereby God is *dishonoured*; but the honour of God ought to be supremely regarded by all. If every one would make it his great care in all things to obey God, to live justly and holily, to walk in every thing according to Christian rules; and would maintain a strict, watchful, and scrupulous eye over himself, to see if there were no wicked way in him; would give diligence to amend whatsoever is amiss; would avoid every unholy, unChristian, and sinful way; and if the practice of all were universally as becometh Christians; how greatly would this be to the glory of God, and of Jesus Christ! How greatly would it be to the credit and honour of religion! How would it tend to excite a high esteem of religion in spectators, and to recommend a holy life! How would it stop the mouths of objectors and opposers! How beautiful and amiable would religion then

appear, when exemplified in the lives of Christians, not maimed and mutilated, but whole and entire, as it were in its true shape, having all its parts and its proper beauty! Religion would then appear to be an amiable thing indeed.

If those who call themselves Christians, thus walked in all the paths of virtue and holiness, it would tend more to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in the world, the conviction of sinners, and the propagation of religion among unbelievers, than all the sermons in the world, so long as the lives of those who are called Christians continue as they are now. For want of this *concern* and *watchfulness* in the degree in which it ought to take place, many truly godly persons adorn not their profession as they ought to do, and, on the contrary, in some things dishonour it. For want of being so much concerned as they ought to be, to know whether they do not walk in some way that is unbecoming a Christian, and offensive to God; their behaviour in some things is very unlovely, and such as is an offence and stumbling-block to others, and gives occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.

(3.) We should be much concerned to know whether we do not live in some way of sin, as we would regard our own *interest*. If we live in any way of sin, it will be exceedingly to our hurt. Sin, as it is the most hateful evil, is that which is most prejudicial to our interest, and tends most to our hurt of anything in the world. If we live in any way that is displeasing to God, it may be the ruin of our souls. Though men reform all other wicked practices, yet if they live in but one sinful way, which they do not forsake, it may prove their everlasting undoing.

If we live in any way of sin, we shall thereby *provoke God* to anger, and bring guilt upon our own souls. Neither will it excuse us, that we were not sensible how evil that way was in which we walked; that we did not consider it; that we were blind as to any evil in it. We contract guilt not only by living in those ways which we know, but in those which we *might* know to be sinful, if we were but sufficiently concerned to know what is sinful and what not, and to examine ourselves, and search our own hearts and ways. If we walk in some evil way, and know it not for want of watchfulness and consideration, that will not excuse us; for we ought to have watched and considered, and made the most diligent inquiry.

If we walk in some evil way, it will be a great prejudice to us in *this world*. We shall thereby be deprived of that comfort which we otherwise might enjoy, and shall expose ourselves to a great deal of soul trouble, and sorrow, and darkness, which otherwise we might have been free from. A wicked way is the original way of pain or grief. In it we shall expose ourselves to the judgments of God, even in this world; and we shall be great losers by it, in respect to our *eternal interest*; and that though we may not live in a way of sin wilfully, and with a deliberate resolution, but carelessly, and through the deceitfulness of our corruptions. However, we shall offend God, and prevent the flourishing of grace in our hearts, if not the very being of it.

Many are very careful that they do not proceed in mistakes, where their temporal interest is concerned. They will be strictly careful that they be not led on blindfold in the bargains which they make; in their traffic one with another, they are careful to have their eyes about them, and to see that they go safely in these cases; and why not, where the interest of their souls is concerned?

(4.) We should be much concerned to know whether we do not live in some way of sin, because we are exceedingly *prone* to walk in some such way.—The heart of man is naturally prone to sin; the weight of the soul is naturally that way, as the stone by its weight tendeth downwards. And there is very much of a remaining proneness to sin in the saints. Though sin be mortified in them, yet there is a body of sin and death remaining; there are all manner of lusts and corrupt inclinations. We are exceeding apt to get into some ill path or other. Man is so prone to sinful ways, that without maintaining a constant strict watch over himself, no other can be expected than that he will walk in some way of sin.

Our hearts are so full of sin, that they are ready to betray us. That to which men are prone, they are apt to get into before they are aware. Sin is apt to steal in upon us unawares. Besides this, we live in a world where we continually meet with temptations; we walk in the midst of snares; and the devil, a subtle adversary, is continually watching over us, endeavouring, by all manner of wiles and devices, to lead us astray into by-paths, [2 Cor. xi. 2, 3](#). “I am jealous over you. I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety; so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” [1 Pet. v. 8](#). “Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”—These things should make us the more jealous of ourselves.

(5.) We ought to be concerned to know whether we do not live in some way of sin; because there are many who live in such ways, and do not *consider* it, or are not sensible of it. It is a thing of great importance that we should know it, and yet the knowledge is not to be acquired without difficulty. Many live in ways which are offensive to God, who are not sensible of it. They are strangely blinded in this case. [Psal. xix. 12](#). “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.” By secret faults, the psalmist means those which are secret to himself, those sins which were in him, or which he was guilty of, and yet was not aware of.

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## SECT. II.

Why many live in sin, and yet not know it.

That the knowing whether we do not live in some way of sin is attended with difficulty, is not because the rules of judging in such a case are not plain or plentiful. God hath abundantly taught us what we ought, and what we ought not, to do; and the rules by which we are to walk are often set before us in the preaching of the word. So that the difficulty of knowing whether there be any wicked way in us, is not for want of external light, or for want of God's having told us plainly and abundantly what are wicked ways. But that many persons live in ways which are displeasing to God, and yet are not sensible of it, may arise from the following things.

1. From the blinding *deceitful nature of sin*. The heart of man is full of sin and corruption, and that corruption is of an exceedingly darkening, blinding nature. Sin always carries a degree of darkness with it; and the more it prevails, the more it darkens and deludes the mind.—It is from hence that the knowing whether there be any wicked way in us is a difficult thing. The difficulty is not at all for want of light without us, not at all because the word of God is not plain, or the rules not clear; but it is because of the darkness within us. The light shines clear enough around us, but the fault is in our eyes; they are darkened and blinded by a pernicious distemper.

Sin is of a deceitful nature, because, so far as it prevails, so far it gains the *inclination* and will, and that sways and biasses the judgment. So far as any lust prevails, so far it biasses the mind to approve of it. So far as any sin sways the inclination or will, so far that sin seems pleasing and good to the man; and that which is pleasing, the mind is prejudiced to think is right.—Hence when any lust hath so gained upon a man, as to get him into a sinful way or practice; it having gained his will, also prejudices his understanding. And the more irregular a man walks, the more will his mind probably be darkened and blinded; because by so much the more doth sin prevail.

Hence many men who live in ways which are not agreeable to the rules of God's word, yet are not *sensible* of it; and it is a difficult thing to make them so; because the same lust that leads them into that evil way, blinds them in it.—Thus, if a man live a way of malice or envy, the more malice or envy prevails, the more will it blind his understanding to approve of it. The more a man hates his neighbour, the more will he be disposed to think that he has just cause to hate him, and that his neighbour is hateful, and deserves to be hated, and that it is not his duty to love him. So if a man live in any way of lasciviousness, the more his impure lust prevails, the more sweet and pleasant will it make the sin appear, and so the more will he be disposed and prejudiced to think there is no evil in it.

So the more a man lives in a way of covetousness, or the more inordinately he desires the profits of the world, the more will he think himself excusable in so doing, and the more

will he think that he has a necessity of those things, and cannot do without them. And if they be necessary, then he is excusable for eagerly desiring them. The same might be shown of all the lusts which are in men's hearts. By how much the more they prevail, by so much the more do they blind the mind, and dispose the judgment to approve of them. All lusts are deceitful lusts. [Eph. iv. 22.](#) "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." And even godly men may for a time be blinded and deluded by a lust, so far as to live in a way which is displeasing to God.

The lusts of men's hearts—prejudicing them in favour of sinful practices, to which those lusts tend, and in which they delight—stir up *carnal reason*, and put men, with all the subtlety of which they are capable, to invent pleas and arguments to justify such practices. When men are very strongly inclined and tempted to any wicked practice, and conscience troubles them about it, they will rack their brains to find out arguments to stop the mouth of conscience, and to make themselves believe that they may lawfully proceed in that practice.

When men have entered upon an ill practice, and proceeded in it, then their *self-love* prejudices them to approve of it. Men do not love to condemn themselves; they are prejudiced in their own favour, and in favour of whatever is found in themselves. Hence they will find out good names, by which to call their evil dispositions and practices; they will make them virtuous, or at least will make them innocent. Their covetousness they will call prudence and diligence in business. If they rejoice at another's calamity, they pretend it is because they hope it will do him good, and will humble him. If they indulge in excessive drinking, it is because their constitutions require it. If they talk against and backbite their neighbour, they call it zeal against sin; it is because they would bear a testimony against such wickedness. If they set up their wills to oppose others in public affairs, then they call their wilfulness conscience, or respect to the public good.—Thus they find good names for all their evil ways.

Men are very apt to bring their principles to their practices, and not their practices to their principles, as they ought to do. They, in their practice, comply not with their consciences; but all their strife is to bring their consciences to comply with their practice.

On the account of this deceitfulness of sin, and because we have so much sin dwelling in our hearts, it is a difficult thing to pass a true judgment on our own ways and practices. On this account we should make diligent search, and be much concerned to know whether there be not some wicked way in us. [Heb. iii. 12, 13.](#) "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Men can more easily see faults in others than they can in themselves. When they see others out of the way, they will presently condemn them, when perhaps they do, or have done, the same, or the like, themselves, and in themselves justify it. Men can discern motes in others' eyes, better than they can beams in their own. [Prov. xxi. 2.](#) "Every way of man is

right in his own eyes.” The heart in this matter is exceedingly deceitful. [Jer. xvii. 9.](#) “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” We ought not therefore to trust in our own hearts in this matter, but to keep a jealous eye on ourselves, to pry into our own hearts and ways, and to cry to God that he would search us. [Prov. xxviii. 26.](#) “He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.”

2. *Satan* also sets in with our deceitful lusts, and labours to blind us in this matter. He is continually endeavouring to lead us into sinful ways, and sets in with carnal reason to flatter us in such ways, and to blind the conscience. He is the prince of darkness; he labours to blind and deceive; it hath been his work ever since he began it with our first parents.

3. Sometimes men are not sensible, because they are *stupidified through custom*. Custom in an evil practice *stupidifies* the mind, so that it makes any way of sin, which at first was offensive to conscience, after a while, to seem harmless.

4. Sometimes persons live in ways of sin, and are not sensible of it, because they are *blinded* by common custom, and the *examples of others*. There are so many who go into the practice, and it is so common a custom, that it is esteemed little or no discredit to a man; it is little testified against. This causes some things to appear innocent, which are very displeasing to God, and abominable in his sight. Perhaps we see them practised by those of whom we have a high esteem, by our superiors, and those who are accounted wise men. This greatly prepossesses the mind in favour of them, and takes off the sense of their evil. Or if they be observed to be commonly practised by those who are accounted godly men, men of experience in religion, this tends greatly to harden the heart, and blind the mind with respect to any evil practice.

5. Persons are in great danger of living in ways of sin and not being sensible of it, for want of duly regarding and considering their duty in the *full extent* of it. There are some who hear of the necessity of reforming from all sins, and attending all duties, and will set themselves to perform some particular duties, at the same time neglecting others. Perhaps their thoughts will be wholly taken up about religious duties, such as prayer in secret, reading the Scriptures and other good books, going to public worship and giving diligent attention, keeping the sabbath, and serious meditation. They seem to regard these things, as though they comprised their duty in its full extent, and as if this were their whole work; and moral duties towards their neighbours, their duties in the relations in which they stand, their duties as husbands or wives, as brethren or sisters, or their duties as neighbours, seem not to be considered by them.

They consider not the *necessity* of those things: and when they hear of earnestly seeking salvation in a way of diligent attendance on all duties, they seem to leave those out of their thoughts, as if they were not meant; nor any other duties, except reading, and praying, and keeping the sabbath, and the like. Or, if they do regard some parts of their moral duty, it may be other branches of it are not considered. Thus if they be just in their dealings, yet



perhaps they neglect deeds of charity. They know they must not defraud their neighbour; they must not lie; they must not commit uncleanness; but seem not to consider what an evil it is to talk against others lightly, or to take up a reproach against them, or to contend and quarrel with them, or to live contrary to the rules of the gospel in their family-relations, or not to instruct their children or servants.

Many men seem to be very conscientious in some things, in some branches of their duty on which they keep their eye, when other important branches are entirely neglected, and seem not to be noticed by them. They regard not their duty in the full extent of it.

## SECT. III.

What method we ought to take, in order to find out whether we do not live in some way of sin.

This, as hath been observed, is a difficult thing to be known; but it is not a matter of so much difficulty, but that if persons were sufficiently concerned about it, and strict and thorough in inquiring and searching, it might, for the most part, be discovered; men might know whether they live in any way of sin, or not. Persons who are deeply concerned to please and obey God, need not, under the light we enjoy, go on in the ways of sin through ignorance.

It is true, that our hearts are exceedingly deceitful; but God, in his holy word, hath given that light with respect to our duty, which is accommodated to the state of darkness in which we are. So that by thorough care and inquiry, we may know our duty, and know whether or no we live in any sinful way. And every one who hath any true love to God and his duty, will be glad of assistance in this inquiry. It is with such persons a concern which lies with much weight upon their spirits, in all things to walk as God would have them, and so as to please and honour him. If they live in any way which is offensive to God, they will be glad to know it, and do by no means choose to have it concealed from them.

All those also, who in good earnest make the inquiry, *What shall I do to be saved?* will be glad to know whether they do not live in some sinful way of behaviour. For if they live in any such way, it is a great disadvantage to them with respect to that great concern. It behoves every one who is seeking salvation, to know and avoid every sinful way in which he lives. The means by which we must come to the knowledge of this, are two; *viz.* the knowledge of the rule, and the knowledge of ourselves.

1st, If we would know whether we do not live in some way of sin, we should take a great deal of pains to be thoroughly *acquainted with the rule.*—God hath given us a true and perfect rule, by which we ought to walk. And that we might be able, notwithstanding our darkness, and the disadvantages which attend us, to know our duty, he hath laid the rule before us abundantly. What a full and abundant revelation of the mind of God have we in the Scriptures! And how plain is it in what relates to practice! How often are rules repeated! In how many various forms are they revealed, that we might the more fully understand them!

But to what purpose will all this care of God to inform us be, if we neglect the *revelation* which God hath made of his mind, and take no care to become acquainted with it? It is impossible that we should know whether we do not live in a way of sin, unless we know the rule by which we are to walk. The sinfulness of any way consists in its disagreement from the rule; and we cannot know whether it agree with the rule or not, unless we be acquainted with the rule. [Rom. iii. 20.](#) “By the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Therefore, lest we go in ways displeasing to God, we ought with the greatest diligence to study, the rules which God hath given us. We ought to read and search the Holy Scriptures

much, and do it with the design to know the whole of our duty, and in order that the word of God may be “a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths.” [Psal. cxix. 105](#). Every one ought to strive to get knowledge in divine things, and to grow in such knowledge, to the end that he may know his duty, and know what God would have him to do.

These things being so, are not the greater part of men very much to blame in that they take no more pains or care to acquire the knowledge of divine things? in that they no more study the Holy Scriptures, and other books which might inform them? as if it were the work of ministers only, to take pains to acquire this knowledge. But why is it so much a minister’s work to strive after knowledge, unless it be, that others may acquire knowledge by him?—Will not many be found inexcusable in the sinful ways in which they live through ignorance and mistake, because their ignorance is a wilful, allowed ignorance? They are ignorant of their duty, but it is their own fault they are so; they have advantages enough to know, and may know it if they will; but they take pains to acquire knowledge, and to be well skilled in their outward affairs, upon which their temporal interest depends; but will not take pains to know their duty.

We ought to take great pains to be well informed, especially in those things which immediately concern us, or which relate to our particular cases.

*2dly*, The other mean is the *knowledge of ourselves*, as subject to the rule.—If we would know whether we do not live in some way of sin, we should take the utmost care to be well acquainted with ourselves, as well as with the rule, that we may be able to compare ourselves with the rule. When we have found what the rule is, then we should be strict in examining ourselves, whether or no we be conformed to the rule. This is the direct way in which our characters are to be discovered. It is one thing wherein man differs from brute creatures, that he is capable of self-reflection, or of reflecting upon his own actions, and what passes in his own mind, and considering the nature and quality of them. And doubtless it was partly for this end that God gave us this power, which is denied to other creatures, that we might know ourselves, and consider our own ways.

We should examine our hearts and ways, until we have satisfactorily discovered either their agreement or disagreement with the rules of Scripture. This is a matter that requires the utmost diligence, lest we overlook our own irregularities, lest some evil way in us should lie hid under disguise, and pass unobserved. One would think we are under greater advantages to be acquainted with ourselves, than with any thing else; for we are always present with ourselves, and have an immediate consciousness of our own actions: all that passeth in us, or is done by us, is immediately under our eye. Yet really in some respects the knowledge of nothing is so difficult to be obtained, as the knowledge of ourselves. We should therefore use great diligence in prying into the secrets of our hearts, and in examining all our ways and practices. That you may the more successfully use those means to know whether you do not live in some way of sin; be advised,

1. Evermore to join *self-reflection* with reading and hearing the word of God. When you read or hear, reflect on yourselves as you go along, comparing yourselves and your own ways with what you read or hear. Reflect and consider what agreement or disagreement there is between the word and your ways. The Scriptures testify against all manner of sin, and contain directions for every duty; as the apostle saith, [2 Tim. iii. 16](#). “And is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” Therefore when you there read the rules given us by Christ and his apostles, reflect and consider, each one of you with himself, Do I live according to this rule? Or do I live in any respect contrary to it?

When you read in the historical parts of Scripture an account of the sins of which others have been guilty, reflect on yourselves as you go along, and inquire whether you do not in some degree live in the same or like practices. When you there read accounts how God re-proved the sins of others, and executed judgments upon them for their sins, examine whether you be not guilty of things of the same nature. When you read the examples of Christ, and of the saints recorded in Scripture, inquire whether you do not live in ways contrary to those examples. When you read there how God commended and rewarded any persons for their virtues and good deeds, inquire whether you perform those duties for which they were commended and rewarded, or whether you do not live in the contrary sins or vices. Let me further direct you, particularly to read the Scriptures to these ends, that you may compare and examine yourselves in the manner now mentioned.

So if you would know whether you do not live in some way of sin, whenever you hear any sin testified against, or any duty urged, in the preaching of the word, be careful to look back upon yourselves, to compare yourselves and your own ways with what you hear, and strictly examine yourselves, whether you live in this or the other sinful way which you hear testified against; and whether you do this duty which you hear urged. Make use of the word as a glass, wherein you may behold yourselves.

How few are there who do this as they ought to do! who, while the minister is testifying against sin, are busy with themselves in examining their own hearts and ways! The generality rather think of others, how this or that person lives in a manner contrary to what is preached; so that there may be hundreds of things delivered in the preaching of the word, which properly belong to them, and are well suited to their cases; yet it never so much as comes into their minds, that what is delivered any way concerns them. Their minds readily fix upon others, and they can charge them, but never think whether or no they themselves be the persons.

2. If you live in any ways which are *generally condemned by the better*, and more sober, *sort of men*, be especially careful to inquire concerning these, whether they be not ways of sin. Perhaps you have argued with yourselves, that such or such a practice is lawful; you cannot see any evil in it. However, if it be generally condemned by godly ministers, and the

better and more pious sort of people, it certainly looks suspicious, whether or no there be not some evil in it; so that you may well be put upon inquiring with the utmost strictness, whether it be not sinful. The practice being so generally disapproved of by those who in such cases are most likely to be in the right, may reasonably put you upon more than ordinarily nice and diligent inquiry concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of it.

3. Examine yourselves, whether all the ways in which you live, are likely to be *pleasant to think of upon a death-bed*. Persons often in health allow and plead for those things, which they would not dare to do, if they looked upon themselves as shortly about to go out of the world. They in a great measure still their consciences as to ways in which they walk, and keep them pretty easy, while death is thought of as at a distance: yet reflections on these same ways are very uncomfortable when they are going out of the world. Conscience is not so easily blinded and muffled then as at other times.

Consider therefore, and inquire diligently, whether or no you do not live in some practice or other, as to the lawfulness of which, when it shall come into your minds upon your death-bed, you will choose to have some further satisfaction, and some better argument than you now have, to prove that it is not sinful, in order to your being easy about it. Think over your particular ways, and try yourselves, with the awful expectation of soon going out of the world into eternity, and earnestly endeavour impartially to judge what ways you will on a death-bed approve of and rejoice in, and what you will disapprove of, and wish you had let alone.

4. Be advised to consider *what others say of you*, and improve it to this end, to know whether you do not live in some way of sin. Although men are blind to their own faults, yet they easily discover the faults of others, and are apt enough to speak of them. Sometimes persons live in ways which do not at all become them, yet are blind to it themselves, not seeing the deformity of their own ways, while it is most plain and evident to others. They themselves cannot see it, yet others cannot shut their eyes against it, cannot avoid seeing it.

For instance. Some persons are of a very *proud* behaviour, and are not sensible of it; but it appears notorious to others. Some are of a very *worldly* spirit, they are set after the world, so as to be noted for it, so as to have a name for it; yet they seem not to be sensible of it themselves. Some are of a very *malicious* and *envious* spirit; and others see it, and to them it appears very hateful; yet they themselves do not reflect upon it. Therefore since there is no trusting to our own hearts and our own eyes in such cases, we should make our improvement of what others say of us, observe what they charge us with, and what fault they find with us, and strictly examine whether there be not foundation for it.

If others charge us with being proud; or worldly, close, and niggardly; or spiteful and malicious; or with any other ill temper or practice; we should improve it in self-reflection, to inquire whether it be not so. And though the imputation may seem to us to be very groundless, and we think that they, in charging us so and so, are influenced by no good

spirit; yet if we act prudently, we shall take so much notice of it as to make it an occasion of examining ourselves.

Thus we should improve what our *friends* say to us and of us, when they from friendship tell us of any thing which they observe amiss in us. It is most imprudent, as well as most unChristian, to take it amiss, and resent it, when we are thus told of our faults: we should rather rejoice in it, that we are shown our spots. Thus also we should improve what our *enemies* say of us. If they from an ill spirit reproach and revile us to our faces, we should consider it, so far as to reflect inward upon ourselves, and inquire whether it be not so, as they charge us. For though what is said, be said in a reproachful, reviling manner; yet there may be too much truth in it. When men revile others even from an ill spirit towards them; yet they are likely to fix upon real faults; they are likely to fall upon us where we are weakest and most defective, and where we have given them most occasion. An enemy will soonest attack us where we can least defend ourselves: and a man that reviles us, though he do it from an unChristian spirit, and in an unchristian manner, yet will be most likely to speak of that, for which we are really most to blame, and are most blamed by others.

So when we hear of others talking against us behind our backs, though they do very ill in so doing, yet the right improvement of it will be, to *reflect upon ourselves*, and consider whether we indeed have not those faults which they lay to our charge. This will be a more Christian and a more wise improvement of it, than to be in a rage, to revile again, and to entertain an ill-will towards them for their evil-speaking. This is the most wise and prudent improvement of such things. Hereby we may get good out of evil; and this is the surest way to defeat the designs of our enemies in reviling and backbiting us. They do it from ill will, and to do us an injury; but in this way we may turn it to our own good.

5. Be advised, *when you see others' faults*, to examine whether there be not the *same* in yourselves. This is not done by many, as is evident from this, that they are so ready to speak of others' faults, and aggravate them, when they have the very same themselves. Thus, nothing is more common than for proud men to accuse others of pride, and to declaim against them upon that account. So it is common for dishonest men to complain of being wronged by others. When a person seeth ill dispositions and practices in others, he is not under the same disadvantage in seeing their odiousness and deformity, as when he looks upon any ill disposition or practice in himself. He can see how odious these and those things are in others; he can easily see what a hateful thing pride is in another; and so of malice, and other evil dispositions or practices. In others he can easily see their deformity; for he doth not look through such a deceitful glass, as when he sees the same things in himself.

Therefore, when you see others' faults; when you take notice, how such an one acts amiss, what an ill spirit he shows, and how unsuitable his behaviour is; when you hear others speak of it, and when you yourselves find fault with others in their dealings with you, or in things wherein you are any way concerned with them; then reflect, and consider, whether

there be nothing of the same nature in yourselves. Consider that these things are just as deformed and hateful in you as they are in others. Pride, a haughty spirit and carriage, are as odious in you as they are in your neighbour. Your malicious and revengeful spirit towards your neighbour, is just as hateful as a malicious and revengeful spirit in him towards you. It is as unreasonable for you to wrong, and to be dishonest with your neighbour, as it is for him to wrong, and be dishonest with you. It is as injurious and unChristian for you to talk against others behind their backs, as it is for others to do the same with respect to you.

6. Consider the ways in which *others are blinded* as to sins in which they live, and strictly inquire whether *you* be not blinded in the same ways. You are sensible that others are blinded by their lusts; consider whether the prevalence of some carnal appetite or lust of the mind have not blinded you. You see how others are blinded by their temporal interest; inquire whether your temporal interests do not blind you also in some things, so as to make you allow yourselves in things which are not right. You are as liable to be blinded through inclination and interest, and have the same deceitful and wicked hearts as other men, [Prov. xxvii. 12](#). “As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.”

SECT. IV.

Particular subjects of self-examination—The Lord's day—God's house.

I desire all those would strictly examine themselves in the following particulars, who are concerned not to live in any way of sin, as I hope there are a considerable number of such now present; and this certainly will be the case with all who are godly, and all who are duly concerned for their own salvation.

1. Examine yourselves with respect to the *sabbath-day*, whether you do not live in some way of breaking or profaning God's holy sabbath. Do you strictly in all things keep this day, as sacred to God, in governing your thoughts, words, and actions, as the word of God requires on this holy day? Inquire whether you do not only fail in *particulars*, but whether you do not live in some *way* whereby this day is profaned; and particularly inquire concerning three things.

(1.) Whether it be not a frequent thing with you to *encroach upon the sabbath* at its *beginning*, and after the sabbath is begun to be out at your work, or following that worldly business which is proper to be done only in our own time. If this be a thing in which you allow yourselves, you live in a way of sin; for it is a thing which can by no means be justified. You have no more warrant to be out with your team, or to be cutting wood, or doing any other worldly business, immediately after the sabbath is begun, than you have to do it in the middle of the day. The time is as holy near the beginning of the sabbath as it is in the middle; it is the whole that we are to rest, and to keep holy, and devote to God; we have no licence to take any part of it to ourselves.

When men often thus *encroach* upon the sabbath, it cannot be from any necessity which can justify them: it can only be for want of due care, and due regard to holy time. They can with due care get their work finished, so that they can leave it by a certain hour. This is evident, for when they are under a natural necessity of finishing their work by a certain time, then they do take that care as to have done before that time comes: as, for instance, when they are aware that at such a time it will be dark, and they will not be able to follow their work any longer, but will be under a natural necessity of leaving off; why, then, they will and do take care ordinarily to have finished their work before that time; and this although the darkness sometimes begins sooner, and sometimes later.

This shows, that with due care men can ordinarily have done their work by a limited time. If proper care will finish their work by a limited time when they are under a natural necessity of it, the same care would as well finish it by a certain time when we are only under a moral necessity. If men knew that as soon as ever the sabbath should begin, it would be perfectly dark, so that they would be under a natural necessity of leaving off their work abroad by that time, then we should see that they would generally have their work done before the time. This shows that it is only for want of care, and of regard to the holy command



of God, that men so frequently have some of their work abroad to do after the sabbath is begun.

Nehemiah took great care that no burden should be borne after the beginning of the sabbath, *Nehem. xiii. 19.* "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath," *i.e.* began to be darkened by the shade of the mountains before sun-set, "I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should be no burden brought in on the sabbath-day."

(2.) Examine whether it be not your manner to *talk on the sabbath* of things *unsuitable* for holy time. If you do not move such talk yourselves, yet when you fall into company that set you the example, are you not wont to join in diverting talk, or in talk of worldly affairs, quite wide from any relation to the business of the day? There is as much reason that you should keep the sabbath holy with your tongues, as with your hands. If it be unsuitable for you to employ your *hands* about common and worldly things, why is it not as unsuitable for you to employ your tongues about them?

(3.) Inquire whether it be not your manner to *loiter away the time* of the sabbath, and to spend it in a great measure in idleness, in doing nothing. Do you not spend more time on sabbath-day, than on other days, on your beds, or otherwise idling away the time, not improving it as a precious opportunity of seeking God, and your own salvation?

2. Examine yourselves, whether you do not live in some way of sin with respect to the *institutions of God's house*. Here I shall mention several instances.

(1.) Do you not wholly neglect some of those institutions, as particularly the *sacrament of the Lords supper*? Perhaps you pretend scruples of conscience, that you are not fit to come to that ordinance, and question whether you be commanded to come. But are your scruples the result of a serious and careful inquiry? Are they not rather a cloak for your own negligence, indolence, and thoughtlessness concerning your duty? Are you satisfied, have you thoroughly inquired and looked into this matter? If not, do you not live in sin, in that you do not more thoroughly inquire? Are you excusable in neglecting a positive institution, when you are scrupulous about your duty, and yet do not thoroughly inquire what it is?

But be it so, that you are *unprepared*; is not this your own sin, your own fault? and can sin excuse you from attending on a positive institution of Christ? When persons are like to have children to be baptized, they can be convinced that it is their duty to come. If it be only conscience that detained them, why doth it not detain them as well now as heretofore? or if they now be more thorough in their inquiries concerning their duty, ought they not to have been thorough in their inquiries before as well as now?

(2.) Do you not live in sin, in living in the neglect of *singing God's praises*? If singing praise to God be an ordinance of God's public worship, as doubtless it is, then it ought to be performed by the whole worshipping assembly. If it be a command that we should worship

God in this way, then all ought to obey this command, not only by joining with others in singing, but in singing themselves. For if we suppose it answers the command of God for us only to join in our hearts with others, it will run us into this absurdity, that *all* may do so; and then there would be none to sing, none for others to join with.

If it be an appointment of God, that Christian congregations should sing praises to him, then doubtless it is the duty of *all*; if there be no exception in the rule, then all ought to comply with it, unless they be incapable of it, or unless it would be a hinderance to the other work of God's house, as the case may be with ministers, who sometimes may be in great need of that respite and intermission after public prayers, to recover their breath and strength, so that they may be fit to speak the word. But if persons be now not capable, because they know not how to sing, that doth not excuse them, unless they have been incapable of learning. As it is the command of God, that all should sing, so all should make conscience of learning to sing, as it is a thing which cannot be decently performed at all without learning. Those, therefore, who neglect to learn to sing, live in sin, as they neglect what is necessary in order to their attending one of the ordinances of God's worship. Not only should persons make conscience of learning to sing themselves, but parents should conscientiously see to it, that their children are taught this among other things, as their education and instruction belongs to them.

(3.) Are you not guilty of allowing yourselves in sin, in neglecting to do your part towards the *removal of scandals* from among us? All persons that are in the church, and the children of the church, are under the watch of the church; and it is one of those duties to which we are bound by the covenant which we either actually or virtually make, in uniting ourselves to a particular church, that we will watch over our brethren, and do our part to uphold the ordinances of God in their purity. This is the end of the institution of particular churches, *viz.* the maintaining of the ordinances of divine worship there, in the manner which God hath appointed.

Examine whether you have not allowed yourselves in sin with respect to this matter, through fear of offending your neighbours. Have you not allowedly neglected the proper steps for removing scandals, when you have seen them; the steps of reproving them privately, where the case would allow of it, and of telling them to the church, where the case required it? Instead of watching over your brother, have you not rather hid yourselves, that ye might not be witnesses against him? and when you have seen scandal in him, have you not avoided the taking of proper steps according to the case?

(4.) Art not thou one whose manner it is, to come *late to the public worship* of God, and especially in *winter*, when the weather is cold? and dost thou not live in sin in so doing? Consider whether it be a way which can be justified; whether it be a practice which doth honour to God and religion; whether it have not the appearance of setting light by the public worship and ordinances of God's house. Doth it not show that thou dost not prize

such opportunities, and that thou art willing to have as little of them as thou canst? Is it not a disorderly practice? and if all should do as thou dost, what confusion would it occasion?

(5.) Art thou not one whose manner it commonly is to *sleep in the time of public service*? and is not this to live in a way of sin? Consider the matter rationally; is it a thing to be justified, for thee to lay thyself down to sleep, while thou art present in the time of divine service, and pretendest to be one of the worshipping assembly, and to be hearing a message from God? Would it not be looked upon as a high affront, an odious behaviour, if thou shouldst do so in the presence of a king, while a message was delivering to thee, in his name, by one of his servants? Canst thou put a greater contempt on the message which the King of kings sendeth to thee, concerning things of the greatest importance, than from time to time to lay thyself down, and compose thyself to sleep, while the messenger is delivering his message to thee?

(6.) Art thou not one who is *not careful to keep his mind intent* upon what is said and done in public worship? Dost thou not, in the midst of the most solemn acts of worship, suffer thy thoughts to rove after worldly objects, worldly cares and concerns, or perhaps the objects of thy wicked lusts and desires? and dost thou not herein live in a way of sin?



SECT. V.

Self-examination concerning secret sins.

I shall now propose to you to examine yourselves, Whether you do not live in some secret sin; whether you do not live in the neglect of some secret duty, or secretly live in some practice which is offensive to the pure and all-seeing eye of God. Here you should examine yourselves concerning all secret duties, as reading, meditation, secret prayer; whether you attend those at all, or if you do, whether you do not attend them in an unsteady and careless manner. You should also examine yourselves concerning all secret sins. Strictly inquire what your behaviour is, when you are hid from the eye of the world, when you are under no other restraints than those of conscience, when you are not afraid of the eye of man, and have nothing to fear but the all-seeing eye of God.—Here, among many other things which might be mentioned, I shall particularly mention two.

(1.) Inquire whether you do not live in the neglect of the duty of *reading the Holy Scriptures*. The Holy Scriptures were surely written to be read; and unless we be *popish* in our principles, we shall maintain, that they were not only given to be read by ministers, but by the people too. It doth not answer the design for which they were given, that we have once read them, and that we once in a great while read something in them. They were given to be always with us, to be continually conversed with, as a rule of life. As the artificer must always have his rule with him in his work; and the blind man that walks must always have his guide by him; and he that walks in darkness must have his light with him; so the Scriptures were given to be *a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path*.

That we may continually use the Scriptures as our rule of life, we should make them our daily companion, and keep them with us continually; [Josh. i. 8](#). “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.” See also [Deut. vi. 6-9](#). So Christ commands us to search the Scriptures, [John v. 39](#). These are the mines wherein we are to dig for wisdom as for hidden treasures. Inquire, therefore, whether you do not live in the neglect of this duty, or neglect it so far, that you may be said to live in a way of sin.

(2.) Inquire whether you do not live in some way of secretly *gratifying some sensual lust*. There are many ways and degrees, wherein a carnal lust may be indulged; but every way is provoking to a holy God. Consider whether, although you restrain yourselves from more gross indulgences, you do not, in some way or other, and in some degree or other, secretly from time to time gratify your lusts, and allow yourselves to taste the sweets of unlawful delight.

Persons may greatly provoke God, by only allowedly gratifying their lusts in their thoughts and imaginations. They may also greatly provoke God by excess and intemperance in gratifying their animal appetites in those things which are in themselves lawful. Inquire,

therefore, whether you do not live in some sinful way or other, in secretly gratifying a sinful appetite.

SECT. VI.

Self-examination concerning our temper of mind towards our neighbours—and our dealings with them.

I would propose to you to examine yourselves, whether you do not live in some way of sin,—1. In the spirit and *temper of mind* which you allow towards your neighbour.

(1.) Do you not allow and indulge a *passionate*, furious disposition? If your natural temper be hasty and passionate, do you truly strive against such a temper, and labour to govern your spirit? Do you lament it, and watch over yourselves to prevent it? or do you allow yourselves in a fiery temper? Such a disposition doth not become a *Christian*, or a *man*. It doth not become a man, because it unmans him; it turns a man from a rational creature, to be like a wild beast. When men are under the prevalency of a furious passion, they have not much of the exercise of reason. We are warned to avoid such men, as being dangerous creatures, [Prov. xxii. 24, 25](#). “Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.”

(2.) Do not you live in *hatred* towards some or other of your neighbours? Do you not hate him for real or supposed injuries that you have received from him? Do you not hate him, because he is not friendly towards you, and because you judge that he hath an ill spirit against you, and hates you, and because he opposes you, and doth not show you that respect which you think belongs to you, or doth not show himself forward to promote your interest or honour? Do you not hate him, because you think he despises you, has mean thoughts of you, and takes occasion to show it? Do you not hate him, because he is of the opposite party to that which is in your interest, and because he has considerable influence in that party.

Doubtless you will be loth to call it by so harsh a name as *hatred*; but inquire seriously and impartially, whether it be any thing better. Do you not feel ill towards him? Do you not feel a prevailing disposition within you to be pleased when you hear him talked against and run down, and to be glad when you hear of any dishonour put upon him, or of any disappointments which happen to him? Would you not be glad of an opportunity to be even with him for the injuries which he hath done you? And wherein doth hatred work but in such ways as these?

(3.) Inquire whether you do not live in envy towards some one at least of your neighbours. Is not his prosperity, his riches, or his advancement in honour, uncomfortable to you? Have you not, therefore, an ill will, or at least less good will to him, because you look upon him as standing in your way, you look upon yourself as depressed by his advancement? And would it not be pleasing to you now, if he should be deprived of his riches, or of his honours, not from pure respect to the public good, but because you reckon he stands in your way? Is it not merely from a selfish spirit that you are so uneasy at his prosperity?

2. I shall propose to your consideration, whether you do not live in some way of sin, and wrong in your *dealings with your neighbours*.

(1.) Inquire whether you do not from time to time *injure and defraud* those with whom you deal. Are your ways with your neighbour altogether just, such as will bear a trial by the strict rules of the word of God, or such as you can justify before God? Are you a faithful person? may your neighbours depend on your word? Are you strictly and firmly true to your trust, or any thing with which you are entrusted, and which you undertake? Or do you not by your conduct plainly show, that you are not conscientious in such things?

Do you not live in a careless sinful neglect of *paying your debts*? Do you not, to the detriment of your neighbour, sinfully withhold that which is not your own, but his? Are you not wont to *oppress* your neighbour? When you see another in necessity, do you not thence take advantage to screw upon him? When you see a person ignorant, and perceive that you have an opportunity to make your gains of it, are you not wont to take such an opportunity? Will you not deceive in buying and selling, and labour to blind the eyes of him of whom you buy, or to whom you sell, with deceitful words, hiding the faults of what you sell, and denying the good qualities of what you buy, and not strictly keeping to the truth, when you see that falsehood will be an advantage to you in your bargain?

(2.) Do you not live in *some wrong which you have formerly done* your neighbour without repairing it? Are you not conscious that you have formerly, at some time or other, wronged your neighbour, and yet you live in it, have never repaired the injury which you have done him? If so, you live in a way of sin.



SECT. VII.

Self-examination respecting charity towards our neighbours, and conversation with them.

I desire you would examine yourselves, 1. Whether you do not live in the neglect of the duties of *charity* towards your neighbour. You may live in sin towards your neighbour, though you cannot charge yourselves with living in any injustice in your dealings. Here also I would mention two things.

(1.) Whether you are guilty of *sinfully withholding* from your neighbour who is in want. Giving to the poor, and giving liberally and bountifully, is a duty absolutely required of us. It is not a thing left to persons' choice to do as they please; nor is it merely a thing commendable in persons to be liberal to others in want; but it is a duty as strictly and absolutely required and commanded as any other duty whatsoever, a duty from which God will not acquit us; as you may see in [Deut. xv. 7, 8.](#) &c. and the neglect of this duty is very provoking to God, [Prov. xxi. 13.](#) "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also himself shall cry, and not be heard."

Inquire, therefore, whether you have not lived in a way of sin in this regard. Do you not see your neighbour suffer, and pinched with want, and you, although sensible of it, harden your hearts against him, and are careless about it? Do you not in such a case, neglect to inquire into his necessities, and to do something for his relief? Is it not your manner to hide your eyes in such cases, and to be so far from devising liberal things, and endeavouring to find out the proper objects and occasions of charity, that you rather contrive to avoid the knowledge of them? Are you not apt to make objections to such duties, and to excuse yourselves? And are you not sorry for such occasions, on which you are forced to give something, or expose your reputation?—Are not such things grievous to you? If these things be so, surely you live in sin, and in great sin, and have need to inquire, whether your spot be not such as is not the spot of God's children.

(2.) Do you not live in the neglect of reproofing your neighbour, when you see him going on in a way of sin? This is required of us by the command of God, as a duty of love and charity which we owe our neighbour: [Lev. xix. 17.](#) "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." When we see our neighbour going on in sin, we ought to go, and in a Christian way deal with him about it. Nor will it excuse us, that we fear it will have no good effect; we cannot certainly tell what effect it will have. This is past doubt, that if Christians generally performed this duty as they ought to do, it would prevent abundance of sin and wickedness, and would deliver many a soul from the ways of death.

If a man going on in the ways of sin, saw that it was generally disliked and discountenanced, and testified against by others, it would have a strong tendency to reform him. His regard for his own reputation would strongly persuade him to reform; for hereby he would



see that the way in which he lives makes him odious in the eyes of others. When persons go on in sin, and no one saith any thing to them in testimony against it, they know not but that their ways are approved, and are not sensible that it is much to their dishonour to do as they do. The approbation of others tends to blind men's eyes, and harden their hearts in sin; whereas, if they saw that others utterly disapprove of their ways, it would tend to open their eyes and convince them.

If others neglect their duty in this respect, and our reproof alone will not be so likely to be effectual; yet that doth not excuse us: for if one singly may be excused, then every one may be excused, and so we shall make it no duty at all.

Persons often need the reproofs and admonitions of others, to make them sensible that the ways in which they live are sinful; for, as hath been already observed, men are often blinded as to their own sins.

2. Examine yourselves, whether you do not live in some way of sin in your *conversation* with your neighbours. Men commit abundance of sin, not only in the business and dealings which they have with their neighbours, but in their talk and converse with them.

(1.) Inquire whether you do not keep company with persons of a *lewd and immoral* behaviour, with persons who do not make conscience of their ways, are not of sober lives, but on the contrary, are profane and extravagant, and unclean in their communication. This is what the word of God forbids, and testifies against: [Prov. xiv. 7](#). "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." [Prov. xiii. 20](#). "A companion of fools shall be destroyed." The psalmist professes himself clear of this sin, [Psalm xxvi. 4, 5](#). "I have not sat with vain persons; neither will I go with dissemblers: I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked."

Do you not live in this sin? Do you not keep company with such persons? and have you not found them a snare to your souls? If you have any serious thoughts about the great concerns of your souls, have you not found this a great hinderance to you? Have you not found that it hath been a great temptation to you? Have you not been from time to time led into sin thereby? Perhaps it may seem difficult wholly to forsake your old wicked companions. You are afraid they will deride you, and make game of you; therefore you have not courage enough to do it. But whether it be difficult or not, yet know this, that if you continue in such connexions, you live in a way of sin, and, as the Scripture saith, *you shall be destroyed*. You must either cut off your right hands, and pluck out your right eyes, or else even go with them into the fire that never shall be quenched.

(2.) Consider whether, in your conversation with others, you do not accustom yourselves to *evil speaking*. How common is it for persons, when they meet together, to sit and spend their time in talking against others, judging this or that of them, spreading ill and uncertain reports which they have heard of them, running down one and another, and ridiculing their infirmities! How much is such sort of talk as this the entertainment of companies when they

meet together! and what talk is there which seems to be more entertaining, to which persons will more listen, and in which they will seem to be more engaged, than such talk! You cannot but know how common this is.

Therefore examine whether you be not guilty of this—And can you justify it? Do you not know it to be a way of sin, a way which is condemned by many rules in the word of God? Are you not guilty of eagerly taking up any ill report which you hear of your neighbour, seeming to be glad that you have some news to talk of, with which you think others will be entertained? Do you not often spread ill reports which you hear of others, before you know what ground there is for them? Do you not take a pleasure in being the reporter of such news? Are you not wont to pass a judgment concerning others, or their behaviour, without talking to them, and hearing what they have to say for themselves? Doth not that folly and shame belong to you which is spoken of in [Prov. xviii. 13](#). “He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”

This is utterly an inquiry, a very unChristian practice, which commonly prevails, that men, when they hear or know of any ill of others, will not do a christian part, in going to talk with them about it, to reprove them for it, but will get behind their backs before they open their mouths, and *there* are very forward to speak, and to judge, to the hurt of their neighbour’s good name. Consider whether you be not guilty of this. Consider also how apt you are to be displeased when you hear that others have been talking against you! how forward are you to apply the rules, and to think and tell how they ought first to have come and talked with you about it, and not to have gone and spread an ill report of you, before they knew what you had to say in your vindication! How ready are persons to resent it, when others meddle with their private affairs, and busy themselves, and judge, and find fault, and declaim against them! How ready are they to say, it is no business of theirs! Yet are you not guilty of the same?

(3.) Is it not your manner to seem to countenance and *fall in with the talk of the company* in which you are, in that which is *evil*? When the company is vain in its talk, and falls into lewd discourse, or vain jesting, is it not your manner, in such a case, to comply and fall in with the company, to seem pleased with its talk, if not to join with it, and help to carry on such discourse, out of compliance with your company, though indeed you disapprove of it in your hearts? So inquire, whether it be not your manner to fall in with your companions, when they are talking against others. Do you not help forward the discourse, or at least seem to fall in with their censures, the aspersions they cast on others, and the reflections they make upon their neighbours’ characters?

There are some persons, who, in case of difference between persons or parties, are *double-tongued*, will seem to fall in with *both* parties. When they are with those on one side, they will *seem* to be on their side, and to fall in with them in their talk against their antagonists. At another time, when they are with those of the other side, they will *seem* to comply

with them, and will condemn the other party; which is a very vile and deceitful practice. Seeming to be friendly to both before their faces, they are enemies to both behind their backs; and that upon so mean a motive as the pleasing of the party with which they are in company. They injure both parties, and do what in them lies to establish the difference between them. Inquire whether or no this be your manner.

(4.) Is it not your manner, not to confine yourselves to *strict truth* in your conversation with your neighbours? Lying is accounted ignominious and reproachful among men; and they take it in high disdain to be called liars; yet how many are there that do not so govern their tongues, as strictly to confine them to the truth! There are various degrees of transgressing in this kind. Some, who may be cautious of transgressing in one degree, may allow themselves in another. Some, who commonly avoid speaking directly and wholly contrary to truth, in a plain matter of fact; yet perhaps are not strictly true in speaking of their own thoughts, desires, affections, and designs, and are not exact to the truth, in the relations which they give of things in conversation; scruple not to vary in circumstances, to add some things, to make their story the more entertaining; will magnify and enlarge things, to make their relation the more wonderful; and in things wherein their interest or credit is concerned, will make false representations of things: will be guilty of an unwarrantable equivocation, and a guileful way of speaking, wherein they are chargeable with a great abuse of language. In order to save their veracity, words and sentences must be wrested to a meaning quite beside their natural and established signification. Whatever interpretation such men put on their own words, they do not save themselves from the guilt of lying in the sight of God. Inquire whether you be not guilty of living in sin in this particular.

SECT. VIII.

Self-examination respecting the families to which we belong.

Examine yourselves, whether you do not live in some way of sin in the *families to which you belong*. There are many persons who appear well among their neighbours, and seem to be of an honest, civil behaviour in their dealings and conversation abroad; yet if you follow them to their own houses, and to the families to which they belong, there you will find them very perverse in their ways; there they live in ways which are very displeasing to the pure all-searching eyes of God. You have already been directed to examine your conversation abroad; you have been directed to search the house of God, and to see if you have brought no defilement into it; you have been directed to search your closets, to see if there be no pollution or provocation there; be advised now to search your *houses*, examine your behaviour in the families to which you belong, and see what your ways and manners are there.

The houses to which we belong are the places where the generality of us spend the greater part of our time. If we respect the world as a man's sphere of action, a man's own house is the greater part of the world to him; *i. e.* the greater part of his actions and behaviour in the world is limited within this sphere. We should therefore be very critical in examining our behaviour, not only abroad, but at home. A great proportion of the wickedness of which men are guilty, and that will be brought out at the day of judgment, will be the sin which they shall have committed in the families to which they belong.

Therefore inquire how you behave yourselves in the *family relations* in which you stand. As those relative duties which we owe towards the members of the same family belong to the second table of the law, so love is the general duty which comprises them all. Therefore,

(1.) Examine yourselves, whether you do not live in some way which is *contrary to that love* which is due to those who belong to the same family. Love, implying a hearty good will, and a behaviour agreeable to it, is a duty which we owe to all mankind. We owe it to our neighbours, to whom we are no otherwise related than as they are our neighbours; yea, we owe it to those who stand in no relation to us, except that they are of mankind, are reasonable creatures, the sons and daughters of Adam. It is a duty that we owe to our enemies; how much more then do we owe it to those who stand in so near a relation to us as a husband or wife, parents or children, brethren or sisters!

There are the same obligations on us to love such relatives as to love the rest of mankind. We are to love them as men; we are to love them as our neighbours; we are to love them as belonging to the same Christian church; and not only so, but here is an additional obligation, arising from that near relation in which they stand to us. This is over and above the other. The nearer the relation, the greater is the obligation to love. To live in hatred, or in a way that is contrary to love, towards any man, is very displeasing to God; but how much more

towards one of the same family! Love is the uniting band of all societies, [Col. iii. 14](#). “And above all these things, put on charity which is the bond of perfectness.”

The union in love in our own family should be so much the stronger, as that society is more peculiarly our own, and is more appropriated to ourselves, or is a society in which we are more especially interested. Christ saith, [Matt. vii. 22](#). “I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” If this be true concerning those who are our brethren only as men, or professing Christians, how much more concerning those who are of the same family! If contention be so evil a thing in a town among neighbours, how much more hateful is it between members of the same family! If hatred, envy, or revenge, be so displeasing to God, towards those who are only our fellow-creatures, how much more provoking must it be between those that are our natural brothers and sisters, and are one bone and flesh! If only being angry with a neighbour without a cause be so evil, how much sin must needs be committed in those broils and quarrels between the nearest relations on earth!

Let every one inquire how it is with himself. Do you not in this respect allow yourselves in some way of sin? Are you not often jarring and contending with those who dwell under the same roof? Is not your spirit often ruffled with anger towards some of the same family? Do you not often go so far as to wish evil to them in your hearts, wish that some calamity would befall them? Are you not guilty of reproachful language towards them, if not of revengeful acts? Do you not neglect and refuse those offices of kindness and mutual helpfulness which become those who are of one family? Yea, are there not some who really go so far, as in some degree to entertain a settled hatred or malice against some of their nearest relations?—But here I would particularly apply myself,

[1.] To *husbands and wives*. Inquire whether you do not live in some way of sin in this relation. Do you make conscience of performing all those duties which God in his word requires of persons in this relation? or do you allow yourselves in some ways which are directly opposite thereto? Do you not live in ways that are contrary to the obligations into which you entered in your marriage-covenant? The promises which you then made are not only binding as promises which are ordinarily made between man and man, but they have the nature of vows or promissory oaths; they are made in the presence of God, because they respect him as a witness to them; and therefore the marriage-covenant is called *the covenant of God*; [Prov. ii. 17](#); “which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.” When you have vowed that you will behave towards those to whom you are thus united, as the word of God directs in such a relation, are you careless about it, no more thinking what you have promised and vowed, regardless how you perform those vows?

Particularly, are you not commonly guilty of bitterness of spirit towards one another, and of unkindness in your language and behaviour? If wrath, and contention, and unkind

and reproachful language, be provoking to God, when only between neighbours; what is it then between those whom God hath joined together to be one flesh, and between whom he hath commanded so great and dear a friendship to be maintained? [Eph. v. 28, 29](#). “So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.” [Eph. v. 25](#). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

It is no excuse at all for either party to indulge bitterness and contention in this relation, that the other party is to blame; for when was there ever one of fallen mankind to be found who had no faults? When God commanded such an entire friendship between man and wife, he knew that the greater part of mankind would have faults; yet he made no exception. And if you think your yoke-fellows have faults, you should consider whether you yourselves have not some too. There never will be any such thing as persons living in peace one with another, in this relation, if this be esteemed a sufficient and justifiable cause of the contrary. It becomes good friends to cover one another’s faults: *Love covers a multitude of faults*: [Prov. x. 1](#). “Hatred stirreth up strife; but love covereth all sins.” But are not you rather quick to spy faults, and ready to make the most of them. Are not very little things often the occasion of contention between you? Will not a little thing often ruffle your spirits towards your companions? and when any misunderstanding is begun, are you not guilty of exasperating one another’s spirits by unkind language, until you blow up a spark into a flame?

Do you endeavour to accommodate yourselves to each other’s tempers? Do you study to suit each other? or do you set up your own wills, to have your own ways, in opposition to each other, in the management of your family concerns? Do you make it your study to render each other’s lives comfortable? or is there not, on the contrary, very often subsisting between you a spirit of ill will, a disposition to vex and cross one another?

Husbands do sometimes greatly sin against God, in being of an unkind imperious behaviour towards their wives, treating them as if they were servants; and (to mention one instance of such treatment in particular) laying them under unjust and unreasonable restraints in the use and disposal of their common property; forbidding them so much as to dispose of any thing in charity, as of their own judgment and prudence. This is directly contrary to the word of God, where it is said of the virtuous wife, [Prov. xxxi. 20](#). that “she stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.” If God hath made this her duty, then he hath given her this right and power, because the duty supposes the right. It cannot be the duty of her who hath no right to dispose of any thing, to stretch forth her hand to the poor, and to reach forth her hands to the needy.

On the other hand, are not the commands of God, the rules of his word, and the solemn vows of the marriage-covenant, with respect to the subordination which there ought to be in this relation, made light of by many? “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands,

as unto the Lord:" so Col. iii. 18. What is commanded by God, and what hath been solemnly vowed and sworn in his presence, certainly ought not to be made a jest of; and the person who lightly violates these obligations, will doubtless be treated as one who slights the authority of God, and takes his name in vain.

[2.] I shall apply myself to *parents and heads of families*. Inquire whether you do not live in some way of sin with respect to your children, or others committed to your care: and particularly inquire,

1. Whether you do not live in sin, by living in the *neglect of instructing* them. Do you not wholly neglect the duty of instructing your children and servants? or if you do not wholly neglect it, yet do you not afford them so little instruction, and are you not so unsteady, and do you not take so little pains in it, that you live in a sinful neglect? Do you take pains in any measure proportionate to the importance of the matter? You cannot but own that it is a matter of vast importance, that your children be fitted for death, and saved from hell; and that all possible care be taken that it be done speedily; for you know not how soon your children may die. Are you as careful about the welfare of their souls as you are of their bodies? Do you labour as much that they may have eternal life, as you do to provide estates for them to live on in this world?

Let every parent inquire, whether he do not live in a way of sin in this respect: and let masters inquire, whether they do not live in a way of sin, in neglecting the poor souls of their servants; whether their only care be not to make their servants subservient to their worldly interest, without any concern what becomes of them to all eternity.

2. Do you not live in a sinful *neglect of the government* of your families? Do you not live in the sin of Eli? who indeed counselled and reprov'd his children, but did not exercise government over them. He reprov'd them very solemnly, as 1 Sam. ii. 23, 24, 25. but he did not restrain them; by which he greatly provok'd God, and brought an everlasting curse upon his house: 1 Sam. iii. 12. "In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house. When I begin, I will also make an end. I will judge his house for ever; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

If you say you cannot restrain your children, this is no excuse; for it is a sign that you have brought up your children without government, that your children regard not your authority. When parents lose their government over their children, their reproofs and counsel signify but little. How many parents are there who are exceedingly faulty on this account! How few are there who are thorough in maintaining order and government in their families! How is family-government in a great measure vanished! and how many are as likely to bring a curse upon their families, as Eli! This is one principal ground of the corruptions which prevail in the land. This is the foundation of so much debauchery, and of such corrupt practices among young people: family-government is in a great measure extinct.

By neglect in this particular, parents bring the guilt of their children's sins upon their own souls, and the blood of their children will be required at their hands.

Parents sometimes weaken one another's hands in this work; one parent disapproving what the other doth; one smiling upon a child, while the other frowns; one protecting, while the other corrects. When things in a family are thus, children are like to be undone. Therefore let every one examine whether he do not live in some way of sin with respect to this matter.

[3.] I shall now apply myself to *children*. Let them examine themselves, whether they do not live in some way of sin towards their parents. Are you not guilty of some undutifulness towards them, in which you allow yourselves? Are you not guilty of despising your parents for infirmities which you see in them? Undutiful children are ready to condemn their parents for their infirmities. Are not you sons of Ham, who saw and made derision of his father's nakedness, whereby he entailed a curse on himself and his posterity to this day; and not the sons of Shem and Japheth, who covered the nakedness of their father? Are you not guilty of dishonouring and despising your parents for natural infirmities, or those of old age? [Prov. xxiii. 22.](#) "Despise not thy mother when she is old." Doth not that curse belong to you, in [Deut. xxvii. 16.](#) "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother?"

Are you not wont to despise the counsels and reproofs of your parents? When they warn you against any sin, and reprove you for any misconduct, are you not wont to set light by it, and to be impatient under it? Do you honour your parents for it? on the contrary, do you not receive it with resentment, proudly rejecting it? Doth it not stir up corruption, and a stubborn and perverse spirit in you, and rather make you to have an ill-will to your parents, than to love and honour them? Are you not to be reckoned among the fools mentioned [Prov. xv. 5.](#) "A fool despiseth his father's instruction?" and doth not that curse belong to you, [Prov. xxx. 17.](#) "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it?"

Do you not allow a fretful disposition towards your parents, when they cross you in any thing? Are you not apt to find fault with your parents, and to be out of temper with them?

Consider, that if you live in such ways as these, you not only live in sin, but in that sin, than which there is scarcely any one oftener threatened with a curse in the word of God.





## SECT. IX.

Awakening considerations for self-examination.

We come now to mention some things, in order to convince those who, upon examination, find that they do live in some way of sin, of the importance of their knowing and amending their manner of life. You have had directions laid before you, how to find out whether you do live in any way of sin or not; and you have heard many particulars mentioned as proper subjects for your examination of yourselves. How then do you find things? Do you find yourselves clear of living in any way of sin? I mean not whether you find yourself clear of sin; that is not expected of any of you; for there is not a man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not, [1 Kings viii. 46](#). But is there not some way of sin in which you *live*, which is your *stated way* or *practice*? There are doubtless some who are clear in this matter, some “who are undefiled in the way, and do no iniquity,” [Psal. cxix. 1, 2, 3](#).

Let your own consciences answer how you find with respect to yourselves, by those things which have been proposed to you. Do you not find that you are guilty? that you *live* in a way of sin, and have *allowed* yourselves in it? If this be the case, then consider the following things.

If you have been *long seeking salvation*, and have not yet succeeded, it may be this hath been the cause. You have perhaps wondered what hath been the matter, that you have been so long a time under concern about your salvation, that you have taken so much pains, and all seems to be to no purpose. You have many a time cried earnestly to God, yet he doth not regard you. Others obtain comfort, but you are left in darkness. But is it any wonder at all, if you have lived in some way of sin all this while? If you have lived in any sinful way, this is a sufficient reason why all your prayers and all your pains have been blasted.

If all this while you have lived in some sinful way, so far you have failed of seeking salvation in the right way. The right way of seeking salvation is, to seek it in the diligent performance of all duties, and in the denial of all ungodliness. If there be any one member that is corrupt, and you cut it not off, there is danger that it will carry you to hell, ([Matt. v. 29, 30](#).)

2. If grace have not been flourishing, but, on the contrary, in *languishing circumstances in your souls*, perhaps this is the cause. The way to grow in grace is to walk in the way of obedience to all the commands of God, to be very thorough in the practice of religion. Grace will flourish in the hearts of those who live in this manner; but if you live in some way of sin, that will be like some secret disease at your vitals, which will keep you poor, weak, and languishing.

One way of sin lived in will wonderfully keep you down in your spiritual prosperity, and in the growth and strength of grace in your hearts. It will grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and will in a great measure banish him from you: this will prevent the good influence of the

word and ordinances of God to the causing of grace to flourish in you. It will be a great obstacle to their good effect. It will be like an ulcer within a man, which, while it remains, will keep him weak and lean, though you feed him with ever so wholesome food, or feast him ever so daintily.

3. If you have been left to *fall into great sin*, perhaps this was the occasion of it. If you have been left greatly to wound your own souls, perhaps this was what made way for it, that you allowed yourselves in some way of sin. A man who doth not avoid every sin, and is not universally obedient, cannot be well guarded against great sins. The sin in which he lives will be always an inlet, an open door, by which Satan from time to time will find entrance. It is like a breach in your fortress, through which the enemy may get in, and find his way to you greatly to hurt and wound you.

If there be any way of sin which is retained as an outlet to corruption, it will be like a breach in a dam, which, if it be let alone, and be not stopped, will grow bigger and wider, and will endanger the whole. If any way of sin be lived in, it will be like *Gideon's ephod*, which was a snare to him and his house.

4. If you live very much in *spiritual darkness*, and without the comfortable presence of God, it may be this is the cause. If you complain that you have but little sweet communion with God, that you seem to be left and deserted of God, that God seems to hide his face from you, and but seldom gives you the sweet views of his glory and grace, that you seem to be left very much to grope in darkness, and to wander in a wilderness; perhaps you have wondered what is the matter; you have cried to God often, that you might have the light of his countenance, but he heareth you not; and you have sorrowful days and nights upon this account. But if you have found, by what hath been said, that you live in some way of sin, it is very probable *that* is the cause, that is the root of your mischief, that is the *Achan*, the troubler that offends God, and causes him to withdraw, and brings so many clouds of darkness upon your souls. You grieve the Holy Spirit by the way in which you live; and that is the reason that you have no more comfort from him.

Christ hath promised, that he will manifest himself to his disciples; but it is upon the condition, that they keep his commands: [John xiv. 21](#). "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." But if you habitually live in disobedience to any of the commandments of Christ, then it is no wonder that he doth not give you the comfortable manifestations of himself. The way to receive the special favours of God, and to enjoy comfortable communion with him, is to walk closely with him.

5. If you have been long *doubting about your condition*, perhaps this is the cause. If persons be converted, the most likely way to have the evidences of it clear, and to have the Spirit of God witnessing with our spirits, that we are the children of God, is to walk closely with God. This, as we have observed already, is the way to have grace in a flourishing state

in the soul; it is the way to have the habits of grace strengthened, and the exercises of it lively. And the more lively the exercises of grace are, the more likely will they be to be seen. Besides, this is the way to have God manifesting himself to us, as our father and our friend, to have the manifestations and inward testimonies of his love and favour.

But if you live in some way of sin, it is no wonder if that greatly darkens your evidences, as it keeps down the exercises of grace, and hides the light of God's countenance. And it may be that you never will come to a comfortable resolution of that point, whether you be converted or not, until you shall have wholly forsaken the way of sin in which you live.

6. If you have met with the *frowns of Providence*, perhaps this has been the cause. When you have met with very sore rebukes and chastisements, that way of sin hath probably been your troubler. Sometimes God is exceedingly awful in his dealings with his own people in this world, for their sins. Moses and Aaron were not suffered to enter into Canaan, because they believed not God, and spake unadvisedly with their lips, at the waters of Meribah. And how terrible was God in his dealings with David! what affliction in his family did he send upon him! one of his sons ravishing his sister; another murdering his brother, and having expelled his father out of his kingdom, openly in the sight of all Israel, and in the sight of the sun, defiling his father's concubines on the top of the house, and at last coming to a miserable end? Immediately after this followed the rebellion of Sheba; and he had this uncomfortable circumstance attending the end of his life, that he saw another of his sons usurping the crown.

How awfully did God deal with Eli, for living in the sin of not restraining his children from wickedness! He killed his two sons in one day; brought a violent death upon Eli himself; took the ark from him, and sent it into captivity; cursed his house for ever; and swore that the iniquity of his house should not be purged with sacrifice and offering for ever; that the priesthood should be taken from him, and given to another family; and that there should never be an old man in his family.

Is not some way of sin in which you live the occasion of the frowns and rebukes of Providence which you have met with? True, it is not the proper business of your neighbours to judge you with respect to events of Providence; but you yourselves ought to inquire, wherefore God is contending with you, [Job ix. 10](#).

7. If *death be terrible to you*, perhaps this is the foundation of it. When you think of dying, you find you shrink back at the thought. When you have any illness, or when there is any thing which seems any way to threaten life, you find you are affrighted by it; the thoughts of dying, and going into eternity, are awful to you; and that although you entertain a hope that you are converted. If you live in some way of sin, probably this is very much the foundation of it. This keeps your minds sensual and worldly, and hinders a lively sense of heaven and heavenly enjoyments. This keeps grace low, and prevents that relish of heavenly enjoyments which otherwise you would have. This prevents your having the comfortable

sense of the divine favour and presence; and without that no wonder you cannot look death in the face without terror.

The way to have the prospect of death comfortable, and to have undisturbed peace and quiet when we encounter death, is, to walk closely with God, and to be undefiled in the way of obedience to the commands of God; and that it is otherwise sometimes with truly godly persons, is doubtless frequently owing to their living in ways displeasing to God.

8. If you find by these things which have been proposed to you, that you have lived in a way of sin, consider that if you henceforward live in the same way, you will live in *known* sin. Whether in time past it have been known sin or not, though you may have hitherto lived in it through ignorance or inadvertence; yet if now you be sensible of it, henceforward, if you continue in it still, it will not be a sin of *ignorance*, but you will be proved to be of that class of men who live *in ways of known sin*.

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**A WARNING TO PROFESSORS :**

*OR THE*

**GREAT GUILT OF THOSE WHO ATTEND ON THE ORDINANCES OF DIVINE  
WORSHIP, AND YET ALLOW THEMSELVES IN ANY KNOWN WICKEDNESS**

[Ezek. xxiii. 37, 38, 39.](#)

That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire to devour them. Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; end, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

## INTRODUCTION.

Samaria and Jerusalem, or Israel and Judah, are here represented by two women, Aholah and Aholibah; and their idolatry and treachery towards their covenant God is represented by the adultery of these women. They forsook God, who was their husband, and the guide of their youth, and prostituted themselves to others. The baseness of Aholah and Aholibah towards God, their husband, is here pointed out by two things, *viz.* adultery and bloodshed: *They have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands.*

1. They committed adultery with other lovers, *viz.* with their idols: *With their idols have they committed adultery.*

2. They not only committed adultery, but they took their children that they bore to God, and killed them for their lovers. Their hearts were quite alienated from God, their husband, and they were so bewitched with lust after those other lovers, that they took their own children, whom they had by their husband, and put them to cruel deaths, to make a feast with them for their lovers; as it is said in [ver. 37](#). “And have also caused my sons whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire to devour them.”

But here is a twofold wickedness of those actions of their held forth to us in the words. (1.) The wickedness of them considered in themselves; for who can express the horrid baseness of this their treatment of God, their husband? (2.) An additional wickedness, resulting from the joining of these actions with sacred things. Beside the monstrous wickedness of these actions in themselves considered, there was this which exceedingly increased the guilt, that on the same day they came into God’s sanctuary, or that they lived in such wickedness at the same time, that they came and attended the holy ordinances of God’s house, pretending to worship and adore him, whom they all the while treated in such a horrid manner; and so herein defiled and profaned holy things; as in [ver. 38, and 39](#). “Moreover, this have they done unto me; they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary, to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.”

Doctrine.—When they that attend ordinances of divine worship allow themselves in known wickedness, they are guilty of dreadfully profaning and polluting those ordinances.

By a divine ordinance, when the expression is used in its greatest latitude, is meant any thing of divine institution or appointment. Thus we call marriage a divine ordinance, because it was appointed by God. So civil government is called an ordinance of God; [Rom. xiii. 1, 2](#). “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are *ordained* of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the *ordinance* of God.”

But the word is more commonly used only for an instituted or appointed way or mean of worship. So the sacraments are ordinances; so public prayer, singing of praise, the preaching of the word, and the hearing of the word preached, are divine ordinances. The setting apart of certain officers in the church, the appointed way of discipline, public confession of scandals, admonition, and excommunication, are ordinances. These are called the ordinances of *God's house*, or of public worship; and these are intended in the doctrine: it is the profanation of these ordinances that is spoken of in the text: "They came into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done it in the midst of mine house,<sup>171</sup>" saith God. This doctrine seems to contain two *propositions*.

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171 [Ezek. xxiii. 39.](#)

## SECT. I

The ordinances of God are holy.

Divine ordinances are holy in the following respects:

1. They are *conversant* wholly and immediately about God, and things divine. When we are in the attendance on the ordinances of divine worship, we are in the special presence of God. When persons come and attend on the ordinances of God, they are said to come before God, and to come into his presence: [Jer. vii. 10.](#) “Come and stand before me, in this house which is called by my name.” [Psal. c. 2.](#) “Come into his presence with singing”

In divine ordinances, persons have immediate intercourse with God, either in applying to him, as in prayer and singing praises, or in receiving from him, waiting solemnly and immediately on him for spiritual good, as in hearing the word; or in both applying to God and receiving from him, as in the sacraments. They were appointed on purpose that in them men might converse and hold communion with God. We are poor, ignorant, blind worms of the dust; and God did not see it meet that our way of intercourse with God should be left to ourselves; but God hath given us his ordinances, as ways and means of conversing with him.

In these ordinances, holy and divine things are exhibited and represented. In the preaching of the word, holy Doctrine and the divine will are exhibited; in the sacraments, Christ Jesus and his benefits are represented; in prayer and praise, and in the attendance on the word and sacraments, are represented our faith, love, and obedience.

2. The *end* of God’s ordinances is holy. The immediate end is to glorify God. They are instituted to direct us in the holy exercises of faith and love, divine fear and reverence, submission, thankfulness, holy joy and sorrow, holy desires, resolutions, and hopes. True worship consists in these holy and spiritual exercises; and as these divine ordinances are the ordinances of worship, they are to help us, and to direct us in such a worship as this.

3. They have the sanction of *divine authority*. They are not only conversant about a divine and holy object, and designed to direct and help us in divine and holy exercises, but they have a divine and holy author. The infinitely great and holy God hath appointed them, the eternal Three in One. Each person in the Trinity hath been concerned in their institution. God the Father hath appointed them, and that by his own Son. They are of Christ’s own appointment; and he appointed, as he had received of the Father: [John xii. 49.](#) “I have not spoken of myself, but the Father, which sent me, he gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.” And the Father and Son more fully revealed and ratified them by the Spirit; and they are committed to writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

They are holy, in that God hath hallowed them, or consecrated them. They are conversant about holy things; and God ordained them, that in them *we* might be conversant about holy things. They are for a holy use; and it is God who, by his own immediate authority, ordained



them for that holy use; which renders them much more sacred than otherwise they would have been.

4. They are attended *in the name* of God. Thus we are commanded to do all that we do, in word or deed, in the name of Christ, [Col. iii. 17.](#) which is to be understood especially of our attendance on ordinances. Ordinances are administered in the name of God. When the word is preached by authorized ministers, they speak in God's name, as Christ's ambassadors, as co-workers together with Christ: [2 Cor. v. 20.](#) "Now we are ambassadors for Christ;" [chap. vi. 1.](#) "We are workers together with him." When a true minister preaches, he speaks as the oracles of God, [1 Pet. iv. 11.](#) and he is to be heard as one representing Christ.

So in administering the sacraments, the minister represents the person of Christ; he baptizes in his name, and in the Lord's supper stands in his stead. In administering church-censures, he still acts, as the apostle expresses it, in the person of Christ, [2 Cor. ii. 10.](#) On the other hand, the congregation, in their addresses to God in ordinances, as prayer and praise, act in the name of Christ, the Mediator, as having him to represent them, and as coming to God by him.

## SECT. II

God's ordinances are dreadfully profaned by those who attend on them, and yet allow themselves in ways of wickedness.

Persons who come to the house of God, into the holy presence of God, attending the duties and ordinances of his public worship, pretending with others, according to divine institution, to call on the name of God, to praise him, to hear his word, and commemorate Christ's death, and who yet, at the same time, are wittingly and allowedly going on in wicked courses, or in any practice contrary to the plain rules of the word of God. therein greatly profane the holy worship of God, defile the temple of God and those sacred ordinances on which they attend. The truth of this proposition appears by the following considerations.

1. By attending ordinances, and yet living in allowed wickedness, they show great *irreverence* and contempt of those holy ordinances. When persons who have been committing known wickedness, and yet live in it, and have no other design than to go on still in the same, when they come from their wickedness, as it were the same day, as it is expressed in the text, and attend the sacred solemn worship and ordinances of God, and then go from the house of God directly to the like allowed wickedness—they hereby express a most irreverent spirit with respect to holy things, and in a horrid manner cast contempt upon God's sacred institutions, and on those holy things which we are concerned with in them.

They show that they have no reverence of that God who hath hallowed these ordinances. They show a contempt of that divine authority which instituted them. They show a horribly irreverent spirit towards that God into whose presence they come, and with whom they immediately have to do in ordinances, and in whose name these ordinances are performed and attended. They show a contempt of that adoration of God, of that faith and love, and that humiliation, submission, and praise, which ordinances were instituted to express. What an irreverent spirit doth it show, that they are so careless after what manner they come before God! that they take no care to cleanse and purify themselves, in order that they may be fit to come before God! yea, that they take no care to avoid making themselves more and more unclean and filthy!

They have been taught many a time, that God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, and how exceedingly he is offended with sin; yet they care not how unclean and abominable they come into his presence. It shows horrid irreverence and contempt, that they are so bold, that they are not *afraid* to come into the presence of God in such a manner; and that they will presume to go out of the presence of God, and from an attendance upon holy things, again to their sinful practices. If they had any reverence of God and holy things, an approach into his presence, and an attendance on those holy things, would leave that awe upon their minds, that they would not dare to go immediately from them to their ways of known wickedness.

It would show a great irreverence in any person towards a king, if he should not care how he came into his presence, and if he should come in a sordid habit, and in a very indecent manner. How much more horrid irreverence doth it show, for persons willingly and allowedly to defile themselves with that filth which God infinitely hates, and so frequently to come into the presence of God!

2. By making a show of respect to God in ordinances, and then acting the contrary in their lives, they do but *mock* God. In attending ordinances, they make a show of respect to God. By joining in prayer, in public adorations, confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings, they make a show of high thoughts of God, and of humbling themselves before him; of sorrow for their sins, of thankfulness for mercies, and of a desire of grace and assistance to obey and serve God. By attending upon the hearing of the word, they make a show of a teachable spirit, and of a rediness to practise according to the instructions given. By attending on the sacraments, they make a show of faith in Christ, of choosing him for their portion, and spiritually feeding upon him.

But by their actions they all the while declare the contrary. They declare, that they have no high esteem of God, but that they despise him in their hearts. They declare, that they are so far from repenting of that they intend to continue in, their sins. They declare, that they have no desire of that grace and assistance to live in a holy manner for which they prayed, and that they had rather live wickedly: this is what they choose, and for the present are resolved upon. They declare by their actions, that there is no truth in what they pretend in hearing the word preached, that they had a desire to know what the will of God is, that they might be directed in their duty; for they declare by their actions, that they desire not to do the will of God, and that they do not intend any such thing: but intend, on the contrary, to disobey him: and that they prefer their carnal interests before his authority and glory.

They declare by their actions, that there is no truth in what they pretend in their attendance on the sacraments, that they desire to be fed with spiritual nourishment, and to be conformed and assimilated to Christ, and to have communion with him. They show by their practices, that they have no regard to Christ; and that they had rather have their lusts gratified, than to be fed with his spiritual food: they show, that they desire not any assimilation to Christ, but to be different from him, and of an opposite character to him: they show, that instead of desiring communion with Christ, they are his resolved and allowed enemies, willfully acting the part of enemies to Christ, dishonouring him, and promoting the interest of Satan against him.

Now, what can this be else but mockery, to make a show of great respect, reverence, love, and obedience, and at the same time willfully to declare the reverse in actions. If a rebel or traitor should send addresses to his king, making a show of great loyalty and fidelity, and should all the while openly, and in the king's sight, carry on designs of dethroning him, how could his addresses be considered as any other than mockery? If a man should bow and

kneel before his superior, and use many respectful terms to him, but at the same time should strike him, or spit in his face, would his bowing and his respectful terms be looked upon in any light than as done in mockery? When the Jews kneeled before Christ, and said, *Hail, King of the Jews*, but at the same time spit in his face, and smote him upon the head with a reed; could their kneeling and salutations be considered as any other than mockery?

Men who attend ordinances, and yet willingly live in wicked practices, treat Christ in the same manner that these Jews did. They come to public worship, and pretend to pray to him, to sing his praises, to sit and hear his word; they come to the sacrament, pretending to commemorate his death. Thus they kneel before him, and say, *Hail, King of the Jews*; yet at the same time they live in ways of wickedness, which they know Christ hath forbidden, of which he hath declared the greatest hatred, and which are exceedingly to his dishonour. Thus they buffet him, and spit in his face. They do as Judas did, who came to Christ saying, *Hail, Master*, and kissed him, at the same time betraying him into the hands of those who sought his life.

How can it be interpreted in any other light, when men come to public worship, and attend ordinances, and yet will be drunkards and profane swearers, will live in lasciviousness, injustice, or some other known wickedness? If a man should pray to God to keep him from drunkenness, and at the same time should put the bottle to his own mouth, and drink himself drunk; the absurdity and horrid wickedness of his conduct would be manifest to every man. But the very same thing, though not so visible to us, is done by those who make profession of great respect to God, and pray God from time to time to keep them from sin; yet at the same time have no design to forsake their known sins but intend the contrary.

God sees men's designs and resolutions more plainly than we can see their outward actions; therefore for a man to pray to God to be kept from sin, and at the same time to intend to sin, is mockery as visible to God as if he prayed to be kept from some particular sin, which he was at the same time willingly and allowedly committing.

These persons are guilty of a horrid profanation of God's ordinances; for they make them occasions of a greater affront to God, the occasions of showing their impudence and presumption; for he who lives in wilful wickedness, and doth not enjoy the ordinances of God, is not guilty of so great presumption, as he who attends these ordinances, and yet allows himself in wickedness. This latter acts as though he came into the presence of God on purpose to affront him. He comes from time to time to hear the will of God, and all the while designs disobedience, and goes away and acts directly contrary to it.

A servant would affront his master by wilfully disobeying his commands in any wise. But he would affront him much more, if he should on every occasion come to him to inquire his will, as though he were ready to do whatever his master would have him do, and then should immediately go away and do the contrary.

3. They put the ordinances of God to a *profane use*. The ordinances of God are holy, as they are set apart of God to a holy use and purpose. They are the worship of God, instituted for the ends of giving honour and glory to him, and to be means of grace and spiritual good to us. But those persons who attend these ordinances, and yet live in allowed wickedness, aim at neither of these ends: they, in their attendance on ordinances, neither aim to give honour to God, or to express any love, or esteem, or thankfulness; nor do they sincerely seek the good of their own souls. It is not truly the aim of any such persons to obtain grace, or to be made holy; their actions plainly show that this is not their desire; they choose to be wicked, and intend it.

It is not therefore to these purposes that they improve the holy ordinances of God; but they put them to another and profane use. They attend ordinances to avoid that discredit which a voluntarily and habitual absence from them would cause among those with whom they live, to avoid the punishment of human laws, or for their worldly advantage; to make up for other wickedness, or for some other carnal purposes. Thus they profane the ordinances of God, by perverting them to profane, purposes.

4. When persons thus treat God's holy ordinances, it tends to *beget contempt* of them in others. When others see sacred things commonly used so irreverently, and attended with such carelessness and contempt, and treated without any sacred regard; when they see persons are bold with them, treat them without any solemnity of spirit; when they see them thus commonly profaned, it tends to diminish their sense of their sacredness, and to make them seem no very awful things. In short, it tends to imbolden them to do the like.

The holy vessels and utensils of the temple and tabernacle were never to be put to a common use, nor to be handled without the greatest care and reverence: for if it had been commonly otherwise, the reverence of them could not have been maintained; they would have seemed no more sacred than any thing else. So it is in the ordinances of Christian worship.



SECT. III.

A call to self-examination.

Let this doctrine put all upon *examining* themselves, whether they do not allow themselves in known wickedness. You are such as do enjoy the ordinances of divine worship. You come into the holy presence of God, attending on those ordinances, which God, by sacred authority, hath hallowed and set apart, that in them we might have immediate intercourse with himself; that we might worship and adore him, and express to him a humble, holy, supreme respect; and that in them we might receive immediate communications from him.

Here you come and speak to God, pretending to express your sense how glorious he is, and how worthy that you should fear and love him, humble yourselves before him, devote yourselves to him, obey him, and have a greater respect to his commands and to his honour, than to any temporal interest, ease, or pleasure of your own. Here you pretend before God, that you are sensible how unworthily you have done by sins committed in times past, and that you have a great desire not to do the like in time to come. You pretend to confess your sins, and to humble yourselves for them. Here you pray that God would give you his Spirit to assist you against sin, to keep you from the commission of it, enable you to overcome temptations, and help you to walk holily in all your conversation, as though you really had a great desire to avoid such sins as you have been guilty of in time past. And the like pretences you have made in your attendance upon the other ordinances, as in hearing the word, in singing praise, &c.

But consider whether you do not horribly defile and profane the public prayers and other ordinances. Notwithstanding all your pretences, and what you seem to hold forth by your attendance on them, do you not all the while live in known wickedness against God? For all your pretences of respect to God, of humiliation for sin, and desires to avoid it, have you not come directly from the allowed practice of known sin to God's ordinances, and did not at all repent of what you had done, nor at all sorry for it at the very time when you stood before God, making these pretences; and even had no design of reformation, but intended to return to the same practice again after your departure from the presence of God?—I say, Hath not this, on many occasions, been your manner of coming and attending on the ordinances of divine worship? Not only so, but is it not still your manner, your common way of attending upon these ordinances, even to this very day? Do you not lie to God with your tongues, when you pretend, that he is a great God and that you are poor, guilty, unworthy creatures, deserving his wrath by the sins of which you have been guilty? and when you pretend, that you earnestly desire he would keep you from the like for time to come? Are you not guilty of horrid mockery of God in it, when at the same time you design no such thing, but the contrary?

Do you not even the same day that you come into God's house, and to his ordinances, allow yourselves in known sins? Do you not with consent and approbation think of the sinful practices, in which you allow yourselves, and in which you have been exercising yourselves in the week past! Do you not the very day in which you attend ordinances, allowedly please and gratify a wicked imagination? And are you not then perpetrating wickedness in your thoughts, and contriving the further fulfilment of your wickedness! Yea, are you not guilty of these things sometimes even in the very time of your attendance on ordinances, when you are in the immediate presence of God? and while others have immediate intercourse with God, and you likewise pretend to the same? Do you not, even in these circumstances, allow yourselves in wicked thoughts and imaginations, voluntarily wallowing in known wickedness.

Are not some of you guilty of allowedly breaking God's holy sabbath, in maintaining no government of your thoughts thinking indifferently about any thing that comes next to mind; and not only thinking, but talking too about common, worldly affairs? And sometimes talking in such a manner, as is not suitable even on other days; talking profanely, or in an unclear manner, sporting and diverting yourselves in such conversation of God's holy day? Yea, it is well if some have not been thus guilty in the very time of attendance on the ordinances of worship.

Examine yourselves, how it hath been with you. You all attend many of the ordinances of divine worship. You come to the house of God, attend public prayers, singing, and preaching of the word; and many of you come to the Lord's supper, that holy ordinance, instituted for the special commemoration of the greatest and most wonderful of all divine acts towards mankind; for the special and visible representation of the most glorious and wonderful things of our religion; for the most solemn profession and renewal of your engagement to God; and for special communion with Jesus Christ. Let such examine themselves whether they do not allow themselves in known sin, to the horrid profanation and pollution of this most sacred ordinance.

Examine and see whether you do not allow yourselves in some way of dealing with your fellow-men, which you have sufficient light to know to be evil; or whether you do not allow yourselves in a known evil behaviour towards some person or persons of the families to which you respectively belong, as towards your husbands, your wives, your children, or servants; or your neighbours, in your spirit and behaviour towards them, or in your talk of them.

Examine whether you do not some way willingly indulge an unclean appetite, in less or grosser acts of uncleanness, or in your discourse, or in your imagination. Or do you not give way to a lust after strong drink, or indulge yourselves in some vicious excess in gratifying some sensual appetite in meat or drink, or otherwise? Are you not willingly guilty of vanity, and extravagance in your conversation?

Do you not, for all your attendance on ordinances, continue in the allowed neglect of your precious souls, neglecting secret prayer or some known duty of private religion? Or do you not allow yourselves in sabbath-breaking?—In all these ways are the ordinances of God's sacred worship polluted and profaned.

Men are apt to act very treacherously and perversely in the matter of self-examination. When they are put upon examining themselves, they very often decline it, and will not enter into any serious examination of themselves at all. They hear uses of examination insisted on, but put them off to others, and never seriously apply them to themselves.—And if they do examine themselves, when they are put upon it, they are exceedingly partial to themselves; they spare themselves; they do not search, and look, and pass a judgment according to truth; but so as unreasonably to favour and justify themselves—If they can be brought to examine themselves at all, whether they do not allow themselves in known wickedness, although they attend on divine ordinances, they will not do it impartially. Their endeavour will not be indeed to know the truth of their ease, and to give a true answer to their consciences; but to blind themselves, to persuade and flatter themselves that they do not allow themselves in known sin, whether it be true or not. There are two things especially wherein persons often act very perversely and falsely in this matter.

1. Persons very often deal very perversely in pretending, that the sins in which they live are *not known* sins. Nothing is more common surely, than for persons to flatter themselves with this concerning the wickedness in which they live. Let that wickedness be almost what it may, they will plead to their consciences, and endeavour to still them, that there is no evil in it, or that they do not *know* that there is any evil in it. Men's own consciences can best tell how they are wont to do in this matter.—There is hardly any kind of wickedness that men commit, but they will plead thus in excuse for it. They will plead thus about their cheating and injustice, about their hatred of their neighbours, about their evil speaking, about their revengeful spirit, about their excessive drinking, about their lying, their neglect of secret prayer, their lasciviousness, their unclean dalliances; yea they will plead excuses for very gross acts of uncleanness, as fornication, adultery, and what not. They have their vain excuses and carnal reasonings in favour of all their evil actions. They will say, What harm, what evil is there in such and such an action? And if there be a plain rule against it, yet they will plead that their circumstances are peculiar, and that they are excepted from the general rule; that their temptation is so great, that they are excusable; or some thing will they find to plead.

If it be some thing upon which their lusts are much set, and about which they feel remorse of conscience, they will never leave studying and contriving with all the art and subtlety of which they are masters, till they shall have found out some reason, some excuse, with which they shall be able in some measure to quiet their consciences. And whether after all they shall have made it out to blind conscience or not, yet they will plead that their argument is



good, and it is no sin; or if it be a sin, it is only a sin of ignorance.—So men will plead for the wickedness which they do in the dark. So without doubt some very gross sinners plead to their consciences; as would appear, if we could but look into their hearts; when indeed the strongest argument they have, *that is such a thing there is no evil*, is the strongest lust they have to it, the inordinate desire they have to commit it.

It was the saying of one, *Licitis perimus omnes*; that is, *We all perish by lawful things*; which is as much as to say, men commonly live wickedly and go to hell, in those ways which they flatter themselves to be lawful. Or at least they flatter themselves, that they are sins of ignorance; they do not know them to be unlawful.—Thus, I make no doubt some will be apt to do, in applying to themselves this use of examination, if they can be persuaded to apply it to themselves at all. Whether these things be true of you, let your own consciences speak, you that neglect secret prayer; you that live in secret, unclean, lascivious actions; you that indulge an inordinate appetite for strong drink; you that defraud or oppress others; you that indulge a spirit of revenge and hatred towards your neighbour.—Here I desire you to consider two or three things.

(1.) Not all sins, which one knows not with a certain knowledge to be sinful, are justly called sins of ignorance. Men often will excuse themselves for venturing upon a sinful action or practice, with this, that they know not that it is sinful; which is at most true no otherwise, than as they do not know it to be sinful with a *certain* knowledge, or with the evidence of absolute demonstration; although at the same time it is a sin against their light, and against great light. They have been so taught, that they have had light enough to make them sensible that it is displeasing to God, and not warranted or allowed by him. And they do in their consciences think it to be sinful; they are secretly convinced of it, however they may pretend the contrary, and labour to deceive themselves, and to persuade themselves that they do not think there is any evil in it.

Those sins which are contrary to sufficient information and instruction, and contrary to the real dictates of their own consciences, or to the judgment of their own minds; whether there be certain or demonstrative knowledge or no; these are what I would be understood to mean, when I speak of known sins. Such light as this, whether there be absolutely certain knowledge or no, is sufficient to render the action utterly inexcusable, and to render it, when allowed, a horrible profanation and pollution of the holy ordinances of God.

(2.) It is in vain for persons to pretend that those are sins of ignorance, which they have often and clearly heard testified against from the word of God. It will be found to be so at last; it will be found to be a vain thing for persons who have lived under the light of the gospel, and where all manner of iniquity is testified against, if they live in immoral and vicious practices, to pretend that they are sins of ignorance; unless the case be very peculiar and extraordinary.

(3.) It is in vain for you to pretend that those are sins of ignorance, of which you would not dare to proceed in the practice, if you knew that your soul was to be required of you this night. Persons do many things, for which they plead, and pretend they think there is no evil in them, who yet would as soon eat fire, as do the same, if they knew that they were to stand before the judgment seat of Christ within four and twenty hours. This shows that persons do but prevaricate, when they pretend that their sins are sins of ignorance.

2. Another way wherein men deal falsely and perversely in this matter, is, in pretending that they do *not allow* themselves in those sins which they practise. They either pretend that they know them not to be sins, or if they cannot but own that, then they will say, they do not allow themselves in them; and so they hope God is not very much provoked by them, They pretend this, though they make a trade of them, They go on repeating one act after another, without ever seriously repenting or past, or resolving against future acts. But take heed that you do not deceive yourselves in this matter; for such pretences, however they do something towards stilling your consciences now, will do nothing when you come to stand before your righteous and holy Judge.

## SECT. IV

Address to such as attend ordinances, and yet allow themselves in known sin.

Consider how holy and sacred the ordinances of God are; what mockery you are guilty of in making such a show, and such pretences in attending ordinances, and yet voluntarily acting the reverse of what you pretend. Consider that there is no sort of sinners with whom God is so provoked, and who stand so guilty before him, as the profaners of his ordinances. The fire of God's wrath is kindled by none so much as by the polluters of holy things. They are represented as those who are especially guilty before God, in the third commandment: "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Why is this annexed to this command, rather than to any other of the ten, but because the breach of it especially renders a man guilty in the sight of God?

The taking of God's name in vain includes the profanation and pollution of ordinances and holy things. They do in a very dreadful manner take God's name in vain, who attend on his ordinances, and yet live in known sin; for, as we have shown, they manifest the greatest irreverence for him, and contempt of divine things. They manifest a contempt of his authority, a contempt of the business and design of his ordinances, and a most careless and irreverent spirit in things wherein they have immediate converse with God. Ordinances, as we have shown, are attended in the name of God; and therefore, by such an attendance on them, the name of God is greatly profaned. You that attend ordinances in such a manner, take the name of God so much in vain, that you use it only in mockery, and so as to expose it to contempt. Such a way of attending ordinances is a trampling of all that is sacred under foot.

We have in Scripture scarce any such awful instances of the immediate and miraculous vengeance of God, as on the profaners of holy things. How did God consume Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire before him! How did he break forth upon Uzza, for handling the ark with too much irreverence! 2 Sam. vi. 6,7. And how did he break forth on the children of Israel at Bethshemesh, for profaning the ark! "He smote of the people fifty thousand threescore and ten men," as in 1 Sam. vi. 19.

And God hath threatened in the New Testament, that if any man "defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy," 1. Cor. iii. 17. There is an emphasis in the expression. God will destroy all sinners, let it be what sin it will which they commit, and in which they continue; and yet it is said, "If any man defile the temple of God, *him* shall God destroy," as if it had been said, there is something peculiar in the case, and God is especially provoked to destroy such, and consume them in the fire of his wrath; and he will indeed destroy them with a destruction especially dreadful.

So God hath declared, Gal. vi. 7. "That he will not be mocked; "i.e. if any presume to mock him, they will find him, by experience, to be no contemptible being. God will vindicate

his holy majesty from the contempt of those who dare to mock him, and he will do it effectually: they shall fully find how dreadful a being he is, whose name they have daringly profaned and polluted. Defilers and profaners of ordinances, by known and allowed wickedness, provoke God more than the heathen, who have no ordinances. Thus the wickedness of Judah and Jerusalem is said to be far worse than that of Sodom, though the inhabitants of Sodom were, as we have reason to think, some of the worst of the heathens. See [Ezek. xvi. 46, 47.](#), &c. The sin of Sodom is here spoken of as a light thing in comparison with the sins of Judah. And what should be the reason, but that Judah enjoyed holy things which they profaned and polluted, which Sodom had no opportunity to do? for it is not to be supposed, that Judah otherwise arrived to the same pass that Sodom had.

Consider therefore, ye who allow yourselves in known wickedness, and live in it, who yet come to the house of God, and to his ordinances from time to time, without any serious design of forsaking your sins, but, on the contrary, with an intention of continuing in them, and who frequently go from the house of God to your wicked practices; consider how guilty you have made yourselves in the sight of God, and how dreadfully God is provoked by you. It is a wonder of God's patience, that he doth not break forth upon you, and strike you dead in a moment; for you profane holy things in a more dreadful manner than Uzza did, when yet God struck him dead for his error. And whereas he was struck dead for only one offence; you are guilty of the same sin from week to week, and from day to day.

It is a wonder that God suffers you to live upon earth, that he hath not, with a thunderbolt of his wrath, struck you down to the bottomless pit long ago. You that are allowedly and voluntarily living in sin, who have gone on hitherto in sin, are still going on, and do not design any other than to go on yet; it is a wonder that the Almighty's thunder lies still, and suffers you to sit in his house, or to live upon earth. It is a wonder that the earth will bear you, and that hell doth not swallow you up. It is a wonder that fire doth not come down from heaven, or come up from hell, and devour you; that hell-flames do not enlarge themselves to reach you, and that the bottomless pit hath not swallowed you up.

However, that you are as yet borne with, is no argument that your damnation slumbers. The anger of God is not like the passions of men, that it should be in haste. There is a day of vengeance and recompense appointed for the vessels of wrath; and when the day shall have come, and the iniquity shall be full, none shall deliver out of God's hand. Then will he recompense, even recompense into your bosoms.

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**T H E F I N A L J U D G M E N T :**

*OR,*

**THE WORLD JUDGED RIGHTEOUSLY BY JESUS CHRIST.**

[ACTS xvii. 31.](#)

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.

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**INTRODUCTION.**

These words are a part of the speech which Paul made in Marshill, a place of concourse of the judges and learned men of Athens. Athens was the principal city of that part of Greece which was formerly a commonwealth by itself, and was the most noted place in the whole world for learning, philosophy, and human wisdom; and it continued so for many ages; till at length the Romans having conquered Greece, its renown from that time began to diminish; and Rome having borrowed learning of it, began to rival it in science, and in the polite and civil arts. However, it was still very famous in the days of Christ and the apostles, and was a place of concourse for wise and learned men.

Therefore, when Paul came thither, and began to preach concerning Jesus Christ, a man who had lately been crucified at Jerusalem, (as in the [18th verse](#).) the philosophers thronged about him, to hear what he had to say. The strangeness of his doctrine excited their curiosity; for they spent their time in endeavouring to find out new things, and valued themselves greatly upon their being the authors of new discoveries, as we are informed in [ver. 21](#). They despised his doctrine in their hearts, and esteemed it very ridiculous, calling the apostle a babbler; for the preaching of Christ crucified was to the Greeks foolishness, [1 Cor. i. 23](#). yet the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, two different sects, had a mind to hear what the babbler had to say.

Upon this Paul rises up in the midst of them, and makes a speech; and as he speaks to philosophers and men of learning, he speaks quite differently from his common mode of address. There is evidently, in his discourse, a greater depth of thought, more philosophical reasoning, and a more elevated style, than are to be found in his ordinary discourses to common men. His speech is such as was likely to draw the attention and gain the assent of philosophers. He shows himself to be no babbler, but a man who could offer such reason, as they, however they valued themselves upon their wisdom, were not able to gainsay. His practice here is agreeable to what he saith of himself, [1 Cor. ix. 22](#). “that he became all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.” He not only to the weak became as weak, that he might gain the weak; but to the wise he became as wise, that he might gain the wise.

In the first place, he reasons with them concerning their worship of idols. He declares to them the true God, and points out how unreasonable it is to suppose, that he delights in such superstitious worship. He begins with this, because they were most likely to hearken to it, as being so evidently agreeable to the natural light of human reason, and also agreeable to what some of their own poets and philosophers had said, ([ver. 28](#).) He begins not immediately to tell them about Jesus Christ, his dying for sinners, and his resurrection from the dead; but first draws their attention with that to which they were more likely to hearken; and then, having thus introduced himself, he proceeds to speak concerning Jesus Christ.

He tells them, the times of this ignorance concerning the true God, in which they had hitherto been, God winked at; he suffered the world to lie in heathenish darkness; but now the appointed time was come, when he expected *men should every where repent;* " because he had appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." As an enforcement to the duty of turning to God from their ignorance, superstition, and idolatry, the apostle brings in this, that God had appointed such a day of judgment. And as a proof of this, he brings the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Concerning the words of the text, we may observe,

That in them the apostle speaks of the general judgment: *He will judge the World.*—The time when this shall be, on the appointed day: *He hath appointed a day.*—How the world is to be judged: *In righteousness.*—The man by whom it is to be judged: *Christ Jesus whom God raised from the dead.*

Doctrine. There is a day coming, in which there will be a general righteous judgment of the whole world, by Jesus Christ.

In speaking upon this subject, I shall show, That God is the Supreme Judge of the world. That there is a time coming, when God will, in the most public and solemn manner, judge the whole world. That the person by whom he will judge it is Jesus Christ. That the transactions of that day will be greatly interesting and truly awful. That all shall be done in righteousness. And finally, I shall take notice of those things which shall be immediately consequent upon the judgment.

SECT. I.

God is the supreme judge of the world.

1. God is so by *right*. He is by right the supreme and absolute ruler and disposer of all things, both in the natural and moral world. The rational understanding part of the creation is indeed subject to a different sort of government from that to which irrational creatures are subject. God governs the sun, moon, and stars; he governs even the motes of dust which fly in the air. Not a hair of our heads falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father. God also governs the brute creatures; by his providence, he orders, according to his own decrees, all events concerning those creatures. And rational creatures are subject to the same sort of government; all their actions,<sup>172</sup> and all events relating to them, being ordered by superior providence, according to absolute decrees; so that no event that relates to them ever happens without the disposal of God, according to his own decrees. The rule of this government is God's wise decree, and nothing else.

But rational creatures, because they are intelligent and voluntary agents, are the subjects of another kind of government. They are so only with respect to those of their actions, in which they are *causes by counsel*, or with respect to their voluntary actions. The government of which I now speak is called *moral* government, and consists in two things, in giving laws, and in judging.

God is, with respect to this sort of government, by right the sovereign *ruler* of the world. He is possessed of this rightly by reason of his infinite greatness and excellency, by which he merits, and is perfectly and solely fit for, the office of supreme ruler. He that is so excellent as to be infinitely worthy of the highest respect of the creature, hath thereby a right to that respect; he deserves it by a merit of condignity; so that it is injustice to deny it to him. And he that is perfectly wise and true, and is only so regarded, hath a right in every thing to be regarded, and to have his determinations attended to and obeyed.

God hath also a right to the character of supreme ruler, by reason of the absolute dependence of every creature on him. All creatures, and rational creatures no less than others, are wholly derived from him, and every moment are wholly dependent upon him for being, and for all good: so that they are properly his possession. And as, by virtue of this, he hath a right to give his creatures whatever rules of conduct he pleases, or whatever rules are agreeable to his own wisdom; so the mind and will of the creature ought to be entirely conformed to the nature and will of the Creator, and to the rules he gives, that are expressive of it.

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172 Except as they are sinful; for the sinfulness of actions is not included in the decrees of God, who is pure act from eternity to eternity.



For the same reason, he hath a right to *judge* their actions and conduct, and to fulfil the sanction of his law. He who hath an absolute and independent right to give laws, hath evermore the same right to judge those to whom the laws are given. It is absolutely necessary that there should be a judge of reasonable creatures; and sanctions, or rewards and punishments, annexed to rules of conduct, are necessary to the being of laws.

A person may instruct another without sanctions, but not give laws. However, these sanctions themselves are vain, are as good as none, without a judge to determine the execution of them. As God hath a right to be judge, so hath he a right to be the *supreme* judge; and none hath a right to reverse his judgments, to receive appeals from him, or to say to him, Why judgest thou thus?

2. God is, *in fact*, the supreme judge of the world. He hath power sufficient to vindicate his own right. As he hath a right which cannot be disputed, so he hath power which cannot be controlled. He is possessed of omnipotence, wherewith to maintain his dominion over the world; and he doth maintain his dominion in the moral as well as the natural world. Men may refuse subjection to God as a lawgiver; they may shake off the yoke of his laws by rebellion; yet they cannot withdraw themselves from his judgment. Although they will not have God for their lawgiver, yet they shall have him for their judge. The strongest of creatures can do nothing to control God, or to avoid him while acting in his judicial capacity. He is able to bring them to his judgment-seat, and is also able to execute the sentence which he shall pronounce.

There was once a notable attempt made by opposition of power entirely to shake off the yoke of the moral government of God, both as lawgiver, and as judge. This attempt was made by the angels, the most mighty of creatures; but they miserably failed in it: God notwithstanding acted as their judge in casting those proud spirits out of heaven, and binding them in chains of darkness unto a further judgment, and a further execution. "God is wise in heart and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?" [Job ix. 4](#). Wherein the enemies of God deal proudly, he is above them. He ever hath acted as judge in bestowing what rewards, and inflicting what punishments, he pleased on the children of men. And so he doth still; he is daily fulfilling the promises and threatenings of the law, in disposing of the souls of the children of men, and so he evermore will act.

God acteth as judge towards the children of men more especially,

(1.) In man's particular judgment at death. Then the sentence is executed, and the reward bestowed *in part*; which is not done without a judgment. The soul, when it departs from the body, appears before God to be disposed of by him, according to his law. But by this appearing before God, to be judged at death, we need understand no more than this, that the soul is made immediately sensible of the presence of God, God manifesting himself immediately to the soul, with the glory and majesty of a judge; that the sins of the wicked, and the righteousness of the saints, are brought by God to the view of their consciences, so

that they know the reason of the sentence given, and their consciences are made to testify to the justice of it; and that thus the will of God for the fulfilment of the law, in their reward or punishment, is made known to them and executed. This is undoubtedly done at every man's death.

(2.) In the great and general judgment, when all men shall together appear before the judgment-seat to be judged: and which judgment will be much more solemn, and the sanctions of the law will to a further degree be fulfilled.—But this brings me to another branch of the subject.

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## SECT. II.

That there is a time coming when God will, in the most public and solemn manner, judge the whole world of mankind.

The doctrine of a general judgment is not sufficiently discoverable by the light of nature. Indeed some of the heathens had some obscure notions concerning a future judgment. But the light of nature, or mere unassisted reason, was not sufficient to instruct the world of fallen men in this doctrine. It is one of the peculiar Doctrine of revelation, a doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There were indeed some hints of it in the Old Testament, as in [Psal. xcvi. 13](#). The Lord cometh to judge the world with righteousness, and his people with his truth." And [Eccl. xii. 14](#). "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." And in some other such like passages. But this doctrine is with abundantly the greatest clearness revealed in the New Testament: there we have it frequently and particularly declared and described with its circumstances.

However, although it be a doctrine of revelation, and be brought to light by the gospel, the brightest and most glorious revelation that God hath given to the world; yet it is a doctrine which is entirely agreeable to reason, and of which reason gives great confirmation. That there will be a time before the dissolution of the world, when the inhabitants of it shall stand before God, and give an account of their conduct; and that God will in a public manner, by a general and just judgment, set all things to rights respecting their moral behaviour, is a doctrine entirely agreeable to reason; which I shall now endeavour to make appear. But I would premise, that what we would inquire into, is not whether all mankind shall be judged by God; for that is a thing that the light of nature clearly teaches, and we have already spoken something of it: but whether it be rational to think that there will be a *public* judgment of all mankind *together*. This I think will appear very rational from the following considerations.

1. Such a judgment will be a more glorious display of God's majesty and dominion; it will be more glorious, because it will be more open, public, and solemn. Although God now actually exercises the most sovereign dominion over the earth; although he reigns and doth all things according to his own will, ordering all events as seemeth to himself good; and although he is actually judge in the earth, continually disposing of men's souls according to their works; yet he rules after a more hidden and secret manner, insomuch that it is common among the proud sons of men to refuse acknowledging his dominion. Wicked men question the very existence of a God, who taketh care of the world, who ordereth the affairs of it, and judgeth in it; and therefore they cast off the fear of him. Many of the kings and great men of the earth do not suitably acknowledge the God who is above them, but seem to look upon themselves as supreme, and therefore tyrannize over mankind, as if they were in no wise accountable for their conduct. There have been, and now are, many atheistical persons, who acknowledge not God's moral dominion over mankind; and therefore they throw off the yoke of his laws and government. And how great a part of the world is there now, and has

there always been, that has not acknowledged that the government of the world belongs to the God of Israel, or to the God of Christians; but has paid homage to other imaginary deities, as though they were their sovereign lords and supreme judges. Over how great a part of the world hath Satan usurped the dominion, and set up himself for God, in opposition to the true God!

Now, how agreeable to reason is it, that God, in the winding up of things, when the present state of mankind shall come to a conclusion, should in the most open and public manner, manifest his dominion over the inhabitants of the earth, by bringing them all, high and low, rich and poor, kings and subjects, together before him to be judged with respect to all that they ever did in the world! that he should thus openly discover his dominion in this world, where his authority hath been so much questioned, denied, and proudly opposed! That those very persons, who have thus denied and opposed the authority of God, should be themselves, with the rest of the world, brought before the tribunal of God! That however God be not now visibly present upon earth, disposing and judging in that visible manner that earthly kings do; yet at the conclusion of the world he should make his dominion visible to all, and with respect to all mankind, so that every eye shall see him, and even they who have denied him shall find, that God is supreme Lord of them, and of the whole world!

2. The end of judgment will be more fully answered by a public and general, than only by a particular and private, judgment. The end for which there is any judgment at all is to display and glorify the righteousness of God; which end is more fully accomplished by calling men to an account, bringing their actions to the trial, and determining their slate according to them, the whole world, both angels and men, being present to behold, than if the same things should be done in a more private way. At the day of judgment there will be the most glorious display of the justice of God that ever was made. Then God will appear to be entirely righteous towards every one; the justice of all his moral government will on that day be at once discovered. Then all objections will be removed; the conscience of ever man shall be satisfied; the blasphemies of the ungodly will be for ever put to silence, and argument will be given for the saints and angels to praise God for ever: [Rev. xix. 1, 2](#). And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power be to the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments.”

3. It is very agreeable to reason, that the irregularities which are so open and manifest in the world, should, when the world comes to an end, be publicly rectified by the supreme governor. The infinitely wise God, who made this world to be a habitation for men, and placed mankind to dwell here, and hath appointed man his end and work, must take care of the order and good government of the world, which he hath thus made. He is not regardless how things proceed here on earth: it would be a reproach to his wisdom, and to the perfect rectitude of his nature, to suppose so. This world is a world of confusion; it hath been filled

with irregularity and confusion ever since the fall; and the irregularities of it are not only private, relating to the actions of particular persons; but states, kingdoms, nations, churches, cities, and all societies of men in all ages, have been full of public irregularities. The affairs of the world, so far as they are in the hands of men, are carried on in the most irregular and confused manner.

Though justice sometimes takes place, yet how often do injustice, cruelty, and oppression prevail! How often are the righteous condemned, and the wicked acquitted and rewarded! How common is it for the virtuous and pious to be depressed, and the wicked to be advanced! How many thousands of the best men have suffered intolerable cruelties, merely for their virtue and piety, and in this world have had no help, no refuge to fly to! The world is very much ruled by the pride, covetousness, and passions of men. Solomon takes much notice of such like irregularities in the present state, (in his book of Ecclesiastes,) whereby he shows the vanity of the world.

Now, how reasonable is it to suppose, that God, when he shall come and put an end to the present state of mankind, will in an open, public manner, the whole world being present, rectify all these disorders! and that he will bring all things to a trial by a general judgment, in order that those who have been oppressed may be delivered; that the righteous cause may be pleaded and vindicated, and wickedness, which has been approved, honoured, and rewarded, may receive its due disgrace and punishment; that the proceedings of kings and earthly judges may be inquired into by him, whose eyes are as a flame of fire; and that the public actions of men may be publicly examined and recompensed according to their desert! How agreeable is it to divine wisdom thus to order things, and how worthy of the supreme governor of the world!

4. By a public and general judgment, God more fully accomplishes the reward he designs for the godly, and the punishment he designs for the wicked. One part of the reward which God intends for his saints, is the honour which he intends to bestow upon them. He will honour them in the most public and open manner, before the angels, before all mankind, and before them that hated them.. And it is most suitable that it should be so: it is suitable that those holy, humble souls, that have been hated by wicked men, have been cruelly treated and put to shame by them, and who have been haughtily domineered over, should be openly acquitted, commended, and crowned, before all the world.

So one part of the punishment of the ungodly will be the open shame and disgrace which they shall suffer. Although many of them have proudly lifted up their heads in this world, have had a very high thought of themselves, and have obtained outward honour among men; yet God will put them to open shame, by showing all their wickedness and moral filthiness before the whole assembly of angels and men; by manifesting his abhorrence of them, in placing them upon his left hand, among devils and foul spirits; and by turning them away into the most loathsome, as well as most dreadful, pit of hell, to dwell there for



ever.—Which ends may be much more fully accomplished in a general, than in a particular judgment.

SECT. III.

The world will be judged by Jesus Christ.

The person by whom God will judge the world, is Jesus Christ, God-man. The second person in the Trinity, that same person of whom we read in our Bibles, who was born of the Virgin Mary, lived in Galilee and Judea, and was at last crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, will come to judge the world both in his divine and human nature, in the same human body that was crucified, and rose again, and ascended up into heaven: [Acts i. 11.](#) “This same Jesus that is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven.” It will be his human nature which will then be seen by the bodily eyes of men. However, his divine nature, which is united to the human, will then also be present: and it will be by the wisdom of that divine nature that Christ will see and judge.

Here naturally arises an inquiry, Why is Christ appointed to judge the world rather than the Father or the Holy Ghost? We cannot pretend to know all the reasons of the divine dispensations. God is not obliged to give us an account of them. But so much may we learn by divine revelation, as to discover marvellous wisdom in what he determines and orders with respect to this matter. We learn,

1. That God seeth fit, that he who is in the *human nature*, should be the judge of those who are of the human nature: [John v. 27.](#) “And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” Seeing there is one of the persons of the Trinity united to the human nature, God chooses, in all his transactions with mankind, to transact by him. He did so of old, in his discoveries of himself to the patriarchs, in giving the law, in leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, and in the manifestations he made of himself in the tabernacle and temple: when, although Christ was not actually incarnate, yet he was so in design, it was ordained and agreed in the covenant of redemption, that he should become incarnate. And since the incarnation of Christ, God governs both the church and the world by Christ. So he will also at the end *judge* the world by him. All men shall be judged by God, and yet at the same time by one invested with their own nature.

God seeth fit, that those who have bodies, as all mankind will have at the day of judgment, should see their judge with their bodily eyes, and hear him with their bodily ears. If one of the other persons of the Trinity had been appointed to be judge, there must have been some extraordinary outward appearance made on purpose to be a token of the divine presence, as it was of old, before Christ was incarnate. But now there is no necessity of that: now one of the persons of the Trinity is actually incarnate, so that God by him may appear to bodily eyes without any miraculous visionary appearance.

2. Christ hath this honour of being the judge of the world given him, as a *suitable reward* for his sufferings. This is a part of Christ’s exaltation. The exaltation of Christ is given him in reward for his humiliation and sufferings. This was stipulated in the covenant of redemp-

tion; and we are expressly told, it was given him in reward for his sufferings, [Phil. ii. 8-12.](#) “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

God seeth meet, that he who appeared in such a low estate amongst mankind, without form or comeliness, having his divine glory veiled, should appear amongst men a second time, in his own proper majesty and glory, without a veil; to the end that those who saw him here at the first, as a poor, frail man, not having where to lay his head, subject to much hardship and affliction, may see him the second time in power and great glory, invested with the glory and dignity of the absolute Lord of heaven and earth; and that he who once tabernacled with men, and was despised and rejected of them, may have the honour of arraigning all men before his throne, and judging them with respect to their eternal state! [John v. 21-24.](#)

God seeth meet that he who was once arraigned before the judgment-seat of men, and was there most vilely treated, being mocked, spitted upon, and condemned, and who was at last crucified, should be rewarded, by having those very persons brought to his tribunal, that they may see him in glory, and be confounded; and that he may have the disposal of them for all eternity; as Christ said to the high priest while arraigned before him, [Matt. xxvi. 64.](#) “Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

3. It is needful that Christ should be the judge of the world, in order that he may *finish* the work of redemption. It is the will of God, that he who is the redeemer of the world should be a *complete* redeemer; and that therefore he should have the whole work of redemption left in his hands. Now, the redemption of fallen man consists not merely in the impetration of redemption, by obeying the divine law. and making atonement for sinners, or in preparing the way for their salvation, but it consists in a great measure, and is actually fulfilled, in converting sinners to the knowledge and love of the truth, in carrying them on in the way of grace and true holiness through life, and in finally raising their bodies to life, in glorifying them, in pronouncing the blessed sentence upon them, in crowning them with honour and glory in the sight of men and angels, and in completing and perfecting their reward. Now, it is necessary that Christ should do this, in order to his finishing the work which he hath begun. Raising the saints from the dead, judging them, and fulfilling the sentence, is part of their salvation; and therefore it was necessary that Christ should be appointed judge of the world, in order that he might *finish* his work. ([John vi. 30, 40. chap. v. 25-31.](#)) The redemption of the bodies of the saints is part of the work of redemption; the resurrection to life is called a redemption of their bodies, ([Rom. viii 23.](#))



It is the will of God, that Christ himself should have the fulfilling of that for which he died, and for which he suffered so much. Now, the end for which he suffered and died was the complete salvation of his people; and this shall be obtained at the last judgment, and not before. Therefore it was necessary that Christ be appointed judge, in order that he himself might fully accomplish the end for which he had both suffered and died. When Christ had finished his appointed sufferings, God did, as it were, put the purchased inheritance into his hands, to be kept for believers, and be bestowed upon them at the day of judgment.

4. It was proper that he who is appointed king of the church should rule till he should have put all his enemies under his feet; in order to which, he must be the judge of his *enemies*, as well as of his people. One of the offices of Christ, as redeemer, is that of a king; he is appointed king of the church, and head over all things to the church; and in order that his kingdom be complete, and the design of his reign be accomplished, he must *conquer* all his enemies, and then he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father: [1 Cor. xv. 24, 25](#). "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Now, when Christ shall have brought his enemies, who had denied, opposed, and rebelled against him, to his judgment-seat, and shall have passed and executed sentence upon them, this will be a final and complete *victory* over them, a victory which shall put an end to the war. And it is proper that he who at present reigns, and is carrying on the war against those who are of the opposite kingdom, should have the honour of obtaining the victory, and finishing the war.

5. It is for the abundant *comfort of the saints* that Christ is appointed to be their judge. The covenant of grace, with all its circumstances, and all those events to which it hath relation, is every way so contrived of God, as to give strong consolation to believers: for God designed the gospel for a glorious manifestation of his grace to them; and therefore every thing in it is so ordered, as to manifest the most grace and mercy.

Now, it is for the abundant consolation of the saints, that their own Redeemer is appointed to be their judge; that the same person who spilled his blood for them hath the determination of their state left with him; so that they need not doubt but that they shall have what he was at so much cost to procure.

What matter of joy to them will it be at the last day, to lift up their eyes, and behold the person in whom they have trusted for salvation, to whom they have fled for refuge, upon whom they have built as their foundation for eternity, and whose voice they have often heard, inviting them to himself for protection and safety, coming to judge them.

6. That Christ is appointed to be the judge of the world, will be for the more abundant *conviction of the ungodly*. It will be for their conviction, that they are judged and condemned by that very person whom they have rejected, by whom they might have been saved, who

shed his blood to give them an *opportunity* to be saved, who was wont to offer his righteousness to them, when they were in their state of trial, and who many a time called and invited them to come to him, that they might be saved. How justly will they be condemned by him whose salvation they have rejected, whose blood they have despised, whose many calls they have refused, and whom they have pierced by their sins!

How much will it be for their conviction, when they shall hear the sentence of condemnation pronounced, to reflect with themselves, how often hath this same person, who now passes sentence of condemnation upon me, called me, in his word, and by his messengers, to accept of him, and to give myself to him! How often hath he knocked at the door of my heart! and had it not been for my own folly and obstinacy, how might I have had him for my *Saviour*, who is now my incensed *Judge*!

SECT. IV.

Christ's coming, the resurrection, the judgment prepared, the books opened, the sentence pronounced and executed.

1. Christ Jesus will, in a most magnificent manner, descend from heaven with all the holy angels. The man Christ Jesus is now in the heaven of heavens, or, as the apostle expresses it, *far above all heavens*, [Eph. iv. 10](#). And there he hath been ever since his ascension, being there enthroned in glory, in the midst of millions of angels and blessed spirits. But when the time appointed for the day of judgment shall have come, notice of it will be given in those happy regions, and Christ will descend to the earth, attended with all those heavenly hosts, in a most solemn, awful, and glorious manner. Christ will come with divine majesty, he will come in the glory of the Father, [Matt. xvi. 27](#). "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels."

We can now conceive but little of the holy and awful magnificence in which Christ will appear, as he shall come in the clouds of heaven, or of the glory of his retinue. How mean and despicable, in comparison with it, is the most splendid appearance that earthly princes can make! A glorious visible light will shine round about him, and the earth, with all nature, will tremble at his presence. How vast and innumerable will that host be which will appear with him! Heaven will be for the time deserted of its inhabitants.

We may argue the glory of Christ's appearance, from his appearance at other times. When he appeared in transfiguration, his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. The apostle Peter long after spake of this appearance in magnificent terms, [2 Pet. i. 16, 17](#). "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory." And his appearance to St. Paul at his conversion, and to St. John, as related in [Rev. i. 13](#), &c. were very grand and magnificent. But we may conclude, that his appearance at the day of judgment will be vastly more so than either of these, as the occasion will be so much greater. We have good reason to think, that our nature, in the present frail state, could not bear the appearance of the majesty in which he will then be seen.

We may argue the glory of his appearance, from the appearances of some of the angels to men; as of the angel that appeared at Christ's sepulchre, after his resurrection, [Matt. xxviii. 3](#). "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow." The angels will doubtless all of them make as glorious an appearance at the day of judgment, as ever any of them have made on former occasions. How glorious, then, will be the retinue of Christ, made up of so many thousands of such angels! and how much more glorious will Christ, the judge himself, appear, than those his attendants! Doubtless their God will appear immensely more glorious than they.

Christ will thus descend into our air, to such a distance from the surface of the earth, that every one, when all shall be gathered together, shall see him, [Rev. i. 7](#). "Behold, he

cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.” Christ will make this appearance suddenly, and to the great surprise of the inhabitants of the earth. It is therefore compared to a cry at midnight, by which men are wakened in a great surprise.

2. At the sound of the last trumpet, the dead shall rise, and the living shall be changed. As soon as Christ is descended, the last trumpet shall sound, as a notification to all mankind to appear; at which mighty sound shall the dead be immediately raised, and the living changed: [1 Cor. xv. 52](#). “For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” [Matt. xxiv. 31](#). “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet.” [1 Thess. iv. 16](#). “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.” There will be some great and remarkable signal given for the rising of the dead, which it seems will be some mighty sound, caused by the angels of God, who shall attend on Christ.

Upon this all the dead shall rise from their graves; all both small and great, who shall have lived upon earth since the foundation of the world; those who died before the flood, and those who were drowned in the flood, all that have died since that time, and that shall die to the end of the world. There will be a great moving upon the face of the earth, and in the waters, in bringing bone to his bone, in opening graves, and bringing together all the scattered particles of dead bodies. The earth shall give up the dead that are in it, and the sea shall give up the dead that are in it.

However the parts of the bodies of many are divided and scattered; however many have been burnt, and their bodies have been turned to ashes and smoke, and driven to the four winds; however many have been eaten of wild beasts, of the fowls of heaven, and the fishes of the sea; however many have consumed away upon the face of the earth, and great part of their bodies have ascended in exhalations; yet the all-wise and all-powerful God can immediately bring every part to his part again.

Of this vast multitude some shall rise to life, and others to condemnation. [John v. 28, 29](#). “All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

When the bodies are prepared, the departed souls shall again enter into their bodies, and be re-united to them, never more to be separated. The souls of the wicked shall be brought up out of hell, though not out of misery, and shall very unwillingly enter into their bodies, which will be but eternal prisons to them. [Rev. xx. 13](#). “And death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them.” They shall lift their eyes full of the utmost amazement and horror to see their awful Judge. And perhaps the bodies with which they shall be raised will be most filthy and loathsome, thus properly corresponding to the inward, moral turpitude of their souls.



The souls of the righteous shall descend from heaven together with Christ and his angels: [1 Thess. iv. 14.](#) "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." They also shall be re-united to their bodies, that they may be glorified with them. They shall receive their bodies prepared by God to be mansions of pleasure to all eternity. They shall be every way fitted for the uses, the exercises, and delights of perfectly holy and glorified souls. They shall be clothed with a superlative beauty, similar to that of Christ's glorious body: [Phil. iii. 21.](#) "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Their bodies shall rise incorruptible, no more liable to pain or disease, and with an extraordinary vigour and vivacity, like that of those spirits that are as a flame of fire. [1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.](#) "It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." With what joy will the souls and bodies of the saints meet, and with what joy will they lift up their heads out of their graves to behold the glorious sight of the appearing of Christ! And it will be a glorious sight to see those saints arising out of their graves, putting off their corruption, and putting on incorruption and glory.

At the same time, those that shall then be alive upon the earth shall be changed. Their bodies shall pass through a great change, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; [1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.](#) "Behold, I show you a great mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." The bodies of the wicked then living will be changed into such hideous things, as shall be answerable to the loathsome souls that dwell in them, and such as shall be prepared to receive and administer eternal torments without dissolution. But the bodies of the righteous shall be changed into the same glorious and immortal form in which those that shall be raised will appear.

3. They shall all be brought to appear before Christ, the godly being placed on the right hand, the wicked on the left; [Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 33.](#) The wicked, however unwilling, however full of fear and horror, shall be brought or driven before the judgment-seat. However they may try to hide themselves, and for this purpose creep into dens and caves of the mountains, and cry to the mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; yet there shall not one escape; to the judge they must come, and stand on the left hand with devils. On' the contrary, the righteous will be joyfully conducted to Jesus Christ, probably by the angels. Their joy will, as it were, give them wings to carry them thither. They will with ecstasies and raptures of delight meet their friend and Saviour, come into his presence, and stand at his right hand.

Besides the one standing on the right hand and the other on the left, there seems to be this difference between them, that when the dead in Christ shall be raised, they will all be caught up into the air, where Christ shall be, and shall be there at his right hand during the judgment, never more to set their feet on this earth. Whereas the wicked shall be left standing on the earth, there to abide the judgment. [1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.](#) "The dead in Christ

shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

And what a vast congregation will there be of all the men, women, and children that shall have lived upon earth from the beginning to the end of the world! [Rev. xx. 12.](#) “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.”

4. The next thing will be, that the books shall be opened: [Rev. xx. 12.](#) “I saw the dead, great and small, stand before God; and the books were opened.” Which books seem to be these two, the book of God’s remembrance, and the book of Scripture; the former as the evidence of their deeds which are to be judged, the latter as the rule of judgment. The works both of the righteous and of the wicked will be brought forth, that they may be judged according to them, and those works will be tried according to the appointed and written rule.

(1.) The works of both righteous and wicked will be rehearsed. The book of God’s remembrance will be first opened. The various works of the children of men are, as it were, written by God in a book of remembrance, [Mal. iii. 16.](#) “A book of remembrance was written before him.” However ready ungodly men may be to make light of their own sins, and to forget them; yet God never forgetteth any of them: neither doth God forget any of the good works of the saints. If they give but a cup of cold water with a spirit of charity, God remembers it.

The evil works of the wicked shall then be brought forth to light. They must then hear of all their profaneness, their impenitence, their obstinate unbelief, their abuse of ordinances, and various other sins. The various aggravations of their sins will also be brought to view, as how this man sinned after such and such warnings, that after the receipt of such and such mercies; one after being so and so favoured with outward light, another after having been the subject of inward conviction, excited by the immediate agency of God. Concerning these sins, they shall be called to account to see what answer they can make for themselves: [Matt. xii. 36.](#) “But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” [Rom. xiv. 12.](#) “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

The good works of the saints will also be brought forth as evidences of their sincerity, and of their interest in the righteousness of Christ. As to their evil works, they will not be brought forth against them on that day; for the guilt of them will not lie upon them, they being clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Judge himself will have taken the guilt of their sins upon him; therefore their sins will not stand against them in the book of God’s remembrance. The account of them will appear to have been cancelled before that time. The account that will be found in God’s book will not be of debt, but of credit. God cancels their debts, and sets down their good works, and is pleased, as it were, to make himself a debtor for them, by his own gracious act.

Both good and bad will be judged according to their works: [Rev. xx. 12.](#) “And the dead were judged out of those things that were found written in the books, according to their works;” and [ver. 13.](#) “And they were judged every man according to their works.” Though the righteous are justified by faith, and not by their works; yet they shall be judged *according* to their works: then works shall be brought forth as the evidence of their faith. Their faith on that great day shall be tried by its fruits. If the works of any man shall have been bad, if his life shall appear to have been unChristian, that will condemn him, without any further inquiry. But if his works, when they shall be examined, prove good and of the right sort, he shall surely be justified. They will be declared as a sure evidence of his having believed in Jesus Christ, and of his being clothed with his righteousness.

But by works we are to understand all voluntary exercises of the faculties of the soul; as for instance, the words and conversation of men, as well as what is done with their hands: [Matt. xii.](#) “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Nor are we to understand only outward acts, or the thoughts outwardly expressed, but also the thoughts themselves, and all the inward workings of the heart. Man judgeth according to the outward appearance, but God judgeth the heart: [Rev. ii. 23.](#) “I am he that searcheth the heart and the reins, and I will give unto every one of you according to his works.” Nor will only positive sins be brought into judgment, but also omissions of duty, as is manifest by [Matt. xxv. 42.](#) &c. “For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink,” &c.

On that day secret and hidden *wickedness* will be brought to light. All the uncleanness, injustice, and violence, of which men have been guilty in secret, shall be manifest both to angels and men. Then it will be made to appear, how this and that man have indulged themselves in wicked imaginations, in lascivious, covetous, malicious, or impious desires and wishes; and how others have harboured in their hearts enmity against God and his law; also impenitency and unbelief, notwithstanding all the means used with them, and motives set before them, to induce them to repent, return, and live.

The *good works* of the saints also, which were done in secret, shall then be made public, and even the pious and benevolent affections and designs of their hearts; so that the real and secret characters of both saints and sinners shall then be most clearly and publicly displayed.

(2.) The book of Scripture will be opened, and the works of men will be tried by that touchstone. Their works will be compared with the word of God. That which God gave men for the rule of their action while in this life, shall then be made the rule of their judgment. God hath told us beforehand, what will be the rule of judgment. We are told in the Scriptures upon what terms we shall be justified, and upon what terms we shall be condemned. That which God hath given us to be our rule in our lives, he will make his own. rule in judgment.



The rule of judgment will be twofold. The *primary* rule of judgment will be the law. The law ever hath stood, and ever will stand in force, as a rule of judgment, for those to whom the law was given: [Matt. v. 18](#). “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” The law will so far be made the rule of judgment, that not one person at that day shall by any means be justified or condemned, in a way inconsistent with that which is established by the law. As to the wicked, the law will be so far the rule of judgment respecting them, that the sentence denounced against them will be the sentence of the law. The righteous will be so far judged by the law, that although their sentence will not be the sentence of the law, yet it will by no means be such a sentence as shall be inconsistent with the law, but such as it allows: for it will be by the righteousness of the law that they shall be justified.

It will be inquired concerning every one, both righteous and wicked, whether the law stands against him, or whether he hath a fulfilment of the law to show. As to the *righteous*, they will have fulfilment to show; they will have it to plead, that the judge himself hath fulfilled the law for them; that he hath both satisfied for their sins, and fulfilled the righteousness of the law for them: [Rom. x. 4](#). “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” But as to the wicked, when it shall be found, by the book of God’s remembrance, that they have broken the law, and have no fulfilment of it to plead, the sentence of the law shall be pronounced upon them.

A *secondary* rule of judgment will be the gospel, or the covenant of grace, wherein it is said, “He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned:” [Rom. ii. 16](#). “In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” By the gospel, or covenant of grace, eternal blessedness will be adjudged to believers. When it shall be found that the law hinders not, and that the curse and condemnation of the law stands not against them, the reward of eternal life shall be given them, according to the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

5. The sentence will be pronounced. Christ will say to the wicked on the left hand, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”<sup>173</sup> How dreadful will these words of the judge be to the poor, miserable, despairing wretches on the left hand! How amazing will every syllable of them be! How will they pierce them to the soul! These words show the greatest wrath and abhorrence. Christ will bid them depart; he will send them away from his presence, will remove them for ever far out of his sight, into an everlasting separation from God, as being most loathsome, and unfit to dwell in his presence, and enjoy communion with him.

Christ will call them *cursed*; *Depart, ye cursed*, to whom everlasting wrath and ruin belong; who are by your own wickedness prepared for nothing else, but to be firebrands of

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173 [Matt. xxv. 41](#).



hell; who are the fit objects and vessels of the vengeance and fury of the Almighty. *Into fire:* he will not send them away merely into a loathsome prison, the receptacle of the filth arid rubbish of the universe; but into a furnace of fire; that must be their dwelling-place, there they must be tormented with the most racking pain and anguish. It is *everlasting* fire; there is eternity in the sentence, which infinitely aggravates the doom, and will make every word of it immensely more dreadful, sinking, and amazing to the souls that receive it. *Prepared for the devil and his angels:* this sets forth the greatness and intensesness of the torments, as the preceding part of the sentence does the duration. It shows the dreadfulfulness of that fire to which they shall be condemned, that it is the same that is prepared for the devils, those foul spirits and great enemies of God. Their condition will be the same as that of the devils, in many respects; particularly as they must burn in the fire for ever.

This sentence will doubtless be pronounced in such an awful manner as shall be a terrible manifestation of the wrath of the judge. There will be divine, holy, and almighty wrath manifested in the countenance and voice of the judge; and we know not what other manifestations of anger will accompany the sentence. Perhaps it will be accompanied with thunders and lightnings, far more dreadful than were on mount Sinai at the giving of the law. Correspondent to these exhibitions of divine wrath, will be the appearances of terror and most horrible amazement in the condemned. How will all their faces look pale! how will death sit upon their countenances, when those words shall be heard! What dolorous cries, shrieks, and groans! What trembling, and wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, will there then be!

But with the most benign aspect, in the most endearing manner, and with the sweetest expressions of love, will Christ invite his saints on his right hand to glory; saying, “come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”<sup>174</sup> He will not bid them to go from him, but *to come with him*; to go where he goes; to dwell where he dwells; to enjoy him, and to partake with him. He will call them blessed, blessed of *his Father*, blessed by him whose blessing is infinitely the most desirable, namely, God. *Inherit the kingdom:* they are not only invited to go with Christ, and to dwell with him, but to inherit a kingdom with him; to sit down with him on his throne, and to receive the honour and happiness of a heavenly kingdom. “Prepared for you from the foundation of the world:”<sup>175</sup> this denotes the sovereign and eternal love of God, as the source of their blessedness. He puts them in mind, that God was pleased to set his love upon them, long before they had a being, even from eternity; that therefore God made heaven on purpose for them, and fitted it for their delight and happiness.

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174 [Matt. xxv. 34](#)

175 [Ibid](#)

6. Immediately after this, the sentence will be executed, as we are informed. [Matt. xxv. 46.](#) “These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” When the words of the sentence shall have once proceeded out of the mouth of the judge, then that vast and innumerable throng of ungodly men shall go away, shall be driven away, shall be necessitated to go away with devils, and shall with dismal cries and shrieks be cast into the great furnace of fire prepared for the punishment of devils, the perpetual thunders and lightnings of the wrath of God following them. Into this furnace they must in both soul and body enter, never more to come out. Here they must spend eternal ages in wrestling with the most excruciating torments, and in crying out in the midst of the most dreadful flames, and under the most insupportable wrath.

On the other hand; the righteous shall ascend to heaven with their glorified bodies, in company with Christ, his angels, and all that host which descended with him; they shall ascend in the most joyful and triumphant manner, and shall enter with Christ into that glorious and blessed world, which had for the time been empty of its creature inhabitants. Christ having given his church that perfect beauty, and crowned it with that glory, honour, and happiness, which were stipulated in the covenant of redemption before the world was, and which he died to procure for them; and having made it a truly glorious church, every way complete, will present it before the Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Thus shall the saints be instated in everlasting glory, to dwell there with Christ, who shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water, to the full enjoyment of God, and to an eternity of the most holy, glorious, and joyful employments.



## SECT. V.

All will be done in righteousness.

Christ will give to every man his due, according to a most righteous rule. Those who shall be condemned, will be most justly condemned; will be condemned to that punishment which they shall most justly deserve; and the justice of God in condemning them will be made most evident. Now the justice of God in punishing wicked men, and especially in the degree of their punishment, is often blasphemously called in question. But it will be made clear and apparent to all; their own consciences will tell them that the sentence is just, and all cavils will be put to silence.

So those that shall be justified, shall be most justly adjudged to eternal life. Although they also were great sinners, and deserved eternal death; yet it will not be against justice or the law, to justify them, they will be in Christ. But the acquitting of them will be but giving the reward merited by Christ's righteousness, [Rom. iii. 26](#). "That God may be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Christ will judge the world in righteousness, particularly as he will give to every one a *due proportion* either of reward or punishment, according to the various characters of those who shall be judged. The punishments shall be duly proportioned to the number and aggravations of the sins of the wicked; and the rewards of the righteous shall be duly proportioned to the number of their holy acts and affections, and also to the degree of virtue implied in them. I would observe further,

1. That Christ cannot fail of being just in judging, through *mistake*. He cannot take some to be sincere and godly, who are not so, nor others to be hypocrites, who are really sincere. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and he searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men. He can never err in determining what is justice in particular cases, as human judges often do. Nor can he be blinded by prejudices, as human judges are very liable to be. [Deut. x. 17](#). "He regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." It is impossible he should be deceived by the excuse, and false colours, and pleas of the wicked, as human judges very commonly are. It is equally impossible that he should err, in assigning to every one his proper proportion of reward or punishment, according to his wickedness or good works. His knowledge being infinite, will effectually guard him against all these, and other such errors.

2. He cannot fail of judging righteously through an *unrighteous* disposition; for he is infinitely just and holy in his nature. [Deut. xxxii. 4](#). "He is the rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." It is not possible that an infinitely powerful, self-sufficient being should be under any temptation to injustice. Nor is it possible that an infinitely wise being, who knoweth all things, should

not choose justice. For he who perfectly knows all things, perfectly knows how much more amiable justice is than injustice; and therefore must choose it.

SECT. VI.

Those things which will immediately follow the day of judgment.

1. After the sentence shall have been pronounced, and the saints shall have ascended with Christ into glory, this world will be dissolved by fire: the conflagration will immediately succeed the judgment. When an end shall have been put to the present state of mankind, this world, which was the place of their habitation during that state, will be destroyed, there being no further use for it. This earth which had been the stage upon which so many scenes had been acted, upon which there had been so many great and famous kingdoms and large cities; where there had been so many wars, so much trade and business carried on for so many ages; shall then be destroyed. These continents, these islands, these seas and rivers, these mountains and valleys, shall be seen no more at all: all shall be destroyed by devouring flames. This we are plainly taught in the word of God. [2 Pet. iii. 7.](#) “But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.” But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.” , wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.”

2. Both the misery of the wicked and the happiness of the saints will be increased, beyond what shall be before the judgment. The misery of the wicked will be increased, as they will be tormented not only in their souls, but also in their bodies, which will be prepared both to receive and administer torment to their souls. There will doubtless then be the like connexion between soul and body, as there is now; and therefore the pains and torments of the one will affect the other. And why may we not suppose that their torments will be increased as well as those of the devils? Concerning them we are informed, ([Jam. ii. 19.](#)) that they believe there is one God, and tremble in the belief; expecting no doubt that he will inflict upon them, in due time, more severe torments than even those which they now suffer. We are also informed that they are bound ” in chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; *and* unto the judgment of the great day;” ([2 Pet. ii. 4.](#) and [Jude 6.](#)) which implies that their full punishment is not yet executed upon them, but that they are now reserved as prisoners in hell, to receive their just recompence on the day of judgment. Hence it was that they thought Christ was *come to torment them before the time.* [Matt. viii. 29.](#) Thus the punishment neither of wicked men nor devils will be complete before the final judgment.

No more will the happiness of the saints be complete before that time. Therefore we are in the New Testament so often encouraged with promises of the resurrection of the dead, and of the day when Christ shall come the second time. These things are spoken of as the great objects of the expectation and hope of Christians. A state of separation of soul and

body is to men an unnatural state. Therefore when the bodies of the saints shall be raised from the dead, and their souls shall be again united to them, as their state will be more natural, so doubtless it will be more happy. Their bodies will be *glorious* bodies, and prepared to administer as much to their happiness, as the bodies of the wicked will be to administer to their misery.

We may with good reason suppose the accession of happiness to the souls of the saints will be great, since the occasion is represented as the marriage of the church, and the Lamb; [Rev. xix. 7.](#) “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” Their joy will then be increased, because they will have new arguments of joy. The body of Christ will then be perfect, the church will be complete; all the parts of it will have come into existence, which will not be the case before the end of the world; no parts of it will be under sin or affliction: all the members of it will be in a perfect state; and they shall all be together by themselves, none being mixed with ungodly men. Then the church will be as a bride adorned for her husband, and therefore she will exceedingly rejoice.

Then also the Mediator will have fully accomplished his work. He will then have destroyed, and will triumph over, all his enemies. Then Christ will have fully obtained his reward, and fully accomplished the design which was in his heart from all eternity. For these reasons Christ himself will greatly rejoice, and his members must needs proportionably rejoice with him. Then God will have obtained the end of all the great works which he hath been doing from the beginning of the world. All the designs of God will be unfolded in their events; then his marvellous contrivance in his hidden, intricate, and inexplicable works will appear, the ends being obtained. Then the works of God being perfected, the divine glory will more abundantly appear. These things will cause a great accession of happiness to the saints, who shall behold them. Then God will have fully glorified himself, his Son, and his elect; then he will see that all is very good, and will entirely rejoice in his own works. At the same time the saints also, viewing the works of God brought thus to perfection, will rejoice in the view, and receive from it a large accession of happiness.

Then God will make more abundant manifestations of his glory, and of the glory of his Son; then he will more plentifully pour out his Spirit, and make answerable additions to the glory of the saints, and by means of all these will so increase the happiness of the saints, as shall be suitable to the commencement of the ultimate and most perfect state of things, and to such a joyful occasion, the completion of all things. In this glory and happiness will the saints remain for ever and ever.



## SECT. VII.

The uses to which this doctrine is applicable.

I. The *first use* proper to be made of this doctrine is of *instruction*. Hence many of the mysteries of Divine Providence may be unfolded. There are many things in the dealings of God towards the children of men, which appear very mysterious, if we view them without having an eye to this last judgment, which yet, if we consider this judgment, have no difficulty in them. As,

1. That God suffers the wicked to live and prosper in the world. The infinitely holy and wise Creator and Governor of the world must necessarily hate wickedness; yet we see many wicked men spreading themselves as a green bay-tree; they live with impunity; things seem to go well with them, and the world smiles upon them. Many who have not been fit to live, who have held God and religion in the greatest contempt, who have been open enemies to all that is good, who by their wickedness have been the pests of mankind; many cruel tyrants, whose barbarities have been such as would even fill one with horror to hear or read of them; yet have lived in great wealth and outward glory, have reigned over great and mighty kingdoms and empires, and have been honoured as a sort of earthly gods.

Now, it is very mysterious, that the holy and righteous Governor of the world, whose eye beholds all the children of men, should suffer it so to be, unless we look forward to the day of judgment; and then the mystery is unravelled. For although God for the present keeps silence, and seems to let them alone; yet then he will give suitable manifestations of his displeasure against their wickedness; they shall then receive condign punishment. The saints under the Old Testament were much stumbled at these dispensations of Providence, as you may see in [Psal. lxxiii.](#) and [Jer. ch. xii.](#) The difficulty to them was so great, because then a future state and a day of judgment were not revealed with that clearness with which they are now.

2. God sometimes suffers some of the best of men to be in great affliction, poverty, and persecution. The *wicked* rule, while *they* are subject; the wicked are the head, and they are the tail; the wicked domineer, while they serve, and are oppressed, yea are trampled under their feet, as the mire of the streets. These things are very common, yet they seem to imply great confusion. When the wicked are exalted to power and authority, and the godly are oppressed by them, things are quite out of joint: [Prov. xx. 26.](#) "A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring." Sometimes one wicked man makes many hundreds, yea thousands, of precious saints a sacrifice to his lust and cruelty, or to his enmity against virtue and the truth, and puts them to death for no other reason but that for which they are especially to be esteemed and commended.

Now, if we look no further than the present state, these things appear strange and unaccountable. But we ought not to confine our views within such narrow limits. When God

shall have put an end to the present state, these things shall all be brought to rights. Though God suffers things to be so for the present, yet they shall not proceed in this course always; comparatively speaking, the present state of things is *but for a moment*. When all shall be settled and fixed by a divine judgment, the righteous shall be exalted, honoured, and rewarded, and the wicked shall be depressed and put under their feet. However the wicked now prevail against the righteous, yet the righteous shall at last have the ascendant, shall come off conquerors, and shall see the just vengeance of God executed upon those who now hate and persecute them.

3. It is another mystery of providence, that God suffers so much public injustice to take place in the world. There are not only private wrongs, which in this state pass unsettled, but many public wrongs, wrongs done by men acting in a public character, and wrongs which affect nations, kingdoms, and other public bodies of men. Many suffer by men in public offices, from whom there is no refuge, from whose decisions there is no appeal. Now it seems a mystery that these things are tolerated, when he that is rightfully the Supreme Judge and Governor of the world is perfectly just; but at the final judgment all these wrongs shall be adjusted, as well as those of a more private nature.

II. Our *second use* of this subject shall be to apply it to the *awakening* of sinners. You that have not the fear of God before your eyes, that are not afraid to sin against him, consider seriously what you have heard concerning the day of judgment. Although these things be now future and unseen, yet they are real and certain. If you now be left to yourselves, if God keep silence, and judgment be not speedily executed, it is not because God is regardless how you live, and how you behave yourselves. Now indeed God is invisible to you, and his wrath is invisible; but at the day of judgment, you yourselves shall see him with your bodily eyes: you shall not then be able to keep out of his sight, or to avoid seeing him: [Rev. i. 7](#). “Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” You shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven; your ears shall hear the last trumpet, that dreadful sound, the voice of the archangel; your eyes shall see your judge sitting on the throne, they shall see those manifestations of wrath which there will be in his countenance; your ears shall hear him pronounce the sentence.

Seriously consider, if you live in the ways of sin, and appear at that day with the guilt of it upon you, how you will be able to endure the sight or the hearing of these things, and whether horror and amazement will not be likely to seize you, when you shall see the judge descending, and hear the trump of God. What account will you be able to give, when it shall be inquired of you, why you led such a sinful, wicked life? What will you be able to say for yourselves, when it shall be asked, why you neglected such and such particular duties, as the duty of secret prayer, for instance? or why you have habitually practised such and such particular sins or lusts? Although you be so careless of your conduct and manner of life,



make so light of sin, and proceed in it so freely, with little or no dread or remorse; yet you must give an account of every sin that you commit, of every idle word that you speak, and of every sinful thought of your hearts. Every time you deviate from the rules of justice, of temperance, or of charity; every time you indulge any lust, whether secretly or openly, you must give an account of it: it will never be forgotten, it stands written in that book which will be opened on that day.

Consider the rule you will be judged by. It is the perfect rule of the divine law, which is exceeding strict, and exceeding broad. And how will you ever be able to answer the demands of this law?—Consider also,

1. That the judge will be your *supreme* judge. You will have no opportunity to appeal from his decision. This is often the case in this world; when we are dissatisfied with the decisions of a judge, we often may appeal to a higher, a more knowing, or a more just judicatory. But no such appeal can be made from our Divine Judge; no such indulgence will be allowed: or if it were allowed, there is no superior judge to whom the appeal should be made. By his decision, therefore, you must abide.

2. The judge will be *omnipotent*. Were he a mere man, like yourselves, however he might judge and determine, you might resist, and by the help of others, if not by your own strength, prevent or elude the execution of the judgment. But the judge being omnipotent, this is utterly impossible. In vain is all resistance, either by yourselves, or by whatever help you can obtain: “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished,” [Prov. xi. 21](#). As well might you “set the briers and thorns in battle against God,” [Isa. xxvii. 4](#).

3. The judge will be *inexorable*. Human judges may be prevailed upon to reverse their sentence, or at least to remit something of its severity. But in vain will be all your entreaties, all your cries and tears to this effect, with the great Judge of the world. Now indeed he inclines his ear, and is ready to hear the prayers, cries, and entreaties of all mankind; but then the day of grace will be past, and the door of mercy be shut: then although ye spread forth your hands, yet the judge will hide his eyes from you; yea, though ye make many prayers, he will not hear: [Isa. i. 15](#). Then the judge will deal in fury: his eye shall not spare, neither will he have pity: and though ye cry in his ears with a loud voice, yet will he not hear you: [Ezek. viii. 18](#). And you will find no place of repentance in God, though you seek it carefully with tears.

4. The judge at that day will not mix mercy with *justice*. The time for mercy to be shown to sinners will then be past. Christ will then appear in another character than that of the merciful Saviour. Having laid aside the inviting attributes of grace and mercy, he will clothe himself with justice and vengeance. He will not only, in general, exact of sinners the demands of the law, but he will exact the whole, without any abatement; he will exact the very uttermost farthing, [Matt. v. 26](#). Then Christ will come to fulfil that in [Rev. xiv. 10](#). “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup

of his indignation.” The punishment threatened to ungodly men is *without any pity*: See [Ezek. v. 11](#). “Neither shall mine eye spare; neither will I have any pity.” Here all judgments have a mixture of mercy; but the wrath of God will be poured out upon the wicked without mixture, and vengeance will have its full weight.

III. I shall apply myself, *thirdly*, to several *different characters* of men.

1. To those who live in secret wickedness. Let such consider, that for all these things God will bring them into judgment. Secrecy is your temptation. Promising yourselves this, you practise many things, you indulge many lusts, under the covert of darkness, and in secret corners, which you would be ashamed to do, in the light of the sun, and before the world. But this temptation is entirely groundless. All your secret abominations are even now perfectly known to God, and will also hereafter be made known both to angels and men: [Luke xii. 2, 3](#). “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light: and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.”

Before human judges are brought only those things which are known; but before this judge shall be brought the most “hidden things of darkness, and even the counsels of the heart,” [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). All your secret uncleanness, all your secret fraud and injustice, all your lascivious desires, wishes, and designs, all your inward covetousness, which is idolatry, all your malicious, envious, and revengeful thoughts and purposes, whether brought forth into practice or not, shall then be made manifest, and you shall be judged according to them. Of these things, however secret, there will be need of no other evidence than the testimony of God and of your own consciences.

2. To such as are not just and upright in their dealings with their fellow-men. Consider, that all your dealings with men must be tried, must be brought forth into judgment, and there compared with the rules of the word of God. All your actions must be judged according to those things which are found written in the book of the word of God. If your ways of dealing with men shall not agree with those rules of righteousness, they will be condemned. Now, the word of God directs us to practise entire justice: “That which is altogether just shalt thou follow,” [Deut. xvi. 20](#). and to do to others as we would they should do to us. But how many are there, whose dealings with their fellow-men, if strictly tried by these rules, would not stand the test!

God hath, in his word, forbidden all deceit and fraud in our dealings one with another, [Lev. xi. 13](#). He hath forbidden us to oppress one another, [Lev. xxv. 14](#). But how frequent are practices contrary to those rules, and which will not bear to be tried by them! How common are fraud and trickishness in trade! How will men endeavour to lead on those with whom they trade in the dark, that so they may make their advantage! Yea, lying in trading is too

common a thing among us. t How common are such things as that mentioned, [Prov. xx. 14.](#) “It is nought, it is nought, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.”

Many men will take the advantage of another’s ignorance to advance their own gain, to his wrong; yea, they seem not to scruple such practices. Beside downright lying, men have many ways of blinding and deceiving one another in trade, which are by no means right in the sight of God, and will appear to be very unjust, when they shall be tried by the rule of God’s word at the day of judgment. And how common a thing is oppression or extortion, in taking any advantage that men can by any means obtain, to get the utmost possible of their neighbour for what they have to dispose of, and their neighbour needs!

Let such consider, that there is a God in heaven, who beholds them, and sees how they conduct themselves in their daily traffic with one another; and that he will try their works another day. Justice shall assuredly take place at last. The righteous Governor of the world will not suffer injustice without control; he will control and rectify it, by returning the injury upon the head of the injurer: [Matt. vii. 2.](#) “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

3. To those who plead for the lawfulness of practices generally condemned by God’s people. You who do this, consider that your practices must be tried at the day of judgment. Consider, whether or no they are likely to be approved by the most holy Judge at that day: [Prov. v. 21.](#) “The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord; and he pondereth all his goings.” However, by your carnal reasonings, you may deceive your own hearts, yet you will not be able to deceive the judge, he will not hearken to your excuses, but will try your ways by the rule; he will know whether they be straight or crooked.

When you plead for these and those liberties which you take, let it be considered, whether they be likely to be allowed of by the judge at the last great day. Will they bear to be tried by his eyes, which are purer than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity?

4. To those who are wont to excuse their wickedness. Will the excuses which you make for yourselves be accepted at the day of judgment? If you excuse yourselves to your own consciences, by saying, that you were under such and such temptations which you could not withstand; that corrupt nature prevailed, and you could not overcome it; that it would have been so and so to your damage, if you had done otherwise; that if you had done such a duty, you would have brought yourselves into difficulty, would have incurred the displeasure of such and such friends, or would have been despised and laughed at; or if you say, you did no more than it was the common custom to do, no more than many godly men have done, no more than certain persons of good reputation now practise; that if you had done otherwise, you would have been singular; if these be your excuses for the sins which you commit, or for the duties which you neglect, let me ask you, will they appear sufficient when they shall be examined at the day of judgment?



5. To those who live in impenitence and unbelief. There are some persons who live in no open vice, and perhaps conscientiously avoid secret immorality, who yet live in impenitence and unbelief. They are indeed called upon *to repent and believe the gospel*, to forsake their evil ways and *thoughts*, and to return to God, that he may have mercy on them; to come unto Christ, *labouring*, and *heavy-laden with sin*, that they may obtain *rest* of him; and are assured, that if they *believe*, *they shall lie saved*; and that if they *believe not*, *they shall be damned*; and all the most powerful motives are set before them, to induce them to comply with these exhortations, especially those drawn from the eternal world; yet they persist in sin, they remain impenitent and unhumbled; they will not come unto Christ, that they may have life.

Now such men shall be brought into judgment for their conduct, as well as more gross sinners. Nor will they be any more able to stand in the judgment than the other. They resist the most powerful means of grace; go on in sin against the clear light of the gospel; refuse to hearken to the kindest calls and invitations; reject the most amiable Saviour, the judge himself; and despise the free offers of eternal life, glory, and felicity. And how will they be able to answer for these things at the tribunal of Christ?

IV. If there be a day of judgment appointed, then let all be very strict in trying their own sincerity. God on that day will discover the secrets of all hearts. The judgment of that day will be like the fire, which burns up whatsoever is not true gold; wood, hay, stubble, and dross, shall be all consumed by the scorching fire of that day. The judge will be like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap, which will cleanse away all filthiness, however it may be coloured over: [Mal. iii. 2.](#) "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap:" and [chap. iv. 1.](#) "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts."

There are multitudes of men that wear the guise of saints, appear like saints, and their state, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of their neighbours, is good. They have sheep's clothing. But no disguise can hide them from the eyes of the judge of the world. His eyes are as a flame of fire: they search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men. He will see whether they be sound at heart; he will see from what principles they have acted. A fair show will in no degree deceive him, as it doth men in the present state. It will signify nothing to say, "Lord, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence; and in thy name have we cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works."<sup>176</sup> It will signify nothing to pretend to a great deal of comfort and joy, and to the experience of great religious affections, and to your having done many things in religion and morality, unless you have some greater evidences of sincerity.

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176 [Matt. vii. 22.](#)

Wherefore let every one take heed that he be not deceived concerning himself; and that he depend not on that which will not bear examination at the day of judgment. Be not contented with this, that you have the judgment of men, the judgment of godly men, or that of ministers, in your favour. Consider that they are not to be your judges at last. Take occasion frequently to compare your hearts with the word of God; that is the rule by which you are to be finally tried and judged. And try yourselves by your works, by which also you must be tried at last. Inquire whether you lead holy Christian lives, whether you perform universal and unconditional obedience to all God's commands, and whether you do it from a truly gracious respect to God.

Also frequently beg of God, the judge, that he would search you, try you now, and discover you to yourselves, that you may see if you be insincere in religion; and that he would lead you in the way everlasting. Beg of God, that if you be not upon a good foundation, he would unsettle you, and fix you upon the sure foundation. The example of the psalmist in this is worthy of imitation: [Psal. xxvi. 1, 2](#). "Judge me, O Lord, examine me, and prove me; try my reins and mine heart;" and [Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24](#). "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." God will search us hereafter, and discover what we are, both to ourselves and to all the world; let us pray that he would search us, and discover our hearts to us now. We have need of divine help in this matter; for the heart is deceitful above all things.

V. If God hath appointed a day to judge the world, let us judge and condemn ourselves for our sins. This we must do, if we would not be judged and condemned for them on that day. If we would escape condemnation, we must see that we justly may be condemned; we must be so sensible of our vileness and guilt, as to see that we deserve all that condemnation and punishment which are threatened; and that we are in the hands of God, who is the sovereign disposer of us, and will do with us as seemeth to himself good. Let us therefore often reflect on our sins, confess them before God, condemn and abhor ourselves, be truly humbled, and repent in dust and ashes.

VI. If these things be so, let us by no means be forward to judge others. Some are forward to judge others, to judge their hearts both in general and upon particular occasions, to determine as to the principles, motives, and ends of their actions. But this is to assume the province of God, and to set up ourselves as lords and judges. [Rom. xiv. 4](#). "Who art thou, that thou judgest another man's servant?" [Jam. iv. 11](#). "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law." To be thus disposed to judge and act censoriously towards others, is the way to be judged and condemned ourselves. [Matt. vii. 1, 2](#). "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

VII. This doctrine affords matter of great consolation to the godly. This day of judgment, which is so terrible to ungodly men, affords no ground of terror to you, but abundant ground of joy and satisfaction. For though you now meet with more affliction and trouble than most wicked men, yet on that day you shall be delivered from all afflictions, and from all trouble. If you be unjustly treated by wicked men, and abused by them, what a comfort is it to the injured, that they may appeal to God, who judgeth righteously, Thee psalmist used often to comfort himself with this.

Upon these accounts the saints have reason to love the appearing of Jesus Christ. [2 Tim. iv. 8](#). "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all those that love his appearing." This is to the saints a blessed hope. [Tit. ii. 13](#). "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. This day may well be the object of their eager desire, and when they hear of Christ's coming to judgment, they may well say, " Even so come, Lord Jesus," [Rev. xxii. 20](#). It will be the most glorious day that ever the saints saw; it will be so both to those who shall die, and whose souls shall go to heaven, and to those who shall then be found alive on earth: it will be the wedding-day of the church. Surely then in the consideration of the approach of this day, there is ground of great consolation to the saints.

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**SINNERS IN ZION TENDERLY WARNED :**

*OR*

**THE FEARFULNESS WHICH WILL HEREAFTER SURPRISE SINNERS IN  
ZION, REPRESENTED AND IMPROVED.**

[ISAIAH xxxiii. 14.](#)

The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the  
devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? <sup>177</sup>

## SECT. I.

Showing who are sinners in Zion.

There are two kinds of persons among God's professing people; the one, those who are truly godly, spoken of in the verse following the text: <sup>178</sup> "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly," &c. The other kind consists of sinners in Zion, or hypocrites. It is to be observed, that the prophet in this chapter speaks interchangeably, first to the one, and then to the other of these characters of men; awfully threatening and denouncing the wrath of God against the one, and comforting the other with gracious promises. Thus you may observe, in the [5th and 6th verses.](#), there are comfortable promises to the godly; then in the eight following verses, awful judgments are threatened against the sinners in Zion. Again, in the two next verses are blessed promises to the sincerely godly, and in the former part of [ver. 17.](#) And then in the latter part of [ver. 17.](#) and in [ver. 18, and 19.](#) are terrible threatenings to sinners in Zion: then in the verses that follow are gracious promises to the godly.

Our text is part of what is said in this chapter to sinners in Zion. In [ver. 10.](#) it is said, "Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself," *i.e.* Now will I arise to execute wrath upon the ungodly; I will not let them alone any longer. They shall see that I am not asleep, and that I am not regardless of mine own honour. "Now will I be exalted. <sup>179</sup>" Though they have cast contempt upon me, yet I will vindicate the honour of my own majesty: I will exalt myself, and show my greatness, and my awful majesty in their destruction. "Now will I lift up myself; <sup>180</sup>" now I will no longer have mine honour trampled in the dust by them: but my glory shall be manifested in their misery.

In [ver. 11.](#) the prophet proceeds, "Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble:" *i. e.* Ye shall pursue happiness in ways of wickedness, but you shall not obtain it; you are as ground which brings forth no fruit, as if only chaff were sowed in it; it brings forth nothing but stubble, which is fit for nothing but to be burned.

It seems to have been the manner in that land where the corn grew very rank, when they had reaped the wheat, and gathered it off from the ground, to set fire to the stubble; which is alluded to here; and therefore it is added, "Your breath, as fire, shall devour you: <sup>181</sup>" *i.e.* Your own wicked speeches, your wickedness that you commit with your breath, or with your tongues, shall set fire to the stubble and devour it.

Then it follows in [ver. 12.](#) "And the people shall be as the burnings of lime." As they are wont to burn lime in a great and exceeding fierce fire, till stones, and bones, and other things

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178 [Isaiah xxxiii. 15.](#)

179 [Isaiah xxxiii. 10.](#)

180 [Ibid.](#)

181 [Isaiah xxxiii. 11.](#)



are burnt to lime; so shall the wicked be burnt in the fire of God's wrath. "As thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire: <sup>182</sup>" as briars and thorns are the encumbrance and curse of the ground where they grow, and are wont to be burnt; so shall it be with the wicked that are among God's people, and grow in God's field. [Heb. vi. 7, 8.](#) "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."

Then it follows in [ver. 13.](#) "Hear ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might." This implies that God will by the destruction of ungodly men, manifest his glory very publicly, even in the sight of the whole world, both in the sight of those that are near, and of those that are far off. "Acknowledge my might. <sup>183</sup>" Which implies that God will execute wrath upon ungodly men, in such a manner as extraordinarily to show forth his great and mighty power. The destruction and misery of the wicked will be so dreadful, that it will be a manifestation of the omnipotent power of God, that he can execute such misery; agreeably to [Rom. ix. 22.](#) "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."

Next follow these words: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? <sup>184</sup>" The sense is, That the time will come, when fearfulness will surprise the sinners in Zion; because they will know, that they are about to be cast into a devouring fire, which they must suffer for ever and ever, and which none can endure.

It may be inquired, who are the sinners in Zion?—I answer, That they are those who are in a natural condition among the visible people of God. Zion, or the city of David of old, was a type of the church; and the church of God in Scripture is perhaps more frequently called by the name of Zion than by any other name. And commonly by Zion is meant the true church of Christ, or the invisible church of true saints. But sometimes by this name is meant the visible church, consisting of those who are outwardly, by profession and external privileges, the people of God. This is intended by Zion in this text.

The greater part of the world are sinners: Christ's flock is, and ever hath been, but a little flock. And the sinners of the world are of two sorts: those who are visibly of Satan's kingdom, who are without the pale of the visible church; and those who do not profess the true religion, nor attend the external ordinances of it. Beside these there are the sinners in Zion. Both are the objects of the displeasure and wrath of God; but his wrath is more espe-

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182 [Isaiah xxxiii. 12](#)

183 [Isaiah xxxiii. 13.](#)

184 [Isaiah xxxiii. 14.](#)

cially manifested in Scripture against the latter. Sinners in Zion will have by far the lowest place in hell.

They are exalted nearest to heaven in this world, and they will be lowest in hell in another. The same is meant by *hypocrites*. Sinners in Zion are all hypocrites; for they make a profession of the true religion; they attend God's ordinances, and make a show of being the worshippers of God; but all is hypocrisy.

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SECT. II.

*How fearfulness will hereafter surprise sinners in Zion.*

1. They will hereafter be *afraid*. Now many of them seem to have little or no fear. They are quiet and secure. Nothing will awaken them: the most awful threatenings and the loudest warnings do not much move them. They are not so much moved with them, but they can eat, and drink, and sleep, and go about their worldly concerns without much disturbance. But the time will come, when the hardest and most stupid wretches will be awakened. Though now preaching will not awaken them, and the death of others will not make them afraid; though seeing others awakened and converted will not much affect them; though they can stand all that is to be heard and seen in a time of general out-pouring of the Spirit of God, without being much moved; yet the time will come, when they will be awakened, and fear will take hold of them. They will be afraid of the wrath of God: however senseless they be now, they will hereafter be sensible of the awful greatness of God, and that it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands.

2. They will be *surprised* with fear. This seems to imply two things; *viz.* the greatness of their fear, and the suddenness of it.

(1.) The *greatness* of their fear. Surprise argues a high degree of fear. Their fears will be to the degree of astonishment. Some of the sinners in Zion are somewhat afraid now: they now and then have some degree of fear. They are not indeed *convinced* that there is such a place as hell; but they are *afraid* there is. They are not thoroughly awakened; neither are they quite easy. They have at certain times inward molestations from their consciences; but they have no such degrees of fear, as to put them upon any thorough endeavours to escape future wrath.

However, hereafter they will have fear enough, as much, and a great deal more, than they will be able to stand under. Their fear will be to the degree of horror; they will be horribly afraid; and terrors will take hold on them as waters. Thus we read of *their fear coming as a desolation, and of distress and anguish coming upon them*; [Prov. i. 27](#). It is also very emphatically said of the wicked, that *trouble and anguish shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle*. [Job xv. 24](#).

The stoutest heart of them all will then melt with fear. The hearts of those who are of a sturdy spirit, and perhaps scorn to own themselves afraid of any man, and are even ashamed to own themselves afraid of the wrath of God, will then become as weak as water, as weak as the heart of a little child. And the most reserved of them will not be able to hide his fears. Their faces will turn pale; they will appear with amazement in their countenances; every joint in them will tremble; all their bones will shake; and their knees will smite one against another: nor will they be able to refrain from crying out with fear, and from rending the air with the most dismal shrieks.

(2.) They will be *suddenly* seized with fear. The sinners in Zion often remain secure, till they are surprised, as with a cry at midnight. They will be, as it were, awakened out of their secure sleep in a dismal fright. They will see an unexpected calamity coming upon them; far more dreadful than they were aware of, and coming at an unexpected season.

With respect to the time when the wicked shall be thus surprised with fear;

1. It is often so on a *death-bed*. Many things pass in their lifetime, which one would think might well strike terror into their souls; as when they see others die, who are as young as they, and of like condition and circumstances with themselves, whereby they may see how uncertain their lives are, and how unsafe their souls. It may well surprise many sinners, to consider how old they are grown, and are yet in a Christless state; how much of their opportunity to get an interest in Christ is irrecoverably gone, and how little remains; also how much greater their disadvantages now are, than they have been. But these things do not terrify them: as age increases, so do the hardness and stupidity of their hearts grow upon them.

But when death comes, then the sinner is often filled with astonishment. It may be, when he is first taken sick, he has great hope that he shall recover; as men are ready to flatter themselves with hopes, that things will be as they fain would have them. But when the distemper comes to prevail much upon him, and he sees that he is going into eternity; when he sees that all the medicines of physicians are in vain, that all the care and endeavours of friends are to no purpose, that nothing seems to help him, that his strength is gone, that his friends weep over him, and look upon his case as desperate; when he sees, by the countenance and behaviour of the physician, that he looks upon his case as past hope, and perhaps overhears a whispering in the room, wherein his friends signify one to another, that they look upon it that he is struck with death, or wherein they tell one another, that his extreme parts grow cold, that his countenance and manner of breathing, and his pulse, show death, and that he begins to be in a cold death-sweat; and when perhaps, by and by, some one thinks himself bound in duty and faithfulness to let him know the worst, and therefore comes and asks him whether or no he be sensible that he is a dying:—then how doth fearfulness surprise the sinner in Zion! How doth his heart melt with fear! This is the thing which he feared ever since he was taken sick; but till now he had hope that he should recover. The physician did not speak; or if he despaired, he spoke of such and such medicines as being very proper; and he hoped that they would be effectual; and when these failed, he changed his medicines, and applied something new: then the sinner hoped *that* would be effectual. Thus, although he constantly grew worse and worse, still he hoped to recover.

At the same time he cried to God to spare him, and made promises how he would live, if God would spare him; and he hoped that God would hear him. He observed also, that his friends, and perhaps the minister, seemed to pray earnestly for him; and he could not but hope that those prayers would be answered, and he should be restored. But now how doth

his heart sink and die within him! how doth he look about with a frighted countenance! how quick is the motion of his eye, through inward fear! and how quick and sudden are all his motions! what a frightful hurry doth he seem to be in! How doth every thing look to him when he sees pale grim death staring him in the face, and a vast eternity within a few hours or minutes of him!

It may be, he still struggles for a little hope; he is loth to believe what is told him; he tells his informers, that he hopes they are more affrighted than they need be; he hopes that those symptoms arise from some other cause; and, like a poor drowning man, he catches at slender and brittle twigs, and clinches his hands about whatever he sees within his reach.

But as death creeps more and more on him, he sees his twigs break, all his hopes of life fail, and he sees he must die. O! there is nothing but death before him! He hath been hoping; but his hopes are all dashed; he sees this world, and all that belongs to it, are gone. Now come the thoughts of hell into his mind with amazement. O! how shall he go out of the world? He knows he hath no interest in Christ; his sins stare him in the face. O the dreadful gulf of eternity! He had been crying to God, perhaps since he was sick, to save him; and he had some hope, if it were his last sickness, that yet God would pity him, and give him pardoning grace before he should die. He begged and pleaded, and he hoped that God would have pity on his poor soul. At the same time he asked others to pray for him, and he had been looking day after day for some light to shine into his soul. But, alas! now he is a dying and his friends ask him, how death appears to him? whether any light appear? whether God have not given him some token of his favour? and he answers, No, with a poor, faltering, trembling voice, if able to speak at all: or if his friends ask a signal of hope, he can give none.

Now death comes on him more and more, and he is just on the brink of eternity. Who can express the fear, the misgivings, the hangings back, and the horrible fright and amazement, of his soul? Some who, in such circumstances, have been able to speak, have been known to cry out, *O eternity! eternity!* and some, *O! a thousand worlds for an inch of time! O! if they might but live a little while longer!* But it must not be; go they must. They feel the frame of nature dissolving, and perceive the soul is just a going; for sometimes the exercise of reason seems to hold to the last.

What, in such a case, is felt in the soul, in those last moments, when it is just breaking its bands with the body, about to fetch its leap, on the edge of eternity, and the very brink of hell, without any Saviour, or the least testimony of divine mercy: I say, what is sometimes felt by Christless souls in these moments, none can tell; nor is it within the compass of our conception.

2. The misery of the departed soul of a sinner, besides what it now feels, consists in a great part in amazing fears of what is *yet to come*. When the union of the soul and body is actually broken, and the body has fetched its last gasp, the soul forsakes its old habitation,

and then falls into the hands of devils, who fly upon it, and seize it more violently than ever hungry lions flew upon their prey. And with what horror will it fall into those cruel hands!

If we imagine to ourselves the dreadful fear with which a lamb or kid falls into the paws of a wolf, which lays hold of it with open mouth; or if we imagine to ourselves the feeling of a little child, that hath been pursued by a lion, when it is taken hold of, and sees the terrible creature open his devouring jaws to tear it in pieces; or the feeling of those two and forty children, who had mocked Elisha, when they fell into the paws of the bears that tare them in pieces: I say if we could have a perfect idea of that terror and astonishment which a little child has in such a case, yet we should have but a faint idea of what is felt in the departing soul of a sinner, when it falls into the hands of those cruel devils, those roaring lions, which then seize of it!

And when the soul is carried to hell, and there is tormented, suffers the wrath of the Almighty, and is overwhelmed and crushed with it, it will also be amazed with the apprehensions of what shall *yet remain*. To think of an eternity of this torment remaining, O how will it fill, and overbear, and sink down the wretched soul! How will the thought of the duration of this torment without end cause the heart to melt like wax! How will the thought of it sink the soul into the bottomless pit of darkness and gloominess! Even those proud and sturdy spirits, the devils, tremble at the thoughts of that *greater* torment which they are to suffer at the day of judgment. So will the poor damned souls of men. They have already more than they will be able to bear: how then will they tremble at the thought of having their misery so vastly augmented!

Persons sometimes in this world are afraid of the day of judgment. If there be an earthquake, or if there be more than common thunder and lightning, or if there be some unusual sight in the heavens, their hearts are ready to tremble for fear that the day of judgment is at hand. O how then do the poor souls in hell fear it, who know so much more about it, who know by what they feel already, and know *certainly*, that whenever it comes they shall stand on the left hand of the judge, to receive the dreadful sentence; and that then, in soul and body, they must enter into those everlasting burnings which are prepared for the devil and his angels, and who probably know that their misery is to be an hundred-fold greater than it is now.

3. Fearfulness will surprise them at the *last judgment*. "When Christ shall appear in the clouds of heaven, and the last trumpet shall sound, then will the hearts of wicked men be surprised with fearfulness. The poor damned soul, in expectation of it, trembles every day and every hour from the time of its departure from the 'body. It knows not, indeed, when it is to be, but it knows it is to be. But when the alarm is given in hell that the day is come, it will be a dreadful alarm indeed. It will, as it were, fill the caverns of hell with shrieks; and when the souls of the damned shall enter into their bodies, it will be with amazing horror of what is coming. And when they shall lift up their heads out of their graves, and shall see

the judge, it will be a most terrible sight. Gladly would they return into their graves again, and hide themselves there, if that might be; and gladly would they return into hell, their former state of misery, to hide themselves from this awful sight, if that would excuse them.

So those sinners in Zion, who shall then be found alive on the earth, when they shall see this sight, will be surprised with fearfulness. The fear and horror which many poor sinners feel when they are dying, is great, and beyond all that of which we can have any idea; but that is nothing to the horror that will seize them when they shall come to see this sight.

There will not be a wicked man upon earth who will be able to bear it, let him be who he will; let him be rich or poor, old or young, male or female, servant or master, king or subject, learned or unlearned; let him be ever so proud, ever so courageous, and ever so sturdy. There is not one who will be able at all to support himself; when he shall see this sight, it will immediately sink his spirit; it will loose the joints of his loins; it will make his countenance more ghastly than death. The rich captains, and valiant generals and princes, who now scorn to show any fear at the face of an enemy, who scorn to tremble at the roaring of cannon, will tremble and shriek when they shall hear the last trumpet, and see the majesty of their judge: it will make their teeth to chatter, and make them fly to hide themselves in the caves and rocks of mountains, crying to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and cover them from the wrath of the judge.

Fearfulness will surprise them when they shall be dragged before the judgment-seat. The wicked hang back when they are about to meet death; but in no measure as they will hang back when they come to meet their great judge. And when they come to stand before the judge, and are put on his left hand, fearfulness and amazement will surprise them. The majesty of the judge will be intolerable to them. His pure and holy eye, which will behold and search them, and pierce them through, will be more terrible to their souls a thousand times than flashes of lightning piercing their hearts. There will they stand in a trembling expectation, that by and by they shall hear the words of that dreadful sentence proceed out of the mouth of Christ: they will have a horrible expectation of that sentence; and what shall they do, whither shall they fly, so as to be out of its hearing? They cannot shut their ears, so as not to hear it.

Fearfulness will surprise them when the sentence shall come to be pronounced. At the close of the judgment, that dreadful doom will be uttered by the judge; and it will be the most terrible voice that ever was heard. The sound of the last trumpet, that shall call men to judgment, will be a more terrible sound to wicked men than ever they shall have heard till that time; but the sound of the last sentence will be much more terrible than that. There will not be one of all those millions at the left hand, whether high or low, king or subject, who will be able to support himself at all under the sound of that sentence: but they will all sink under it.

Lastly, Fearfulness will surprise them, when they shall come to see the fire kindle upon the world, in which they are to be tormented for ever. When the sentence shall have been pronounced, Christ, with his blessed saints and glorious angels, will leave this lower world, and ascend into heaven. Then will the flames begin to kindle, and fire will probably be seen coming down from heaven; and soon will the fire lay hold of that accursed multitude. Then will their hearts be surprised with fearfulness; that fire will appear a dreadful fire indeed. O what chatterings of teeth, what shaking of loins, what distortions of body, will there be at that time, when they shall see, and begin to feel, the fierceness of the flames! What shall they do, whither shall they go, to avoid those flames? Where shall they hide themselves? If they creep into holes, or creep into caves of the earth, yea if they could creep down to the centre of the earth, it will be in vain; for it will set on fire the bottoms of the mountains, and burn to the lowest hell. They will see no place to fly to, no place to hide themselves.

Then their hearts will be filled with tearfulness, and will utterly sink in despair. Thus it shall hereafter be with every one that shall then be found to be a sinner, and especially with sinners in Zion.



### SECT. III.

Why sinners in general will hereafter be surprised with fear.

1. Fearfulness will surprise them, because they will know that they are to be cast into *devouring fire*. There is nothing which seems to give one a more terrible idea of torment and misery, than to think of being cast alive into a great fire; especially if we conceive of the senses remaining quick, and not benumbed by the fire. The wicked will hereafter have that to make them afraid, that they are not only to be cast into a fire, but into devouring fire; which implies, that it will be a fire of extraordinary fierceness of heat, and before which nothing can stand.

The fire into which men are to be cast is called a *furnace of fire*. Furnaces are contrived for an extreme degree of heat, this being necessary for the purposes for which they are designed, as the running and refining of metals, and the melting of materials into glass. The fire of such earthly furnaces may be called *devouring fire*, as the heat of some of them is such, that in them even stones will presently be dissolved. Now, if a person should be brought to the mouth of such a furnace, and there should see how the fire glows, so as presently to make every thing cast into it all over white and bright with fire, and at the same time should know that he was immediately to be cast into this furnace, would not fearfulness surprise him?

In some heathen countries, the manner of disposing of dead bodies is to dig a great pit, to put in it a great quantity of fuel, to put the dead bodies on the pile, and to set it on fire. This is some image of the burning of dead souls in the pit of hell. Now, if a person were



brought to the edge of such a pit, all filled with glowing flames, to be immediately cast into it, would it not surprise the heart with fearfulness?

The flames of a very great fire, as when a house is all on fire, give one some idea of the fierceness of the wrath of God: such is the rage of the flames. And we see that the greater a fire is, the fiercer is its heat in every part; and the reason is, because one part heats another. The heat in a particular place, besides the heat which proceeds out of the fuel in that place, is increased by the additional heat of the fire all around it. Hence we may conceive something of what fierceness that fire will be, when this visible world shall be turned into one great furnace. That will be devouring fire indeed. Such will be the heat of it, that, as the apostle says, “the elements shall melt with fervent heat,” [2 Pet. iii. 10](#).

Men can artificially raise such a degree of heat with burning glasses, as will quickly melt the very stones and sand. And it is probable that the heat of that great fire which will burn the world, will be such as to melt the rocks, and the very ground, and turn them into a kind of liquid fire: so that the whole world will probably be converted into a great lake, or liquid globe of fire, a vast ocean of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed. It will be an ocean of fire, which will always be in a tempest, in which the wicked shall be tossed to and fro, having no rest day nor night, vast waves or billows of fire continually rolling over their heads.

But all this will be only an *image* of that dreadful fire of the wrath of God, which the wicked shall at the same time suffer in their *souls*. We read in [Rev. xix. 15](#). of “the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” This is an extraordinary expression, carrying a terrible idea of the future misery of the wicked. If it had been only said of the wrath of God, that would have expressed what is dreadful. If the wrath of a king be as the roaring of a lion, what is the wrath of God? But it is not only said the wrath of God, but the *fierceness and wrath of God*, or the rage of his wrath; and not only so, but the fierceness and wrath of *Almighty God*. O what is that! the fierceness and rage or fury of Omnipotence! of a being of infinite strength!

What an idea doth that give of the state of those worms that suffer the fierceness and wrath of such an Almighty Being! And is it any wonder that fearfulness surprises their hearts, when they see this about to be executed upon them?

2. Another reason given in the text, why fearfulness will hereafter surprise sinners, is, that they will be sensible this devouring fire will be *everlasting*. If a man were brought to the mouth of a great furnace to be cast into the midst of it, if at the same time he knew he should suffer torment but for one minute, yet that minute would be so terrible to him, that fearfulness would surprise and astonish him. How much more, if he were to be cast into a fire much fiercer; the fire in which wicked men are hereafter to be tormented! And if the thought of suffering this devouring fire for one minute would be enough to fill one with such surprising fearfulness, what will seize them, when they shall know that they are to bear it, not for one minute, nor for one day, nor for one year, nor for one age, nor for a hundred ages,

nor for a million of ages, one after another, but *for ever and ever*; without any end, and never, never be delivered!

They shall know, that the fire itself will be *everlasting fire*; fire that never shall be quenched: [Mark ix. 43, 44.](#) "To go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." And they shall know that their torment in that fire never will have an end, [Rev. xiv. 10, 11.](#) They shall know that they shall for ever be full of quick sense within and without; their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins, and their vitals, shall for ever be full of glowing melting fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and also that they shall eternally be full of the most quick and lively sense to feel the torment.

They shall know that they shall never cease restlessly to plunge and roll in that mighty ocean of fire. They shall know that those billows of fire, which are greater than the greatest mountains, will never cease to roll over them, following one another *for ever and ever*.

At the same time they will have a more lively sense of eternity than we ever can have here. We can have but a little sense of what an eternal duration is; and indeed none can comprehend it; it swallows up all thought and imagination: if we set ourselves to think upon it, we are presently lost. But they will have another and far clearer sense of it than we have. O how vast will eternity appear to them, when they think of spending it in such burnings! This is another reason that fearfulness will surprise them. The thoughts of eternity will always amaze them, and will sink and depress them to a bottomless depth of despair.

3. The third reason given in the text, why fearfulness will surprise them at the apprehension of this punishment, is, that they will know, they shall *not be able to bear it*. When they shall see themselves going into that devouring fire, they will know that they are not able to bear it. They will know that they are not able to grapple with the fierceness and rage of those flames; for they will see the fierceness of the wrath of God in them; they will see an awful manifestation of Omnipotence in the fury of that glowing furnace. And in those views their hearts will utterly fail them; their hands will not be strong, nor can their hearts endure. They will see that their strength is weakness; and that they can do nothing in such a conflict.

When they shall have come to the edge of the pit, and of the burning lake, and shall look into the furnace, then they will cry out with exclamations like these: O! what shall I do? how shall I bear the torments of this fire? how can I endure them? Who can endure? where is the man so stout-hearted, where is the giant of such strength and such courage, that he can bear this? O! what shall I do? Must I be cast in thither? I cannot bear it; I can never endure it. O that I could return to my first nothing! How can I endure it one moment? how much less can I endure it for ever and ever! And must I bear it for ever? what! for ever and ever, without any end, and never find any refuge, never be suffered to return to my first nothing, and be no nearer to the end of these sufferings after millions of ages? O what dismal

contentions and shrieks, and shaking of loins, and gnashing of teeth, will there be then! No wonder that fearfulness will then surprise the wicked.

#### SECT. IV.

Why it will be especially thus with sinners in Zion, who dwell among God's visible people.



There will hereafter be a very great difference between sinners in Zion and other sinners; a great difference between the most pointed hypocrite of them all, and the drunkards, the adulterers, the Sodomites, the thieves, and murderers among the heathen, who sin against only the light of nature. The fearfulness which will surprise them, although it will be very dreadful, yet will be in no measure so amazing and horrible, as that which will seize the sinners in Zion. That fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, which they will suffer, will be mild and moderate in comparison with that which the sinners in Zion will suffer.

The wrath of God is in his word manifested against the wicked heathens; but it is ten times as much manifested against those sinners who make the profession and enjoy the privileges of the people of God; and yet remain enemies to God. Both the Old Testament and the New are full of terrible denunciations against such. Read the books of Moses, read the prophets, and you will find them full of dreadful threatenings against such. Read over the history of Christ's life and the speeches which he made when upon earth; there you will see what woes and curses he frequently denounced against such. How often did he say, that it should be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for the cities in which most of his mighty works were done! Read over the history of the Acts of the Apostles, and their epistles; there you will find the same. It is the sinners in Zion, or hypocrites, that are always in Scripture spoken of as the people of God's wrath: [Isa. x. 6](#). "I will send him against a hypocritical nation, against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil."—The reasons are chiefly these:

1. That they sin against so much *greater light*. This is often spoken of in Scripture, as an aggravation to the sin and wickedness of sinners in Zion. He that knows not his Lord's will, and doeth it not, is declared not to be worthy of so many stripes, as he who, being informed of his Lord's will, is in like manner disobedient. If men be blind, they have comparatively no sin; but when they see, when they have light to know their duty, and to know their obligation, then their sin is great, [John ix. 14](#). When the light that is in a man is darkness, how great is that darkness! and when men live in wickedness, in the midst of great light, that light is like to be the blackness of darkness indeed.

2. That they sin against such *professions and vows*. The heathens never pretended to be the worshippers of the true God. They never pretended to be Christ's disciples; they never came under any covenant-obligations to be such. But this is not the case with sinners in Zion. Now, God highly resents falsehood and treachery. Judas, who betrayed Christ with a

kiss, was a greater sinner, and much more the object of God's wrath, than Pilate, who condemned him to be crucified, and was his murderer.

3. That they sin against so much greater mercy. They have the infinite mercy of God, in giving his own Son, often set before them: they have the dying love of Christ represented to them: they have this mercy, this glorious Saviour, his blood and righteousness, often offered to them: they have a blessed opportunity to obtain salvation for their souls; a great price is put into their hands to this end: they have that precious treasure, the Holy Scriptures, and enjoy sabbaths, and sacraments, and the various means of grace: but all these means and advantages, these opportunities, offers, mercies, and invitations, they abuse, despise, and reject.

But there is no wrath like that which arises from mercy abused and rejected. When mercy is in this way turned into wrath, this is the fiercest wrath.—Sinners in Zion, beside their fall by the first Adam, have a fall also by the second: he is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, at which they stumble and fall; and there is no fall like this; the fall by the first Adam is light in comparison with it.

On these accounts, whenever we see the day of judgment, as every one of us shall see it, we shall easily distinguish between the sinners in Zion and other sinners, by their shriller cries, their louder, more bitter, and dolorous shrieks, the greater amazement of their countenances, and the more dismal shaking of their limbs, and contortions of their bodies.

SECT. V.

An earnest exhortation to sinners in Zion, now to fly from the devouring fire and everlasting burnings.

You have often been exhorted to fly from the “wrath to come.” This devouring fire, these everlasting burnings, of which we have been speaking, are *the wrath to come*. You hear of this fire, of these burnings, and of that fearfulness which will seize and surprise sinners in Zion hereafter; and O what reason have you of thankfulness that you only hear of them, that you do not as yet feel them, and that they have not already taken hold of you! They are, as it were, following you, and coming nearer and nearer every day. Those fierce flames are already kindled in the wrath of God; yea, the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God burn against you; it is ready for you: that pit is prepared for you, with fire and much wood, and the wrath of the Lord, as a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

Lot was with great urgency hastened out of Sodom, and commanded to make haste, and fly for his life, and escape to the mountains, lest he should be consumed in those flames which burned up Sodom and Gomorrah. But that burning was a mere spark to that devouring fire, and those everlasting burnings, of which you are in danger. Therefore improve the present opportunity.

Now, God is pleased again to pour out his Spirit upon us; and he is doing great things amongst us. God is indeed come again, the same great God who so wonderfully appeared among us some years ago, and who hath since, for our sins, departed from us, left us so long in so dull and dead a state, and hath let sinners alone in their sins; so that there have been scarcely any signs to be seen of any such work as conversion. That same God is now come again; he is really come in like manner, and begins, as he did before, gloriously to manifest his mighty power, and the riches of his grace. He brings sinners out of darkness into marvellous light. He rescues poor captive souls out of the hands of Satan; he saves persons from the devouring fire; he plucks one and another as brands out of the burnings; he opens the prison-doors, and knocks off their chains, and brings out poor prisoners; he is now working salvation among us from this very destruction of which you have now heard.

Now, now, then, is the time, now is the blessed opportunity to escape those everlasting burnings. Now God hath again set open the same fountain among us, and gives one more happy opportunity for souls to escape. Now he hath set open a wide door, and he stands in the door-way, calling and begging with a loud voice to the sinners of Zion: Come, saith he, come, fly from the wrath to come; here is a refuge for you; fly hither for refuge; lay hold on the hope set before you.

A little while ago, it was uncertain whether we should ever see such an opportunity again. If it had always continued as it hath been for some years past,<sup>185</sup> almost all of you

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185 This was written in 1740, five or six years after the former revival had ceased.

would surely have gone to hell; in a little time fearfulness would have surprised you, and you would have been cast into that devouring fire, and those everlasting burnings. But in infinite mercy God gives another opportunity; and blessed are your eyes, that they see it, if you did but know your own opportunity.

You have had your life spared through these six years past, to this very time, to another outpouring of the Spirit. What would you have done, if you had died before it came? How doleful would your case have been! But you have reason to bless God that it was not so, and that you are yet alive, and now again see a blessed day of grace. And will you not improve it? Have you not so much love to your poor souls, as to improve such an opportunity as this?

Some, there is reason to think, have lately fled for refuge to Christ; and will you be willing to stay behind still, poor miserable captives, condemned to suffer for ever in the lake of fire? Hereafter you will see those of your neighbours and acquaintance, who are converted, mounting up as with wings, with songs of joy, to meet their Lord; and if you remain unconverted, you at the same time will be surprised with fear; and horror will take hold of you, because of the devouring fire, and the everlasting burnings.

It is an awful thing to think of, that there are now some persons in this very congregation, here and there, who will be the subjects of that very misery of which we have now heard, although it be so dreadful, although it be so intolerable, and although it be eternal! There are probably some now reading or hearing this discourse, who shall be seen, at the day of judgment, among the devils, at the left hand of the judge, with frightened, ghastly countenances; wringing their hands, gnashing their teeth, shrieking and crying out.

Now we know not their names, nor where to look for them. But God knoweth their names, and now seeth and knoweth what they think, and how much they regard the warnings which are given them this day. We have not the least reason to suppose any other than that some of you will hereafter see others entering into glory with Christ, and saints, and angels, while you, with dreadful horror, shall see the fire begin to kindle about you. It may be, that the persons are now blessing themselves in their own hearts, and each one saying with himself, Well, I do not intend it shall be I. Every one hopes to go to heaven; none would by any means miss of it. If any thought they should miss of it, they would be greatly amazed. But all will not go thither; it will undoubtedly be the portion of some to toss and tumble for ever among the fiery billows of God's wrath.

It is not to be supposed, but that there are some here who will not be in earnest; let them have ever so good an opportunity to obtain heaven, they will not thoroughly improve it. Tell them of hell as often as you will, and set it out in as lively colours as you will, they will be slack and slothful; and they will never be likely to obtain heaven, while they are sleeping, and dreaming, and intending, and hoping. The wrath of God, which pursues them, will take

them by the heels; hell, that follows after, will overtake them; fearfulness will surprise them, and a tempest will steal them away.

Nor is it to be supposed, that all who are now seeking will hold out; some will backslide; they will be unsteady. If now they seem to be pretty much engaged, it will not hold. Times will probably alter by and by, and they having not obtained grace, there will be many temptations to backsliding, with which they will comply. The hearts of men are very unsteady; they are not to be trusted. Men are very short-winded; they cannot tell how to have patience to wait upon God; they are soon discouraged. Some that are now under convictions may lose them. Perhaps they will not leave off seeking salvation at once; but they will come to it by degrees. After a while, they will begin to hearken to excuses, not to be quite so constant in duty; they will begin to think that they need not be quite so strict; they will say to themselves, they see no hurt in such and such things; they see not but they may practise them without any great guilt. Thus giving way to temptations, and hearkening to excuses, they will by degrees lose their convictions, and become secure in sin.

There were some who were guilty of backsliding, the last time of the revival of religion among us. While the talk upon religious subjects was generally kept alive, they continued to seek; but when this began to abate, and they saw others less zealous than they had been, and especially when they saw some miscarriages of professors, they began to grow more careless, to seek less earnestly, and to plead these things as an excuse. And they are left behind still; they are to this day in a miserable condemned state, in danger of the devouring fire, and of everlasting burnings; in twice so dangerous a state as they were in before they were awakened; and God only knows what will become of them. And as it was then, so we dread it will be now.

Some who are now in a natural condition, are doubtless near death; they have not long to live in the world; and if they seek in a dull way, or if, after they have sought for a while, they are guilty of backsliding, death will come upon them long enough before there will come such another opportunity. When they leave off seeking, it will not be without a design of seeking again some time or other; but death will be too quick for them. It is not the manner of death to wait upon men, while they take time to indulge their sloth, and gratify their lusts. When his appointed time comes, he will do his work. Will you put off in hope of seeing another such time seven years hence? Alas! how many of those who are now in a natural condition may be in hell before another seven years shall have elapsed!

Therefore now let every one look to himself. It is for your own souls' salvation. If you be foolish, and will not hearken to counsel, will not improve the opportunity when it is given you, and will not enter into such an open door, you alone must bear it. If you shall miss this opportunity, and quench your convictions now, and there shall come another time of the outpouring of the Spirit, you will be far less likely to have any profit by it; as we see now God chiefly moves on the hearts of those who are very young, who are brought forward

upon the stage of action since the last outpouring of the Spirit, who were not then come to years of so much understanding, and consequently not so much in the way of the influences of the Spirit. As to those who were grown up, and had convictions then, and quenched them, the most of these are abundantly more hardened, and seem to be more passed over. So it will probably be with you hereafter, if you miss this opportunity, and quench the convictions of the Spirit which you have now.

As to you who had awakenings the last time of the outpouring of the Spirit, and have quenched them, and remain to this day in a natural condition, let me call upon you also, now that God is giving you one more such opportunity. If passing in impenitence through one such opportunity hath so hardened you, and hath been such a great disadvantage to you, how sad will your case be, if you shall now miss another! Will you not thoroughly awake out of sleep, bestir yourselves for your salvation, and resolve now to begin again, and never leave off more? Many fled for refuge from the devouring fire before, and you were left behind. Others have fled for refuge now, and still you are left behind; and will you always remain behind? Consider, can you dwell with devouring fire? can you dwell with everlasting burnings? Shall children, babes and sucklings, go into the kingdom of God before you?

How will you hereafter bear to see them coming and sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, when yourselves are thrust out, and are surprised with fearfulness at the sight of that devouring fire, and those everlasting burnings, into which you are about to be cast? Take heed lest a like threatening be fulfilled upon you with that which we have in [Numb. xiv. 22, 23](#). Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers; neither shall any of them that provoked me see it." Together with [ver. 31](#). "But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised."

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**T H E E N D O F T H E W I C K E D**

*CONTEMPLATED*

**BY THE RIGHTEOUS:**

*OR,*

**THE TORMENTS OF THE WICKED IN HELL, NO OCCASION OF GRIEF TO  
THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.**

[Rev. xviii. 20.](#)

Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you an her. <sup>186</sup>



## INTRODUCTION.

In this chapter we have a very particular account of the fall of Babylon, or the antiChristian church, and of the vengeance of God executed upon her. Here it is proclaimed that Babylon the great is fallen, and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; that her sins had reached unto heaven, and that God had remembered her iniquity; that God gave commandment to reward her, as she had rewarded others, to double unto her double according to her works; in the cup she had filled, to fill to her double, and how much she had glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow to give her. And it is declared, that these plagues are come upon her in one day, death, mourning, and famine; and that she should be utterly burnt with fire; *because strong is the Lord who judgeth her.*

These things have respect partly to the overthrow of the antiChristian church in this world, and partly to the vengeance of God upon her in the world to come. There is no necessity to suppose, that such extreme torments as are here mentioned will ever be executed upon papists, or upon the antichristian church, in this world. There will indeed be a dreadful and visible overthrow of that idolatrous church in this world. But we are not to understand the plagues here mentioned as exclusive of the vengeance which God will execute on the wicked upholders and promoters of antiChristianism, and on the cruel antichristian persecutors, in another world.

This is evident by [ver. 3.](#) of the next chapter, where, with reference to the same destruction of antichrist which is spoken of in this chapter, it is said, “Her smoke rose up for ever and ever;” in which words the eternal punishment of antichrist is evidently spoken of. Antichrist is here represented as being cast into hell, and there remaining for ever after; he hath no place any where else but in hell. This is evident by [ver. 20.](#) of the next chapter, where, concerning the destruction of antichrist, it is said, “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

Not but that the wicked antiChristians have in all ages gone to hell as they died, and not merely at the fall of antichrist; but then the wrath of God against antichrist, of which damnation is the fruit, will be made eminently visible here on earth, by many remarkable tokens. Then antichrist will be confined to hell, and will have no more place here on earth; much after the same manner as the devil is said at the beginning of Christ’s thousand years’ reign on earth, to be cast into the bottomless pit, as you may see in the beginning of the twentieth chapter. Not but that he had his place in the bottomless pit before; he was cast down to hell when he fell at first: [2 Pet. ii. 4.](#) “Cast them down to hell, and deliver them into chains of darkness.” But now, when he shall be suffered to deceive the nations no more, his

kingdom will be confined to hell. In this text is contained part of what John heard uttered upon this occasion; and in these words we may observe,

1. To whom this voice is directed, *viz.* to *the holy prophets and apostles*, and the rest of the inhabitants of the heavenly world. When God shall pour out his wrath upon the anti-Christian church, it will be seen, and taken notice of, by all the inhabitants of heaven, even by holy prophets and apostles. Neither will they see as unconcerned spectators.

2. What they are called upon by the voice to do, *viz.* to *rejoice over Babylon* now destroyed, and lying under the wrath of God. They are not directed to rejoice over her in prosperity, but in flames, and beholding the smoke of her burning ascending up for ever and ever.

3. A reason given: for *God hath avenged* you on her; *i. e.* God hath executed just vengeance upon her, for shedding your blood, and cruelly persecuting you. For thus the matter is represented, that antichrist had been guilty of shedding the blood of the holy prophets and apostles, as in [chap. xvi. 6](#). “For they have shed the blood of saints and of prophets.” And in [chap. xviii. 24](#). of this context, “In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all them that were slain on the earth.” Not that antichrist had literally shed the blood of the prophets and apostles; but he had shed the blood of those who were their followers, who were of the same spirit, and of the same church, and same mystical body. The prophets and apostles in heaven are nearly related and united to the saints on earth; they live, as it were, in true Christians in all ages. So that by slaying these, persecutors show that they would slay the prophets and apostles, if they could; and they indeed do it as much as in them lies.

On the same account, Christ says of the Jews in his time, [Luke xi. 50](#). “That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.” So Christ himself is said to have been crucified in the anti-Christian church, [chap. xi. 8](#). “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” So all the inhabitants of heaven, all the saints from the beginning of the world, and the angels also, are called upon to rejoice over Babylon, because of God’s vengeance upon her, wherein he avenges them: they all of them had in effect been injured and persecuted by antichrist. Indeed they are not called upon to rejoice in having their revenge glutted, but in seeing justice executed, and in seeing the love and tenderness of God towards them, manifested in his severity towards their enemies.

## SECT. I.

When the saints in glory shall see the wrath of God executed on ungodly men, it will be no occasion of grief to them, but of rejoicing.

It is not only the sight of God's wrath executed on those wicked men who are of the anti-Christian church, which will be occasion of rejoicing to the saints in glory; but also the sight of the destruction of all God's enemies: whether they have been the followers of anti-christ or not, that alters not the case, if they have been the enemies of God, and of Jesus Christ. All wicked men will at last be destroyed together, as being united in the same cause and interest, as being all of Satan's army. They will all stand together at the day of judgment, as being all of the same company.

And if we understand the text to have respect only to a temporal execution of God's wrath on his enemies; that will not alter the case. The thing they are called upon to rejoice at, is the execution of God's wrath upon his and their enemies. And if it be matter of rejoicing to them to see justice executed in part upon them, or to see the beginning of the execution of it in this world; for the same reason will they rejoice with greater joy, in beholding it fully executed. For the thing here mentioned as the foundation of their joy, is the execution of just vengeance: *Rejoice, for God hath avenged you on her.*

*Prop. I.* The glorified saints will see the wrath of God executed upon ungodly men. This the Scriptures plainly teach us, that the righteous and the wicked in the other world see each other's state. Thus the rich man in hell, and Lazarus and Abraham in heaven, are represented as seeing each other's opposite states, in the 16th chap, of Luke The wicked in their misery will see the saints in the kingdom of heaven; [Luke xiii. 28, 29](#). "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

So the saints in glory will see the misery of the wicked under the wrath of God. [Isa. lxvi. 24](#). "And they shall go forth and look on the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." And [Rev. xiv. 9, 10](#). "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." The saints are not here mentioned, being included in Christ, as his members. The church is the fulness of Christ, and is called Christ, [1 Cor. xii. 12](#). So in the [19th chapter, ver. 2, 3](#), the smoke of Babylon's torment is represented as rising up for ever and ever, in the sight of the heavenly inhabitants.

At the day of judgment, the saints in glory at Christ's right hand, will see the wicked at the left hand in their amazement and horror, will hear the judge pronounce sentence upon

them, saying, <sup>187</sup> “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” and will see them go away into everlasting punishment. But the Scripture seems to hold forth to us, that the saints will not only see the misery of the wicked at the day of judgment, but the fore-mentioned texts imply, that “the state of the damned in hell will be in the view of the heavenly inhabitants; that the two worlds of happiness and misery will be in view of each other. Though we know not by what means, nor after what manner, it will be; yet the Scriptures certainly lead us to think, that they will some way or other have a direct and immediate apprehension of each other’s state. The saints in glory will see how the damned are tormented; they will see God’s threatenings fulfilled, and his wrath executed upon them.

*Prop. II.* When they shall see it, it will be no occasion of *grief* to them. The miseries of the damned in hell will be inconceivably great. When they shall come to bear the wrath of the Almighty poured out upon them without mixture, and executed upon them without pity or restraint, or any mitigation; it will doubtless cause anguish, and horror, and amazement vastly beyond all the sufferings and torments that ever any man endured in this world; yea, beyond all extent of our words or thoughts. For God in executing wrath upon ungodly men will act like an Almighty God. The Scripture calls this wrath, God’s fury, and the fierceness of his wrath; and we are told that this is to show God’s wrath, and to make his power known; or to make known how dreadful his wrath is, and how great his power.

The saints in glory will see this, and be far more sensible of it than now we can possibly be. They will be far more sensible how dreadful the wrath of God is, and will better understand how terrible the sufferings of the damned are; yet this will be no occasion of grief to them. They will not be sorry for the damned; it will cause no uneasiness or dissatisfaction to them; but on the contrary, when they have this sight, it will excite them to joyful praises. These two things are evidences of it:

1. That the seeing of the wrath of God executed upon the damned, should cause grief in the saints in glory, is inconsistent with that state of perfect happiness in which they are. There can no such thing as grief enter, to be an alloy to the happiness and joy of that world of blessedness. Grief is an utter stranger in that world. God hath promised that he will wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more sorrow. [Rev. xxi. 4.](#) and [chap. vii. 17.](#)

2. The saints in heaven possess all things as their own, and therefore all things contribute to their joy and happiness. The Scriptures teach that the saints in glory inherit all things. This God said in John’s hearing, when he had the vision of the New Jerusalem; [Rev. xxi. 7.](#) And the Scriptures teach us to understand this absolutely of all the works of creation and providence. [1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.](#) “All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or

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187 [Matt. xxv. 41.](#)

the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.” Here the apostle teaches, that all things in the world to come, or in the future and eternal world, are the saints’; not only life but death; men, and angels, and devils, heaven and hell, are theirs, to contribute to their joy and happiness. Therefore the damned and their misery, their sufferings and the wrath of God poured out upon them, will be an occasion of joy to them. If there were any thing whatsoever that did not contribute to their joy, but caused grief, then there would be something which would not be theirs.

That the torments of the damned are no matter of grief, but of joy, to the inhabitants of heaven, is very clearly expressed in several passages of this book of Revelation; particularly by [chap. xvi. 5-7.](#) and [chap. xix.](#) at the beginning.

SECT. II.

Why the sufferings of the wicked will not be cause of grief to the righteous, but the contrary.

1. Negatively; it will not be because the saints in heaven are the subjects of any ill disposition; but on the contrary, this rejoicing of theirs will be the fruit of an amiable and excellent disposition: it will be the fruit of a perfect holiness and conformity to Christ, the holy Lamb of God. The devil delights in the misery of men from cruelty, and from envy and revenge, and because he delights in misery, for its own sake, from a malicious disposition.

But it will be from exceedingly different principles, and for quite other reasons, that the just damnation of the wicked will be an occasion of rejoicing to the saints in glory. It will not be because they delight in seeing the misery of others absolutely considered. The damned suffering divine vengeance will be no occasion of joy to the saints merely as it is the misery of others, or because it is pleasant to them to behold the misery of others merely for its own sake. The rejoicing of the saints on this occasion is no argument, that they are not of a most amiable and excellent spirit, or that there is any defect on that account, that there is any thing wanting, which would render them of a more amiable disposition. It is no argument that they have not a spirit of goodness and love reigning in them in absolute perfection, or that herein they do not excel the greatest instances of it on earth, as much as the stars are higher than the earth, or the sun brighter than a glowworm.

And whereas the heavenly inhabitants are in the text called upon to rejoice over Babylon, because God had avenged them on her; it is not to be understood, that they are to rejoice in having their revenge glutted, but to rejoice in seeing the justice of God executed, and in seeing his love to them in executing it on his enemies.

2. Positively; the sufferings of the damned will be no occasion of grief to the heavenly inhabitant, as they will have *no love nor pity* to the damned as such. It will be no argument of want of a spirit of love in them, that they do not love the damned; for the heavenly inhabitants will know that it is not fit that they should love them, because they will know then, that God has no love to them, nor pity for them; but that they are the objects of God's eternal hatred. And they will then be perfectly conformed to God in their wills and affections. They will love what God loves, and that only. However the saints in heaven may have loved the damned while here, especially those of them who were near and dear to them in this world, they will have no love to them hereafter.

It will be an occasion of their rejoicing, as *the glory of God* will appear in it. The glory of God appears in all his works: and therefore there is no work of God which the saints in glory shall behold and contemplate, but what will be an occasion of rejoicing to them. God glorifies himself in the eternal damnation of the ungodly men. God glorifies himself in all that he doth; but he glorifies himself principally in his eternal disposal of his intelligent creatures, some are appointed to everlasting life, and others left to everlasting death.

The saints in heaven will be perfect in their love to God: their hearts will be all a flame of love to God, and therefore they will greatly value the glory of God, and will exceedingly delight in seeing him glorified. The saints highly value the glory of God here in this, but how much more will they so do in the world to come. They will therefore greatly rejoice in all that contributes to that glory. The glory of God will in their esteem be of greater consequence, than the welfare of thousands and millions of souls.—Particularly,

(1.) They will rejoice in seeing the *justice* of God glorified in the sufferings of the damned. The misery of the damned, dreadful as it is, is but what justice *requires*. They in heaven will see and know it much more clearly, than any of us do here. They will see how perfectly just and righteous their punishment is, and therefore how properly inflicted by the supreme Governor of the world. They will greatly rejoice to see justice take place, to see that all the sin and wickedness that have been committed in the world, is remembered of God, and has its due punishment. The sight of this strict and immutable justice of God will render him amiable and adorable in their eyes. They will rejoice when they see him who is their Father and eternal portion so glorious in his justice.

Then there will be no remaining difficulties about the justice of God, about the absolute decrees of God, or any thing pertaining to the dispensations of God towards men. But divine justice in the destruction of the wicked will then appear as light without darkness, and will shine as the sun without clouds, and on this account will they sing joyful songs of praise to God, as we see the saints and angels do, when God pours the vials of his wrath upon anti-christ; [Rev. xvi. 5-7](#). They sing joyfully to God on this account, that true and righteous are his judgments; [Rev. xix. 1-6](#). They seeing God so strictly just will make them value his love the more. Mercy and grace are more valuable on this account. The more they shall see of the justice of God, the more will they prize and rejoice in his love.

(2.) They will rejoice in it, as it will be a glorious manifestation of the *power* and *majesty* of God. God will show his own greatness in executing vengeance on ungodly men. This is mentioned as one end of the destruction I of the ungodly; ” What if God, willing to show his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” God will hereby show how much he is above his enemies. There are many now in the world, who proudly lift up themselves against God. There are many open opposers of the cause and interest of Christ. “They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.”<sup>188</sup> ” Then God will show his glorious power in destroying these enemies.

The power of God is sometimes spoken of as very glorious, as appearing in the temporal destruction of his enemies; [Exod. xv. 6](#). “Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.” But how much more



glorious will it appear in his triumphing over, and dashing in pieces at once, all his enemies, wicked men and devils together, all his haughty foes! The power of God will gloriously appear in dashing to pieces his enemies as a potter's vessel. Moses rejoiced and sang when he saw God glorify his power in the destruction of Pharaoh and his host at the Red sea. But how much more will the saints in glory rejoice, when they shall see God gloriously triumphing over all his enemies in their eternal ruin! Then it will appear how dreadful God is, and how dreadful a thing it is to disobey and condemn him. It is often mentioned as a part of the glory of God, that he is a terrible God. To see the majesty, and greatness, and terribleness of God, appearing in the destruction of his enemies, will cause the saints to rejoice; and when they shall see how great and terrible a being God is, how will they prize his favour! how will they rejoice that they are the objects of his love! how will they praise him the more joyfully, that, he should choose them to be his children, and to live in the enjoyment of him!

It will occasion rejoicing in them, as they will have the greater sense of *their own happiness*, by seeing the contrary misery. It is the nature of pleasure and pain, of happiness and misery, greatly to heighten the sense of each other. Thus the seeing of the happiness of others tends to make men more sensible of their own calamities; and the seeing of the calamities of others tends to heighten the sense of our own enjoyments.

When the saints in glory, therefore, shall see the doleful state of the damned, how will this heighten their sense of the blessedness of their own state, so exceedingly different from it! When they shall see how miserable others of their fellow-creatures are, who were naturally in the same circumstances with themselves; when they shall see the smoke of their torment, and the raging of the flames of their burning, and hear their dolorous shrieks and cries, and consider that they in the mean time are in the most blissful state, and shall surely be in it to all eternity; how will they rejoice!

This will give them a joyful sense of the *grace and love of God to them*, because hereby they will see how great a benefit they have by it. When they shall see the dreadful miseries of the damned, and consider that they deserved the same misery, and that it was *sovereign grace*, and nothing else, which made them so much to differ from the damned, that, if it had not been for that, they would have been in the same condition: but that God from all eternity was pleased to set his love upon them, that Christ hath laid down his life for them, and hath made them thus gloriously happy for ever, O how will they admire that dying love of Christ, which has redeemed them from so great a misery, and purchased for them so great happiness, and has so distinguished them from others of their fellow-creatures! How joyfully will they sing to God and the Lamb, when they behold this!

## SECT. III.

An objection answered.

The objection is, "If we are apprehensive of the damnation of others now, it in no wise becomes us to rejoice at it, but to lament it. If we see others in imminent danger of going to hell, it is accounted a very sorrowful thing, and it is looked upon as an argument of a senseless and wicked spirit, to look upon it otherwise. When it is a very dead time with respect to religion, and a very degenerate and corrupt time among a people, it is accounted a thing greatly to be lamented; and on this account, that at such times there are but few converted and saved, and many perish. Paul tells us, that he had great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart, because so many of the Jews were in a perishing state: [Rom. ix. 1, 2, 3](#). "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." And if a neighbour die, and his death be attended with circumstances which look darkly as to the state of his soul, we account it a sorrowful thing, because he hath left us no more comfortable grounds to hope for his salvation. Why, is it not then an unbecoming thing in the saints in glory to rejoice when they see the damnation of the ungodly?

*Ans. 1.* It is now our duty to love all men, though they are wicked; but it will not be a duty to love wicked men hereafter. Christ, by many precepts in his word, hath made it our duty to love all men. We are commanded to love wicked men, and our enemies and persecutors. But this command doth not extend to the saints in glory, with respect to the damned in hell. Nor is there the same reason that it should. We ought now to love all, and even wicked men; we know not but that God loves them. However wicked any man is, yet we know not but that he is one whom God loved from eternity; we know not but that Christ loved him with a dying love, Had his name upon his heart before the world was, and had respect to him when he endured those bitter agonies on the cross. We know not but that he is to be our companion in glory to all eternity.

But this is not the case in another world. The saints in glory will know concerning the damned in hell, that God never loved them, but that he hates them, and will be for ever hated of God. This hatred of God will be fully declared to them; they will see it, and will see the fruits of it in their misery. Therefore, when God has thus declared his hatred of the damned, and the saints see it, it will be no way becoming in the saints to love them, not to mourn over them. It becomes the saints fully and perfectly to consent to what God doth, without any reluctance or opposition of spirit; yea, it becomes them to rejoice in every thing that God sees meet to be done.

*Ans. 2.* We ought now to seek and be concerned for the salvation of wicked men, because now they are capable subjects of it. Wicked men, though they may be very wicked, yet are

capable subjects of mercy. It is yet a day of grace with them, and they have the offers of salvation. Christ is as yet seeking their salvation; he is calling upon them, inviting and wooing them; he stands at the door and knocks. He is using many means with them, is calling them, saying, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?* The day of his patience is yet continued to them; and if Christ is seeking their salvation, surely we ought to seek it.

God is wont now to make men the means of one another's salvation; yea, it is his ordinary way so to do. He makes the concern and endeavours of his people the means of bringing home many to Christ. Therefore they ought to be concerned for and endeavour it. But it will not be so in another world: there wicked men will be no longer capable subjects of mercy. The saints will know, that it is the will of God the wicked should be miserable to all eternity. It will therefore cease to be their duty any more to seek their salvation, or to be concerned about their misery. On the other hand, it will be their duty to rejoice in the will and glory of God. It is not our duty to be sorry that God hath executed just vengeance on the devils, concerning whom the will of God in their eternal state is already known to us.

*Ans. 3.* Rejoicing at the calamities of others now, rests not on the same grounds as that of the saints in glory. The evil of rejoicing at other's calamities now, consists in our envy, or revenge, or some such disposition is gratified therein; and not that God is glorified, that the majesty and justice of God gloriously shine forth.

*Ans. 4.* The different circumstances of our nature now, from what will he hereafter make that a virtue now which will be no virtue then. For instance, if a man be of a virtuous disposition, the circumstances of our nature now are such, that it will necessarily show itself by natural affection, and to be without natural affection is a very vicious disposition; and is so mentioned in [Rom. i. 31](#). But natural affection is no virtue in the saints in glory. Their virtue will exercise itself in a higher manner.

*Ans. 5.* The vengeance inflicted on many of the wicked will be a manifestation of God's love to the saints. One way whereby God shows his love to the saints, is by destroying their enemies. God hath said, <sup>189</sup> "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye." And it is often mentioned in Scripture, as an instance of the great love of God to his people, that his wrath is so awakened, when they are wronged and injured. Thus Christ hath promised that God will avenge his own elect, [Luke xviii. 7](#). and hath said, that "if any man offend one of his little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." [Matt. xviii. 6](#).

So the saints in glory will see the great love of God to them, in the dreadful vengeance which he shall inflict on those who have injured and persecuted them; and the view of this love of God to them will be just cause of their rejoicing. Thus, in the text, heaven and the

holy apostles and prophets are called to rejoice over their enemies, because God hath avenged them of them.

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## SECT. IV.

The ungodly warned.

I shall apply this subject only in one use, *viz.* of *warning* to ungodly men. And in order to this, I desire such to consider,

1. How destitute of any comforting consideration your condition will be, if you perish at last. You will have none to pity you. Look which way you will, before or behind, on the right hand or left, look up to heaven, or look about you in hell, and you will see none to condole your case, or to exercise any pity towards you, in your dreadful condition. You must bear these flames, you must bear that torment and amazement, day and night, for ever, and never have the comfort of considering, that there is so much as one that pities your case; there never will one tear be dropped for you.

(1.) You have now been taught that you will have no pity from the *created inhabitants* of heaven. If you shall look to them, you will see them all rejoicing at the sight of the glory of God's justice, power, and terrible majesty, manifested in your torment. You will see them in a blissful and glorious state; you will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God; you will see many come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and sit down in that glorious kingdom; and will see them all with one voice, and with united joy, praising God for glorifying himself in your destruction. You will wail and gnash your teeth under your own torments, and with envy of their happiness; but they will rejoice and sing: [Isa. lxxv. 13, 14.](#) "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, my servants shall eat. but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit."

(2.) God will exercise no pity towards you. If you might have his pity in any degree, that would be of more worth to you than thousands of worlds. That would make your case to be not without comfort and hope. But God will exercise no pity towards you. He hath often said concerning wicked men, that his eye shall not spare, neither will he have pity, ([Ezek. v. 11.](#) and [vii. 4, 9.](#) and [viii. 18.](#)) He will cast upon you, and not spare; you will see nothing in God, and receive nothing from him, but perfect hatred, and the fierceness of his wrath; nothing but the mighty falls or outpourings of wrath upon you every moment; and no cries will avail to move God to any pity, or in the least to move him to lighten his hand, or assuage the fierceness and abate the power of your torments.

Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, will have no pity on you. Though he had so much love to sinners, as to be willing to lay down his life for them, and offers you the benefits of his blood, while you are in this world, and often calls upon you to accept them; yet then he will have no pity upon you. You never will hear any more instructions from him; he will utterly refuse

to be your instructor: on the contrary, he will be your judge, to pronounce sentence against you.

(3.) You will find none that will pity you in hell. The devils will not pity you, but will be your tormentors, as roaring lions or hell-hounds to tear you in pieces continually. And other wicked men who shall be there will be like devils; they will have no pity on you, but will hate, and curse, and torment you. And you yourselves will be like devils; you will be like devils to yourselves, and will be your own tormentors.

2. Consider what an aggravation what you have heard under this doctrine will be to your misery. Consider how it will be at the day of judgment, when you shall see Christ coming in the clouds of heaven, when you shall begin to wail and cry, as knowing that you are those who are to be condemned; and perhaps you will be ready to fly to some of your godly friends; but you will obtain no help from them: you will see them unconcerned for you, with joyful countenances ascending to meet the Lord, and not the less joyful for the horror in which they see you. And when you shall stand before the tribunal at the left hand, among devils, trembling and astonished, and shall have the dreadful sentence passed upon you, you will at the same time see the blessed company of saints and angels at the right hand rejoicing, and shall hear them shout forth the praises of God, while they hear your sentence pronounced. You will then see those godly people, with whom you shall have been acquainted, and who shall have been your neighbours, and with whom you now often converse, rejoicing at the pronounciation and execution of your sentence.

Perhaps there are now some godly people, to whom you are near and dear, who are tenderly concerned for you, are ready to pity you under all calamities, and willing to help you; and particularly are tenderly concerned for your poor soul, and have put up many fervent prayers for you. How will you bear to hear these singing for joy of heart, while you are crying for sorrow of heart, and howling for vexation of spirit, and even singing the more joyful for the glorious justice of God which they behold in your eternal condemnation?

You that have godly parents, who in this world have tenderly loved you, who were wont to look upon your welfare as their own, and were wont to be grieved for you when any thing calamitous befell you in this world, and especially were greatly concerned for the good of your souls, industriously sought, and earnestly prayed for their salvation; how will you bear to see them in the kingdom of God, crowned with glory? Or how will you bear to see them receiving the blessed sentence, and going up with shouts and songs, to enter with Christ into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, while you are amongst a company of devils, and are turned away with the most bitter cries, to enter into everlasting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels? How will you bear to see your parents, who in this life had so dear an affection for you, now without any love to you, approving the sentence of condemnation, when Christ shall with indignation bid you depart, wretched, cursed creatures, into eternal burnings? How will you bear to see and hear them praising

the Judge, for his justice exercised in pronouncing this sentence, and hearing it with holy joy in their countenances, and shouting forth the praises and hallelujahs of God and Christ on that account?

When they shall see what manifestations of amazement there will be in you, at the heaving of this dreadful sentence, and that every syllable of it pierces you like a thunderbolt, and sinks you into the lowest depths of horror and despair; when they shall behold you with a frightened, amazed countenance, trembling and astonished, and shall hear you groan and gnash your teeth; these things will not move them at all to pity you, but you will see them with a holy joyfulness in their countenances, and with songs in their mouths. When they shall see you turned away and beginning to enter into the great furnace, and shall see how you shrink at it, and hear how you shriek and cry out; yet they will not be at all grieved for you, but at the same time you will hear from them renewed praises and hallelujahs for the true and righteous judgments of God, in so dealing with you.

Then you will doubtless remember how those your glorified parents seemed to be concerned for your salvation, while you were here in this world; you will remember how they were wont to counsel and warn you, and how little you regarded their counsels, and how they seemed to be concerned and grieved, that there appeared no more effect of their endeavours for the good of your souls. You will then see them praising God for executing just vengeance on you, for setting so light by their counsels and reproofs. However here they loved you, and were concerned for you, now they will rise up in judgment against you, and will declare how your sins are aggravated by the endeavours which they to no purpose used with you, to bring you to forsake sin and practise virtue, and to seek and serve God; but you were obstinate under all, and would not hearken to them. They will declare how inexcusable you are upon this account. And when the Judge shall execute the more terrible wrath upon you on this account, that you have made no better improvement of your parents' instructions, they will joyfully praise God for it. After they shall have seen you lie in hell thousands of years, and your torment shall yet continue without any rest, day or night; they will not begin to pity you then; they will praise God, that his justice appears in the eternity of your misery.

You that have godly husbands, or wives, or brethren, or sisters, with whom you have been wont to dwell under the same roof, and to eat at the same table, consider how it will be with you, when you shall come to part with them; when they shall be taken and you left; [Luke xvii. 34, 35, 36.](#) "I tell you, in that night, there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left." However you may wail and lament, when you see them parted from you, they being taken and you left, you will see in them no signs of sorrow, that you are not taken with them; that you ascend not with them to meet the Lord in the air, but are left below to be consumed with the world, which is reserved unto fire, against the day of the perdition of ungodly men.

Those wicked men, who shall go to hell from under the labours of pious and faithful ministers, will see those ministers rejoicing and praising God upon the occasion of their destruction. Consider, ye that have long lived under Mr. Stoddard's ministry, <sup>190</sup> and are yet in a natural condition, how dreadful it will be to you, to see him who was so tenderly concerned for the good of your souls while he was here, and so earnestly sought your salvation, to see him rising up in judgment against you, declaring your in-excusableness, declaring how often he warned you; how plainly he set your danger before you, and told you of the opportunity that you had; how fully he set forth the miserable condition in which you were, and the necessity there was that you should obtain an interest in Christ; how movingly and earnestly he exhorted you to get into a better state, and how regardless you were; how little you minded all that he said to you; how you went on still in your trespasses, hardened your necks, and made your hearts as an adamant, and refused to return! How dreadful will it be to you to hear him declaring how inexcusable you are upon these accounts! How will you be cut to the heart, when you shall see him approving the sentence of condemnation, which the Judge shall pronounce against you, and judging and sentencing you with Christ, as an assessor in judgment; for the saints shall judge the world, (1 Cor. vi. 2.) and when you shall see him rejoicing in the execution of justice upon you for all your unprofitableness under his ministry!

3. Consider what a happy opportunity you have in your hands now. Now your case is very different from the case of wicked men in another world, of which you have now heard; and particularly in the following respects.

(1.) God makes it the duty of all the godly now to be concerned for your salvation. As to those who are damned in hell, the saints in glory are not concerned for their welfare, and have no love nor pity towards them; and if you perish hereafter, it will be an occasion of joy to all the godly. But now God makes it the duty of all the godly, to love you with a sincere good-will and earnest affection. God doth not excuse men from loving you, for your ill qualities: though you are wicked and undeserving, yet God makes it the duty of all sincerely to wish well to you; and it is a heinous sin in the sight of God, for any to hate you. He requires all to be concerned for your salvation, and by all means to seek it. It is their duty now to lament your danger, and to pray for mercy to you, that you may be converted and brought home to Christ.

Now the godly who know you, desire your salvation, and are ready to seek, and pray for it. If you be now in distress about the condition of your souls, you are not in such a forsaken, helpless condition, as those that are damned; but you may find many to pray for you, many who are willing to assist you by their advice and counsels, and all with a tender concern, and with hearty wishes that your souls may prosper. Now some of you have godly friends

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190 The author's grandfather and predecessor.



who are near and dear to you; you are beloved of those who have a great interest in heaven, and who have power with God by their prayers: you have the blessing of living under the same roof with them. Some of you have godly parents to pray for you, and to counsel and instruct you, who you may be sure will do it with sincere love and concern for you. And there is not only the command of God, God hath not only made it the duty of others to seek your salvation, but hath given encouragement to others to seek it. He gives encouragement that they may obtain help for you by their prayers, and that they may be instrumental of your spiritual good. God reveals it to be his manner, to make our sincere endeavours a mean of each other's good. How different is the case with you from what it is with those that are already damned! And how happy an opportunity have you in your hands, if you would but improve it!

(2.) Now you live where there is *a certain order of men* appointed to make it the business of their lives to seek your salvation. Now you have ministers, not to rise up in judgment against you; but in Christ's stead, to beseech you to be reconciled to God; [2 Cor. v. 20](#). God hath not only made it the duty of all to wish well to your souls, and occasionally to endeavour to promote your spiritual interests, but he hath set apart certain persons, to make it their whole work, in which they should spend their days and their strength.

(3.) *Christ himself* is now seeking your salvation. He seeks it by the fore-mentioned means, by appointing men to make it their business to seek it; he seeks it by them; they are his instruments, and they beseech you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. He seeks it, in commanding your neighbours to seek it. Christ is represented in Scripture, as wooing the souls of sinners. He uses means to persuade them to choose and accept of their own salvation. He often invites them to come to him that they may have life, that they may find rest to their souls; to come and take of the water of life freely. He stands at the door and knocks; and ceases not, though sinners for a long time refuse him. He bears repeated repulses from them, and yet mercifully continues knocking, saying, "Open to me, that I may come in and sup with you, and you with me." At the doors of many sinners he stands thus knocking for many years together. Christ is become a most importunate suitor to sinners, that he may become their sovereign. He is often setting before them the need they have of him, the miserable condition in which they are, and the great provision that is made for the good of their souls; and he invites them to accept of this provision, and promises it shall be theirs upon their mere acceptance.

Thus how earnestly did Christ seek the salvation of Jerusalem, and he wept over it when they refused; [Luke xix. 41, 42](#). "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." And [Matt. xxiii. 37](#). "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens

under her wings, and ye would not!" Thus Christ is now seeking your salvation; such an opportunity have you now in your hands. Consider therefore how many means Christ is using with you, to bring you to salvation.

Besides those things which have been now mentioned, some of you have a degree of the inward strivings and influences of the Spirit, which makes your opportunity much greater. You have Christ's internal calls and knockings. All the persons of the Trinity are now seeking your salvation. God the Father hath sent his Son, who hath made way for your salvation, and removed all difficulties, except those which are with your own heart. And he is waiting to be gracious to you; the door of his mercy stands open to you; he hath set a fountain open for you to wash in from sin and uncleanness. Christ is calling, inviting, and wooing you; and the Holy Ghost is striving with you by his internal motions and influences.

4. If you now repent, before it be too late, *the saints and angels* in glory will rejoice at your repentance. If you repent not till it is too late, they will, as you have heard, rejoice in seeing justice executed upon you. But if you now repent, they will rejoice at your welfare, that you who were lost, are found; that you who were dead, are alive again. They will rejoice that you are come to so happy a state already, and that you are in due time to inherit eternal happiness. [Luke xv. 3-10](#). So that if now you will improve your opportunity, there will be a very different occasion of joy in heaven concerning you, than that of which the doctrine speaks; not a rejoicing on occasion of your misery, but on occasion of your unspeakable blessedness.

5. If you repent before it is too late, *you yourselves* shall be of that joyful company. They will be so far from rejoicing on occasion of your ruin, that you yourselves will be of that glorious company, who will rejoice in all the works of God, who will have all tears wiped away from their eyes, to whom there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, and from whom sorrow and sighing shall flee away. You yourselves will be of those who will rejoice at the glorious display of God's majesty and justice, in his wrath on his enemies. You will be of those that shall sing for joy of heart at the day of judgment, while others mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit; and you will enter into the joy of your Lord, and there shall *never be any end or abatement of your joy.*'

## CHRIST EXALTED :

OR

JESUS CHRIST GLORIOUSLY EXALTED ABOVE ALL EVIL IN THE WORK  
OF REDEMPTION.<sup>191</sup>

[1 corinthians xv. 25, 26.](#)

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death.

The apostle in this chapter particularly opposes some among the Christian Corinthians, who denied the resurrection of the dead, and infested the church with their doctrine. There were two sorts of persons in that age, who were especially great opposers of the doctrine of the resurrection: one among the Jews, and the other among the heathen. Among the *Jews* were the Sadducees, of whom we read, [Acts xxiii. 8.](#) For the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, either angel or spirit; and we have the same account in other places. Among the *heathen*, that were the chief opposers of this doctrine, were their philosophers. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, was not consistent with their philosophy, by the principles of which, it was impossible that one who was deprived of the habit of life, should ever receive it again. And therefore they ridiculed the doctrine when the apostle preached it among them at Athens.<sup>192</sup> Probably the church at Corinth received this corruption from the philosophers, and not the Sadducees. For Corinth was near to Athens, the place of the chief resort of the philosophers of Greece.

The apostle, in opposing this error, first insists on Christ's resurrection from the dead; and next on the resurrection of all the saints at the end of the world. And, in the verses next before the text, shows how both are connected, or that one arises or follows from the other. And then adds, "then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."<sup>193</sup>—Observe,

1. Here is one thing wherein appears the glory of that exaltation and dominion, that Christ has as our redeemer, *viz.* that it issues in the subjection of all enemies under his feet. It is not said all *his* enemies; possibly, because those that shall be put under his feet, are not only his enemies, but also the enemies of his Father, and of his people. Their being *under his feet*, denotes their being perfectly subdued, and his being gloriously exalted over them.

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191 LECTURE, AUGUST, 1738

192 [Acts xvii.](#)

193 [1 Cor. xv. 24.](#)

It shall be thus with respect to God's and his, and his people's enemies universally, not one excepted; which universality is signified here two ways; *all enemies*—and the very *last enemy*: when there shall be but one enemy left, that shall also be put under his feet.

2. We may learn what is here meant by *enemies*, by the particular instance here given as the *last* that shall be destroyed, *viz. death*. Which shows, that by enemies, is not meant *persons* only, that set themselves in opposition to God and his people, but *evils*; whatever is against God and his people, and opposes Christ or his saints, whether they be persons or things.

SECT. I.

How evil, of all kinds has prevailed and highly exalted itself in the world.

Evil, of all kinds, has risen to an exceeding height in the world, and highly exalted itself against God, and Christ, and the church.—This will appear by the following particulars.

1. *Satan* has highly exalted himself, and greatly prevailed. He is vastly superior in his natural capacity and abilities, to mankind. He was originally one of the highest rank of creatures; but proudly exalted himself, in rebellion, against God in heaven. We are told, that *pride was the condemnation of the devil.*<sup>194</sup> He became proud of his own superior dignity and mighty abilities, and the glory which his Creator had put upon him; and probably thought it too much to submit to the Son of God, and attempted to exalt his throne above him. And he prevailed to draw away vast multitudes of the heavenly hosts, into an open rebellion against God.

And after he was cast down from heaven, he proudly exalted himself in this world, and prevailed to do great things. By his subtle temptations he procured the fall of our first parents, and so brought about the ruin of their whole race. He procured their ruin in body and soul, and the death of both; and that they should be exposed to all manner of calamity in this world, and to eternal ruin hereafter. He so far prevailed, that he drew men off from the service of their Maker, and set up himself to be the god of this world; and in a little time drew the world into that almost universal corruption, which brought on the flood of waters, by which it was destroyed. And after that, he drew off all nations, except the posterity of Jacob, from the worship of the true God, and darkened all the world with heathenism; and held them under this darkness for a great many ages; he himself being worshipped as God almost all over the world; the nations of the earth offered sacrifices to him; and multitudes offered up their children. And during that time, he often so far prevailed against the people of God, that he had almost swallowed them up. The church was often brought to the very brink of ruin.

And when Christ himself appeared in the world, how did he exalt himself against him! and prevailed so far, as to influence men to hate and despise him all the days of his life. And at last he persuaded one of his own disciples to betray him. Accordingly, he was delivered into the hands of men, to be mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and treated with the greatest ignominy that unrestrained malice could devise; and at last procured that he should be put to the most cruel and ignominious kind of death. And since that, he has greatly exalted himself against the gospel and kingdom of Christ. He has procured that the church, for the most part, has been the subject of great persecution; has often brought it to the brink of utter destruction; has accomplished great works in setting up those great kingdoms of antichrist

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194 I Tim. iii 6.

and Mahomet; and darkened great part of the world, that was once enlightened with the gospel of Christ, with worse than heathen darkness. And he has infected the Christian world with multitudes of heresies and false ways of worship, and greatly promoted atheism and infidelity. Thus highly has the devil exalted himself against God and Christ, and the elect; and so far he prevailed.

2. *Guilt* is another evil which has come to a great height in the world. All guilt is an evil of a dreadful nature: the least degree of it is enough utterly to undo any creature. It is a thing that reaches unto heaven, and cries to God, and brings down his wrath. The guilt of any one sin is so terrible an evil, that it prevails to bind over the guilty person to suffer everlasting burnings: and so is in some respect infinite, in that it obliges to that punishment which has no end; and so is infinitely terrible. But this kind of evil has risen to a most amazing height in this world; where not only some persons are guilty, but all, in all nations and ages, are naturally guilty wretches. And they who live to act any time in the world, are not only guilty of one sin, but of thousands, and thousands of thousands. What multiplied and what aggravated sins are some men guilty of! What guilt lies on some particular persons! How much more on some particular populous cities! How much more still on this wicked world! How much does the guilt of the world transcend all account, all expression, all powers of numbers or measures! And above all, how vast is the guilt of the world, in all ages, from the beginning to the end of it! To what a pitch has guilt risen! The world being, as it were, on every side, loaded with it, as with mountains heaped on mountains, above the clouds and stars of heaven.

And guilt, when it was imputed to Christ, greatly prevailed against him—though in himself innocent, and the eternal Son of God—even so as to hold him prisoner of justice for a while; and to open the flood-gates of God’s wrath upon him, and bring his waves and billows over him.

3. *Corruption* and wickedness of heart, is another thing that has risen to an exceeding height in the world. Sin has so far prevailed, that it has become universal: all, mere men, are become sinful and corrupt creatures. Let us attend to St Paul’s description of the world.<sup>195</sup> “Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. As is written, There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.” And not only is every one corrupt, but they are all over corrupt, in every power, faculty, and principle; every part is depraved. Which is here represented by the several parts of the body being corrupt, as the throat, the tongue, the lips, the mouth, the feet. ” Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood.” And

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195 Rom. iii. 9-18.

not only is every part corrupt, but exceeding corrupt; being possessed with dreadful principles of corruption, horribly evil dispositions and principles of sin, that may be represented by the poison of asps: which makes men like vipers and devils: principles of all uncleanness, pride, deceit, injustice, enmity, malice, blasphemy, murder. Here their *throats* are compared to an *open sepulchre*, and their *mouth* is said to be full of *cursing and bitterness*, and destruction and misery are said to be in their ways.

And there are those principles of sin not only that are very bad, but every kind; here is no sort of wickedness, but there is a seed of it in men. And these seeds and principles have not only a being in men's hearts, but are there in great strength: they have the absolute possession and dominion over men, so that they are *sold under sin*. Yea, wicked principles, and those only, are in the heart. *The imagination of the thoughts of their heart is evil only*. There are bad principles only, and no good ones. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Thus the hearts of all men are *deceitful and desperately wicked*.<sup>196</sup>

And if we look, not only at the natural corruption of the heart, but at the contracted habits of sin, by wicked education and customs, how full shall we find the world of wickedness, in this respect! How have men, by bad customs in sinning, broken down all restraints upon natural corruption, and as it were abandoned themselves to wickedness! So far has corruption and wickedness prevailed in the world, and so high has it risen, that it is become a great and universal deluge, that overtops all things, and prevails with that strength, that it is like the raging waves of the tempestuous ocean; which are ready to bear down all before them.

4. Many of the *devil's instruments* have greatly prevailed, and have been exalted to an exceeding height in the world. It has been so in almost all ages of the world. Many of the devil's instruments have prospered and prevailed, till they have got to the head of great kingdoms and empires, with vast riches and mighty power.

Those four great heathen monarchies that rose in the world before Christ<sup>197</sup>, are spoken of in Scripture as kingdoms set up in opposition to the kingdom of Christ. So they are represented in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.<sup>198</sup> These monarchies were exceeding powerful. The two last ruled over the greater part of the then known world. And the last especially, *viz.* the Roman empire, was exceeding mighty: so that it is said to be diverse from all kingdoms; and that it should devour the whole earth, and tread it down, and break it in pieces.<sup>199</sup> It is represented by the fourth beast, which was dreadful and terrible; and strong exceedingly; and had great iron teeth, that devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped

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196 [Jer. xvii. 9.](#)

197 The Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies

198 [Dan. ii. 35, 36.](#)

199 [Dan. vii. 23.](#)

the residue with his feet.<sup>200</sup> These four kingdoms all persecuted the church of God in their turns, especially the last. One of the governors of this monarchy put Christ to death. And afterwards one emperor after another, made dreadful havoc of the church; making a business of it, with the force of all the empire, to torment and destroy the Christians; endeavouring, if possible, to root out the Christian name from under heaven.

And in these latter ages, how have those two great instruments of the devil, *viz.* antichrist and Mahomet, prevailed, and to what a pitch of advancement have they arrived; ruling over vast empires, with mighty wealth, pride and power: so that the earth has been, as it were, subdued by them. Antichrist has set up himself as the vicar of Christ; and has for many ages usurped the power of God, “sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God; and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.” And how dreadfully has he ravaged the church of God, being drunk with the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus. And has often, as it were, deluged the world in Christian blood, shed with the utmost cruelty that human wit and malice could invent.—And at this day, many other instruments of the devil, many heretics, atheists, and other infidels, are exerting themselves against Christ and his church, with great pride and contempt.

5. *Affliction* and misery have also prevailed and risen to an unspeakable height in the world. The spiritual misery which the elect are naturally in, is great. They are miserable captives of sin and Satan, and under obligations to suffer eternal burnings. This misery all mankind are naturally in. And spiritual troubles and sorrows have often risen to a great height in the elect. The troubles of a wounded spirit and guilty conscience, have been felt with intolerable and insupportable weight. “A wounded spirit who can bear?”<sup>201</sup> And the darkness that has risen to God’s people after conversion, through the temptations and buffetings of the devil, and the hidings of God’s face, and manifestations of his anger, have been very terrible. And temporal afflictions have often risen exceeding high. The church of God has, for the most part, all along, been a seat of great affliction and tribulation.

But the height to which the evil of affliction has risen, nowhere appears so much, as in the afflictions that Christ suffered. The evil of affliction and sorrow exalted itself so high, as to seize the Son of God himself, and to cause him to be all in a bloody sweat, and to make his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. It caused him to cry out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Affliction never prevailed to such a degree in this world, as in Christ, whose soul was, as it were, overwhelmed in an ocean of it.

6. *Death* is an evil which has greatly prevailed, and made dreadful havoc in this world. How does it waste and devour mankind, one age after another; sparing none, high or low, rich or poor, good or bad! Wild beasts have destroyed many; many cruel princes have taken

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200 [Dan. vii. 7.](#)

201 [Prov. xviii. 14.](#)



away the lives of thousands, and laid waste whole countries: but death devours all; none are suffered to escape. And the bodies of the saints as well as others, fall a prey to this great devourer. Yea, so high did this enemy rise, that he took hold on Christ himself, and swallowed him among the rest. He became the prey of this great, insatiable monster. By his means, was his bodily frame destroyed, and laid dead in the dark and silent grave. And death still goes on destroying thousands every day. And therefore the grave is one of those things which Agur says, never has enough.<sup>202</sup> —So have evils of every kind prevailed; and to such a degree have they exalted themselves in the world.

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202 [Prov. xxx 16.](#)

## SECT. II.

How Jesus Christ, in the work of redemption, appears gloriously above all these evils.

It was not the will of the infinitely wise and holy Governor of the world, that things should remain in this confusion; this reign of evil, which had prevailed and exalted itself to such a height. But he had a design of subduing it; and delivering an elect part of the world from it, and exalting them to the possession of the greatest good, and to reign in the highest glory, out of a state of subjection to all these evils. And he chose his Son as the person most fit for an undertaking that was infinitely too great for any mere creature: and he has undertaken the work of our redemption. And though these evils are so many and so great, and have prevailed to such a degree, and have risen to such a height, and have been, as it were, all combined together; yet wherein they have exalted themselves, Christ, in the work of redemption, appears above them. He hath gloriously prevailed against them all, and brings them under his feet; and rides forth, in the chariots of salvation, over their heads; or leading them in triumph at his chariot wheels. He appears in this work infinitely higher and mightier than they, and sufficient to carry his people above them, and utterly to destroy them all.

1. Christ appears gloriously above all evil in what he did to procure redemption for us in his state of *humiliation*, by the righteousness he wrought out, and the atonement he made for sin. The evils mentioned, never seemed so much to prevail against him as in his sufferings: but in them, the foundation was laid for their overthrow. In them he appeared above *Satan*. Though *Satan* never exalted himself so high, as he did in procuring these sufferings of Christ; yet, then, Christ laid the foundation for the utter overthrow of his kingdom. He slew *Satan*, as it were, with his own weapon, the spiritual David cut off this Goliath's head with his own sword; and he triumphed over him in his cross. "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."<sup>203</sup> *i. e.* in his *cross*, mentioned in the preceding words. Then the wisdom of Christ appeared gloriously above the subtlety of *Satan*. *Satan*, that old serpent, used a great deal of subtlety to procure Christ's death; and doubtless, when he had accomplished it, thought he had obtained a complete victory; being then ignorant of the contrivance of our redemption. But so did the wisdom of Christ order things, that *Satan's* subtlety and malice, should be made the very means of undermining the foundations of his kingdom; and so he wisely led him into the pit that he had digged.

In this also Christ appeared gloriously above the guilt of men. For he offered a sacrifice, that was sufficient to do away all the guilt of the whole world. Though the guilt of man was like the great mountains, whose heads are lifted up to the heavens; yet his dying love, and his merits, appeared as a mighty deluge that overflowed the highest mountains; or like a boundless ocean that swallows them up; or like an immense fountain of light, that with the

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203 Coloss. ii. 15

fulness and redundance of its brightness, swallows up men's greatest sins, as little motes are swallowed up and hidden in the disk of the sun.

In this Christ appeared above all the *corruption* of man, in that hereby he purchased holiness for the chief of sinners. And Christ in undergoing such extreme affliction, got the victory over all *misery*; and laid a foundation for its being utterly abolished, with respect to his elect. In dying he became the plague and destruction of death. When death slew him, it slew itself: for Christ, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, even the devil.<sup>204</sup> By this he laid the foundation of the glorious resurrection of all his people to an immortal life.

2. Christ appears gloriously exalted above all evil, in his *resurrection* and *ascension* into heaven. When Christ rose from the dead, then it appeared that he was above death, which, though it had taken him captive, could not hold him.

Then he appeared above the devil. Then this Leviathan that had swallowed him, was forced to vomit him up again; as the Philistines that had taken captive the ark, were forced to return it; Dagon being fallen before it, with his head and hands broken off, and only the stumps left.—Then he appeared above our guilt: for he was justified in his resurrection.<sup>205</sup> In his resurrection he appeared above all affliction. For though he had been subject to much affliction, and overwhelmed in it; he then emerged out of it, as having gotten the victory, never to conflict with any more sorrow.

When he ascended up into heaven, he rose far above the reach of the devil and all his instruments, who had before had him in their hands. And now has he sat down at the right hand of God, as being made head over all things to the church, in order to a complete and perfect victory over sin, Satan, death, and all his enemies. It was then said to him, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."<sup>206</sup> He entered into a state of glory, wherein he is exalted far above all these evils, as the forerunner of his people; and to make intercession for them, till they also are brought to be with him, in like manner exalted above all evil.

3. Christ appears gloriously above all evil, in his work in the *hearts* of the elect, in their conversion and sanctification. This is what the application of redemption, so far as it is applied in this world, consists in; which is done by the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Christ. In this work of Christ in the hearts of his elect, he appears glorious above Satan. For the strong man armed is overcome, and all his armour, wherein he trusted, is taken from him, and his spoil divided. In this work, the lamb is, by the spiritual David, taken out of the mouth of the lion and bear: the poor captive is delivered from his mighty and cruel enemies.

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204 [Heb. ii. 14.](#)

205 [Rom. iv. 4. 25.](#) [1 Tim. iii. 16.](#)

206 [Psal. cx. 1.](#)

In this Christ appears gloriously above the *corruption* and wickedness of the heart; above its natural darkness in dispelling it, and letting in light; and above its enmity and opposition, by prevailing over it, drawing it powerfully; and irresistibly to himself, and turning a heart of stone into a heart of flesh: above the obstinacy and perverseness of the will, by making them willing in the day of his power. In this he appears above all their lusts. For all sin is mortified in this work, and the soul is delivered from the power and dominion of it. In this work the grace of Christ gloriously triumphs over men's *guilt*. He comes over the mountains of their sins, and visits them with his salvation.

And God is wont often in this work, either in the beginning or progress of it, to give his people those spiritual comforts, in which he gloriously appears to be above all affliction and sorrow: and often gives them to triumph over the devil, and his powerful and cruel instruments. Many saints, by the influences of Christ's Spirit on their hearts, have rejoiced and triumphed, when suffering the greatest torments and cruelties of their persecutors. And in this work Christ sometimes gloriously appears above death, in carrying his people far above the fears of it, and making them to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"<sup>207</sup>

4. Christ gloriously appears above all these forementioned evils, in his *glorifying* the souls of departed saints in heaven. In this he gives a glorious victory over death. Death by it is turned from an enemy into a servant; and their death, by the glorious change that passes in the state of their souls, is become a resurrection, rather than a death. Now Christ exalts the soul to a state of glory, wherein it is perfectly delivered from Satan and all his temptations, and all his instruments; and from all remains of sin and corruption, and from all affliction: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."<sup>208</sup>

5. Christ appears gloriously above these evils, in what he doth in his *providence* in the world, as head and redeemer of his church. He appears gloriously above Satan and all his instruments in upholding his church, even from its first establishment, through all the powerful attempts that have been made against it by earth and hell: hereby fulfilling his promise, "That the gates of hell should never prevail against it."<sup>209</sup>

Christ gloriously triumphed over these his enemies, in a remarkable success of his gospel, soon after his ascension, when many thousands in Jerusalem, and all parts of the world, were so soon turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God: and in causing his word to go on and prosper, and his church to increase and prevail against all the opposition of the heathen world, when they united all their power to put a stop to it,

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207 1 Cor. xv. 55.

208 Rev. vii. 16, 27.

209 Matt. xvi. 18.

and root it out. So that, in spite of all that the philosophers, and wise men, and emperors and princes could do, the gospel in a little time overthrew Satan's old heathenish kingdom in the whole Roman empire, which was then the main part of the world; and so brought about the greatest and most glorious revolution. Instead of one single nation, now the greater part of the nations of the known world were become God's people.

And Christ's exaltation above all evil in his government of the world, in his providence, as the Redeemer of his people, has since gloriously appeared in reviving his church by the reformation from popery, after it had for many ages lain in a great measure hid, and dwelt in a wilderness, under antiChristian persecution.

And he will yet far more gloriously triumph over Satan and all his instruments, in all the mighty kingdoms that have been set up in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, at the time of the fall of antichrist, and the beginning of those glorious times so much spoken of in Scripture prophecy. "Then shall the stone that has been cut out without hands smite all these kingdoms, and break them to pieces; and they shall become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind shall carry them away, that no place should be found for them: and the stone which smote them shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth."<sup>210</sup> "Then shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."<sup>211</sup> And then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."<sup>212</sup> Though great and mighty empires have been set up one after another in the world, in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, during the succession of so many ages; yet, Christ's kingdom shall be the last and the universal kingdom, which he has given him, as the heir of the world. Whatever great works Satan has wrought; the final issue and event of all, in the winding up of things in the last ages of the world, shall be the glorious kingdom of Christ through the world; a kingdom of righteousness and holiness, of love and peace, established every where. Agreeable to the ancient prediction, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."<sup>213</sup>

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210 [Dan. ii. 34, 35.](#)

211 [Ver. 44.](#)

212 [Rev. xi. 15.](#)

213 [Dan. vii. 13, 14, 27.](#)

Then shall Christ appear gloriously exalted indeed above all evil: and then shall all the saints in earth and heaven gloriously triumph in him, and sing, "Hallelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." <sup>214</sup>

6. Christ will appear gloriously above all evil in the *consummation* of the redemption of his elect church at the end of the world. Then will be completed the whole work of redemption with respect to all that Christ died for, both in its impetration and application; and not till then. And then will Christ's exaltation above all evil be most perfectly and fully manifest. Then shall the conquest and triumph be completed with respect to all of them. Then shall all the devils, and all their instruments, be brought before Christ, to be judged and condemned. And then shall be completed their destruction in their consummate and everlasting misery; when they shall be all cast into the lake of fire, no more to range, and usurp dominion in the world; or have liberty to make opposition against God and Christ: they shall for ever be shut up, thenceforward only to suffer. Then shall death be totally destroyed. All the saints shall be delivered everlastingly from it. Even their bodies shall be taken from the power of death, by a glorious resurrection.

Then shall all guilt, and all sin and corruption, and all affliction, all sighs and tears, be utterly and eternally abolished, concerning every one of the elect; they being all brought to one complete body, to their consummate and immutable glory. And all this as the fruit of Christ's blood, and as an accomplishment of his redemption.

Then all that evil, which has so prevailed, and so exalted itself, and usurped and raged, and reigned, shall be perfectly and for ever thrust down and destroyed, with respect to all the elect; and all will be exalted to a state wherein they will be for ever immensely above all these things. " And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." <sup>215</sup>

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214 Rev. xix. 1, 2, 6.

215 Rev. xxi. 4.

SECT. III.

The subject improved and applied.

1. In this we may see how the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ appears in the work of redemption. It was because the Father had from eternity a design of exceedingly glorifying his Son, that he appointed him to be the person that should thus triumph over the evil in the world. The work of redemption is the most glorious of all God's works that are made known to us. The glory of God most remarkably shines forth in it. And this is one thing wherein its glory eminently appears, that therein Christ appears so gloriously above Satan and all his instruments; above all guilt, all corruption, all affliction, above death, and above all evil. And more especially, because evil hath so exalted itself in the world, as we have heard; and exalted itself against Christ in particular.

Satan has ever had a peculiar enmity against the Son of God. Probably his first rebellion, which was his condemnation, was his proudly taking it in disdain, when God declared the decree in heaven, that his Son in man's nature, should be the King of heaven; and that all the angels should worship him. However that was, yet it is certain that his strife has ever been especially against the Son of God. The enmity has always been between the seed of the woman, and the serpent. And therefore that war which the devil maintains against God, is represented by the devil and his angels fighting against Michael and his angels.<sup>216</sup> This Michael is Christ.<sup>217</sup>

God had appointed his Son to be the heir of the world; but the devil has contested this matter with him, and has strove to set himself up as God of the world. And how exceedingly has the devil exalted himself against Christ! How did he oppose him as he dwelt among the Jews, in his tabernacle and temple! And how did he oppose him when on earth! And how has he opposed him since his ascension! What great and mighty works has Satan brought to pass in the world! how many Babels has he built up to heaven, in his opposition to the Son of God! How exceeding proud and haughty has he appeared in his opposition! How have he and his instruments, and sin, affliction, and death, of which he is the father, raged against Christ? But yet Christ, in the work of redemption, appears infinitely above them all. In this work he triumphs over them, however they have dealt proudly; and they all appear under his feet. In this the glory of the Son of God, in the work of redemption, remarkably appears.

The beauty of good appears with the greatest advantage, when compared with its contrary evil. And the glory of that which is excellent, then especially shows itself, when it triumphs over its contrary, and appears vastly above it, in its greatest height. The glory of Christ, in

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216 [Rev. xii. 7.](#)

217 [Dan. x. 21.](#) and [xii. 1](#)

this glorious exaltation over so great evil, that so exalted itself against him, the more remarkably appears, in that he is thus exalted out of so low a state. Though he appeared in the world as a little child; yet how does he triumph over the most gigantic enemies of God and men! He who was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” is a man of war, and triumphed over his enemies in all their power. He who was meek and lowly of heart, has triumphed over those proud foes. And he is exalted over them all, in that which appears most despicable, even his cross.

2. Here is matter of exceeding great encouragement for all sinful miserable creatures in the world of mankind, to come to Christ. For let them be as sinful as they will, and ever so miserable; Christ, in the work of redemption, is gloriously exalted above all their sin and misery.

How high soever their guilt has risen, though mountains have been heaping on mountains all the days of their lives, till the pile appears towering up to heaven, and above the very stars; yet Christ in the work of redemption appears gloriously exalted above all this height.—Though they are overwhelmed in a mighty deluge of woe and misery; a deluge that is not only above their heads, but above the heads of the highest mountains; and they do not see how it is possible that they should escape; yet they have no reason to be discouraged from looking to Christ for help; who in the work of redemption, appears gloriously above the deluge of evil. Though they see dreadful corruption in their hearts; though their lusts appear like giants, or like the raging waves of the sea; yet they need not despair of help; but may look to Christ, who appears in the work of redemption, gloriously above all this corruption.

If they apprehend themselves to be miserable captives of Satan; and find him too strong an adversary for them; and the devil is often tempting and buffeting them, and triumphing over them with great cruelty: if it seems to them that the devil has swallowed them up, and has got full possession of them, as the whale had of Jonah; yet there is encouragement for them to look again, as Jonah did, towards God’s holy temple, and to trust in Christ for deliverance from Satan, who appears so gloriously exalted above him in the work of redemption.

If they are ready to sink with darkness and sorrows, distress of conscience, or those frowns of God upon them; so that God’s waves and billows seem to pass over them; yet they have encouragement enough to look to Christ for deliverance. These waves and billows have before exalted themselves against Christ; and he appeared to be infinitely above them.—And if they are afraid of death; if it looks exceeding terrible, as an enemy that would swallow them up; yet let them look to Christ who has appeared so gloriously above death; and their fears will turn into joy and triumph.

3. What cause have they who have an interest in Christ, to glory in their Redeemer! They are often beset with many evils, and many mighty enemies surround them on every side, with open mouths ready to devour them: but world, over guilt, and over death. For as



their Redeemer is mighty, and is so exalted above all evil; so shall they also be exalted in him. They are now, in a sense, so exalted; for nothing can hurt them. Christ carries them, as on eagle's wings, nigh out of the reach of all evils, so that they cannot come near them, to do them any real harm. And, in a little time, they shall be carried so out of their reach, that they shall not be able even to molest them anymore for ever.

## SELF - FLATTERIES

OR

THE VAIN SELF-FLATTERIES OF THE SINNER. <sup>218</sup>

Ps. xxxvi. 2.

For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

In the [foregoing verse](#)., David says, “The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes:” that is, when he saw that the wicked went on in sin, in an allowed way of wickedness, it convinced him, that they were not afraid of those terrible judgments, and of that wrath, with which God hath threatened sinners. If the sinner were afraid of these, he could never go on so securely in sin, as he doth.

It was a strange thing that men, who enjoyed such light as they did in the land of Israel, who read and heard those many awful threatenings which were written in the book of the law, should not be afraid to go on in sin. But saith the psalmist, *They flatter themselves in their own eyes*: they have something or other which they make a foundation of encouragement, whereby they persuade themselves that they shall escape those judgments; and that makes them put far away the evil day.

In this manner the sinner proceeds, *until his iniquity be found to be hateful*; that is, until he finds by experience that it is a more dreadful thing to sin against God, and break his holy commands, than he imagined. He thinks sin to be sweet, and hides it as a sweet morsel under his tongue: he loves it, and flatters himself in it, till at length he finds by experience, that it is bitter as gall and wormwood. Though he thinks the commission of sin to be lovely, yet he will find the fruit of it to be hateful, and what he cannot endure. [Prov. xxiii. 32](#). “At last it will bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder.”

Here observe, the subject spoken of is the wicked man, of whom the psalmist had been speaking in the foregoing verse.—His action in flattering himself in his own eyes; *i. e.* he makes himself and his case to appear to himself, or in his own eyes, better than it is.

How long he continues so to do, *until his iniquity be found to be hateful*. Which may be taken for, either, his *sin itself*, as the wicked will see how odious sin is to God, when he shall feel the effects of his hatred, and how hateful to angels and saints; or, rather, the *cause* is here put for the effect, the tree for its fruit, and he will find his iniquity to be hateful, as he will find the hatefulness and feel the terribleness of the fruit of his iniquity.—Hence it appears, that *Wicked men generally flatter themselves with hopes of escaping punishment, till it actually comes upon them*.



There are but few sinners who despair, who give up the cause, and conclude with themselves, that they shall go to hell; yet there are but few who do not go to hell. It is to be feared that many go to hell every day out of this country; yet very few of them suffer themselves to believe, that they are in any great danger of that punishment. They go on sinning and thus travelling in the direct road to the pit; yet they persuade themselves that they shall never fall into it.

SECT. I.

Sinners flatter themselves with the hope of impunity.

We are so taught in the word of God. [Deut. xxix. 18, 19.](#) “Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God. Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood, and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he *bless himself in his heart*, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.” Where it is supposed, that they whose hearts turn away from God, and are roots that bear gall and wormwood, generally bless themselves in their hearts, saying, *We shall have peace.*

See also [Ps. xlix. 17, 18.](#) “When he dieth, he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him, though whilst he lived he *blessed his soul.*” And [Ps. l. 21.](#) “These things thou hast done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”

It is very evident, that sinners flatter themselves that they shall escape punishment, otherwise they would be in dreadful and continual distress; they could never live so cheerfully as they now do. Their lives would be filled with sorrow and mourning, and they would be in continual uneasiness and distress; as much as those that are exercised with some violent pain of body. But it is apparent that men are careless and secure; they are not much concerned about future punishment, and they cheerfully pursue their business and recreations. Therefore they undoubtedly *flatter* themselves, that they shall not be eternally miserable in hell, as they are threatened in the word of God.

It is evident that they flatter themselves with hopes that they shall escape punishment, otherwise they would certainly be restrained, at least from many of those sins in which they now live: they would not proceed in wilful courses of sin. The transgression of the wicked convinced the psalmist, and is enough to convince every one, that there is no fear of God before his eyes, and that he flatters himself in his own eyes. It would be impossible for men allowedly to do those very things, which they know are threatened with everlasting destruction, if they did not some way encourage themselves they should nevertheless escape that destruction.

SECT. II.

Some of the various ways wherein sinners flatter themselves in their own eyes.

1. Some flatter themselves with a secret hope, that there is no such thing as *another world*. They hear a great deal of preaching, and a great deal of talk about hell, and the eternal judgment; but those things do not seem to them to be real. They never saw hell, nor the devils and damned spirits; and therefore are ready to say with themselves, How do I know that there is any such thing as another world? When the beasts die, there is an end of them, and how do I know but that it will be so with me? Perhaps all these things are nothing but the inventions of men, nothing but cunningly-devised fables.

Such thoughts are apt to rise in the minds of sinners, and the devil sets in to enforce them. Such thoughts are an ease to them; therefore they *wish* they were true, and that makes them the more ready to think that they *are* so. So that they are hardened in the way of sin, by infidelity and atheistical thoughts. [Psal. xiv. 1.](#) “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” [Psal. xciv. 6, 7.](#) “They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.”

2. Some flatter themselves that *death* is a great way off, and that they shall hereafter have much opportunity to seek salvation; and they think if they earnestly seek it, though it be a great while hence, they shall obtain. Although they see no reason to conclude that they shall live long, and perhaps they do not positively conclude that they shall; yet it doth not come into their minds that their lives are really uncertain, and that it is doubtful whether they will live another year. Such a thought as this doth not take any hold of them. And although they do not absolutely determine that they shall live to old age or to middle age, yet they secretly flatter themselves with such an imagination. They are disposed to believe so, they act upon it, and run the venture.

Men believe that things will be as they choose to have them, without reason, and sometimes without the appearance of reason, as is most apparent in this case. [Psal. xlix. 11.](#) “Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.”—The prepossession and desire of men to have it so, is the principal thing that makes them so believe. However, there are several other things which they use as arguments to flatter themselves. Perhaps they think, that since they are at present in health, or in youth, or that since they are useful men, do a great deal of good, and both themselves and others pray for the continuance of their lives; they are not likely to be removed by death very soon.—If they live many years in the world, they think it very probable that they shall be converted before they die; as they expect hereafter to have much more convenient opportunities to become converted, than they have now. And by some means or other they think they shall get through their work before they arrive at old age.

3. Some flatter themselves that they lead *moral* and orderly lives, and therefore think that they shall not be damned. They think with themselves that they live not in any vice, that they take care to wrong no man, are just and honest dealers; that they are not addicted to hard drinking, or to uncleanness, or to bad language; that they keep the sabbath strictly, are constant attendants on the public worship, and maintain the worship of God in their families. Therefore they hope that God will not cast them into hell. They see not why God should be so angry with them as that would imply, seeing they are so orderly and regular in their walk! They see not that they have done enough to anger him to that decree. And if they have angered him, they imagine they have also done a great deal to pacify him.

If they be not as yet converted, and it be necessary that they should experience any other conversion in order to their salvation, they hope that their orderly and strict lives will move God to give them converting grace. They hope that surely God will not see those that live as they do go to hell. Thus they flatter themselves, as those ([Luke xviii. 9.](#)) “that trusted in themselves that they were righteous.”

4. Some make the *advantages* under which they live an occasion of self-flattery. They flatter themselves, that they live in a place where the gospel is powerfully preached, and among a religious people, where many have been converted; and they think it will be much easier for them to be saved on that account. Thus they abuse the grace of God to their destruction; they do that which the Scriptures call *despising the riches of God’s goodness*; [Rom. ii. 4.](#) “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”

Some flatter themselves, that they are born of godly parents, who are dear to God, who have often and earnestly prayed for them, and hope that their prayers will be heard; and that encourages them to go on in the way of neglecting their souls. The Jews had great dependence upon this, that they were the children of Abraham; [John viii. 33.](#) they make their boast, “We be Abraham’s seed;” and [in verse 39.](#) “Abraham is our father.”

5. Some flatter themselves with their own *intentions*. They intend to give themselves liberty for a while longer, and *then* to reform. Though now they neglect their souls, and are going on in sin; yet they intend ere long to bestir themselves, to leave off their sins, and to set themselves to seek God. They hear that there is great encouragement for those who earnestly seek God, that they shall find him. So they intend to do; they propose to seek with a great deal of earnestness. They are told, that there are many who seek to enter the kingdom of heaven, who shall not be able; but they intend, not only to seek, but *to strive*. However, for the present they allow themselves in their ease, sloth, and pleasure, minding only earthly things.

Or if they should be seized with some mortal distemper, and should draw near to the grave, before the time which they lay out in their minds for reformation, they think how earnestly they would pray and cry to God for mercy; and as they hear God is a merciful God,

who taketh no delight in the death of sinners, they hence flatter themselves that they shall move God to have pity on them.

There are but few sinners, knowing themselves to be such, who have not intentions of future repentance and reformation; but few who do not flatter themselves, that they shall in good earnest seek God some time or other. Hell is full of *good intenders*, who never proved to be *true performers*: [Acts xxiv. 25](#). "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

6. There are some who flatter themselves, that they *do*, and have *done*, a great deal for their salvation, and therefore hope they shall obtain; when indeed they neither do what they ought to do, nor what they might do even in their present state of unregeneracy; nor are they in any likely way to be converted. They think they are striving, when they actually neglect many moral and some instituted duties; nor do they exert themselves as if it were for their lives; they are not *violent* for the kingdom of heaven.

There are doubtless many such; many are concerned, and are seeking, and do many things, and think that they are in a very fair way to obtain the kingdom of God; yet there is great danger that they will prove at last to be some of the foolish virgins, and be found without oil in their vessels.

7. Some hope by their strivings to obtain salvation *of themselves*. They have a secret imagination, that they shall, by degrees, work in themselves sorrow and repentance of sin, and love towards God and Jesus Christ. Their striving is not so much an earnest seeking to God, as a striving to do themselves that which is the work of God. Many who are now seeking have this imagination; they labour, read, pray, hear sermons, and go to private meetings, with the view of making themselves holy, and of working in themselves holy affections.

Many, who only project and design to turn to God hereafter, are apt to think that it is an easy thing to be converted; that it is a thing which will be in their own power at any time, when they shall earnestly set themselves to it.

8. Some sinners flatter themselves, that they are *already* converted. They sit down and rest in a false hope, persuading themselves that all their sins are pardoned; that God loves them; that they shall go to heaven when they die; and that they need trouble themselves no more: [Rev. iii. 17](#). "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Sinners very generally go on flattering themselves in some or other of these ways, till their punishment actually overtakes them. These are the baits by which Satan catches souls, and draws them into his snare. They are such self-flatteries as these that keep men from seeing their danger, and that make them go on securely, [Proverbs vii. 23](#). "as the bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

Those that flatter themselves with hopes of living a great while longer in the world, very commonly continue to do so till death comes. Death comes upon them when they expect it not; they look upon it as a great way off, when there is but a step between. They thought not of dying at that time, nor at any time near it. When they were young, they proposed to live a good while longer; and if they happen to live till middle age, they still maintain the same thought, that they are not yet near death; and so that thought goes along with them as long as they live, or till they are just about to die.

Men often have a dependence on their own righteousness, and as long as they live are never brought off from it. Multitudes uphold themselves with their own intentions, till all their prospects are dashed in pieces by death. They put off the work which they have to do till such a time; and when that comes, they put it off to another time; until death, which cannot be put off, overtakes them. There are many also that hold a false hope, a persuasion that they belong to God; and as long as they live, by all the marks and signs which are given of a true convert, they never will be persuaded to let go their hope, till it is rent from them by death.

Thus men commonly uphold themselves, and make themselves easy, till hell-fire makes them uneasy. Everlasting ruin comes upon them as a snare, and all their hopes are at once cut off, and turned into everlasting despair: [1 Thess. v. 3](#). “When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”



## SECT. III.

The subject applied.

1. Hence we learn one reason why there are but few saved, and why so many perish from under the gospel. All men know that they must die, and all that sit under the light of the gospel have been told many a time, that after this there is another world; that there are but two states in that other world—a state of eternal happiness, and a state of eternal misery—that there is but one way of escaping the misery and obtaining the blessedness of eternity, which is by obtaining an interest in Christ, through faith in him; and that this life is the only opportunity of obtaining an interest in Christ. Yet men are so much given to flatter themselves in those ways which we have mentioned, that there are but few that seasonably take care of their salvation. Indeed they cannot but be in some measure concerned about their souls; yet they flatter themselves with one thing or other, so that they are kept steadily and uninterruptedly going on in the broad way to destruction.

2. Hence we learn the reason why awakening truths of Scripture, and awakening sermons, make no more impression upon men. It is in itself a wonderful and surprising thing, that God's denunciations of eternal misery, and threatenings of casting sinners into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever and ever, do not affect them, do not startle them. The truth is, they *flatter* themselves, by such means as we have mentioned, that this dreadful misery is not for them; that they shall escape it, though multitudes of others are involved in it. They take not these threatenings to themselves; they seem to think that they do not belong to them.

How many are there, who, for all the awakening sermons they have heard, are yet secure in sin! and who, although they are sensible that they are in a Christless condition, and are still going on in sin, yet intend to go to heaven, and expect that by some means or other they shall arrive there. They are often told, that God is very angry with them: yet they think God is a very merciful God, and they shall be able to pacify him. If they be told how uncertain life is, *that* doth not awaken them, because they flatter themselves with long life. If they be told how dangerous it is to delay the business of religion, they promise themselves, that they will hereafter engage in it with more earnestness than others, and so obtain the end, the salvation of their souls. Others, when they are told that many shall seek who shall not be able to obtain, think surely, that *they* having done so much for salvation, shall not be denied.

3. Let every sinner examine, whether he do not flatter himself in some of those ways which have been mentioned. What is it in your own minds which makes you think it is safe for you to delay turning to God? What is it that encourages you to run such a venture as you do, by delaying this necessary work? Is it that you hope there is no such state as heaven or hell, and have a suspicion that there is no God? Is it this that makes you secure? or is it that you are not much afraid but that you shall have opportunity enough a great while hence

to mind such things? Is it an intention of a future seeking at a more convenient season? and are you persuaded that God will hearken to you then, after you shall have so long turned a deaf ear to his commands and gracious invitations? Are you encouraged to commit sin, because you hope to repent of it? Are you encouraged by the mercy of God to be his enemies? and do you resolve still to provoke him to anger, because you think he is easily pacified?

Or do you think that your conversion is in your own power, and that you can turn to God when you please? Is it because you have been born of godly parents that you are so secure? or do you imagine that you are in a fair way to be converted? Do you think that what you have done in religion will engage God to pity you, and that he never can have the heart to condemn one who has lived in so orderly a manner? or do you think that you are indeed converted already? and doth that encourage you to take a liberty in sinning? Or are you secure, because you are so stupid as to think nothing about these things? Do you let these concerns wholly alone, and scarcely ever think at all how it will be with you after you are dead??Certainly it must be one or more of these things which keeps you in your security, and encourages you to go on in sin. Examine therefore, and see which of them it is.

4. Be persuaded to leave off thus flattering yourselves in your own eyes. You are here informed, that those who do as you do, commonly continue so doing till their punishment actually comes upon them. Thereby you may be convinced of the vanity of all such flatteries. Be afraid of that which you are sure is the devil's bait: "Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird." [Prov. i. 17.](#)

You are not only told in the Scriptures, that sinners are generally thus allured to hell, but your own reason may convince you that it is so. For doubtless other sinners have as much ground to hope an escape of punishment as you; and it is evident, that they generally do hope to escape. Men under the gospel almost universally think they shall not go to hell; if it were otherwise, they could have no peace or comfort in the world. Yet what multitudes have we reason to conclude go down from under the preaching of the gospel to the pit of destruction! Now, this is surely enough to convince any sober, prudent person of the folly of such flattery, and of the folly of every one that doth not immediately set about this great work with his might. If you could have access to the damned, you would hear many of them curse themselves, for thus flattering themselves while they lived in this world; and you would have the same doctrine preached to you by their wailings and yellings which is now delivered to you.

If your temptation to security be unbelief of the fundamental Doctrine of religion, such as the being of God, of another world, and an eternal judgment, you may consider, that though that makes you secure at present, yet it will not do always, it will not stand by when you come to die. The fool often in health saith, *There is no God*; but when he comes to die, he cannot rest in any such supposition. Then he is generally so much convinced in his own conscience, that there is a God, that he is in dreadful amazement for fear of his eternal wrath.

It is folly, therefore, to flatter yourselves with any supposition now, which you will not then be able to hold. If you depend on long life, consider how many who have depended on the same thing, and had as much reason to depend on it as you, have died within your remembrance.

Is it because you are outwardly of an orderly life and conversation, that you think you shall be saved? How unreasonable is it to suppose, that God should be so obliged by those actions, which he knows are not done from the least respect or regard to him, but wholly with a private view! Is it because you are under great advantages, that you are not much afraid but that you shall some time or other be converted, and therefore neglect yourselves and your spiritual interests? And were not the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum, under as great advantages as you, when Christ himself preached the gospel to them, almost continually, and wrought such a multitude of miracles among them? Yet he says, that it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for those cities.

Do you expect you shall be saved, however you neglect yourselves, because you were born of godly parents? Hear what Christ saith, [Matt. iii. 9](#). "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father." Do you flatter yourselves that you shall obtain mercy, though others do not, because you intend hereafter to seek it more earnestly than others? Yet you deceive yourselves, if you think that you intend better than many of those others, or better than many who are now in hell once intended.

If you think you are in a way of earnest seeking, consider whether or no you do not mind other things yet more? If you imagine that you have it in your own power to work yourselves up to repentance, consider, that you must assuredly give up that imagination, before you can have repentance wrought in you. If you think yourselves already converted, and that encourages you to give yourselves the greater liberty in sinning, this is a certain sign that you are not converted.

Wherefore abandon all these ways of flattering yourselves; no longer follow the devil's bait; and let nothing encourage you to go on in sin; but immediately and henceforth seek God with all your heart, and soul, and strength.

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## DISHONESTY ;

OR,

### THE SIN OF THEFT AND OF INJUSTICE. 219

EXOD. xx. 15.

Thou shalt not steal.

This is one of the ten commandments, which constitute a summary of man's duty, as revealed by God. God made many revelations to the children of Israel in the wilderness by Moses: but this made in the ten commandments is the chief. Most of those other revelations contained ceremonial or judicial laws; but this contains the moral law. The most of those other laws respected the Jewish nation; but here is a summary of laws binding on all mankind. Those were to last till Christ should come, and have set up the Christian church; these are of perpetual obligation, and last to the end of the world. God everywhere, by Moses and the prophets, manifests a far greater regard to the duties of these commands, than to any of the rites of the ceremonial law.

These commands were given at mount Sinai, before any of the precepts of the ceremonial or judicial laws. They were delivered by a great voice out of the midst of fire, which made all the people in the camp tremble, and afterwards were engraven on tables of stone, and laid up in the ark; the first table containing the four first commandments, which teach our duty to God; the second table containing the six last, which teach our duty to man. The sum of the duties of the first table is contained in that which Christ says is the first and great commandment of the law; [Matt. xxii. 37](#). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." The sum of what is required in the second table, is what Christ calls the second command, like unto the first; [verse 39](#). "The second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Of the commands of this second table of the law, the first, (which is the *fifth* of the ten,) refers to that *honour* which is due to our neighbour; the second respects his *life*; the third his *chastity*; the fourth his *estate*; the fifth his good *name*; the sixth and last respects his *possessions* and enjoyments in general. It is that command which respects our neighbour's *estate*, and which is the fourth command of the second table, and the eighth of the whole decalogue, on which I am now to insist: and here I shall make the command itself, as the words of it lie before us in the decalogue, my subject: and as the words of the commandment are in the form of a prohibition, forbidding a certain kind of sin; so I shall consider particularly what it is that this command forbids. The sin that is forbidden in this command is

called *stealing*; yet we cannot reasonably understand it only of that act, which in the more ordinary and strict sense of the word, is called stealing. But the iniquity which this command forbids, may be summarily expressed thus:—*An unjust usurping of our neighbour's property, without his consent.*

So much is doubtless comprehended in the text; yet this comprehends much more than is implied in the ordinary use of the word, *stealing*; which is only a secret taking of that which is another's from his possession, without either his consent or knowledge. But the ten commands are not to be limited to the strictest sense of the words, but are to be understood in such a latitude, as to include all things that are of that nature or kind. Hence Christ reproves the Pharisees' interpretation of the sixth command, [Matt. v. 21, 22.](#); and also their interpretation of the seventh command; see [verse 27, 28.](#); by which it appears that the commands are not to be understood as forbidding only these individual sins, which are expressly mentioned, in the strictest sense of the expressions; but all other things of the same nature or kind.—Therefore, what is forbidden in this command is all unjust usurpation of our neighbour's property. Here it may be observed, that an unjust usurpation of our neighbour's property is twofold; it may be, either by *withholding* what is our neighbour's, or, by *taking* it from him.

SECT. I.

The dishonesty of withholding what is our neighbour's.

There are many ways in which persons may unjustly usurp their neighbour's property, by withholding what is his due; but I shall particularize only two things.

1. The unfaithfulness of men in *not fulfilling their engagements*. Ordinarily when men promise anything to their neighbour, or enter into engagements by undertaking any business with which their neighbour intrusts them, their engagements invest their neighbour with a right to that which is engaged; so that if they withhold it, they usurp that which belongs to their neighbour. So, when men break their promises, because they find them to be convenient, and they cannot fulfill them without difficulty and trouble; or merely because they have altered their minds since they promised. They think they have not consulted their own interest in the promise which they have made, and that if they had considered the matter as much before they promised as they have since, they should not have promised! Therefore they take the liberty to set their own promises aside. Besides, sometimes persons violate this command, by neglecting to fulfill their engagements, through a careless, negligent spirit.

They violate this command, in withholding what belongs to their neighbour, when they are not faithful in any business which they have undertaken to do for their neighbour. If their neighbour have hired them to labour for him for a certain time, and they be not careful well to husband the time; if they be hired to a day's labour, and be not careful to improve the day, as they have reason to think that he who hired justly expected of them; or if they be hired to accomplish such a piece of work, and be not careful to do it well, do it not as if it were for themselves, or as they would have others do for them, when they in like manner betrust them with any business of theirs; or if they be intrusted with any particular affair, which they undertake, but use not that care, contrivance, and diligence, to manage it so as will be to the advantage of him who entrusts them, and as they would manage it, or would insist that it should be managed, if the affair was their own: in all these cases they unjustly withhold what belongs to their neighbour.

2. Another way in which men unjustly withhold what is their neighbour's, is *in neglecting to pay their debts*. Sometimes this happens, because they run so far into debt that they cannot reasonably hope to be able to pay their debts; and this they do, either through pride and affectation of living above their circumstances, or through a grasping, covetous disposition, or some other corrupt principle. Sometimes they neglect to pay their debts from carelessness of spirit about it, little concerning themselves whether they are paid or not, taking no care to go to their creditor, or to send to him; and if they see him from time to time, they say nothing about their debts. Sometimes they neglect to pay their debts, because it would put them to some inconvenience. The reason why they do it not, is not because they cannot do it, but because they cannot do it so conveniently as they desire; and so they rather choose

to put their creditor to inconvenience by being without what properly belongs to him, than to put themselves to inconvenience by being without what doth not belong to them, and what they have no right to detain. In any of these cases they unjustly usurp the property of their neighbour.

Sometimes persons have that by them with which they could pay their debts if they would; but they want to lay out their money for something else, to buy gay clothing for their children, or to advance their estates, or for some such end. They have other designs in hand, which must fail, if they pay their debts. When men thus withhold what is due, they unjustly usurp what is not their own. Sometimes they neglect to pay their debts, and their excuse for it is that their creditor doth not need it; that he hath a plentiful estate, and can well bear to lie out of his money. But if the creditor be ever so rich, that gives no right to the debtor to withhold from him that which belongs to him. If it be due, it ought to be paid: for that is the very notion of its being due. It is no more lawful to withhold from a man what is his due, without his consent, because he is rich and able to do without it, than it is lawful to steal from a man because he is rich, and able to bear the loss.

## SECT. II.

The dishonesty of unjustly taking a neighbour's property.

The principal ways of doing this seem to be these four, by negligence, by fraud, by violence, or by stealing strictly so called.

1. The first way of unjustly depriving our neighbour of that which is his, is by *negligence*, by carelessly neglecting that which is expected by neighbours, one of another, and is necessary to prevent our neighbour's suffering in his estate by us, or by anything that is ours: and in order that neighbours may live one by another, without suffering in their lawful interests, rights, and possessions, one by another.

For instance, when proper care is not taken by men to prevent their neighbour's suffering in the produce of his fields or enclosures, from their cattle, or other brute creatures; which may be either through negligence with regard to their creatures themselves, in keeping those that are unruly, and giving them their liberty, though they know that they are not fit to have their liberty, and are commonly wont to break into their neighbour's enclosures greatly to his damage; or through a neglect of that which is justly expected of them, to defend others' fields from suffering by the neighbourhood of their own. In such cases men are guilty of unjustly taking from their neighbour what is his property.

It is said in the law of Moses, [Exod. xxii. 5](#). "If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his vineyard, shall he make restitution." Now a man may be unjustly the cause of his neighbour's field or vineyard being eaten, either by putting in his beast, and so doing what he should not do; or by neglecting to do what he should do, to prevent his beast from getting into his field. What is said in the [144th Psalm, and two last verses](#), supposes that a people who carry themselves as becomes a people whose God is the Lord, will take thorough care that beasts do not break into their neighbour's enclosures: "That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be *no breaking in*, nor *going out*; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.<sup>220</sup>"

2. Taking away that which is our neighbour's by fraud, or by deceiving him, is another mode of usurping our neighbour's property. This is the case when men in their dealings take advantage of their neighbour's ignorance, or oversight, or mistake, to get something from him; or when they make their gains, by concealing the defects of what they sell, putting off bad for good, though this be not done by speaking falsely, but only by keeping silence: or when they take a higher price than what they sell is really worth, and more than they could get for it if the concealed defects were known: or when they sell that for good, which

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220 [Psalms 144:14](#)



indeed is not merchantable, which is condemned in [Amos viii. 6](#). “Yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat.”

If a man puts off something to another with defects that are concealed, knowing that the other receives it as good, and pays such a price for it, under a notion of its having no remarkable defect but what he sees, and takes the price which the buyer under that notion offers; the seller knows that he takes a price of the buyer for that which the buyer had not of him; for the buyer is deceived, and pays for those things which he finds wanting in what he buys. It is just the same thing, as if a man should take a payment that another offers him, through a mistake, for that which he never had of him, thinking that he had it of him, when he had it not.

So a man fraudulently takes away that which is his neighbour's, when he gets his money from him by falsely commending what he hath to sell, above what he knows to be the true quality of it; and attributes those good qualities to it which he knows it has not: or if he does not that, yet sets forth the good qualities in a degree beyond what he knows to be the true degree; or speaks of the defects and ill qualities of what he has to sell, as if they were much less than he knows they are: or on the contrary, when the buyer will cry down what he is about to buy, contrary to his real opinion of the value of it.—These things, however common they be in men's dealings one with another, are nothing short of iniquity, and *fraud*, and a great breach of this commandment, upon which we are discoursing. [Prov. xx. 14](#). “It is nought, it is nought, saith the buyer;” but when he is gone his way then he boasteth.”—Many other ways there are whereby men deceive one another in their trading, and whereby they fraudulently and unjustly take away that which is their neighbour's.

3. Another mode of unjustly invading and taking away our neighbour's property, is by *violence*. This violence may be done in different degrees.—Men may take away their neighbour's goods either by mere open violence, either making use of superior strength, forcibly taking away anything that is his; or by express or implicit threatenings forcing him to yield up what he has into their hands; as is done in open robbery and piracy. Or, by making use of some advantages which they have over their neighbour, in their dealings with him, constrain him to yield to their gaining unreasonably of him; as when they take advantage of their neighbour's poverty to extort unreasonably from him for those things that he is under a necessity of procuring for himself or family. This is an oppression against which God hath shown a great displeasure in his word. [Levit. xxv. 14](#). “And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour, ye shall not oppress one another.” [Prov. xxii. 22, 23](#). “Rob not the poor, because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate; for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.” And, [Amos iv. 1, 2](#). “Hear this word, ye kin of Bashan, that are in the mount of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, the Lord hath sworn in his holiness, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks.”

When the necessity of poor indigent people is the very thing whence others take occasion to raise the price of provisions, even above the market; this is such an oppression. There are many poor people whose families are in such necessity of bread, that they in their extremity will give almost any price for it, rather than go without it. Those who have to sell, though hereby they have an advantage in their hands, yet surely should not take the advantage to raise the price of provisions. We should doubtless think that we had just cause to complain, if we were in such necessity as they are, and were reduced to their straits, and were treated in this manner; and let us remember, that it is owing only to the distinguishing goodness of God to us, that we are not in their circumstances; and whatever our present circumstances are, yet we know not but that the time may still come when their case may be ours.

Men may oppress others, though they be not poor, if they will take advantage of any particular necessities of their neighbour, unreasonably to extort from him. The case may be so at particular seasons, that those who are not poor, may stand in particular and extraordinary need of what we have, or what we can do for them; so that it would be greatly to their disadvantage or loss to be without it. Now to take advantage of their urgent circumstances, to get from them an unreasonable price, is a violent dealing with our neighbours.

It is very unreasonable to say, such men are so rich, and get money so much more easily than I, that it is no hurt for me to take advantage when they are in special need, and make them give up, for work that I do for them, a great deal more than I would desire to ask of other men. Let such consider, whether, if they should by any means hereafter get forward in the world, and come to have plentiful estates, they would like that persons should act upon such principles towards them. That men are rich, gives us no more right to take away from them what is theirs in this way, than it does to steal from them because they come easily by their property, and can do without it better than we.

Again, another thing that is a kind of violent taking from our neighbour what is his, is taking the advantage of the law to gain from others, when their cause in honesty and conscience is just and good. The circumstances of mankind, their rights, possessions, and dealings one with another, are so various, that it is impossible that any body of human laws should be contrived to suit all possible cases and circumstances. Hence the best laws may be abused and perverted to purposes contrary to the general design of laws, which is to maintain the rights and secure the properties of mankind. Human laws have a regard due to them, but always in subordination to the higher laws of God and nature. Therefore when it so happens, that we have an advantage by the law, to gain what the laws of moral honesty allow not, it is an oppression and violence to take the advantage. That human laws allow it, will not excuse us before God, the Judge of the world, who will judge us another day by his own laws and not by the laws of the commonwealth.

4. The fourth way of unjustly taking from our neighbour that which is his, is *stealing* so called. All unjust ways of taking away, or invading, or usurping what is our neighbour's, are

called stealing in the most extensive use of the word, and all is included in the expression in this command. Yet the word stealing, as it is more commonly used, is not of so great extent, and intends not all unjust invasion of our neighbour's property, but only a particular kind of unjust taking. So that in common speech when we speak of fraudulent dealings, of extortion, unfaithfulness in our trust, and of stealing, we understand different sins by these expressions, though they are an usurpation of what is our neighbour's.

Stealing, strictly so called, may be thus defined, *a designed taking of our neighbour's goods from him, without his consent or knowledge*. It is not merely a withholding of what is our neighbour's, but a taking away: and therein it differs from unfaithfulness in our undertakings and betrustedments, and also from negligence in the payment of debts. It is a designed or wilful depriving of our neighbour of what is his, and so differs from wronging our neighbour in his estate through carelessness or negligence. It is a taking of our neighbour's goods without his knowledge; it is a private, clandestine taking away, and so differs from robbery by open violence.

So also it differs from extortion: for in that the person knows what is taken from him. The aim of him that takes is no other than that he should know it; for he makes use of other means than his ignorance, to obtain what is his neighbour's, *viz.* violence to constrain him to give it up. So also it differs from fraudulent dealing or trading. For though in fraudulent dealing the lawful possessor doth not understand the ways and means, by which he parts with his goods, and by which his neighbour becomes possessed of them; yet he knows the fact; the deceiver designedly conceals the manner only. But in stealing, strictly so called, he that takes, intends not that it shall be known that he takes. It also differs from extortion and fraudulent dealing, in that it is wholly without the consent of the owner. For in extortion, though there be no free consent; yet the consent of the owner is in some sort gained, though by oppressive means. So in fraudulent dealing consent is in some sort obtained, though it be by deceit. But in stealing no kind of consent is obtained.

A person may steal from another, yet not take his goods without the knowledge of the owner; because he may know of it accidentally, he may see what is done, unawares to the thief. Therefore I have denied stealing, a designed taking without the consent or knowledge of the owner. If it be accidentally known, yet it is not known in the design and intention of the thief. The thief is so far at least private in it, that he gives no notice to the owner at the time. It must be also without the consent of the owner. A person may take without the knowledge of the owner, and yet not take without his consent. The owner may not know of his taking at the time, or of his taking any particular things: yet there may be his implicit consent. There may have been a general consent, if not expressed, yet implied. The circumstances of the affair may be such, that his consent may well be presumed upon, either from an established custom, allowed by all, or from the nature of the case; the thing being of such a nature, that it may well be presumed that none would refuse their consent; as in the case

of a person's accidentally passing through his neighbour's vineyard in Israel, and eating his fill of grapes: or from the circumstances of the persons, as is the case, in many instances, of the freedom which near neighbours and intimate friends often take, and of that boldness which they use with respect to each other's goods.

In all *such cases*, though the owner does not particularly know what is done, yet he that takes, does it not with any contrived designed concealment. And though there is no express, particular consent, yet there is a consent either implied, or justly presumed upon; and he that takes, doth not designedly do it without consent.

It may happen in some cases, that one may take the goods of another both without his knowledge and consent, either explicit or implicit, but through mistake; yet he may not be guilty of stealing. Therefore the *design* of him who takes must come into consideration. When he designedly takes away that which is his neighbour's, without his consent or knowledge, then he steals. So that if it should happen, that he has both his consent and knowledge, without his design, he steals. And if it so happen that he takes without either his neighbour's consent or knowledge, and yet without his own design, he steals not. I desire therefore that this, which I take to be the true definition of theft or stealing, may be borne in mind, *viz.* a designed taking of our neighbour's goods, without his consent or knowledge; because it is needful to clear up many things which I have yet to say on this subject.

## SECT. III.

Dishonest excuses.

Here I shall particularly take notice of some things, by which persons may be ready to excuse themselves, in privately taking their neighbour's goods, which however cannot be a just excuse for it, nor will they make such a taking to be stealing.

1. That the person whose goods are privately taken, *owes* or is in debt to him that takes them. Some may be ready to say that they do not take that which is their neighbour's, they take that which is their own, because as much is due to them, their neighbour owes them as much, and unjustly detains it, and they know not whether ever they shall get their due of him. Their neighbour will not do them right, and therefore they must right themselves.

But such pleas as these will not justify a man in going in a private and clandestine manner to take away anything of his neighbour's from his possession, without his consent or knowledge; his doing this is properly stealing. For though something of his neighbour's, which is as valuable as what he takes, may be due to him; that doth not give him such a right to his neighbour's goods, that he may take anything that is his, according to his own pleasure, and at what time and in what manner he pleases. That his neighbour is in debt to him, doth not give him a right to take it upon himself to be his own judge, so that he may judge for himself, which of his neighbour's goods shall be taken from him to discharge the debt; and that he may act merely according to his own private judgment and pleasure in such a case, without so much as acquainting his neighbour with the affair.

In order to warrant such a proceeding as this, everything that his neighbour has, must be his. A man may not take indifferently what he pleases out of a number of goods, without the consent or knowledge of any other person, unless all is his own, to be disposed of as he pleases. Such a way of using goods according to our own pleasure, taking what we will, and at what time we will, can be warranted by nothing but a dominion over the whole. And though he who is in debt may be guilty of great injustice in detaining what is due to another; yet it doth not thence follow, but that he that takes from him, may also be guilty of great injustice towards him. The course he takes to right himself may be very irregular and unreasonable; and such a course, that if universally allowed and pursued in such cases, would throw human society into confusion.

When men obtain a property in any of the professions of this life, they are at the same time also invested with a right to retain a possession of them, till they are deprived of them in some fair and regular proceeding. Every man has a right to hold his estate, and keep possession of his properties, so that no other can lawfully use them as his own, until he either parts with them of his own accord, or until it be taken from him according to some established rule, in a way of open justice. Therefore he who, under pretence of having just

demands upon his neighbour, privately takes his goods without his consent, takes them unjustly, and is guilty of stealing.

2. Much less will it make such a private taking not to be stealing, that he who takes, has, in way of kindness or gift, done for the person from whom he takes, as much as is equivalent to the *value* of what he takes. If a man do his neighbour some considerable kindness, whether in labour, or in something that he gives him, what he does or gives is supposed to be done voluntarily, and he is not to make his neighbour debtor for it; and therefore if anything be privately taken away, upon any such consideration, it is gross stealing.

For instance, when any person needs to have any services done for him, where a considerable number of hands are necessary; it is common for the neighbourhood to meet together and join in helping their neighbour, and frequently some provision is made for their entertainment. If any person who hath assisted on such an occasion, and is a partaker at such an entertainment, shall think within himself, the service I have done is worth a great deal more than what I shall eat and drink here, and therefore shall take liberty privately to take of the provision set before him, to carry away with him, purposely concealing the matter from him who hath entertained him, this is gross stealing; and it is a very ridiculous plea which they make to excuse so unmanly and vile an act.

Persons in such cases may say to themselves, that the provision is made for them, and set before them; that it is a time wherein considerable liberty is given, and they think, seeing they have done so much for their host, they may take something more than they eat and drink there. But then let them be open in it; let them acquaint those with it who make the entertainment; and let it not be done in any wise, in a secret, clandestine manner, with the least design or attempt to avoid their notice: on the contrary, let care be taken to give them notice and obtain their consent.

When persons do such things in a private manner, they condemn themselves by their own act; their doings; what they do secretly, shows that they are conscious to themselves, that they go beyond what it is expected they should do, and do what would not be allowed, if it were known. Such an act, however light they may make of it, is abominable theft, and what any person of religion or any sense of the dignity of their own nature, would to the greatest degree abhor and detest.

3. It is not sufficient to make a private taking without consent not to be stealing, that it is but a small matter that is taken. If the thing be of little value, yet if it be worth a purposed concealing from the owner, the value is great enough to render the taking of it proper theft. If it be pretended that the thing is of so small consequence, that it is not worth asking for; then surely it is not worth a purposed concealing from the owner, when it is taken. He who, under this pretence, conceals his taking, in the very act contradicts his own pretence; for his action shows that he apprehends, or at least suspects, that, as small a matter as it is, the

owner would not like the taking of it, if he knew it; otherwise the taker would not desire to conceal it.

The owner of the goods, and not other people, is the proper judge, whether what he owns be of such a value, that it is worth his while to keep it, and to refuse his consent to the taking of it from him. He who possesses, and not he who takes away, has a right to judge of what consequence his possessions are to him. He has a right to set what value he pleases on them, and to treat them according to that value. Besides, merely that a thing is of small value, cannot give a right to others, purposely and designedly to take it away, without the knowledge or consent of the owner. Because if this only gives a right, then all have a right to take things of small value; and at this rate a great number of persons, each of them taking from a man that which is of small value, might take away all he has.

Therefore, it will not justify persons, in purposely taking such things as fruit from the trees, or gardens, or fields of their neighbours, without their knowledge or consent, that the things which they take are things of small value: nor is that sufficient to render such an act not an act of theft properly so called. This shows also that the smallness of the value of what is privately taken at feasts and entertainments, doth not render the taking of such things not stealing.

The small value of a thing may in some cases justify an occasional taking of things, so far as we may from thence, and from what is generally allowed, reasonably presume that the owner gives his consent. But if that be the case, and persons really take, as supposing that the owner consents to such occasional taking, then he that takes will not at all endeavour to do what he does secretly, nor in any measure to avoid notice. But merely the smallness of the value of a thing, can never justify a secret taking of what is another's.

SECT. IV.

The subject applied—The dishonest warned.

The first use I would make of this doctrine, is to warn against all injustice and dishonesty, as to what appertains to our neighbour's temporal goods or possessions. Let me warn all to avoid all ways of unjustly invading or usurping what is their neighbour's, and let me press that exhortation of the apostle, [Rom. xii. 17.](#) "Provide things honest in the sight of all men;" which implies, that those things which we provide for ourselves, and use as our own, should be such as we come honestly by; and especially that we should avoid all clandestine or *underhand* ways of obtaining any thing that is our neighbour's, either by fraudulent dealing, or by that taking without our neighbour's knowledge and consent, of which we have been speaking.

I warn you to beware of dishonesty in withholding what is your neighbour's, either by unfaithfulness to your trust in any business which you undertake, or by withholding your neighbour's just and honest dues. Consider that saying of the apostle, [Rom. xiii. 8.](#) "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Be also warned against wronging your neighbour or injuring him in his enclosures, or in any of his just rights and properties, through careless neglect of what is reasonably expected by neighbours one of another, in order that they may live one by another without mutual injury. Let all beware that they bring not guilt on their souls in the sight of God, by taking an advantage to oppress any person. Especially beware of taking advantage of others' poverty to extort from them: for God will defend their cause, and you will be no gainers by such oppression.

Beware also of all injustice by deceitful and fraudulent dealing. You doubtless meet with abundance of temptation to fraud, and have need to keep a strong guard upon yourselves. There are many temptations to falsehood or trading, both about what you would buy and what you have to sell. There are, in buying, temptations to do as in [Prov. xx. 14.](#) "It is nought, it is nought, saith the buyer." There are many temptations to take indirect courses, to blind those with whom you deal, about the qualities of what you have to sell, to diminish the defects of your commodities, or to conceal them, and to put off things for good, which are bad. And there are doubtless many other ways that men meet with temptations to deceive others, which your own experience will better suggest to you than I.

But here I shall take occasion to speak of a particular kind of fraud, which is very aggravated, and is rather a defrauding of God than man. What I mean is, *the giving of that which is bad for good in public contributions.* Though it be matter of great shame and lamentation that it should be so, yet it is to be feared, from what has sometimes been observed, that there are some who, when there is a public contribution to be made for the poor, or some other pious and charitable use, sometimes take that opportunity *to put off their bad money.* That which they find, or think, their neighbours will refuse to take at their hands, because they



will have opportunity to see what is offered them, and to observe the badness of it, even *that* they therefore take opportunity to put off to God.

Hereby they endeavour to save their credit; for they apprehend that they shall be concealed. They appear with others to go to the contribution, as it is not known, but that they put in that which is good. But they cheat the church of God, and defraud the expectations of the poor: or rather, they lie to God: for those who receive what is given, stand as Christ's receivers, and not as acting for themselves in this matter.

They that do thus, do that which is very much of the same nature with that sin, against

which God denounces that dreadful curse in [Mal. i. 14](#). "Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen." That hath in his flock a male, ewe, that has in his flock that which is good and fit to be offered to God: for it was the male of the flock principally that was appointed, in the law of Moses, to be offered in sacrifice. He has in his flock that which is good, but he vows and sacrifices to the Lord "the torn, the lame, and the sick," as it is said in the foregoing verse; ye said also, "Behold what a weariness is it, and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hands, saith the Lord?"<sup>221</sup> »

Contributions in the Christian church come in the room of sacrifices in the Jewish church: mercy comes in the room of sacrifice. And what is offered in the way of mercy is as much offered to God, as the sacrifices of old were. For what is done to the poor is done to Christ, and he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; [Prov. xix. 17](#). The Jews that offered the sick and lame of the flock, knew that if they had offered it to their governor, and had attempted to put it off, as part of the tribute or public taxes due to their earthly rulers, it would not be accepted, and therefore they were willing to put it off to God. "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of hosts?"<sup>222</sup> »

So those persons who purposely put bad money into contributions, know that what they put in would not be accepted if they should offer to pay their public taxes. Yea, they know that their *neighbours* would not accept it at their hands; and therefore they are willing to save themselves, by putting it off to God.

This practice has also very much of the nature of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira. What they offered was by way of contribution for charitable uses. The brethren sold what they

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221 [Mal. i. 13](#).

222 [Mal. i. 8](#).

had, and brought it into a common stock, and put all under the care of deacons, that the poor might every one be supplied. Ananias and Sapphira brought a part of their possessions, and put it into the common stock; and their sin was, that they put it in for more than it really was. It was but a part of what they had, and they put it in, and would have it accepted, as if it had been all. So those among us, of whom I am speaking, put off what they put into the charitable stock, for more than it is. For they put it in, under the notion that it is something of some value; they intend it shall be so taken by the church that sees them go to the contribution, when indeed they put in nothing at all.

Ananias and Sapphira were charged with lying to God, and doing an act of fraud towards God himself, in what they did: [Acts v. 4](#). “Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” So those who knowingly put bad money for good into a contribution for a charitable use, as much as in them lies commit an act of fraud and deceit towards God. For the deacons who receive what is contributed, receive it not in their own names, but as Christ’s receivers. I hope these things may be sufficient to deter every reader from ever daring to do such a thing for the future.

Again, another thing I would warn you against, is, stealing, properly and strictly so called; or designedly taking away any of your neighbour’s goods without his consent or knowledge. And especially I would now take occasion to warn against a practice which is very common in the country, particularly among children and young people; and that is, stealing fruit from their neighbour’s trees or enclosures. There is a licentious liberty taken by many children and young people, in making bold with their neighbour’s fruit; and it is to be feared, that they are too much countenanced in it by their parents and many elder people.

I am sensible, that the great thing which is pleaded, and made very much the ground of this liberty which is taken and so much tolerated, is a very abusive and unreasonable construction and application of that text of Scripture in [Deut. xxiii. 24](#). “When thou comest into thy neighbour’s vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill. But thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.” Because this text seems to be so much mistaken and misimproved, I shall therefore endeavour particularly to state the matter of persons taking their neighbour’s fruit, and to set it in a just and clear light as concerning this text.

It was to eat their fill of grapes when they *occasionally* came into or passed through their neighbour’s vineyard, and not that they should go thither on *purpose* to eat grapes. This is manifest by the manner of expression; “When thou comest into thy neighbour’s vineyard, thou mayest eat; <sup>223</sup>” i.e., when thou art come thither on some other occasion. If God had meant to give them leave to come thither on purpose, for no other end, it would not have

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223 [Deut. xxiii. 24](#)

been expressed so: but rather thus, *Thou mayest come* into thy neighbour's vineyard, and eat grapes thy fill.—Such were the circumstances of that people, and vineyards among them were so common, that there was no danger that this liberty would be attended with ill consequence. It is manifest throughout the history of Israel, that vineyards among them were so common that the people in general had them. Every husbandman among them was a vine-dresser; and a great part of the business of a husbandman among them, consisted in dressing and taking care of his vineyards. Grapes seem to have been the most common sort of fruit that they had. Besides, there was no liberty given for persons to go on purpose to a vineyard to eat the fruit of it. So that there was no danger of neighbours suffering one by another, by any such liberty.—The liberty did not tend to any such consequence, as the flocking of a great number to eat grapes, whereby the fruit of the vineyard might be much diminished.

Such were the circumstances of the case, that the consent of the owners of vineyards in general might well be presumed upon, though no such express liberty had been given. You may remember that in the definition of stealing, I observed, that explicit consent is not always necessary; because the case may be so circumstanced, that consent may be well presumed on. And the reason why consent might well be presumed on in the case of eating grapes, of which we are now speaking, is, that there could be no sensible injury, nor any danger of any ill consequences, by which a man would sensibly suffer in the benefit of his vineyard. Hence it is the more easy to determine, what would and what would not be justified by this text, among us. Suppose a particular person among us had a vineyard of the same kind with those which the children of Israel had, it would not justify others in using the same liberty when occasionally passing through it; because it would be a rare thing, and the rarity and scarcity of the fruit would render it of much greater value. Besides, if one man were distinguished by such a possession, to allow of such a liberty would have a much greater tendency to ill consequences, than if they were common, as they were in the land of Canaan. There would be danger of many persons falsely pretending, and making occasions, to pass through the vineyard, for the sake of such rare fruit.

Nor would it be a parallel case, if men in general among us had each of them a *few* vines. That would be a very different thing from persons in general having large vineyards. Nor would this text, in such a case, warrant men's eating their fill of grapes when occasionally passing by.—And though all in general had vineyards, as they had in the land of Canaan, this text would not justify men in going into their neighbour's vineyard on purpose to eat the fruit. No such liberty is given in the text. If there had been such liberty, it might have been of ill consequence. For the sake of saving their own grapes, men might make a practice of going and sending their children into their neighbour's vineyards, to eat their fill from time to time.

But the liberty given in this text to the children of Israel, seems to be very parallel with the liberty taken among us, to take up an apple or two and eat, as we are occasionally passing through a neighbour's orchard; which, as our circumstances are, we may do, and justly presume that we have the owner's consent. This is a liberty that we take, and find no ill consequences. It was very much so with vineyards in the land of Canaan, as it is with orchards among us. Apples in some countries are a rare fruit; and there it would by no means be warrantable for persons to take the same liberty when occasionally passing by their neighbour's apple-tree, which we warrantably take here, when going through a neighbour's orchard.

The consideration of these things will easily show the great abuse that is made of this text, when it is brought to justify such a resorting of children and others to their neighbour's fruit-trees, as is sometimes, on purpose to take and eat the fruit. Indeed this practice is not only not justified by the law of Moses, but it is in itself unreasonable, and contrary to the law of nature. The consequences of it are pernicious, so that a man can have no dependence on enjoying the fruit of his labour, or the benefit of his property in those things, which possibly he may very much value. He can have no assurance but that he shall be mainly deprived of what he has, and that others will not have the principal benefit of it; and so that his end in planting and cultivating that from which he expected those fruits of the earth, which God hath given for the use, comfort, and delight of mankind, will not be in the main frustrated.

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## SECT. V.

An exhortation to honesty.

Under this use, I shall confine myself to two particulars, many other things having been already spoken to.

1. I shall hence take occasion to exhort *parents* to restrain their children from stealing, and particularly from being guilty of theft in stealing the fruits of their neighbour's trees or fields. Christian parents are obliged to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But how much otherwise do they act, who bring them up in theft! And those parents are guilty of this, who—though they do not directly teach them to steal, by example and setting them about it, yet—*tolerate* them in it.

Parents should take effectual care, not only to instruct their children better, and to warn them against any such thievish practices, but also thoroughly to restrain them. Children who practise stealing, make themselves vile. Stealing, by the common consent of mankind, is a very vile practice; therefore those parents that will not take thorough care to restrain their children from such a practice, will be guilty of the same sin which God so highly resented, and awfully punished, in *Eli*, of which we read, [1 Sam. iii. 13](#). “For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.”

2. I exhort those who are conscious in themselves that they have heretofore wronged their neighbour to make *restitution*. This is a duty the obligation to which is exceedingly plain. If a person was wronged in *taking* away anything that was his, certainly he is wronged also in *detaining* it; and all the while that a person, who has been guilty of wronging his neighbour, neglects to make restitution, he lives in that wrong. He not only lives impenitent as to that first wrong of which he was guilty, but he *continually* wrongs his neighbour. A man who hath gotten anything from another wrongfully, *goes on* to wrong him every day that he neglects to restore it, when he has opportunity to do it. The person injured did not only suffer wrong from the other when his goods were first taken from him, but he suffers new injustice from him all the while they are unjustly kept from him.

Therefore I counsel you who are conscious that you have heretofore, wronged your neighbour, either by fraud, or oppression, or unfaithfulness, or stealing, whether lately or formerly, though it may have been a great while ago, speedily to go and make restitution for all the wrong your neighbour has suffered at your hands. That it was done long ago, doth not quit you from obligation to restore. This is a duty with which you must comply; you cannot be acquitted without it. As long as you neglect it, it will be unreasonable in you to expect any forgiveness of God. For what ground can you have to think that God will pardon you, as long as you wilfully continue in the same wrong, and wrong the same man still every day, by detaining from him that which is his? You in your prayers ask of God,

that he would forgive all your sins; but your very prayers are mockery, if you still wilfully continue in those sins.—Indeed, if you go and confess your faults to your neighbour, and he will freely acquit you from making restitution, you will be acquitted from the obligation; for in so doing, your neighbour gives you what before was his. But otherwise you cannot be acquitted.

I would leave this advice with all, for direction in their behaviour on their death-beds. Indeed you should not by any means put it off till you come to die; and you will run the most fearful risk in so doing. But if you will not do it now, while you are in health, I will leave it with you to remember, when you shall come to lie on your deathbeds. Doubtless, then if you have the use of your reason, you will be concerned for the salvation of your poor souls. And let this be one thing then remembered, as absolutely necessary in order to your salvation, that before you die, you must make restitution for whatever wrong you shall have done any of your neighbours; or at least leave orders that such restitution be made; otherwise you will, as it were, go out of the world, and go before your great Judge, with stolen goods in your hands. And certainly it will not be very comfortable or safe, to bring them into his infinitely holy and dreadful presence, when he sits on his throne of judgment, with his eyes as a flame of fire, being more pure than to look on iniquity; when he is about to sentence you to your everlasting unalterable state.

Everyone here present, who has been guilty of wronging his neighbour, and has not made restitution, must die. Let all such therefore remember this counsel now given them, on the day when death shall approach, if they shall be so foolish as to neglect it till that time.

TEMPTATION AND DELIVERANCE;

OR,

JOSEPH'S GREAT TEMPTATION AND GRACIOUS DELIVERANCE. 224

GENESIS xxxix. 12.

And he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

We have here, and in the context, an account of that remarkable behaviour of Joseph in the house of Potiphar, which was the occasion both of his great affliction, and also of his high advancement and prosperity in the land of Egypt.

We read in the beginning of the chapter, how Joseph, after he had been so cruelly treated by his brethren, and sold into Egypt for a slave, was advanced in the house of Potiphar, who had bought him. Joseph was one that feared God, and therefore God was with him; and so influenced the heart of Potiphar his master, that instead of keeping him as a mere slave, to which purpose he was sold, he made him his steward and overseer over his house, and all

that he had was put into his hands; in so much, that we are told, [ver. 6.](#) “that he left all that he had in his hand; and he knew not ought that he had, save the bread which he did eat.”? While Joseph was in these prosperous circumstances, he met with a great temptation in his master's house. We are told that, he being a goodly person and well favoured, his mistress cast her eyes upon and lusted after him, and used all her art to tempt him to commit uncleanness with her.

Concerning this temptation, and his behaviour under it, many things are worthy to be noted. Particularly

We may observe, how *great* the temptation was, that he was under. It is to be considered, that Joseph was now in his *youth*; a season of life, when persons are most liable to be overcome by temptations of this nature. And he was in a state of unexpected *prosperity* in Potiphar's house; which has a tendency to lift persons up, especially young ones, whereby commonly they more easily fall before temptations.

And then, the *superiority* of the person that laid the temptation before him, rendered it much the greater. She was his mistress, and he a servant under her. And the *manner* of her tempting him. She did not only carry herself so towards Joseph, as to give him cause to *suspect* that he might be admitted to such criminal converse with her; but she directly *proposed* it to him; plainly manifesting her disposition to it. So that here was no such thing as suspicion of her unwillingness to deter him, but a manifestation of her desire to entice him



to it. Yea, she appeared greatly engaged in the matter. And there was not only her desire manifested to entice him, but her authority over him to enforce the temptation. She was his mistress, and he might well imagine, that if he utterly refused a compliance, he should incur her displeasure; and she, being his master's wife, had power to do much to his disadvantage, and to render his circumstances more uncomfortable in the family.

And the temptation was the greater, in that she did not only tempt him once, but frequently, *day by day*, [verse 10](#). And at last became more violent with him. She caught him by his garment, saying, *Lie with me*.

His *behaviour* was very remarkable under these temptations. He absolutely refused any compliance with them: he made no reply that manifested as though the temptation had gained at all upon him; so much as to hesitate about it, or at all deliberate upon it. He complied in no *degree*, either to the gross act she proposed, or any thing *tending* towards it, or that should at all be gratifying to her wicked inclination. And he persisted resolute and unshaken under her continual solicitations, [ver. 10](#). "And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her." He, to his utmost, avoided so much as being where she was. And the motives and principles, from which he acted, manifested by his reply to her solicitations, are remarkable.—He first sets before her, how injuriously he should act against his master, if he should comply with her proposal:<sup>225</sup> "Behold, my master—hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, because thou are his wife." But he then proceeded to inform her of that, which, above all things, deterred him from a compliance, *viz.* that it would be great wickedness, and sin against God.—<sup>226</sup> "How shall I do this, and sin against God?" He would not do any such thing, as he would not injure his master; but that which influenced more than all on this occasion, was the fear of sinning against God. On this account he persisted in his resolution to the last.

In the text we have an account of his behaviour under the last and greatest temptation that he had from her. This temptation was great, as it was at a time when there was nobody in the house but he and his mistress, [ver. 11](#). there was an opportunity to commit the fact with the greatest secrecy. And at this time it seems that she was more violent than ever before. She caught him by the garment, &c. She laid hold on him, as though she were resolute to attain her purpose of him.

Under these circumstances he not only refused her, but fled from her, as he would have done from one that was going to assassinate him; he escaped, as for his life. He not only would not be guilty of such a fact, but neither would he by any means be in the house with her, where he should be in the way of her temptation.—This behaviour of Joseph is doubtless

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225 [Gen. xxxix. 8, 9.](#)

226 [Gen. xxxix. 9.](#)



recorded for the instruction of all. Therefore from the words I shall observe, that it is our duty, not only to avoid those things that are themselves sinful, but also, as far as may be, those things that lead and expose to sin.

SECT. I.

Why we should avoid what tends to sin.

Thus did Joseph: he not only refused actually to commit uncleanness with his mistress, who enticed him; but refused to be there, where he should be in the way of temptation, [ver. 10](#). He refused to lie by her, or be with her. And in the text we are told, “he fled and got him out;” would by no means be in her company. Though it was no sin in itself, for Joseph to be in the house where his mistress was; but under these circumstances it would expose him to sin. Joseph was sensible he had naturally a corrupt heart, that tended to betray him to sin; and therefore he would by no means be in the way of temptation; but with haste he fled, he ran from the dangerous place. Inasmuch as he was exposed to sin in that house, he fled out of it with as much haste as if it had been on fire; or full of enemies, who stood ready with drawn swords to stab him to the very heart. When she took him by the garment, he left his garment in her hands; he had rather lose his garment, than stay a moment there, where he was in such danger of losing his chastity.

I said, that persons should avoid things that expose to sin, *as far as may be*; because it is possible that persons may be *called* to expose themselves to temptation; and when it is so, they may hope for divine strength and protection under temptation.

It may be a man’s indispensable duty to undertake an office, or a work, attended with a great deal of temptation. Thus *ordinarily* a man ought not to run into the temptation of being persecuted for the true religion; lest the temptation should be too hard for him; but should avoid it, as much as may be: therefore Christ thus directs his disciples, [Matt. x. 23](#). “When ye be persecuted in one city, flee to another.” Yet, the case may be so, that a man may be called not to flee from persecution; but to run the venture of such a trial, trusting in God to uphold him under it. Ministers and magistrates may be obliged to continue with their people in such circumstances; as Nehemiah says, [Neh. vi. 11](#). “Should such a man as I flee?” So the apostles.—Yea, they may be called to go into the midst of it; to those places where they cannot reasonably expect but to meet with such temptations. So Paul went up to Jerusalem, when he knew beforehand, that *there bonds and affliction awaited him*, [Acts xx. 23](#).

So in some other cases, the necessity of affairs may call upon men to engage in some business that is peculiarly attended with temptations. But when it is so, they are indeed least exposed to sin; for they are always safest in the way of duty. [Prov. x. 9](#). “He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.” And though there be many things by which they may have extraordinary temptations, in the affairs they have undertaken, yet if they have a clear call, it is no presumption to hope for divine support and preservation in it.

But for persons needlessly to expose themselves to temptation, and to do those things that tend to sin, is unwarrantable, and contrary to that excellent example set before us. And

that we ought to avoid not only those things that are in themselves sinful, but also those things that lead and *expose* to sin, is manifest by the following arguments.

1. It is very evident that we ought to use our utmost endeavours to avoid sin; which is inconsistent with needlessly doing those things, that expose and lead to sin. And the greater any evil is, the greater care, and the more earnest endeavours, does it require to avoid it. Those evils that appear to us very great and dreadful, we use proportionably great care to avoid. And therefore the greatest evil of all, requires the greatest and utmost care to avoid it.

Sin is an infinite evil, because committed against an infinitely great and excellent Being, and so a violation of infinite obligation: therefore however great our care be to avoid sin, it cannot be more than proportionable to the evil we would avoid. Our care and endeavour cannot be infinite, as the evil of sin is infinite; but yet it ought to be to the utmost of our power; we ought to use every method that tends to the avoiding of sin. This is manifest to reason.—And not only so, but this is positively required of us in the word of God. [Josh. xxii. 5](#). “Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your soul.” [Deut. iv. 15, 16](#). “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves.” [Chap. xii. 30](#). “Take heed to thyself, that thou be not snared,” &c. [Luke xi. 36](#). “Take heed and beware of covetousness.” [1 Cor. x. 12](#). “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” [Deut. iv. 9](#). “Take heed to thyself, keep thy soul diligently.” These and many other texts of Scripture, plainly require of us the utmost possible diligence and caution to avoid sin.

But how can he be said to use the utmost possible diligence and caution to avoid sin, that voluntarily does those things which naturally expose and lead to sin? How can he be said with the utmost possible caution to avoid an enemy, that voluntarily lays himself in his way? How can he be said to use the utmost possible caution to preserve the life of his child, that suffers it to go on the edge of precipices or pits; or to play on the borders of a deep gulf; or to wander in a wood, that is haunted by beasts of prey?

2. It is evident that we ought to avoid things that expose and lead to sin; because a due sense of the evil of sin, and a just hatred of it, will necessarily have this effect upon us, to cause us so to do.—If we were duly sensible of the evil and dreadful nature of sin, we should have an exceeding dread of it upon our spirits. We should hate it worse than death, and should fear it worse than the devil himself; and dread it even as we dread damnation. But those things that men exceedingly dread, they naturally shun; and they avoid those things that they apprehend expose to them. As a child, that has been greatly terrified by the sight of any wild beast, will by no means be persuaded to go where it apprehends that it shall fall in its way.

As sin in its own nature is infinitely hateful, so in its natural tendency it is infinitely dreadful. It is the tendency of all sin, eternally to undo the soul. Every sin naturally carried hell in it! Therefore, all sin ought to be treated by us as we would treat a thing that is infinitely terrible. If any one sin, yea, the least sin, do not necessarily bring eternal ruin with it, this is owing to nothing but the free grace and mercy of God to us, and not to the nature and tendency of sin itself. But certainly, we ought not to take the less care to avoid sin, or all that tends to it, for the freeness and greatness of God's mercy to us, through which there is hope of pardon; for that would be indeed a most ungrateful and vile abuse of mercy. Were it made known to us, that if we ever voluntarily committed any particular act of sin, we should be damned without any remedy or escape, should we not exceedingly dread the commission of such? Should we not be very watchful and careful to stand at the greatest distance from that sin; and from every thing that might expose us to it; and that has any tendency to stir up our lusts, or to betray us to such an act of sin? Let us then consider, that though the next voluntary act of known sin shall not necessarily and unavoidably *issue* in certain damnation, yet it will certainly *deserve* it. We shall thereby really deserve to be cast off, without any remedy or hope; and it can only be owing to free grace, that it will not certainly and remedilessly be followed with such a punishment. And shall we be guilty of such a vile abuse of God's mercy to us, as to take encouragement from it, the more boldly to expose ourselves to sin?

3. It is evident that we ought not only to avoid sin, but things that expose and lead to sin; because this is the way we act in things that pertain to our temporal interest.—Men avoid not only those things that are themselves the hurt or ruin of their temporal interest, but also the things that tend or expose to it. Because they love their temporal lives, they will not only actually avoid killing themselves, but they are very careful to avoid those things that bring their lives into danger; though they do not certainly know but they may escape.

They are careful not to pass rivers and deep waters on rotten ice, though they do not certainly know that they shall fall through and be drowned. They will not only avoid those things that would be in themselves the ruin of their estates—as setting their own houses on fire, and burning them up with their substance; taking their money and throwing it into the sea, &c.—but they carefully avoid those things by which their estates are exposed. They have their eyes about them; are careful with whom they deal; are watchful, that they be not overreached in their bargains, and that they do not lay themselves open to knaves and fraudulent persons.

If a man be sick of a dangerous distemper, he is careful to avoid every thing that tends to increase the disorder; not only what he knows to be mortal, but other things that he fears may be prejudicial to him. Men are in this way wont to take care of their temporal interest. And therefore, if we are not as careful to avoid sin, as we are to avoid injury in our temporal interest, it will show a regardless disposition with respect to sin and duty; or that we do not

much care though we do sin against God. God's glory is surely of as much importance and concern as our temporal interest. Certainly we should be as careful not to be exposed to sin against the Majesty of heaven and earth, as men are wont to be of a few pounds; yea, the latter are but mere trifles, compared with the former.

4. We are wont to do thus by our dear earthly friends.—We not only are careful of those things wherein the destruction of their lives, or their hurt and calamity in any respect, directly consist; but are careful to avoid those things that but remotely tend to it. We are careful to prevent all occasions of their loss; and are watchful against that which tends, in any wise, to deprive them of their comfort or good name; and the reason is, because they are very dear to us. In this manner, men are wont to be careful of the good of their own children, and dread the approaches of any mischief that they apprehend they are, or may be, exposed to. And we should take it hard if our friends did not do thus by us.

And surely we ought to treat God as a dear friend: we ought to act towards him, as those that have a sincere love and unfeigned regard to him; and so ought to watch and be careful against all *occasions* of that which is contrary to his honour and glory. If we have not a temper and desire so to do, it will show that, whatever our pretences are, we are not God's sincere friends, and have no true love to him.—If we should be offended at any that have professed friendship to us, if they treated us in this manner, and were no more careful of our interest; surely God may justly be offended, that we are no more careful of his glory.

5. We would have God, in his providence towards us, not to order those things that tend to our hurt, or expose our interest; therefore certainly we ought to avoid those things that lead to sin against him.

We desire and love to have God's providence such towards us, as that our welfare may be well secured. No man loves to live exposed, uncertain and in dangerous circumstances. While he is so, he lives uncomfortably, in that he lives in continual fear. We desire that God would so order things concerning us, that we may be safe from fear of evil; and that no evil may come nigh our dwelling; and that because we dread calamity. So we do not love the appearance and approaches of it; and love to have it at a great distance from us. We desire to have God to be to us as a wall of fire round about us, to defend us; and that he would surround us as the mountains do the valleys, to guard us from every danger, or enemy; that so no evil may come nigh us.

Now this plainly shows, that we ought, in our behaviour towards God, to keep at a great distance from sin, and from all that exposes to it: as we desire God, in his providence to us, should keep calamity and misery at a great distance from us, and not to order those things that expose our welfare.

6. Seeing we are to pray we may not be led into temptation, certainly we ought not to run ourselves into it.—This is one request that Christ directs us to make to God in that form

of prayer, which he taught his disciples—“Lead us not into temptation.<sup>227</sup>” And how inconsistent shall we be with ourselves, if we pray to God, that we should not be led into temptation; and at the same time, we are not careful to avoid temptation; but bring ourselves into it, by doing those things that lead and expose to sin. What self-contradiction is it, for a man to pray to God that he may be kept from that, which he takes no care to avoid! By praying that we may be kept from temptation, we profess to God that being in temptation is a thing to be avoided; but by running into it we show that we choose the contrary, *viz.* not to avoid it.

7. The apostle directs us to avoid those things that are in themselves lawful, but tend to lead others into sin; surely then we should avoid what tends to lead ourselves into sin.—The apostle directs, [1 Cor. viii. 9](#). “Take heed lest—this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.” [Rom. xiv. 13](#). “That no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother’s way.” [Ver. 15](#). “But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat.” [Ver. 20, 21](#). “For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.”—Now if this rule of the apostle be agreeable to the word of Christ, as we must suppose, or expunge what he says out of the canon of the Scripture; then a like rule obliges more strongly in those things that tend to lead *ourselves* into sin.

8. There are many precepts of Scripture, which directly and positively imply, that we ought to avoid those things that tend to sin.

This very thing is commanded by Christ, [Matt. xxvi. 41](#). where he directs us to “watch lest we enter into temptation.” But certainly running ourselves into temptation, is the reverse of watching against it.—We are commanded to abstain from all *appearance* of evil; *i. e.* do by sin as a man does by a thing, the sight or appearance of which he hates; and therefore will avoid any thing that looks like it; and will not come near or in sight of it.

Again, Christ commanded to separate from us those things that are stumbling-blocks, or occasions of sin, however dear they are to us. [Matt. v. 29](#). “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.” [Ver. 30](#). “And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.” By the right hand offending us, is not meant its paining us; but the word in the original signifies, being a stumbling-block; if thy right hand prove a stumbling-block, or occasion to fall; *i.e.* an occasion to sin. Those things are called offences or stumbling-blocks in the New Testament, which are the occasions of falling into sin.—Yea, Christ tells us, we must avoid them, however dear they are to us, though as dear as our right hand or right eye. If there be any practice that naturally tends and exposes us to sin, we must have done with it;

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227 [Matt. vi. 13](#).

though we love it never so well, and are never so loth to part with it; though it be as contrary to our inclination, as to cut off our own right hand, or pluck out our own right eye; and that upon pain of damnation, for it is intimated that if we do not, we must go with two hands and two eyes into hell fire.

Again, God took great care to forbid the children of Israel those things that tended to lead them into sin. For this reason, he forbid them marrying strange wives, ([Deut. vii. 3, 4.](#)) “Neither shall thou make marriages with them,—for they will turn away thy sons from following me, that they may serve other gods.” For this reason they were commanded to destroy all those things, that the nations of Canaan had used in their idolatry; and if any were enticed over to idolatry, they were to be destroyed without mercy; though ever so near and dear friends. They were not only to be parted with, but stoned with stones; yea, they themselves were to fall upon them, and put them to death, though son or daughter, or their bosom friend. ([Deut. xiii. 6.](#) &c.) “If thy brother,—or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods,—thou shalt not consent unto him,—neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death.”

Again, The wise man warns us to avoid those things that tend and expose us to sin; especially the sin of uncleanness. [Prov. vi. 27.](#) “Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?—So, whosoever touches her, shall not be innocent.” This is the truth held forth; avoid those customs and practices that naturally tend to stir up lust. And there are many examples in Scripture, which have the force of precept; and recorded, as not only worthy, but demand our imitation. The conduct of Joseph is one; and that recorded of king David, is another. [Psal. xxxix. 1, 2.](#) “I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good”—even from good—that is, he was so watchful over his words, and kept at such a great distance from speaking what might in any way tend to sin; that he avoided, in certain circumstances, speaking what was in itself lawful; lest he should be betrayed into that which was sinful.

9. A prudent sense of our own weakness, and exposedness to yield to temptation, obliges us to avoid that which leads or exposes to sin.

Whoever knows himself, and is sensible how weak he is, and his constant exposedness to run into sin—how full of corruption his heart is, which, like fuel, is ready to catch fire, and bring destruction upon him—how much he has in him to incline him to sin, and how unable he is to stand of himself—who is sensible of this, and has any regard of his duty, will he not be very watchful against every thing that may lead and expose to sin? On this account Christ directed us, [Matt. xxvi. 41.](#) “To watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.” The

reason is added, the flesh is weak! He who, in confidence of his own strength, boldly runs the venture of sinning, by going into temptation, manifests great presumption, and a sottish insensibility of his own weakness. “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” [Prov. xxviii. 26.](#)

The wisest and strongest, and some of the most holy men in the world, have been overthrown by such means. So was David; so was Solomon,—his wives turned away his heart. If such persons so eminent for holiness were this way led into sin, surely it should be a warning to us. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”



SECT. II.

What things lead and expose to sin.

If any thing be made out clearly, from reason and the word of God, to be our duty, this would be enough with all Christians. Will a follower of Christ stand objecting and disputing against what is irrefragably proved and demonstrated to be his duty?

But some may be ready to inquire, How shall we know what things do lead and expose to sin? Let a man do what he will, he cannot avoid sinning, as long as he has such a corrupt heart within him. And there is nothing a man can do, but he may find some temptation in it. And though it be true, that a man ought to avoid those things that lead and expose to sin—and that those things which have a special tendency to expose men to sin, are what we ought to shun, as much as in us lies—yet how shall we judge and determine what things have a natural tendency to sin, or do especially lead to it?

I would answer in some particulars which are plain and easy; and which cannot be denied without the greatest absurdity.

1. That which borders on those sins, to which the lusts of men's hearts strongly incline them, is of this sort. Men come into the world with many strong and violent lusts in their hearts, and are exceeding prone of themselves to transgress; even in the safest circumstances in which they can be placed. And surely so much the nearer they are to that sin, to which they are naturally strongly inclined; so much the more are they exposed. If any of us who are parents should see our children near the brink of some deep pit, or close by the edge of the precipice of a high mountain; and not only so, but the ground upon which the child stood slippery, and steeply descending directly toward the precipice; should we not reckon a child exposed in such a case? should we not be in haste to remove the child from its very dangerous situation?

It was the manner among the Israelites, to build their houses with flat roofs, so that persons might walk on the tops of their houses. And therefore God took care to make it a law among them, that every man should have battlements upon the edges of their roofs; lest any person should fall off and be killed. *Deut. xxii. 8.* "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." And certainly we ought to take the like care that we do not fall into sin; which carries in it eternal death. We should, as it were, fix a battlement, a guard, to keep us from the edge of the precipice. Much more ought we to take care, that we do not go upon a roof that is not only without battlements, but when it is steep, and we shall naturally incline to fall.—Men's lusts are like strong enemies, endeavouring to draw them into sin. If a man stood upon a dangerous precipice, and had enemies about him, pulling and drawing him, endeavouring to throw him down; would he, in such a case, choose or dare to stand near the edge? Would he not endeavour, for his own safety to keep at a distance?

2. Those things that tend to feed lusts in the imagination, are of this kind.—They lead and expose men to sin. Those things that have a natural tendency to excite in the mind the imagination of that which is the object of the lust, certainly tend to feed and promote that lust. What can be more evident, than that a presenting of the object tends to stir up the appetite? Reason and experience teach this.—Therefore, all things, whether words or actions, which have a tendency and expose to sin, tend also to raise in the mind imaginations of what the lust tends to. It is certainly wrong to feed a lust, even in the imagination. It is quite contrary to the holy rules of God’s words. [Prov. xxiv. 9.](#) “The thought of foolishness is sin.” [Matt. v. 28.](#) “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery.” A man, by gratifying his lusts in his imagination and thoughts, may make his soul in the sight of God to be a hold of foul spirits, and like a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. And sinful imaginations tend to sinful actions, and outward behaviour in the end. Lust is always first conceived in the imagination, and then brought forth in the outward practice. You may see the progress of it in [Jam. i. 15.](#) “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.”—Such things are abominable in the sight of a pure and holy God. We are commanded to keep at a great distance from spiritual pollution; and to hate even the very “garment spotted with the flesh.” [Jude 23.](#)

3. Those things that the experience and observation of mankind show to be ordinarily attended or followed with sin, are of this sort. Experience is a good rule to determine by in things of this nature. How do we know the natural tendency of any thing, but by observation and experience? Men observe and find, that some things are commonly attended and followed with other things; and hence mankind pronounce, that they have a natural tendency to them. We have no other way to know the tendency of any thing. Thus men by observation and experience know that the warmth of the sun, and showers of rain, are attended with the growth of plants; and hence they learn, that they have a tendency to it. So they find by experience, that the bite of some kinds of serpents is commonly followed with illness, and often with death; and hence they learn, that the bite of such serpents has a natural tendency to bring disorder upon the body, and exposes to death.—And so, if experience and common observation shows, that any particular practice or custom is commonly attended with that which is very sinful, we may safely conclude that such a practice *tends* to sin; that it leads and exposes to it.

Thus we may determine that tavern-haunting and gaming are things that tend to sin; because common experience and observation show, that those practices are attended with a great deal of sin and wickedness. The observation of all ages and all nations, with one voice, declares it. It shows, where taverns are much frequented for drinking and the like, they are especially places of sin, of profaneness, and other wickedness; and it shows, that those towns, where there is much of this, are places where no good generally prevails. And it also shows, that those persons that are given much to frequenting taverns are most com-

monly vicious persons. And so of gaming; as playing at cards, experience shows, that those persons that practise this, do generally fall into much sin. Hence these practices are become infamous among all sober virtuous persons.

4. Another way by which persons may determine of some things, that they lead and expose to sin, is by their own experience, or what they have found in themselves.—This surely is enough to convince them, that such things actually lead and expose to sin; for what will convince men, if their own experience will not? Thus if men have found by undeniable experience, that any practice or custom stirs up lust in them, and has betrayed them into foolish and sinful behaviour, or sinful thoughts; they may determine that they lead to sin. If they, upon examining themselves, must own that a custom or practice has disposed them to the omission of known duty, such as secret or family prayer, and has indisposed them to reading and religious meditation—or if they find, since they have complied with such a custom, they are less watchful of their hearts, less disposed to any thing that is serious; that the frame of their mind is more light, and their hearts less disposed on the things of another world, and more after vanity—these are *sinful effects*; and therefore if experience shows a custom or practice to be attended with these things, then experience shows that they lead and expose to sin.

5. We may determine whether a thing be of an evil tendency or not, by the effect that an outpouring of the Spirit of God, and a general flourishing of religion, has with respect to it. If this puts a stop to any practice or custom, and roots it out; surely it argues, that that practice or custom is of no good tendency. For if there be no hurt in it, and it tends to no hurt, why should the Spirit of God destroy it? The Spirit of God has no tendency to destroy any thing that is neither sinful, nor has any tendency to sin. Why should it? Why should we suppose, that he is an enemy to that which has no hurt in it; nor has any tendency to that which is hurtful?

The flourishing of religion has no tendency to abolish or expel any thing that is no way against religion. That which is not against religion, religion will not appear against. It is a rule that holds in all contraries and opposites; the opposition is equal on both sides. So contrary as light is to darkness, so contrary is darkness to light. So contrary as the flourishing of religion is to any custom, just so contrary is that custom to the flourishing of religion. That custom that religion tends to destroy, that custom, if it prevail, tends also to destroy religion. Therefore, if the flourishing of religion, and the outpouring of the Spirit of God, tends to overthrow any custom, that takes place or prevails, we may surely determine, that that custom is either in itself sinful, or tends and exposes to evil.

6. We may determine, by the effect that a general decay of religion has with respect to them, whether they be things of a sinful tendency or not. If they be things that come with a decay of religion, that creep in as that decays, we may determine they are things of no

good tendency. The withdrawing of good does not let in good but evil. Evil, not good, comes in, as good gradually ceases. What is it but darkness that comes in, as light withdraws?

Therefore, if there be any decay of religion in the town, or in particular persons, and upon this, any certain customs or practices take place and are allowed, which were wholly abstained from and renounced, when religion was in a more flourishing state; we may safely conclude that such customs and practices are contrary to the nature of true religion; and therefore in themselves sinful, or tending to sin.

7. We may in many things determine whether any custom be of a good tendency, by considering what the effect would be, if it was openly and universally owned and practised. There are many things which persons practise somewhat secretly, and which they plead to be not hurtful; but which if they had suitable consideration to discern the consequence of every body openly practising the same, would soon show a most woeful state of things. If therefore there be any custom, that will not bear universal open practice and profession; we may determine that *that* custom is of an ill tendency. For if it is neither sinful in itself, nor tends to any thing sinful, then it is no matter how open it is: for we need not be afraid of that custom being too prevalent and universal, that has no ill tendency in it.



SECT. III.

A serious warning to all, and especially young people.

Thus I have mentioned some general rules, by which to determine and judge, what things are of a bad and sinful tendency. And these things are so plain, that for a person to deny them, would be absurd and ridiculous.—I would now, in the name of God, *warn all persons* to avoid such things, as appear by these rules to lead and expose to sin. And particularly, I would take occasion to warn *young people*, as they would approve themselves fearers of God, to avoid all such things in company, that being tried by these rules, will appear to have a tendency to sin. Avoid all such ways of talking and acting as have a tendency to this; and follow the example of Joseph. Not only gross acts of uncleanness, but all degrees of lasciviousness, both in talking and acting, are strictly forbidden in Scripture; as what should not be so much as once named among saints or Christians. Gal. v. 9. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness.” Eph. v. 3, 4, 5. “But fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; for this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.” We should hate even the garments spotted with the flesh, *i.e.* should hate and shun all that, in the least degree, approaches to any such thing.

And I desire that certain customs, too common among young people, may be examined by those rules that have been mentioned. That custom in particular, of young people of different sexes reclining together—however little is made of it, and however ready persons may be to laugh at its being condemned—if it be examined by the rules that have been mentioned, it will appear, past all contradiction, to be one of those things that lead and expose to sin. And I believe experience and fact abundantly bear witness to it. It has been one main thing that has led to the growth of uncleanness in the land. And there are other customs and liberties, customarily used among young people in company, which they who use them know that they lead to sin. They know that they stir up their lusts; and this is the very end for which they do it, to gratify their lusts in some measure. Little do such persons consider, what a holy God they are soon to be judged by, who abominates the impurities of their hearts.—If therefore they do actually stir up and feed lust, then certainly they tend to further degrees and more gross acts. That which stirs up lust, makes it more violent, and does therefore certainly the more expose persons to be overcome by it. How evident and undeniable are these things; and how strange that any should make a derision of them!

Possibly you may be confident of your own strength; and may think with yourself, that you are not in danger, that there is no temptation in these things, but what you are able easily to overcome. But you should consider that the most self-confident are most in danger. Peter was very confident that he should not deny Christ, but how dreadfully otherwise was

the event! If others that have fallen into gross sins, should declare how it was with them; doubtless they would say, that they at first thought there was no danger; they were far from the thought that ever they should commit such wickedness; but yet by venturing further and further, they fell at last into the foulest and grossest transgressions. Persons may long withstand temptation, and be suddenly overcome at last. None so much in danger, as the most bold. They are most safe, who are most sensible of their own weakness; most distrustful of their own hearts; and most sensible of their continual need of restraining grace. Young persons, with respect to the sin of uncleanness, are dealt with by the devil, just as some give an account of serpents charming birds and other animals down into their mouths. If the serpent takes them with his eyes, though they seem to be affrighted by it, yet they will not flee away, but will keep the serpent in sight, and approach nearer and nearer to him, till they fall a prey.

Another custom that I desire may be examined by the fore-mentioned rules, is that of young people of both sexes getting together in companies for mirth, and spending the time together till late in the night, in their jollity. I desire our young people to suffer their ears to be open to what I have to say upon this point; as I am the messenger of the Lord of hosts to them; and not determine that they will not hearken, before they have heard what I shall say. I hope there are but few persons among us so abandoned, as to determine that they will go on in a practice, whether they are convinced that it is unlawful or not; or though it should be proved to them to be unlawful by undeniable arguments.—Let us then examine this custom and practice by what has been said. It has been proved undeniably, that we ought not to go on in a practice that leads and exposes to sin; and rules have been laid down to judge what does thus expose and lead to it, which I think are plain and undeniable. Certainly a Christian will not be unwilling to have his practices examined and tried by the rules of reason and God's word; but will rather rejoice in it. And I desire particularly that the practice may be tried by that sure touch-stone of experience. This is one of the rules of trial that have been mentioned; that any custom which the experience and observation of mankind show to be ordinarily attended with sin, may be concluded to be unlawful. And if we look abroad in the country, I doubt not but these two things will be found.

1. That as to those *places* where there is most of this carried on among young people, (as there is more of it in some places than others,) it will be found, as a thing that universally holds, that the young people there are commonly a loose, vain, and irreligious generation; little regarding God, heaven or hell, or any thing but vanity. And that commonly in those towns where most frolicking is carried on, there are the most frequent breakings out of gross sins; fornication in particular.

2. If we go though the country, we shall for the most part find, that those *persons* who are most addicted to this practice, are the furthest from serious thought, and are the vainest

and loosest upon other accounts. And whence should this be, if such a practice was not sinful, or had not a natural tendency to lead persons into sin.

Now I appeal to those who have made pretences to serious religion and saving piety. You have formerly pretended to keep up religion in your closets, and in your own souls; now seriously ask yourselves whether or no you have not found, that this practice has *indisposed* you to serious religion, and taken off your minds from it? Has it not tended to your neglect of secret prayer? And, if you have not wholly neglected it, have you not found, that you have been abundantly more ready to turn it off in *any* manner, and glad to have done with it? more backward to reading and serious meditation, and such things? And, that your mind has been exceedingly diverted from religion, and that for some time?—I do not send you far off to find out whether this custom be not of bad tendency—not beyond the sea, but your own breast; there let the matter be determined.

Let us now try this custom by the effect which the outpouring of the Spirit of God on a people has with respect to it. This we are under great advantage to do; because there has lately been, in this place, the most remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God, that has even been in New England, and it may be in the world, since the apostles' days. And it is well known, that *before* then, the custom *did* prevail in the town; but *after*, the custom was altogether laid aside; and was so for several years.—No account can be given why the Spirit of God, and the flourishing of religion, should abolish such a custom, unless that custom be either in its nature or tendency an enemy to the Spirit of God, and to religion.—The fruits of the Spirit of God are good, and therefore it is good that this custom should be removed; for this is plainly one of the effects. And if so, it is because the custom is bad, either in its nature or tendency; otherwise there would be no good in its being removed. The Spirit of God abolished this custom for this reason, because if it had been kept up in the town, it would have had a direct tendency to hinder that work which the Spirit was about to do amongst us. This was undeniably the reason.

Supposing such a custom had been begun and set up, by the young people all over the town, in the midst of the time of the late outpouring of the Spirit, all of a sudden; would any wise persons, that have truly the cause of religion at heart, rejoiced at it? Would not every one have concluded, without any hesitation, that there was great danger that it would take off people's minds from religion, and make them vain; and so put an end to the flourishing of religion? Would not every considerate person have thought thus of it? And if such a custom would have had an ill tendency *then*, so it will *now*.

Objection. The town is not in such circumstances now, as it was then: it might have done hurt then, by putting an end to the great concern; but now it may do no hurt; for there is now no such great concern to be interrupted by it.

Answer. Though the town is not in such circumstances now as it was then, yet there *ought* to be as much engagedness of mind about religion, as much concern among sinners,

and as much engagedness among the godly, as then; and it is to our shame that there is not. And if such a practice would have tended to *destroy* such a religious concern then, it certainly tends to *prevent* it now. It is a rule that will hold, that what has a tendency to destroy a thing when it is, tends to prevent when it is not. And are we not praying from sabbath to sabbath, and from day to day, for such a concern again? And do not those who pretend to be converted, and yet have lately set up this custom, pray for the same? Are you a convert, a saint, and yet not desire that there should be any more pouring out of the Spirit of God? The town has cause to be ashamed of such converts, if it has any such. And if ye do, why do you do what tends to prevent it.

Again, Let this practice be tried by the effect that a general decay of religion has with respect to it. Now we have a trial: it is now a time that religion is greatly decayed amongst us; and the effect is, that this custom comes in with this decay. Young people begin again to set up their old custom of *frollicking*, (as it is called,) and spending a great part of the night in it, to the violation of family order. What is the reason, if this custom is not bad, either in its nature or tendency, that it did not come in before, when religion was lively? Why does it stay till it can take the advantage of the withdrawment of religion? This is a sign that it is a custom that shuns a spirit of lively religion, as darkness shuns the light, and never comes in till light withdraws.

And here again, I would send persons to their own experience. How did this practice come in with you in particular; you, that two or three years ago seemed to be so engaged in religion? Did it not come in, did you not begin to practise it, as the sense of religion wore off? And what is the matter? Why did not you set up the practice then, when your heart was taken up about reading, meditation, and secret prayer to God? If this do not at all stand in the way of them, and is no hinderance to them, why was you not engaged in both together? What account can you give of it? Why did you leave off this practice and custom, or abstain from it? To what purpose is this changing? One while it must be avoided as evil, and another while practised and pleaded for as good? The making such an alteration does not look well, nor will it be for the honour of religion in the eye of the world. For whether the practice be lawful or not, yet such a thing will surely be improved to our disadvantage. For your avoiding it then has this appearance in the eye of the country, that then you condemned it; and therefore your now returning to it, will appear to them as backsliding in you. Such changelings are evermore, in the eye of the world, greatly to the dishonour of their profession, let it be what it will.

Indeed, this custom, as it is practised, does not only tend to sin, but is in itself very disorderly, sinful, and shameful. For it is attended late in the night, and in the dead of the night, to the neglect of family prayer, and violating all family order; which is disorder and profaneness. Is it lawful to rob God of his ordinary sacrifices, for the sake of your pleasure, diversion, and jollity? Are you of that mind, that it is a decent thing that the stated worship of the great



God should give way to your mirth, and your diversions? Is this the way of God's holy children? Those works that are commonly done in the dead of night, seem to have a black mark set upon them by the apostle, and Christians are exhorted to avoid them, [Rom. xiii. 12, 13](#). "Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness." The word here rendered *rioting* is of far different signification from the term, as used in our laws; for the forcible doing an unlawful thing, by three or more persons assembled together for that purpose. But the word here properly signifies, a *disorderly convention* of persons in order to spend their time together in pleasure and jollity. So the word is commonly used in Scripture: [Prov. xxiii. 20](#). "Be not amongst riotous eaters of flesh." [Prov. xxviii. 7](#). "He that is a companion of riotous men, shameth his father." [Luke xv. 13](#).—"wasted his substance with riotous living."—Again, a black mark seems to be set on such in Scripture, as in [1 Thess. v.5-7](#). "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."

Many of you that have lately set up this practice of frolicking and jollity, *profess* to be children of the light and of the day; and not to be the children of darkness. Therefore *walk as in the day*; and do not those works of darkness, that are commonly done at unseasonable hours of the night. Such things are not only condemned by the apostle, but are looked upon as infamous in all ages among sober people, as all past writings manifest. Therefore it is a thing of bad report, and so forbidden. [Phil. iv. 8](#). " whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue—any praise, think on these things."

Objection. But the wise man allows of this practice, when he says, [Eccles. iii. 4](#). "There is a time to mourn and a time to dance."

Answer. This is nothing to the purpose; for the utmost that any can pretend that it proves, is that it may be used under some circumstances; but not at all, that dancing and other things used by our young people in their frolics are lawful, in those circumstances: any more than what is said in the same chapter, [ver. 3](#).—"there is a time to kill," proves that it is lawful for a man to commit murder.—To deny that dancing, under any circumstances whatever, was lawful, would be absurd; for there was a religious dancing in the Jewish church, which was a way of expressing their spiritual mirth. So David danced before the Lord. And he calls upon others to praise God in the dance. So there may be other circumstances wherein dancing may not be unlawful. But all this makes nothing to the present purpose; to prove that this particular custom is not of a bad tendency. Besides, when the wise man says, "there is a time to dance," that does not prove, that the dead of the night is the time for it. The same wise man doth not justify carnal mirth, but condemns it. [Eccl. ii. 2](#). "I said of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what doth it?"

Objection. If we avoid all such things, it will be the way for our young people to be ignorant how to behave themselves in company.

Answer. But consider what this objection comes to. It certainly comes to this, *viz.* That the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon a people, tends to banish all good conduct, good breeding, and decent behaviour from among them; and to sink them down into clownishness and barbarity! The Spirit of God did actually put an end to this practice among us.—But who is not ashamed to make such an objection? Will any of our young converts talk thus? Will you, that think you were converted by the late pouring out of the Spirit of God, and are made holy persons, heirs of eternal life, talk so blasphemously of it?

If our young people are resolute still to go on notwithstanding all that has been said, I hope that those of them who call themselves converted, will first find out some rational, satisfying answer to the arguments that have been used against it. This at least may be reasonably expected of them, seeing they make such a profession. You have this day been partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and therein solemnly renewed your profession.—If after such light set before you, and such mercy given, you will go on, be it known to you, that your eating now, and at other times, will prove only an eating and drinking judgement to yourselves.

And I desire heads of families, if they have any government over their children, or any command of their own houses, would not tolerate their children in such practices, nor suffer such conventions in their houses.—I do not desire that young people should be abridged of any lawful and proper liberties. But this custom can be of no benefit or service in the world: it tends only to mischief.—Satan doubtless would be glad to have such an interest amongst us as he used to have; and is therefore striving to steal in, while we are sleeping: but let us rouse up ourselves, and vigorously oppose his encroachments. I shall repeat those words of the apostle, [Rom. xiii. 12-14.](#) and leave them to the serious consideration of all persons, old and young. “The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF TIME,

AND THE

IMPORTANCE OF REDEEMING IT. 228

EPH. v. 16.

Redeeming the time

Christians should not only study to improve the opportunities they enjoy, for their *own* advantage, as those who would make a good bargain; but also labour to reclaim *others* from their evil courses; so that God might defer his anger, and time might be redeemed from that terrible destruction, which, when it should come, would put an end to the time of divine patience. And it may be upon this account, that this reason is added, *Because the days are evil*. As if the apostle had said, the corruption of the times tends to hasten threatened judgments; but your holy and circumspect walk will tend to redeem time from the devouring jaws of those calamities.—However, thus much is certainly held forth to us in the words; *viz.* That upon time we should set a high value, and be exceeding careful that it be not lost; and we are therefore exhorted to exercise wisdom and circumspection, in order that we may redeem it. And hence it appears, that *time is exceedingly precious*.

## SECT. I.

Why time is precious.

Time is precious for the following reasons:

1. Because a happy or miserable eternity depends on the good or ill improvement of it. Things are precious in proportion to their importance, or to the degree wherein they concern our welfare. Men are wont to set the highest value on those things upon which they are sensible their interest chiefly depends. And this renders time so exceedingly precious, because our eternal welfare depends on the improvement of it.—Indeed our welfare in *this* world depends upon its improvement. If we improve it not, we shall be in danger of coming to poverty and disgrace; but by a good improvement of it, we may obtain those things which will be useful and comfortable. But it is above all things precious, as our state through eternity depends upon it. The importance of the improvement of time upon other accounts, is in subordination to this.

Gold and silver are esteemed precious by men; but they are of no worth to any man, only as thereby he has an opportunity of avoiding or removing some evil, or of possessing himself of some good. And the greater the evil is which any man hath advantage to escape, or the good which he hath advantage to obtain, by any thing that he possesses, by so much the greater is the value of that thing to him, whatever it be. Thus if a man, by any thing which he hath, may save his life, which he must lose without it, he will look upon that by which he hath the opportunity of escaping so great an evil as death, to be very precious.—Hence it is that time is so exceedingly precious, because by it we have opportunity of escaping everlasting misery, and of obtaining everlasting blessedness and glory. On this depends our escape from an infinite evil, and our attainment of an infinite good.

2. Time is very short, which is another thing that renders it very precious. The scarcity of any commodity occasions men to set a higher value upon it, especially if it be necessary and they cannot do without it. Thus when Samaria was besieged by the Syrians, and provisions were exceedingly scarce, [2 Kings vi. 25](#). “an ass’s head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove’s dung for five pieces of silver.”—So time is the more to be prized by men, because a whole eternity depends upon it; and yet we have but a little of time. [Job xvi. 22](#). “When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.” [Job ix. 25, 26](#). “My days are swifter than a post. They are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.” [Jam. iv 14](#). “Our life; what is it? it is but a vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” It is but as a moment to eternity. Time is so short, and the work which we have to do in it is so great, that we have none of it to spare. The work which we have to do to prepare for eternity, must be done in time, or it never can be done; and it is found to be a work of great difficulty and labour, and therefore that for which time is the more requisite.

3. Time ought to be esteemed by us very precious, because we are uncertain of its continuance. We know that it is very short, but we know not how short. We know not how little of it remains, whether a year, or several years, or only a month, a week, or a day. We are every day uncertain whether that day will not be the last, or whether we are to have the whole day. There is nothing that experience doth more verify than this.—If a man had but little provision laid up for a journey or a voyage, and at the same time knew that if his provision should fail, he must perish by the way, he would be the more choice of it.—How much more would many men prize their time, if they knew that they had but a few months, or a few days, more to live! And certainly a wise man will prize his time the more, as he knows not but that it will be so as to himself. This is the case with multitudes now in the world, who at present enjoy health, and see no signs of approaching death: many such, no doubt, are to die the next month, many the next week, yea, many probably to-morrow, and some this night; yet these same persons know nothing of it, and perhaps think nothing of it, and neither they nor their neighbours can say that they are more likely soon to be taken out of the world than others. This teaches us how we ought to prize our time, and how careful we ought to be, that we lose none of it.

4. Time is very precious, because when it is past, it cannot be recovered. There are many things which men possess, which if they part with, they can obtain them again. If a man have parted with something which he had, not knowing the worth of it, or the need he should have of it; he often can regain it, at least with pains and cost. If a man have been overseen in a bargain, and have bartered away or sold something, and afterwards repent of it, he may often obtain a release, and recover what he had parted with.—But it is not so with respect to time; when once that is gone, it is gone for ever; no pains, no cost will recover it. Though we repent ever so much that we let it pass, and did not improve it while we had it, it will be to no purpose. Every part of it is successively offered to us, that we may choose whether we will make it our own, or not. But there is no delay; it will not wait upon us to see whether or no we will comply with the offer. But if we refuse, it is immediately taken away, and never offered more. As to that part of time which is gone, however we have neglected to improve it, it is out of our possession and out of our reach.

If we have lived fifty, or sixty, or seventy years, and have not improved our time, now it cannot be helped; it is eternally gone from us: all that we can do, is to improve the little that remains. Yea, if a man have spent all his life but a few moments unimproved, all that is gone is lost, and only those few remaining moments can possibly be made his own; and if the whole of a man's time be gone, and it be all lost, it is irrecoverable.—Eternity depends on the improvement of time; but when once the time of life is gone, when once death is come, we have no more to do with time; there is no possibility of obtaining the restoration of it, or another space in which to prepare for eternity. If a man should lose the whole of his worldly substance, and become a bankrupt, it is possible that his loss may be made up. He

may have another estate as good. But when the time of life is gone, it is impossible that we should ever obtain another such time. All opportunity of obtaining eternal welfare is utterly and everlastingly gone.

## SECT. II.

Reflections on time past.

You have now heard of the preciousness of time; and you are the persons concerned, to whom God hath committed that precious talent. You have an eternity before you. When God created you, and gave you reasonable souls, he made you for an endless duration. He gave you time here in order to a preparation for eternity, and your future eternity depends on the improvement of time.—Consider, therefore, what you have done with your *past* time. You are not now beginning your time, but a great deal is past and gone; and all the wit, and power, and treasure of the universe, cannot recover it. Many of you may well conclude, that more than half of your time is gone; though you should live to the ordinary age of man, your glass is more than half run; and it may be there are but few sands remaining. Your sun is past the meridian, and perhaps just setting, or going into an everlasting eclipse. Consider, therefore, what account you can give of your improvement of past time. How have you let the precious golden sands of your glass run?

Every *day* that you have enjoyed has been precious; yea, your *moments* have been precious. But have you not wasted your precious moments, your precious days, yea your precious years? If you should reckon up how many days you have lived, what a sum would there be! and how precious hath every one of those days been! Consider, therefore, what have you done with them? what is become of them all? What can you show of any improvement made, or good done, or benefit obtained, answerable to all this time which you have lived? When you look back, and search, do you not find this past time of your lives in a great measure empty, having not been filled up with any good improvement? And if God, that hath given you your time, should now call you to an account, what account could you give to him?

How much may be done in a year! how much good is there opportunity to do in such a space of time! How much service may persons do for God, and how much for their own souls, if to their utmost they improve it! How much may be done in a day! But what have you done in so many days and years that you have lived? What have you done with the whole time of your youth, you that are past your youth? What is become of all that precious season of life? Hath it not all been in vain to you? Would it not have been as well or better for you, if all that time you had been asleep, or in a state of non-existence?

You have had much time of leisure and freedom from worldly business; consider to what purpose you have spent it. You have not only had ordinary time, but you have had a great deal of holy time. What have you done with all the sabbath-days which you have enjoyed? Consider those things seriously, and let your own consciences make answer.

### SECT. III.

Who are chiefly deserving of reproof from the subject of the preciousness of time.

How little is the preciousness of time considered, and how little sense of it do the greater part of mankind seem to have! and to how little good purpose do many spend their time! There is nothing more precious, and yet nothing of which men are more prodigal. Time is with many, as silver was in the days of Solomon, as the stones of the street, and nothing accounted of. They act as if time were as plenty as silver was then, and as if they had a great deal more than they needed, and knew not what to do with it. If men were as lavish of their money as they are of their time, if it were as common a thing for them to throw away their money, as it is for them to throw away their time, we should think them beside themselves, and not in the possession of their right minds. Yet time is a thousand times more precious than money; and when it is gone, cannot be purchased for money, cannot be redeemed by silver or gold.—There are several sorts of persons who are reprov'd by this doctrine, whom I shall particularly mention.

1. Those who spend a great part of their time in *idleness*, or in doing nothing that turns to any account, either for the good of their souls or bodies; nothing either for their own benefit, or for the benefit of their neighbour, either of the family or of the body-politic to which they belong. There are some persons upon whose hands time seems to lie heavy, who, instead of being concerned to improve it as it passes, and taking care that it pass not without making it their own, act as if it were rather their concern to contrive ways how to waste and consume it; as though time, instead of being precious, were rather a mere encumbrance to them. Their hands refuse to labour, and rather than put themselves to it, they will let their families suffer, and will suffer themselves: [Prov. xix. 15.](#) “An idle soul shall suffer hunger.” [Prov. xxii. 21.](#) “Drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.”

Some spend much of their time at the tavern, over their cups, and in wandering about from house to house, wasting away their hours in idle and unprofitable talk which will turn to no good account: [Prov. xiv. 23.](#) “In all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lips tendeth only to poverty.” The direction of the apostle, in [Eph. iv. 28.](#) is, that we should “labour, working with our hands the thing that is good, that we may have to give to him that needeth.” But indolent men, instead of gaining any thing to give to him that needeth, do but waste what they have already: [Prov. xviii. 9.](#) “He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster.”

2. They are reprov'd by this doctrine who spend their time in *wickedness*, who do not merely spend their time in doing nothing to any good purpose, but spend it to ill purposes. Such do not only lose their time, but they do worse; with it they hurt both themselves and others.—Time is precious, as we have heard, because eternity depends upon it. By the improvement of time, we have opportunity of escaping eternal misery, and obtaining eternal



blessedness. But those who spend their time in wicked works, not only neglect to improve their time to obtain eternal happiness, or to escape damnation, but they spend it to a quite contrary purpose, *viz.* to increase their eternal misery, or to render their damnation the more heavy and intolerable.

Some spend much time in revelling, and in unclean talk and practices, in vicious company-keeping, in corrupting and insnaring the minds of others, setting bad examples, and leading others into sin, undoing not only their own souls, but the souls of others. Some spend much of their precious time in detraction and backbiting; in talking against others; in contention, not only quarrelling themselves, but fomenting and stirring up strife and contention. It would have been well for some men, and well for their neighbours, if they had never done any thing at all; for then they would have done neither good nor hurt. But now they have done a great deal more hurt than they have done or ever will do good. There are some persons whom it would have been better for the towns where they live, to have been at the charge of maintaining them in doing nothing, if that would have kept them in a state of inactivity.

Those who have spent much of their time in wickedness, if ever they shall reform, and enter upon a different mode of living, will find, not only that they have wasted the past, but that they have made work for their remaining time, to undo what they have done. How will many men, when they shall have done with time, and shall look back upon their past lives, wish that they had had no time! The time which they spend on earth will be worse to them than if they had spent so much time in hell; for an eternity of more dreadful misery in hell will be the fruit of their time on earth, as they employ it.

3. Those are reprov'd by this doctrine, who spend their time only in *worldly* pursuits, neglecting their souls. Such men lose their time, let them be ever so diligent in their worldly business; and though they may be careful not to let any of it pass so, but that it shall some way or other turn to their worldly profit. They that improve time only for their benefit in time, lose it; because time was not given for itself, but for that everlasting duration which succeeds it.—They, therefore, whose time is taken up in caring and labouring for the world only, in inquiring what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed; in contriving to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth, how to enrich themselves, how to make themselves great in the world, or how to live in comfortable and pleasant circumstances, while here; who busy their minds and employ their strength in these things only, and the stream of whose affections is directed towards these things; they lose their precious time.

Let such, therefore, as have been guilty of thus spending their time, consider it. You have spent a great part of your time, and a great part of your strength, in getting a little of the world; and how little good doth it afford you, now you have gotten it! What happiness or satisfaction can you reap from it? will it give you peace of conscience, or any rational

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quietness or comfort? What is your poor, needy, perishing soul the better for it? and what better prospects doth it afford you of your approaching eternity? and what will all that you have acquired avail you when time shall be no longer?

## SECT. IV.

An exhortation to improve time.

Consider what hath been said of the preciousness of time, how much depends upon it, how short and uncertain it is, how irrecoverable it will be when gone. If you have a right conception of these things, you will be more choice of your time than of the most fine gold. Every hour and moment will seem precious to you.—But besides those considerations which have been already set before you, consider also the following.

1. That you are accountable to God for your time. Time is a talent given us by God; he hath set us our day; and it is not for nothing, our day was appointed for some work; therefore he will, at the day's end, call us to an account. We must give account to him of the improvement of all our time. We are God's servants; as a servant is accountable to his master, how he spends his time when he is sent forth to work, so are we accountable to God. If men would aright consider this, and keep it in mind, would they not improve their time otherwise than they do? Would you not behave otherwise than you do, if you considered with yourselves every morning, that you must give an account to God, how you shall have spent that day? and if you considered with yourselves, at the beginning of every evening, that you must give an account to God, how you shall have spent that evening? Christ hath told us, that [Matt xii. 36.](#) "for every idle word which men speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment," How well, therefore, may we conclude, that we must give an account of all our idle mispent time!

2. Consider how much time you have lost already. For your having lost so much, you have the greater need of diligently improving what yet remains. You ought to mourn and lament over your lost time; but that is not all, you must apply yourselves the more diligently to improve the remaining part, that you may redeem lost time. You who are considerably advanced in life, and have hitherto spent your time in vanities and worldly cares, and have lived in a great measure negligent of the interests of your souls, may well be terrified and amazed, when you think how much time you have lost and wasted away.—In that you have lost so much time, you have the more need of diligence, on three accounts.

(1.) As your opportunity is so much the shorter.—Your time at its whole length is short. But set aside all that you have already lost, and then how much shorter is it! As to that part of your time which you have already lost, it is not to be reckoned into your opportunity; for that will never be any more; and it is no better, but worse to you, than if it never had been.

(2) You have the same work to do that you had at first, and that under greater difficulties. Hitherto you have done nothing at all of your work, all remains to be done, and that with vastly greater difficulties and opposition in your way than would have been if you had set about it seasonably. So that the time in which to do your work is not only grown shorter, but your work is grown greater. You not only have the *same* work to do, but you have *more*

work; for while you have lost your time, you have not only shortened it, but you have been making work for yourselves. How well may this consideration awaken you to a thorough care, not to let things run on in this manner any longer, and rouse you up immediately to apply yourselves to your work with all your might!

(3.) That is the best of your time which you have lost. The first of a man's time, after he comes to the exercise of his reason, and to be capable of performing his work, is the best. You who have lived in sin till past your youth, have lost the best part. So that here are all these things to be considered together, *viz.* that your time in the whole is but short, there is none to spare; a great part of that is gone, so that it is become much shorter; that which is gone is the best; yet all your work remains, and not only so, but with greater difficulties than ever before attended it; and the shorter your time is, the more work you have to do.

What will make you sensible of the necessity of a diligent improvement of remaining time, if these things will not? Sometimes such considerations as these have another effect, *viz.* to discourage persons, and to make them think, that seeing they have lost so much time, it is not worth their while to attempt to do any thing now. The devil makes fools of them; for when they are young, he tells them, there is time enough hereafter, there is no need of being in haste, it will be better seeking salvation hereafter; and then they believe him. Afterwards, when their youth is past, he tells them, that now they have lost so much, and the best of their time, that it is not worth their while to attempt to do any thing; and now they believe him too. So that with them no time is good. The season of youth is not a good time; for that is most fit for pleasure and mirth, and there will be enough afterwards; and what comes afterwards is not a good time, because the best of it is gone. Thus are men infatuated and ruined.

But what madness is it for persons to give way to discouragement, so as to neglect their work, because their time is short! What need have they rather to awake out of sleep, thoroughly to rouse up themselves, and to be in good earnest, that if possible they may yet obtain eternal life! Peradventure God may yet give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, that they may be saved. Though it be late in the day, yet God calls upon you to rouse, and to apply yourselves to your work; and will you not hearken to his counsel in this great affair, rather than to the counsel of your mortal enemy?

3. Consider how time is sometimes valued by those who are come near to the end of it. What a sense of its preciousness have poor sinners sometimes, when they are on their death-beds! Such have cried out, O, *a thousand worlds for an inch of time!* Then time appears to them indeed precious. An inch of time could do them no more good than before, when they were in health, supposing a like disposition to improve it, nor indeed so much; for a man's time upon a death-bed is attended with far greater disadvantage for such an improvement as will be for the good of his soul, than when he is in health.—But the near approach of death makes men sensible of the inestimable worth of time. Perhaps, when they were in

health, they were as insensible of its value as you are, and were as negligent of it. But how are their thoughts altered now! It is not because they are deceived, that they think time to be of such value, but because their eyes are opened; and it is because you are deceived and blind that you do not think as they do.

4. Consider what a value we may conclude is set upon time by those who are past the end of it. What thoughts do you think they have of its preciousness, who have lost all their opportunity for obtaining eternal life, and are gone to hell? Though they were very lavish of their time while they lived, and set no great value upon it; yet how have they changed their judgments! How would they value the opportunity which *you* have, if they might but have it granted to *them*! What would they not give for one of your days, under the means of grace!—So will you, first or last, be convinced. But if you be not convinced except in the manner in which they are, it will be too late

There are two ways of making men sensible of the preciousness of time. One is, by showing them the reason why it must be precious, by telling them how much depends on it, how short it is, how uncertain, &c. The other is experience, wherein men are convinced how much depends on the improvement of time. The latter is the most effectual way; for that always convinces, if nothing else doth.—But if persons be not convinced by the former means, the latter will do them no good. If the former be ineffectual, the latter, though it be certain, yet is always too late. Experience never fails to open the eyes of men, though they were never opened before. But if they be first opened by that, it is no way to their benefit. Let all therefore be persuaded to improve their time to their utmost.

SECT. V.

Advice respecting the improvement of time.

I shall conclude with advising to three things in particular.

1. Improve the *present* time without any delay. If you delay and put off its improvement, still more time will be lost; and it will be an evidence that you are not sensible of its preciousness. Talk not of more convenient seasons hereafter; but improve your time while you have it, after the example of the psalmist, [Psal. cxix. 60](#). “I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.”

2. Be especially careful to improve *those parts* of time which are most precious. Though all time is very precious, yet some parts are more precious than others; as, particularly, holy time is more precious than common time. Such time is of great advantage for our everlasting welfare; therefore, above all, improve your sabbaths, and especially the time of public worship, which is the most precious part. Lose it not either in sleep, or in carelessness, inattention, and wandering imaginations. How sottish are they who waste away, not only their common, but holy time, yea the very season of attendance on the holy ordinances of God!—The time of youth is precious, on many accounts. Therefore, if you be in the enjoyment of this time, take heed that you improve it. Let not the precious days and years of youth slip away without improvement. A time of the strivings of God’s Spirit is more precious than other time. Then God is near; and we are directed, in [Isa. lv. 6](#). “To seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near.” Such especially is an accepted time, and a day of salvation: [2 Cor. vi. 2](#). “I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

3. Improve well your time of *leisure* from worldly business. Many persons have a great deal of such time, and all have some. If men be but disposed to it, such time may be improved to great advantage. When we are most free from cares for the body, and business of an outward nature, a happy opportunity for the soul is afforded. Therefore spend not such opportunities unprofitably, nor in such a manner that you will not be able to give a good account thereof to God. Waste them not away wholly in unprofitable visits, or useless diversions or amusements. Diversion should be used only in subserviency to business. So much, and no more, should be used, as doth most fit the mind and body for the work of our general and particular callings.

You have need to improve every talent, advantage, and opportunity, to your utmost, while time lasts; for it will soon be said concerning you, according to the oath of the angel, in [Rev. x. 5, 6](#). “And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.”

PROCRASTINATION,

OR

THE SIN AND FOLLY OF DEPENDING ON FUTURE TIME. 229



PROV. xxvii. 1.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

The design of the wise man in this book of Proverbs, is to give us the precepts of true wisdom, or to teach us how to conduct ourselves wisely in the course of our lives. Wisdom very much consists in making a wise improvement of time, and of the opportunities we enjoy. This is often in Scripture spoken as a great part of true wisdom; as [Deut. xxxii. 29](#). “O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!” And [Psal. xc. 12](#). “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” So the wisdom of the wise virgins is represented as consisting much in this, that they improved the proper season to buy oil.

Therefore the wise man in these books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, agreeably to his design, insists on this part of wisdom. He tells us the advantage of seeking Christ early; [Prov. viii. 17](#). And advises us “to do what our hand findeth to do, with our might;” [Eccles. ix. 10](#). advises young people to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, while the evil days come not, in which they shall say they have no pleasure; [Eccles. xii. 1](#). So here he advises us to a wise improvement of the present season.—In the words are two things to be particularly observed.

1. The precept, not to boast of to-morrow; i.e. not to speak or act as though it were our own. It is absurd for men to boast of that which is not theirs. The wise man would not have us behave ourselves as though any time were ours but the present. He that boasts of to-morrow, acts as though he had to-morrow in his possession, or had something whereby he might depend on it, and call it his own.

2. The reason given for this precept; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. It is a good reason why we should not behave ourselves as though the morrow were our own, that indeed it is not; we are not sure of it; we have no hold of future time; we know not whether we shall see the morrow: or if we do know that we shall see it, we know not what we shall see on it.—Hence, we ought to behave ourselves every day, as though we had no dependence on any other.

SECT. I.

Needful precautions.

To prevent a misunderstanding of the doctrine, I observe that it is not meant, that we should in every respect behave as though we knew that we should not live another day. Not depending on another day, is a different thing, from concluding, that we shall not live another day. We may have reason for the one, and not for the other. We have good reason not to depend on another day, but we have no reason to conclude, that we shall not live another day.

In some respects we ought to carry ourselves, as though we know we should not live another day, and should improve every day as if it were the last. Particularly, we should live every day as conscientiously and as holily as if we knew it were the last. We should be as careful every day to avoid all sin, as if we knew that that night our souls should be required of us. We should be as careful to do every duty which God requires of us, and take as much care that we have a good account to give to our Judge, of our improvement of that day, as if we concluded that we must be called to give an account before another day.

But in many other respects, we are not obliged to behave ourselves as though we concluded that we should not live to another day. If we had reason to conclude that we should not live another day, some things would not be our duty which now are our duty. As for instance, in such a case it would not be the duty of any person to make provision for his temporal subsistence during another day: to neglect which, as things now are, would be very imprudent and foolish, as the consequences would show, if every man were to act in this manner. If so, it would never be man's duty to plough or sow the field, or to lay up for winter; but these things are man's duty; as [Prov. vi. 6.](#) "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." And [chap. x. 5.](#), &c. "He that gathereth in the summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest, is a son that causeth shame." And many other places might be mentioned.

So, on the other hand, if we were certain that we should not live another day, some things would be our duty today, which now are not so. As for instance, it would be proper for us to spend our time in giving our dying counsels, and in setting our houses in order. If it were revealed to us, that we should die before to-morrow morning, we ought to look upon it as a call of God to us, to spend the short remainder of our lives in those things which immediately concern our departure, more than otherwise it would be our duty to do.—Therefore, the words which forbid us to boast of to-morrow, cannot be extended so far as to signify, that we ought in all respects to live, as if we knew we should not see another day. Yet they undoubtedly mean, that we ought not to behave ourselves in any respect, as though we depended on another day.



## SECT. II.

The precept explained.

*Boast not thyself of to-morrow.* In this precept two things seem to be forbidden.

1. Boasting ourselves of what shall be on the morrow, or behaving ourselves as though we depended on particular things to come to pass in this world, in some future time. As when men behave themselves, as though they depended on being rich, or promoted to honour hereafter: or as though they were sure of accomplishing any particular design another day. So did the rich man in the gospel, when he did not only promise himself, that he should live many years, but promised himself also, that he should be rich many years. Hence he said to his soul, that he had much goods laid up for many years.

And if men act as though they depended upon it, that they should another day accomplish such and such things for their souls, then may they be said to boast themselves of to-morrow, and not to behave themselves as though they depended on no other day. As when they behave themselves, as though they depended upon it, that they should at another day have such and such advantages for the good of their souls; that they should at another day have the strivings of God's Spirit; that they should at another day find themselves disposed to be thorough in seeking their salvation; that they should at another day have a more convenient season; and that God at another day would stand ready to hear their prayers, and show them mercy.

Or if they act as though they depended upon it that they should have considerable opportunity on a death-bed to seek mercy; or whatever they promise themselves should come to pass respecting them in this world, if they act as depending on it, they boast themselves of to-morrow.

2. Another thing implied, is our boasting of future time itself, or acting as though we depended on it, that we should have our lives continued to us another day. Not only is the command of God delivered in the text transgressed by those who behave themselves as depending upon it, that they shall see and obtain such and such things to-morrow; but by those who act as depending upon it, that they shall remain in being in this world to-morrow.

Both these ways of boasting of to-morrow are reproved by the apostle [chap. iv. 13](#). "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain." By promising themselves that they shall do such and such things, and that they shall get gain, they boast themselves of what shall come to pass in such a time. The apostle in the next verse teaches them, that they ought not to do this, no nor so much as depend upon seeing another day, or on having their lives continued, [ver. 14](#). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." And in [ver. 15](#). he teaches us that both are uncertain and dependent on the will of God, *viz.* Whether we shall live an-

other day, and if we do, whether such and such things shall come to pass? For that you ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that. Therefore he adds in [ver. 16](#). “But now you rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.”

SECT. III.

When men act as though they depend on another day.

1. They will do so, if they set their hearts on the enjoyments of this life. I mean not, if they have any manner of affection to them. We may have some affection to the enjoyments of this world; otherwise they would cease to be enjoyments. If we might have no degree of rejoicing in them, we could not be thankful for them. Persons may in a degree take delight in earthly friends, and other earthly enjoyments. It is agreeable to the wise man's advice that we should do so, [Eccles. v. 18](#). "It is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all this labour that he taketh under the sun"—But by setting our hearts on these things, by placing our happiness on them, and letting out the current of our affections after them—by turning and fixing our inclinations so much upon them, that we cannot well enjoy ourselves without them, so that very much of the strength of the faculties of our minds is employed and taken up about these things—we show that we have our dependence on another day.

The man who doth thus, acts as though he depended on another day, yea many other days, in the world; for it is most evident, that if the enjoyments of this world be of such a nature that they are not to be depended on for one day more, they are not worth the setting of our hearts upon them, or the placing of our happiness in them. We may rejoice in the enjoyments of the world, but not in such a manner as to place the rest of our souls in them. As the apostle saith, we should rejoice in them as though we rejoiced not, [1 Cor. vii. 30](#). So that if this joy should fail, our stock may hold good; and in this case we must behave ourselves only as if we had lost a small stream of joy, but still had the fountain in full possession. We should conduct ourselves as those who have not the foundation of their joy shaken, though some appurtenances have failed. Our happiness as to the body of it, if I may so speak, should yet stand as on an immovable foundation.

They who are very much pleased and elated with the enjoyments of the world, certainly behave themselves as though they had much dependence on their continuance for more than one or two days more—They who addict themselves to vain mirth, and lead a jovial life, show that they set their hearts on the enjoyments of the world, and act as those who depend on more days than the present. For if they were sensible that they could not depend on any future time, but that death would put an eternal end to all their carnal mirth before to-morrow, they would have no heart to spend the present day in such a manner as they now do. It would immediately produce in them a disposition far from levity and vanity.

And when persons are very much sunk with the loss of any temporal enjoyments, or with any temporal disappointments, it shows that they set their hearts upon them, and behave as though they boasted of to-morrow, and depended on their long continuance in life. If they had no such dependence, they would not be frustrated, or would not be overwhelmed

by their frustration. If they be very much sunk, and the comfort of their lives be destroyed by it, it shows that those temporal enjoyments were too much the foundation on which their comfort stood. That which makes a building totter, and threatens its destruction, is not the taking away of some of the exterior parts of the superstructure, but the removal of some considerable part of the foundation on which the house stands.

2. If men are proud of their worldly circumstances, it shows that they have a dependence on to-morrow; for no man would think it worth his while to vaunt himself in that which is to be depended on only for a day. Though a man have a great estate to-day, he will not be puffed up with it, unless he depend upon having it to-morrow. A man who hath no dependence, but that he may to-morrow be in the grave, where the small and great are upon a level, [Job iii. 19.](#) will not be much lifted up with his advancement to a post of honour.

That person will not be proud of his rich and fine clothes, who is sensible that he may be stripped by death to-morrow, and sent out of the world, as he came naked into it. He will not to-day be very proud of his personal beauty, who hath no dependence on escaping to-morrow that stroke of death which will mar all his beauty, and make that face which he now thinks so comely, appear ghastly and horrid; when instead of a ruddy and florid countenance, there will be the blood settled, cold and congealed, the flesh stiff and clayey, the teeth set, the eyes fixed and sunk into the head. Nor will he to-day very much affect to beautify and adorn with gaudy and flaunting apparel, that body concerning which he is sensible that it may be wrapped in a winding sheet to-morrow, to be carried to the grave, there to rot, and be covered and filled with worms.

3. When men envy others their worldly enjoyments, their wealth, their worldly ease, or their titles and high places—their sensual pleasures, or any of their worldly circumstances—it shows, that they set their hearts on the things of the world; and that they are not sensible that these things are not to be depended upon for another day. If they were, they would not think them worth their envy. They would appear so worthless in their eyes, that they would not care who had them, nor who went without them.—So when they contend about worldly possessions and enjoyments, (as almost all the contentions that are in the world are about these things,) it shows that they have dependence on to-morrow; otherwise they would not think the enjoyments of the world worth contending about. They would be very much of the temper recommended by Jesus Christ, [Matt. v. 40.](#) “He that will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.”

4. Men behave themselves as if they depended on another day, when they rest at ease to-day, in a condition out of which they must be delivered before they die. When a man’s mind is at rest, there is something that he rests in: it must have some foundation, either real or imaginary. But if the man be in a condition from which he is sensible he must some time or other be delivered, or be undone, it is impossible that he should rest in the thoughts of remaining in his condition always, and never being delivered from it: for no man is willing

to be ruined; no man can rest in that which he conceives to be connected with his own misery and undoing.—Therefore, if he rest in such a condition for the present, it must be on a supposition, that he shall be delivered from it. If he rest in it to-day, it must be because he depends on being delivered another day, and therefore depends on seeing another day.

We in this land generally profess, that as we are by sinful nature, we are exposed to eternal death, and that therefore there is a necessity that we get out of a natural condition some time before we die. And those among us who are sensible that they have never passed through any such change as in Scripture is called being born again, though they be not sufficiently convinced that there is any such place as hell, yet have a kind of belief of it; at least they do not conclude that there is no such place, and therefore cannot but be sensible that it would be dreadful to die unconverted. Therefore, if they be in a considerable degree of ease and quietness in their condition, it must be because they have a dependence on being delivered out of such a condition some time before they die.

Inasmuch as they are easy, remaining in such a condition to-day, without any prospect of present deliverance, it shows plainly that they depend on another day. If they did not, they could have no quietness in their spirits; because, if there be no grounds of dependence on any further opportunity, then what they are exposed to, by missing the opportunity which they have to-day, is infinitely dreadful.—Persons who are secure in their sins, under the light of the gospel, unless they be deceived with a false hope, are generally so because they boast themselves of to-morrow. They depend on future opportunity; they flatter themselves with hopes of living long in the world; they depend on what shall come to pass hereafter; they depend on the fulfilment of their good intentions as to what they will do at a more convenient season.

5. Men behave themselves as those who depend on another day, when they neglect any thing to-day which must be done before they die. If there be any thing, which is absolutely necessary to be done some time before death, and the necessity of it be sufficiently declared and shown to the person for whom it is thus necessary, if he neglect setting about it immediately, sincerely, and with all his might, certainly it carries this face with it, that the man depends upon its being done hereafter, and consequently that he shall have opportunity to do it.—Because, as to those things which are absolutely necessary to be done, there is need, not only of a possibility of a future opportunity; but of something which is to be depended on, some good ground to conclude that we shall have future opportunity; therefore, whoever lives under the gospel, and does not this day thoroughly reform his life, by casting away every abomination, and denying every lust—and doth not apply himself to the practice of the whole of his duty towards God and man, and begin to make religion his main business—he acts as one who depends on another day; because he is abundantly taught that these things must be done before he dies.

Those who have been seeking salvation for a great while, in a dull, insincere, and slighty manner, and find no good effect of it, have abundant reason to conclude, that some time before they die, they must not only seek, but strive to enter in at the strait gate, and must be violent for the kingdom of heaven; and therefore, if they do not begin thus to-day, they act as those who depend on another day.—So those who have hitherto lived in the neglect of some particular known duty, whether it be secret prayer, or paying some old debt, which they have long owed to their neighbour—or the duty of confessing some fault to a brother who hath aught against them, or of making restitution for some injury?they act as those who depend on another day.

6. Men behave themselves as though they depended on another day, if they do that to-day which some time or other must be undone. There are many things done by men which must be undone by them. They must go back again from the way which they have gone, or they are ruined to all eternity. Therefore, in doing these things, they act as those who depend on future opportunity to undo them: as when a man cheats or defrauds his neighbour in any thing, he acts as one that boasts of to-morrow: for he must undo what he doth before he dies; he must some time or other make restitution, or divine justice, which oversees all things, and governs the whole world, and will see to it that right be done, will not let go its hold of him.

So when men hearken to temptation, and yield to the solicitations of their lusts to commit any sin, they act as those who depend on another day. They do what must be undone. What they then do must be undone by hearty and thorough repentance, or they are ruined and lost for ever. So if persons have been seeking salvation for a time, and afterwards are guilty of backsliding, and turn back after their hands have been put to the plough, they act as those who depend on another day. For what they now do, they must undo some time or other; they must go back again from their backsliding, and have all their work to do over again. And these things must be undone in this world, while men live; for there will be no undoing of them afterwards; they may be suffered for, but never can be undone.

SECT. IV.

Why we ought not to boast of to-morrow.

I come now to show, why we ought not thus to boast ourselves of to-morrow; but on the contrary, to behave ourselves today as though we had no dependence on another. And there is this plain and sufficient reason for it, *viz.* That we have no grounds of dependence on another day. We have neither any foundation to depend upon seeing any particular things come to pass another day, which we may hope or wish for, nor upon enjoying another day in this world. We have nothing for a foundation of dependence that we shall not be in eternity before to-morrow, as both reason and experience show.—We have no promise of God that we shall ever see another day. We are in God’s hands; our lives are in his hands; he hath set our bounds; the number of our months and days are with him; nor hath he told them to us. We see that the life of man at longest is very short, and nothing is more uncertain; and it is a thing universal among mankind, that they know not the day of their death. We see that great natural abilities, and sharpness of wit, and clearness of discernment, do not help to any discovery in this matter. Wise men are as uncertain of the term of their lives as others.

There are so many ways and means whereby the lives of men come to an end, that no circumstances in which a man can be are any security to him from death. That it is but a very little while till to-morrow, is no good ground of dependence that we shall live till then. We see that deaths as sudden as our dying before to-morrow morning, are common in the world. We very often see or hear of sudden deaths. How many suddenly, in a few minutes, pass from a state of health to a state of death, in the daytime, by several kinds of disease, which give no warning of their approach, and by many unforeseen accidents! How many go to sleep in health, and are found dead in their beds in the morning! So that our present health is no good ground of dependence that we shall live to see another day. That persons are now in youth is no good ground of dependence upon another day; for sudden unexpected deaths are common even among those who are in the bloom of youth. Nor is it any ground of dependence in this case, that a man is of a more than ordinary healthy and strong constitution. It is found by experience, that such are liable to sudden death as well as others: [Job xxi. 23](#). “One dieth in his full strength. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.”

That persons have already lived to see a great many days, and that after they had been often in times past told, that they were uncertain of any future time; or that persons have a strong desire to live longer; or that they are now very unprepared for death, both on temporal and spiritual accounts; is no ground of dependence on the future. Death tarries for no man, but comes when and to whom he is sent, and strikes the deadly blow, whether the man be prepared or not. That men have been very useful in their day, and that it is of great

importance to their families and neighbours that they should live longer, is no ground of dependence. The most useful men are often cut down by death, in the midst of their usefulness. The same may be said, though we cannot see which way death should come at us before to-morrow. To how many accidents, to how many diseases, are we liable, which may prove fatal before to-morrow, which yet it is impossible for us to foresee! So, if we be very careful of our lives, and our health, not to expose ourselves to any dangers, still this is no ground of dependence as to any future time. Death comes in many ways which were not thought of. Men foresee not the means of their death, any more than the fish securely swimming in the water foresee the net, or the bird that securely feeds upon the bait sees the snare. It is as the wise man observes, in [Eccles. ix. 12.](#) “For man also knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.”



## SECT. V.

Serious inquiries.

I shall improve this doctrine, by putting you upon examining yourselves, whether you do not boast yourselves of to-morrow, or whether you do not live in such a manner as you would not, were it not that you depend on future time and future opportunity in the world. Would not your behaviour be very different from what it now is, if you every day lived and acted without any dependence on seeing one day more?—You cannot but acknowledge it to be most reasonable, that you should live and act thus. You cannot but own, that you have no good ground of dependence on another day; and therefore that you cannot act wisely any otherwise than in acting as one who hath no dependence on any such thing. Therefore inquire whether you act wisely and reasonably in this respect.

1. Do you not set your hearts much more on this world, than you would, if you had no dependence on the morrow? Is not the language of the rich man in the gospel, the secret language of your hearts? “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,<sup>230</sup>” &c. Is not this the language of your hearts, with respect to what you have gotten already; which makes you place your happiness so much in it? And with respect to what of the world you are seeking and pursuing, is it not with a dependence on enjoying it for a great while, when you shall have obtained it? Are not your lands and other possessions which you have gotten, or are about to get, in your own imagination, yours for a great while?—Would your mind be so filled with thoughts and cares about these things, so much to the exclusion of another world; would you lay yourselves under so great disadvantages for your soul’s good, by involving yourselves in worldly cares; if you had no dependence on having any thing to do with these things for more than the present day? If you did not depend on considerably more time in the world, would your inquiry be so much, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed? and so little, How shall we make our calling and election sure? how shall we be assured that we are upon a good foundation for another world, and that we are in such a state, that death cannot hurt us? How shall we be sure that we are ready to appear before the judgment-seat of a heart-searching God?—Would there be so much of your time spent in laying up treasure on earth—and so little in laying up treasure in heaven, that you might have store against the day of death—were it not that you put death at a distance? Would you be so much raised at your temporal prosperity, and so much sunk when you meet with crosses and disappointments in your worldly affairs, if you did not think that continuance in the world is to be depended on for more days than the present?—Let those who very much affect to adorn their bodies in gaudy apparel, inquire whether they would think it worth their while to spend so much time to make themselves

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230 [Luke xii. 19.](#)

fine, and to set themselves forth as gayer than others, if they really had no dependence that their bodies would be preserved one day longer from being clasped in the cold arms of death?

2. Inquire, whether you would not much less meddle with the concerns of others, and be much more employed with your own hearts, if each day you had no dependence on living another day. If you were sensible that you had had no other day to depend upon than this, you would be sensible that you had great affairs of your own to attend to. You would find a great deal of business at home between God and your own soul; and considering that you cannot depend on another day, it would seem to you that you have but a short time in which to do it, and that therefore you have need to be much engaged. You would say as Christ did, I must work while the day lasts, for the night cometh, wherein no man can work. You would find so much to be done, and so much difficulty in doing it, that you would have little leisure, and little heart, to intermeddle with the business of others. Your business would be confined to a much narrower compass. You would have so much to do at home in your closets, and with your own hearts, that you would find no occasion to go abroad for intermeddling business to fill up your time.

But the truth is, men conceive of a great deal of time which they have to be filled up, and hence they want business: they depend on to-morrow, and the day following, and next month, and next year, yea many years to come. When they are young they depend on living to be middle-aged, and when middle-aged they depend on old age, and always put far away the day of death. Let them be young or old, there always seems to them to be a great vacancy between them and death; hence they wander to and fro for business to fill up that vacancy.—Whereas if they were sensible of the uncertainty of life, they would, in the first place, make sure of their own business; the business of their own precious, immortal souls would be done, before they would attend much to the business of other people. They would have no desire or disposition to concern themselves with every private quarrel which breaks out in the neighbourhood. They would not think it much concerned them to inquire into the matter, and to pass their censure on the affair. They would find something else to do, than to set by the hour together, discussing and censuring the conduct of such and such persons, gathering up or rehearsing the stories which are carried about to the disadvantage of this and that person.

We seldom, if ever, see men who are upon sick-beds, and look upon themselves very dangerously sick, disposed to spend their time in this manner; and the reason is, that they look upon it doubtful whether they shall live long. They do not, so much as others, depend on much time to spare; hence their minds are taken up more about their own souls' concerns, than about the concerns of others. So it would be with persons in health, if their health did not make them depend on a great deal of time in the world.

3. If you each day depend on no other but the present, would you not engage and interest yourselves much less in party designs and schemes, than you are now wont to do? Among a people divided into two parties, as this town hath been for a long time, there is commonly much done by the partizans in forming schemes of opposition to one another. There is always a strife, who shall get their wills and carry their point. This often engages them, if not in open quarrels, in secret intrigues. That there is so much done in these things, is a certain evidence that they boast themselves of to-morrow, and put death at a distance.

Men would certainly find themselves very much indisposed to such things, if they were so sensible of the uncertainty of life, as to depend on no other day than the present. It is therefore very proper, that you should examine yourselves in this particular, at this time. If you really depended on no other day than the present, would your hearts be so much engaged in strife between two parties, as they often are? Would your spirits be so often raised and ruffled? Would you go about with so much prejudice against such and such men: harbouring so much of the old leaven, which so often breaks out in heats of spirit; and, as an old sore which was skinned over, but not cured, sets to raging with a touch which would not have hurt sound flesh?—Commonly in the management of a strife between two parties, there is a great deal of envy. When any who belong to one of the parties seem to prosper, the other party will envy them; it is a grievous thing to them. So there is also much contempt; when one of the parties gets the ascendant a little over the other, they are ready to make the utmost improvement of it, and to insult the other party.—And there is commonly in such cases a great deal of mutual secret reproach. When those of one party get together, then is the time to inveigh against those of the other party, and to set forth their injustice and their fraudulent practices. Then is the time for them to pass their censure on their words and actions. Then is the time to expose their own surmises and suspicions of what the other party intends, what it aims at in such and such things, what the purposes of individuals are, and what they suppose their secret actions are.—Then is the time for all that are friends in the cause, and engaged in the same designs, to entertain one another by ridiculing the words and actions of the other party, and to make themselves sport of their folly and disappointments; and much is done at calling one another *Raca* and *fools*, or other names equivalent, if not much more than equivalent. Then is the time to lay their heads together, to plot and contrive how they shall manage such an affair so as to disappoint the other party, and obtain their own wills.

Brethren, these things ought not so to be among a Christian people; especially among a people that has made the profession which we have made. Nor would they be so if it were not for your dependence on much future time in the world. If you were so sensible of your continual liableness to death, that every day was the last you depended upon, these things certainly would not be so. For let us but consider what are the effects of death with respect to such things. It puts an end to party-quarrels. Many men hold these quarrels as long as

they live. They begin young, and hold on through many great and sore afflictions and chastisements of Providence. The old sore remains, when the supporters of nature bow, and the eyes grow dim, and the hands tremble with age. But death, when that comes, puts an end to all their quarrelling in this world. Death silences the most clamorous, and censorious, and backbiting tongue. When men are dead, they cease to lay schemes against those of another party; death dashes all their schemes, so far as they have any concern in them. [Psal. cxlvi. 4.](#) “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”

When men are dead, they cease to bite and devour others; as it is said to have been of old a proverb among the Egyptians, *Dead men do not bite*. There are many who will bite and devour as long as they live, but death tames them. Men could not be quiet or safe by them while alive, but none will be afraid of them when dead. The bodies of those that made such a noise and tumult when alive, when dead, lie as quietly among the graves of their neighbours as any others. Their enemies, of whom they strove to get their wills while alive, get their wills of them when they are dead. Nothing can please their enemies better than to have them out of their way. It suits them, that those who were so troublesome to them, are locked up safe in the close grave, where they will no more stand in their way.—There are no more effects of their pride, their craftiness, their hatred and envy. [Eccles. ix. 6.](#) “Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished.”

The time will soon come, when you who have for many years been at times warmly contending one with another, will be very peaceable as to this world. Your dead bodies will probably lie quietly together in the same burying place. If you do not leave off contending before death, now natural will it be for others to have such thoughts as these, when they see your corpses; What! is this the man who used to be so busy in carrying on the designs of his party? Oh, now he has done; now he hath no more any part in any of these things; now it doth not at all concern him, who get their wills, or what party is uppermost. We shall hear his voice no more in our town meetings. He will not sit any more to reproach and laugh at others. He is gone to appear before his Judge, and to receive according to his conduct in life.—The consideration of such things as these would certainly have a mighty effect among us, if we did not put far away the day of death. If all acted every day as not depending on any other day, we should be a peaceable, quiet people.

4. Inquire, whether or no you do not allow yourselves in some things, and endeavour to flatter yourselves that there is no evil in them, which you would by no means dare to do if you had not a dependence on living till tomorrow. It is very common among men, when they are strongly enticed to some sinful practice, by their worldly interest, or by their carnal appetites, to pretend that they do not think there is any evil in it; when indeed they know better. Their pretence is only to serve a present turn. And if they expected to have their souls required of them that night, they would by no means dare to persist in the practice.—There-

fore examine the liberties you take by this test. What would you think of them, if you now should have the following news sent you by some messenger from heaven; John, or Thomas, (or whatever your name be,) this night shall thy soul be required of thee. How would such tidings strike you! How would they alter the face of things if doubtless your thoughts would be very quick; you would soon begin to reflect on yourselves, and to examine your past and present conduct. And in what colours would the liberties you now take, appear to you in the case now supposed? Would you then conclude, that there is no evil in them? Would you not be less bold to go forward and meet death, for having continued in such practices? Would you dare to commit such acts again before you die, which now you pretend are lawful? Would not the few hours which you would have to live, be at all the more uncomfortable to you for having done such things? Would you not presently wish that you had let them alone? Yea, would they not appear frightful and terrifying to you? If it be thus, it is a sign that the reason why you now allow yourselves in thorn, and plead for their lawfulness, is that you put death at a distance, and depend on many other days in the world.

5. Inquire, whether you do not some things on the presumption, that you shall hereafter repent of them. Is not this the very thing which causes you to dare to do some things? Is it not the very ground on which you venture to gratify your lusts? Let young people examine all their secret carriage; what they do alone in the dark and in secret corners. God knoweth, and your own hearts know, though men do not. Put the question impartially to your own consciences; is not this the very thing that gives you courage, that God is very merciful, and that he often of his sovereign mercy gives repentance of great sins, and even wilful sins, and in consequence of repentance forgives? And so you hope that one day or other he will do so to you. You intend some time hereafter earnestly to seek; and you hope you shall be awakened. And if you be very earnest, as you intend to be, you hope you shall be converted, and then you shall be forgiven, and it will be as well as if you had never committed such sins.

If this be the case, consider how you boast of to-morrow, and foolishly depend on future opportunity to repent, as well as foolishly presume on the mercy of God to give you repentance, at the same time that you take a course to provoke God, for ever to give you up to a sealed hardness and blindness, and to a most fearful damnation; not considering that God will glorify his revenging justice as well as his mercy; nor remembering the sad example of Esau, “who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright; and afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” [Heb. xii. 16, 17.](#)

6. Inquire, whether you improve this day, as one who doth not depend upon ever having opportunity to keep another sabbath, or to hear or read another discourse. It appears from

what hath been already said, that you have no grounds to depend on any more such opportunities. Now the day is present, and so you are in the better capacity to determine now it is with you. It is but for you to reflect upon yourselves, to look inward, and see how it is with you at this present time. And how is it? Are you as strict and as diligent in keeping this sabbath, watching your thoughts, keeping your hearts, striving in duties both public and private, and improving ordinances, as might be expected of one who hath no dependence on ever enjoying such an opportunity any more; one who doth not depend on ever setting foot again within the walls of God's house?—Do you attend to this address with that care, and desire, and endeavour to improve it for your good, as you would, if you did not depend upon it, that your bodies would not be in the grave, and your souls fixed in eternity, in their unalterable state, before the next sabbath?

7. Are you careful to see to it that the grounds of your hope are good? A man who hath some hope of being in a state of acceptance with God, but is not sure, if he had no dependence on any other day's opportunity of making it sure, would be very strict in examining himself and searching the grounds of his hope, and would not rest in an uncertainty. He would be very thorough in informing himself what might be depended on as good evidence of an interest in Christ, and what not; and would be exceedingly strict in searching his own heart, to see whether there was any thing in him that comes up to the requisites laid down in the Scriptures.—If what appears hopeful in him were dim and obscure, he would set himself very earnestly to obtain that which would be more clear and manifest, and would cry earnestly to God for it, and would apply himself to a diligent use of means in order to it. And good reason why; for he depends on no other opportunity to make his calling and election sure, than what he hath to-day. Inquire therefore whether you be thus thorough in examining your hope. And are you thus careful effectually to see to it, that you are on a sure foundation? If not, then you behave yourselves as those that depend on to-morrow.

SECT. VI.

How to spend every day.

God hath concealed from us the day of our death, without doubt, partly for this end, that we might be excited to be always ready, and might live as those that are always waiting for the coming of their Lord, agreeably to the counsel which Christ gives us, [Matt. xxiv. 42, 43, 44. xxv. 13.](#) and [Mark xiii. 32.](#) &c.—That watchman is not faithful who, being set to defend a house from thieves, or a city from an enemy at hand, will at any hour venture to sleep, trusting that the thief or the enemy will not come. Therefore it is expected of the watchman, that he behave himself every hour of the night, as one who doth not depend upon it that the enemy will tarry until the next hour. Now therefore let me, in Christ's name, renew the call and counsel of Jesus Christ to you, to watch as those that know not what hour your Lord will come. Let me call upon you who are hitherto in an unrenewed condition. Depend not upon it, that you will not be in hell before tomorrow morning. You have no reason for any such dependence; God hath not promised to keep you from it, or to withhold his wrath so long.

How can you reasonably be easy or quiet for one day, or one night, in such a condition, when you know not but your Lord will come this night? And if you should then be found, as you now are, unregenerate, how unprepared would you be for his coming, and how fearful would be the consequence! Be exhorted therefore, for your own sakes, immediately to awake from the sleep of sin, out of sleep, and sleep no more, as not depending on any other day.—Let me exhort you to have no dependence on any future time; to keep every sabbath, and to hear every sermon, as if it were the last. And when you go into your closet, and address yourself to your Father who seeth in secret, do it in no dependence on any future opportunity to perform the same duty. When you that are young go into company for amusement and diversion, consider that it may be the last opportunity of the like nature that ever you may have. In all your dealings with your neighbours, act as if you were never to make another bargain. Behave in your families every day, as though you depended on no other.—Here I shall offer you two motives.

1. Consider, if you will hearken to this counsel, how much it will tend to your safety and peace in life and death. It is the way really and truly to be ready for death; yea, to be fit to live or fit to die; to be ready for affliction and adversity, and for whatever God in his providence shall bring upon you. It is the way to be in, not only an habitual, but actual preparedness for all changes, and particularly for your last change.—It is the way to possess your souls in a serene and undisturbed peace, and to enable you to go on with an immovable fortitude of soul, to meet the most frightful changes, to encounter the most formidable enemies, and to be ready with unshaken confidence to triumph over death whenever you meet him; to have your hearts fixed, trusting in God, as one that stands on a firm foundation,

and hath for his habitation the munition of rocks, that is not afraid of evil tidings, but laughs at the fear of the enemy. It will be the way for you to possess that quietness and assurance spoken of, [Isa. xxxii. 17.](#) “The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.”?The servant who always stands watching, will not be at all surprised at the news that his Lord is coming. This will be the way for you to live above the fear of death. Yea, if heaven and earth should shake, you may stand firm and unshaken, being settled on a rock, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. O how happy are such persons, who have such safety and peace! What a blessed peace is that which arises from such a constant preparation for death! How happy therefore is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

2. What dismal calamities and miseries mankind are subject to for want of this, for want of behaving themselves every day, as not depending on any future day! The way of the world is, one day foolishly to depend on another, yea on many others. And what is the consequence? Why, the consequence with respect to the greater part of the world is, that they live all their days without any true peace or rest of soul. They are all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death. And when death sensibly approaches they are put into a terrible fright. They have a dismal view of their past lives; the ill improvement of their time, and the sins they have been guilty of, stand staring them in the face, and are more frightful to them than so many devils. And when they look forward into that eternity whither they are going, how dismal is the prospect! O how do their hearts shrink at the thought of it! They go before the judgment-seat of God, as those that are dragged thither, while they would gladly, if they could, hide themselves in the caves and dens of the earth.

And what is worse yet than all the disquietude and terror of conscience in this world; the consequence of a contrary behaviour, with respect to the bulk of mankind, is their eternal perdition. They flatter themselves that they shall see another day, and then another, and trust to that, until finally most of them are swallowed up in hell, to lament their folly to all eternity, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.—Consider how it was with all the foolish virgins who trusted to the delay of the bridegroom’s coming: when he came they were surprised, and found unprepared, having no oil in their lamps; and while they went to buy, those who were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut against them, and they came afterwards crying in vain, *Lord, Lord, open to us.*



## THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM ;

OR

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE A JOURNEY TOWARDS HEAVEN. <sup>231</sup>

HEB. xi. 13, 14.

And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country.

The apostle is here setting forth the excellencies of the grace of faith, by the glorious effects and happy issue of it in the saints of the Old Testament. He had spoken in the preceding part of the chapter particularly, of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Jacob. Having enumerated those instances, he takes notice that “these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers,<sup>232</sup> ” &c.—In these words the apostle seems to have a more particular respect to Abraham and Sarah, and their kindred, who came with them from Haran, and from Ur of the Chaldees, as appears by the [15th verse.](#), where the apostle says, ” and truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.”

*Two things may be observed here:*

1. What these saints confessed of themselves, *viz. that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*—Thus we have a particular account concerning Abraham, “I am a stranger and a sojourner with you.”<sup>233</sup> And it seems to have been the general sense of the patriarchs, by what Jacob says to Pharaoh. “And Jacob said to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.<sup>234</sup> ” “I am a stranger and a sojourner with thee, as all my fathers were.”<sup>235</sup>

2. The inference that the apostle draws from hence, *viz. that they sought another country as their home.* “For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country.” In confessing that they were strangers, they plainly declared that this is not their country; that this is not the place where they are at home. And in confessing themselves to be pilgrims,

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231 SEPT. 1733.

232 [Heb. xi. 13.](#)

233 [Gen xxiii. 4.](#)

234 [Gen. xlvii. 9.](#)

235 [Ps. xxxix. 12.](#)

they declared plainly that this is not their settled abode; but that they have respect to some other country, which they seek, and to which they are travelling.

SECT. I.

That this life ought to be so spent by us, as to be only a journey or pilgrimage towards heaven.

Here I would observe,

1. That we ought not to rest in the world and its enjoyments, but should desire heaven. We should “seek first the kingdom of God.”<sup>236</sup> We ought above all things to desire a heavenly happiness; to be with God; and dwell with Jesus Christ. Though surrounded with outward enjoyments, and settled in families with desirable friends and relations; though we have companions whose society is delightful, and children in whom we see many promising qualifications; though we live by good neighbours, and are generally beloved where known; yet we ought not to take our rest in these things as our portion. We should be so far from resting in them, that we should desire to leave them all, in God’s due time. We ought to possess, enjoy, and use them, with no other view but readily to quit them, whenever we are called to it, and to change them willingly and cheerfully for heaven.

A traveller is not wont to rest in what he meets with, however comfortable and pleasing, on the road. If he passes through pleasant places, flowery meadows, or shady groves; he does not take up his content in these things, but only takes a transient view of them as he goes along. He is not enticed by fine appearances to put off the thought of proceeding. No, but his journey’s end is in his mind. If he meets with comfortable accommodations at an inn, he entertains no thoughts of settling there. He considers that these things are not his own, that he is but a stranger, and when he has refreshed himself, or tarried for a night, he is for going forward. And it is pleasant to him to think that so much of the way is gone.

So should we desire heaven more than the comforts and enjoyments of this life. The apostle mentions it as an encouraging, comfortable consideration to Christians, that they draw nearer their happiness. “Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”<sup>237</sup>—Our hearts ought to be loose to these things, as that of a man on a journey; that we may as cheerfully part with them, whenever God calls. “But this I say, brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.”<sup>238</sup>—These things are only lent to us for a little while, to serve a present turn; but we should set our *hearts* on heaven, as our inheritance for ever.

2. We ought to seek heaven, by travelling in the way that leads thither. This is a way of holiness. We should choose and desire to travel thither in this way and in no other; and part

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236 [Matt. vi. 33.](#)

237 [Romans 13:11](#)

238 [1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.](#)

with all those carnal appetites which, as weights, will tend to hinder us. “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us.”<sup>239</sup> However pleasant the gratification of any appetite may be, we must lay it aside, if it be a hinderance, or a stumbling-block in the way to heaven.

We should travel on in the way of obedience to all God’s commands, even the difficult as well as the easy; denying all our sinful inclinations and interests. The way to heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel up hill, though it be hard and tiresome, and contrary to the natural bias of our flesh. We should follow Christ; the path he travelled, was the right way to heaven. We should take up our cross and follow him, in meekness and lowliness of heart, obedience and charity, diligence to do good, and patience under afflictions. The way to heaven is a heavenly life; an imitation of those who are in heaven, in their holy enjoyments, loving, adoring, serving, and praising God and the Lamb. Even if we *could* go to heaven with the gratification of our lusts, we should prefer a way of holiness and conformity to the spiritual self-denying rules of the gospel.

3. We should travel on in this way in a laborious manner.—Long journeys are attended with toil and fatigue; especially if through a wilderness. Persons in such a case expect no other than to suffer hardships and weariness.—So we should travel in this way of holiness, improving our time and strength, to surmount the difficulties and obstacles that are in the way. The land we have to travel through, is a wilderness; there are many mountains, rocks, and rough places that we must go over, and therefore there is a necessity that we should lay out our strength.

4. Our whole lives ought to be spent in travelling this road.—We ought to begin *early*. This should be the *first* concern, when persons become capable of acting. When they first set out in the *world*, they should set out on *this* journey.—And we ought to travel on with *assiduity*. It ought “to be the work of every day., We should often think of our journey’s end; and make it our daily work to travel on in the way that leads to it.—He who is on a journey, is often thinking of the destined place; and it is his daily care and business to get along; and to improve his time to get towards his journey’s end. Thus should heaven be continually in our thoughts; and the immediate entrance or passage to it, *viz.* death, should be present with us.—We ought to *persevere* in this way as long as we live.

“Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”<sup>240</sup> Though the road be difficult and toilsome, we must hold out with patience, and be content to endure hardships. Though the journey be long, yet we must not stop short; but hold on till we arrive at the place we seek. Nor should we be discouraged with the length and difficulties of the way, as the children

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239 [Heb. xii. 1](#)

240 [Heb. xii. 1.](#)

of Israel were, and be for turning back again. All our thought and design should be to press forward till we arrive.

5. We ought to be continually growing in holiness; and in that respect coming nearer and nearer to heaven—We should be endeavouring to come nearer to heaven, in being more heavenly; becoming more and more like the inhabitants of heaven, in respect of holiness and conformity to God; the knowledge of God and Christ; in clear views of the glory of God, the beauty of Christ, and the excellency of divine things, as we come nearer to the beatific vision.—We should labour to be continually growing in divine love—that this may be an increasing flame in our hearts, till they ascend wholly in this flame—in obedience and a heavenly conversation; that we may do the will of God on earth as the angels do in heaven; in comfort and spiritual joy; in sensible communion with God and Jesus Christ. Our path should be as “the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day.”<sup>241</sup> We ought to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness; after an increase in righteousness. “As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.”<sup>242</sup> The perfection of heaven should be our mark. “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”<sup>243</sup>

6. All other concerns of life ought to be entirely subordinate to this.—When a man is on a journey, all the steps he takes are subordinated to the aim of getting to his journey’s end. And if he carries money or provisions with him, it is to supply him in his journey. So we ought wholly to subordinate all our other business, and all our temporal enjoyments, to this affair of travelling to heaven. When any thing we have becomes a clog and hinderance to us, we should quit it immediately. The use of our worldly enjoyments and possessions, should be with such a view, and in such a manner, as to further us in our way heavenward. Thus we should eat, and drink, and clothe ourselves, and improve the conversation and enjoyment of friends. And whatever business we are setting about, whatever design we are engaging in, we should inquire with ourselves, whether this business or undertaking will forward us in our way to heaven? And if not, we should quit our design.

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241 [Prov. iv. 18.](#)

242 [1 Pet. li. 2.](#)

243 [Phil. iii. 13, 14](#)

**SECT. II.**

Why the Christian's life is a journey, or pilgrimage?

1. This world is not our abiding place. Our continuance here is but very short. Man's days on the earth are as a shadow. It was never designed by God that this world should be our home. Neither did God give us these temporal accommodations for that end. If God has given us ample estates, and children or other pleasant friends, it is with no such design, that we should be furnished here, as for a settled abode; but with a design that we should use them for the present, and then leave them in a very little time. When we are called to any secular business, or charged with the care of a family, if we improve our lives to any other purpose, than as a journey toward heaven, all our labour will be lost. If we spend our lives in the pursuit of a temporal happiness; as riches or sensual pleasures; credit and esteem from men; delight in our children, and the prospect of seeing them well brought up, and well settled, &c.—All these things will be of little significancy to us. Death will blow up all our hopes, and will put an end to these enjoyments. "The places that have known us, will know us no more:" and "the eye that has seen us, shall see us no more." We must be taken away for ever from all these things; and it is uncertain when: it may be soon after we are put into the possession of them. And then, where will be all our worldly employments and enjoyments, when we are laid in the silent grave? [Job xiv. 12.](#) "So man lieth down and riseth not again, till the heavens be no more."<sup>244</sup>

2. The future world was designed to be our settled and everlasting abode. There it was intended that we should be fixed; and there alone is a lasting habitation, and a lasting inheritance. The present state is short and transitory; but our state in the other world, is everlasting. And as we are there at first, so we must be without change. Our state in the future world, therefore, being eternal, is of so much greater importance than our state here, that all our concerns in this world should be wholly subordinated to it.

3. Heaven is that place alone where our highest end, and highest good, is to be obtained. God hath made us for himself. "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Therefore, then do we attain to our highest end, when we are brought to God: but that is by being brought to heaven; for that is God's throne, the place of his special presence. There is but a very imperfect union with God to be had in this world, a very imperfect knowledge of him in the midst of much darkness; a very imperfect conformity to God, mingled with abundance of estrangement. Here we can serve and glorify God but in a very imperfect manner; our service being mingled with sin, which dishonours God.—But when we get to heaven, (if ever that be,) we shall be brought to a perfect union with God, and have more clear views of him. There we shall be fully conformed to God, without any remaining sin;

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244 [Job xiv. 12.](#)

for “we shall see him as he is.” There we shall serve God perfectly; and glorify him in an exalted manner, even to the utmost of the powers and capacity of our nature. Then we shall perfectly give up ourselves to God; our hearts will be pure and holy offerings, presented in a flame of divine love.

God is the highest good of the reasonable creature; and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied.—To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is *infinitely* better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops; but God is the ocean.—Therefore it becomes us to spend this life only as a journey towards heaven, as it becomes us to make the seeking of our highest end and proper good, the whole work of our lives; to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life. Why should we labour for, or set our hearts on, any thing else, but that which is our proper end, and true happiness?

4. Our present state, and all that belongs to it, is designed by him that made all things, to be wholly in order to another world.—This world was made for a place of preparation for another. Man’s mortal life was given him, that he might be prepared for his fixed state. And all that God has here given us, is given to this purpose. The sun shines, and the rain falls upon us; and the earth yields her increase to us for this end. Civil, ecclesiastical, and family affairs, and all our personal concerns, are designed and ordered in subordination to a future world, by the maker and disposer of all things. To this therefore they ought to be subordinated by us.

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**SECT. III.**

Instruction afforded by the consideration, that life is a journey, or pilgrimage, towards heaven.

1. This doctrine may teach us moderation in our mourning for the loss of such dear friends, who, while they lived, improved their lives to right purposes—If they lived a holy life, then their lives were a journey towards heaven. And why should we be immoderate in mourning, when they are got to their journey's end? Death, though it appears to us with a frightful aspect, is to them a great blessing. Their end is happy, and better than their beginning. "The day of their death is better to them than the day of their birth."<sup>245</sup> While they lived, they desired heaven, and chose it above this world, or any of its enjoyments. For this they earnestly longed, and why should we grieve that they have obtained it?—Now they have got to their Father's house. They find more comfort a thousand times, now they are got home, than they did in their journey. In this world they underwent much labour and toil; it was a wilderness they passed through. There were many difficulties in the way; mountains and rough places. It was laborious and fatiguing to travel the road; and they had many wearisome days and nights; but now they have got to their everlasting rest. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me. Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."<sup>246</sup> They look back upon the difficulties, and sorrows, and dangers of life, rejoicing that they have surmounted them all.

We are ready to look upon death as their calamity, and to mourn, that those who were so dear to us, should be in the dark grave; that they are there transformed to corruption and worms; taken away from their dear children and enjoyments, &c. as though they were in awful circumstances. But this is owing to our infirmity; they are in a happy condition, inconceivably blessed. They do not mourn, but rejoice with exceeding joy: their mouths are filled with joyful songs, and they drink at rivers of pleasure. They find no mixture of grief, that they have changed their earthly enjoyments, and the company of mortals, for heaven. Their life here, though in the best circumstances, was attended with much that was adverse and afflictive: but now there is an end to all adversity. "They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."<sup>247</sup>

It is true, we shall see them no more in this world, yet we ought to consider that we are travelling towards the same place; and why should we break our hearts that they have got

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245 [Eccles. vii. 1.](#)

246 [\(Rev. xiv. 13.](#)

247 [\(Rev. vii. 16, 17.](#)



there before us! We are following after them, and hope, as soon as we get to our journey's end, to be with them again, in better circumstances. A degree of mourning for near relations when departed is not inconsistent with Christianity, but very agreeable to it; for as long as we are flesh and blood, we have animal propensities and affections. But we have just reason that our mourning should be mingled with joy. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope:"<sup>248</sup> (*i. e.*) that they should not sorrow as the heathen, who had no knowledge of a future happiness. This appears by the following verse; "for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him."

2. If our lives ought to be only a journey towards heaven; how ill do they improve their lives, that spend them in travelling towards hell!—Some men spend their whole lives, from their infancy to their dying day, in going down the broad way to destruction. They not only draw nearer to hell as to time, but they every day grow more ripe for destruction; they are more assimilated to the inhabitants of the infernal world. While others press forward in the strait and narrow way to life, and laboriously travel up the hill toward Zion, against the inclinations and tendency of the flesh; these run with a swift career down to eternal death. This is the employment of every day, with all wicked men; and the whole day is spent in it. As soon as ever they awake in the morning, they set out anew in the way to hell, and spend every waking moment in it. They begin in early days. "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."<sup>249</sup> They hold on it with perseverance. Many of them who live to be old, are never weary in it; though they live to be a hundred years old, they will not cease travelling in the way to hell, till they arrive there. And all the concerns of life are subordinated to this employment. A wicked man is a servant of sin; his powers and faculties are employed in the service of sin, and in fitness for hell. And all his possessions are so used by him as to be subservient to the same purpose. Men spend their time in treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Thus do all unclean persons, who live in lascivious practices in secret; all malicious persons; all profane persons, that neglect the duties of religion. Thus do all unjust persons; and those who are fraudulent and oppressive in their dealings. Thus do all backbiters and revilers; all covetous persons, that set their hearts chiefly on the riches of this world. Thus do tavern-haunters, and frequenters of evil company; and many other kinds that might be mentioned. Thus the bulk of mankind are hasting on in the broad way to destruction; which is, as it were, filled up with the multitude that are going in it with one accord. And they are every day going into hell out of this broad way by thousands. Multitudes are continually flowing down into the great lake of fire and brimstone, as some mighty river constantly disembogues its water into the ocean.

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248 1 Thess. iv. 13.

249 (Psal. xlviii. 4.

3. Hence when persons are converted, they do but begin their work, and set out in the way they have to go.—They never till then do any thing at that work in which their whole lives ought to be spent. Persons before conversion never take a step that way. Then does a man first set out on his journey, when he is brought home to Christ; and so far is he from having done his work, that his care and labour in his Christian work and business is then but begun, in which he must spend the remaining part of his life.

Those persons do ill, who when they are converted, and have obtained a hope of their being in a good condition, do not strive as earnestly as they did before, while they were under awakenings. They ought, henceforward, as long as they live, to be as earnest and laborious, as watchful and careful, as ever; yea, they should increase more and more. It is no just excuse, that now they have obtained conversion. Should not we be as diligent that we may serve and glorify God, as that we ourselves may be happy? And if we have obtained grace, yet we ought to strive as much that we may obtain the other degrees that are before, as we did to obtain that small degree that is behind. The apostle tells us, that he forgot what was behind, and reached forth towards what was before.<sup>250</sup>

Yea, those who are converted, have now a further reason to strive for grace; for they have seen something of its excellency. A man who has once tasted the blessings of Canaan, has more reason to press towards it, than he had before. And they who are converted, should strive to "make their calling and election sure." All those who are converted are not sure of it; and those who are sure, do not know that they shall be always so; and still seeking and serving God with the utmost diligence, is the way to have assurance, and to have it maintained.

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SECT. IV.

An exhortation, so to spend the present life, that it may only be a journey towards heaven.

Labour to obtain such a disposition of mind that you may choose heaven for your inheritance and home; and may earnestly long for it, and be willing to change this world, and all its enjoyments, for heaven. Labour to have your heart taken up so much about heaven, and heavenly enjoyments, as that you may rejoice when God calls you to leave your best earthly friends and comforts for heaven, there to enjoy God and Christ.

Be persuaded to travel in the way that leads to heaven; *viz.* in holiness, self-denial, mortification, obedience to all the commands of God, following Christ's example; in a way of a heavenly life, or imitation of the saints and angels in heaven. Let it be your daily work, from morning till night, and hold out in it to the end; let nothing stop or discourage you, or turn you aside from this road. And let all other concerns be subordinated to this. Consider the reasons that have been mentioned why you should thus spend your life; that this world is not your abiding place, that the future world is to be your everlasting abode; and that the enjoyments and concerns of this world are given entirely in order to another. And consider further for motive,

1. How worthy is heaven that your life should be wholly spent as a journey towards it.—To what better purpose can you spend your life, whether you respect your duty or your interest? What better end can you propose to your journey, than to obtain heaven? You are placed in this world, with a choice given you, that you may travel which way you please; and one way leads to heaven. Now, can you direct your course better than this way? All men have some aim or other in living. Some mainly seek worldly things; they spend their days in such pursuits. But is not heaven, where is fulness of joy for ever, much more worthy to be sought by you? How can you better employ your strength, use your means, and spend your days, than in travelling the road that leads to the everlasting enjoyment of God; to his glorious presence; to the new Jerusalem; to the heavenly mount Zion; where all your desires will be filled, and no danger of ever losing your happiness?—No man is at home in this world, whether he choose heaven or not; here he is but a transient person. Where can you choose your home better than in heaven?

2. This is the way to have death comfortable to us.—To spend our lives so as to be only a journeying towards heaven, is the way to be free from bondage, and to have the prospect and forethought of death comfortable. Does the traveller think of his journey's end with fear and terror? Is it terrible to him to think that he has almost got to his journey's end? Were the children of Israel sorry, after forty years' travel in the wilderness, when they had almost got to Canaan? This is the way to be able to part with the world without grief. Does it grieve the traveller when he has got home, to quit his staff and load of provisions that he had to sustain him by the way?

3. No more of your life will be pleasant to think of when you come to die, than has been spent after this manner.—If you have spent none of your life this way, your whole life will be terrible to you to think of, unless you die under some great delusion. You will see then, that all of your life that has been spent otherwise, is lost. You will then see the vanity of all other aims that you may have proposed to yourself. The thought of what you here possessed and enjoyed, will not be pleasant to you, unless you can think also that you have subordinated them to this purpose.

4. Consider that those who are willing thus to spend their lives as a journey towards heaven may have heaven.—Heaven, however high and glorious, is attainable for such poor worthless creatures as we are. We may attain that glorious region which is the habitation of angels; yea, the dwelling-place of the Son of God; and where is the glorious presence of the great Jehovah. And we may have it freely; without money and without price: if we are but willing to travel the road that leads to it, and bend our course that way as long as we live, we may and shall have heaven for our eternal resting place.

5. Let it be considered, that if our lives be not a journey towards heaven, they will be a journey to hell. All mankind, after they have been here a short while, go to either of the two great receptacles of all that depart out of this world: the one is *heaven*; whither a small number, in comparison, travel; and the other is *hell*, whither the bulk of mankind throng. And one or the other of these must be the issue of our course in this world.

I shall conclude by giving a few *directions*:

1. Labour to get a sense of the vanity of this world; on account of the little satisfaction that is to be enjoyed here; its short continuance, and unserviceableness when we most stand in need of help, *viz.* on a death-bed.—All men, that live any considerable time in the world, might see enough to convince them of its vanity, if they would but consider.—Be persuaded therefore to exercise consideration, when you see and hear, from time to time, of the death of others. Labour to turn your thoughts this way. See the vanity of the world in such a glass.

2. Labour to be much acquainted with heaven.—If you are not acquainted with it, you will not be likely to spend your life as a journey thither. You will not be sensible of its worth, nor will you long for it. Unless you are much conversant in your mind with a better good, it will be exceeding difficult to you to have your hearts loose from these things, and to use them only in subordination to something else, and be ready to part with them for the sake of that better good.—Labour therefore to obtain a realizing sense of a heavenly world, to get a firm belief of its reality, and to be very much conversant with it in your thoughts.

3. Seek heaven only by Jesus Christ.—Christ tells us that he is the way, and the truth, and the life.<sup>251</sup> He tells us that he is the door of the sheep. “I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved; and go in and out and find pasture.”<sup>252</sup> If we therefore would

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251 [John xiv. 6.](#)

252 [John x. 9.](#)

improve our lives as a journey towards heaven, we must seek it by him, and not by our own righteousness; as expecting to obtain it only for his sake, looking to him, having our dependence on him, who has procured it for us by his merit. And expect strength to walk in holiness, the way that leads to heaven, only from him.

4. Let Christians help one another in going this journey.—There are many ways whereby Christians might greatly forward one another in their way to heaven, as by religious conference, &c. Therefore let them be exhorted to go this journey as it were in company, conversing together, and assisting one another. Company is very desirable in a journey, but in none so much as this.—Let them go united, and not fall out by the way, which would be to hinder one another; but use all means they can to help each other up the hill.—This would insure a more successful travelling, and a more joyful meeting at their Father's house in glory.

MAN'S NATURAL BLINDNESS

IN THE

THINGS OF RELIGION.



PSALM xciv. 8-11.

Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. <sup>253</sup>

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253 This Treatise is a posthumous work, collected from the author's papers. They were drawn up by him in the form of three short sermons, in his usual way of preparation for the pulpit; but were by no means finished in a manner fit for the public eye. It is presumed, therefore, that the present form is much more suitable to the nature of the subject, than that in which they appeared in the Glasgow edition (1785) of Eighteen Sermons, connected with the Author's Life, by Dr. Hopkins. This plan has been occasionally adopted respecting some other courses of sermons, especially posthumous ones; which we have been encouraged to do by several judicious friends, who are well acquainted with the author's writings. And we own, it is no small inducement in our view, to edit them in this manner in a standard edition, they are much more likely to do good at a future period. A tract may be reprinted with much greater probability of acceptance and success, than the same in the form of sermons, unfinished by the author, with divisions, transitions, &c. to which the generality of readers are unaccustomed.—W.

## SECT. I.

Introductory observations.

In these words the following particulars are to be observed. (1.) A certain spiritual *disease* charged on *some* persons, *viz.* darkness, and *blindness* of mind, appearing in their ignorance and folly. (2.) The great *degree* of this disease; so as to render the subjects of it *fools*. *Ye fools, when will ye be wise?* And so as to reduce them to a degree of *brutishness*. *Ye brutish among the people*. This ignorance and folly were to such a degree, as to render men like beasts. (3.) The *obstinacy* of this disease; expressed in that interrogation, *When will ye be wise?* Their blindness and folly were not only very great; but deeply rooted and established, resisting all manner of cure. (4.) Of what *nature* this blindness is. It is especially in things pertaining to God. They were strangely *ignorant* of his perfections, like beasts: and had *foolish* notions of him, as though he did not see, nor know; and as though he would not execute justice, by chastising and punishing wicked men. (5.) The *unreasonableness* and *sottishness* of the notion they had of God, that he did not *hear*, did not *observe* their reproaches of him and his people, is shown by observing that he *planted* the ear. It is very *unreasonable* to suppose that he, who gave power of perceiving words to *others*, should not perceive them *himself*. And the *sottishness* of their being insensible of God's all-seeing eye, and particularly of his seeing their wicked actions, appears, in that God is the being who *formed* the eye, and gave others a *power* of seeing. The *sottishness* of their apprehension of God, as though he did not know what they did, is argued from his being the fountain and original of all knowledge. The *unreasonableness* of their expecting to escape God's just chastisements and judgments for sin, is set forth by his chastising even the *heathen*, who did not sin against that light, or against so great mercies, as the wicked in Israel did; nor had ever made such a profession as they. (6.) We may observe, that this dreadful disease is ascribed to *mankind in general*. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of Man, that they are vanity*. The psalmist had been setting forth the vanity and unreasonableness of the thoughts of *some* of the children of men; and immediately upon it he observes, that this vanity and foolishness of thought is *common* and *natural* to *mankind*.

From these particulars we may fairly deduce the following doctrinal observation: That there is an extreme and brutish blindness in things of religion, which naturally possesses the hearts of mankind.—This doctrine is not to be understood as any reflection on the *capacity* of the human nature; for God hath made man with a noble and excellent capacity. The blindness I speak of, is not a merely *negative* ignorance; such as in trees and stones, that know nothing. They have no faculties of understanding and perception, whereby they should be capable of any knowledge. And inferior animals, though they have *sensitive* perception, are not capable of any *intellectual* views. There is no fault to be found with man's *natural* faculties. God has given men faculties truly noble and excellent; well capable of true wisdom

and divine knowledge. Nor is the blindness I speak of like the ignorance of a new-born infant; which arises from want of necessary opportunity to exert these faculties.

The blindness that is in the heart of man, which is spoken of in the text and doctrine, is neither for want of *faculties*, nor *opportunity* to know, but from some positive cause.<sup>254</sup> There is a principle in his heart, of such a blinding and besotting nature, that it hinders the exercises of his faculties about the things of religion; exercises for which God has made him well capable, and for which he gives him abundant opportunity.

In order to make it appear, that such an extreme brutish blindness, with respect to the things of religion, does naturally possess the hearts of men, I shall show how this is manifest in those things that appear in men's open profession; and how it is manifest in those things that are found by inward experience, and are visible in men's practice.

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254 This is meant in a popular not a philosophical sense; and is expressive of active, wilful perverseness, rather than the abstract nature of sin, or the obliquity of the natural act—W.



## SECT. II.

Man's natural blindness in religion, manifested by those things which appear in men's open profession.

I would now show, how it is manifest that there is a sottish and brutish blindness in the hearts of men in the things of religion, by those things which appear in men's open profession.

1. It appears in the *grossness* of that ignorance and those delusions, which have appeared among mankind. Man has faculties given him whereby he is well capable of inferring the being of the Creator from the creatures. The invisible things of God are very plainly and clearly to be seen by the things that are made; and the perfections of the Divine Being, his eternal power and Godhead, are very manifest in the works of his hands. And yet grossly absurd notions concerning the Godhead have prevailed in the world. Instead of acknowledging and worshipping the true God, they have fallen off to the worship of idols. Instead of acknowledging the *one* only true God, they have made a *multitude* of deities. Instead of worshipping a God, who is an almighty, infinite, all-wise, and holy Spirit, they have worshipped the hosts of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars; and the works of their own hands, images of gold and silver, brass and iron, wood and stone; gods that can neither hear, nor see, nor walk, nor speak, nor do, nor know any thing. Some in the shape of men, others in the shape of oxen and calves; some in the shape of serpents, others of fishes, &c.

The sottishness of men in thus worshipping the lifeless images which they themselves have made, is elegantly and forcibly represented by the prophet Isaiah. "The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms. Yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line: he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn for he will take thereof and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshipping it: he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire: with part thereof he eateth flesh: he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire. And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshipping it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god. They have not known, nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see, and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire, yea, also I have

baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it, and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fell down to the stock of a tree?"<sup>255</sup>

Many of the images which the heathen worshipped were made in the most *monstrous* and *terrible* shapes they could devise; and the more hideous and frightful they appeared, the better they supposed they would serve their turn for gods. Some of their images were made so as to be the most *unclean* representations; images of men openly exposing their nakedness. These unclean images, they judged, appeared in a god-like manner, and worthy to be worshipped. Many, instead of worshipping a holy and good God, and infinitely perfect Being, ascribed vices to many of the gods which they worshipped. One god they reckoned notorious for *drunkenness*; others notorious for *uncleanness*: to others they ascribed *lying* and *stealing*; to others *cruelty*; and yet looked upon them worthy to be worshipped as gods! Many worshipped devils, who appealed to them, and whom they themselves reckoned to be evil spirits; but yet built temples, and offered sacrifices to them, because they were afraid of them. Many worshipped *beasts* and *birds* and *fishes*; and the most hateful and loathsome animals were most worshipped; particularly, *serpents* were more commonly worshipped than any other beast. Many worshipped *rivers*, and *trees*, and *mountains*. They worshipped many *diseases*. There is scarcely any thing of which men have not made gods.

And so far has that principle of *blindness* prevailed, with respect to the things of religion, that it has in a great measure extinguished all light in the minds of many, even in matters of *morality*, and things that have but a distant relation to religion. So that many whole nations have professedly approved of many things directly contrary to the light of nature; and the most *horrid vices* and immoralities have been esteemed *harmless*, yea, accounted *virtues* among them; such as *revenge*, *cruelty*, and *incest*. Many nations have openly allowed the practice of *sodomy*. And with some it has been accounted commendable to marry their nearest relations. Many have even worshipped their gods in their temples with acts of *drunkenness* and *whoredom*, and the most abominable lewdness. And the more filthy they were in their uncleanness, they thought their gods the more pleased and delighted with it.

Many nations have been so under the influence of mental blindness, that they have been void of all *civility*, and have been reduced to a state very little above the beasts in their common customs, and ordinary way of living; and in a great many things far below the beasts: being, if I may so speak, much more beastly than the beasts themselves. Now this has not been, because these men, with whom this has been the case, have not had the same *faculties* that we have. That we are not as ignorant as they, is not because we have better natural understandings, or that our minds are by nature more clear, and our eyes more discerning; or that our hearts are not naturally so inclined to sottishness and delusion as theirs. But only because God has not left us so much to ourselves, as he has them. He has

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255 [Isa. xlv. 12-19.](#)

given us more instruction to help us against our delusions. God has so ordered it in his providence, that we should have his good word to instruct us; and has caused that we should grow up from our infancy under Christian instruction.

2. The extreme blindness and sottishness in things of religion, which is naturally in the hearts of men, appears not only in embracing and professing those errors that are very great, but also those that are so *unnatural*. They have not only embraced errors which are very contrary to *truth*, but very contrary to *humanity*; not only against the light of nature, but against the more innocent inclinations of nature. Such has been, and still is, the blindness of many nations in the world, that they embrace those errors which do not only exclude all true virtue, all holy dispositions; but those that have swallowed up the more harmless inclinations of human nature.

Thus they have embraced many gross delusions, that are as contrary as possible to *natural affection*. Such as offering up their own children in sacrifice to their idol; which has been a common thing in the heathen world. And the parents have not only offered them up to *death*, but they have brought them, and offered them up to the most *cruel and tormenting deaths*: as, to be *burnt alive*, to be *broiled* to death in burning brass; which was the way of offering up children to Moloch. The image of the idol being made of brass, in a horrid shape, was heated red hot; and the poor child was laid naked in this burning brass, and so burnt to death. And the *parents themselves* brought the child to this offering, however sweet and pleasant a child it might be. And thus the innocent child was tormented till it died, without any regard to its piteous cries. And it has been the manner of some nations, to offer in sacrifice the fairest and best beloved child that they had. And thus many thousands of poor babes have been offered up. So strong has been the tendency of the hearts of men to delusion, that it has thus overcome those strong natural affections which men have to the fruit of their own bodies.

And many of these delusions have been against men's natural love of their own ease, and aversion to pain. Many have worshipped their idols, and do so to this day, with such rites as are most painful and tormenting; cutting, gashing, and mangling their own flesh. Thus they sottishly worshipped Baal of old. "And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them."<sup>256</sup> And it is still the custom in some nations grievously to torment themselves: to kindle a fire to scorch their own bodies in a most miserable manner; and to put themselves to various and long-continued torments to please their idols. And it is the manner in some countries for persons, on certain occasions, to *kill* themselves; yea, to put themselves to *cruel* deaths; to cast themselves into great fires, and there burn themselves to death. How powerful must be the

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256 1 Kings xviii. 28.

delusions of the human mind, and how strong the tendency of the heart to carry them such a length, and so to overcome the tenderest feelings of human nature!

3. The extreme blindness of the mind of man will appear further, if we consider how *general* gross ignorance and delusion has been. It has for the most part prevailed through the greater part of the world. For most of the time from Noah's flood to the coming of Christ, all nations, except the children of Israel, were overspread with gross heathenish darkness; being given up to the most vain and ridiculous notions, and all manner of superstitious, barbarous, absurd, and unnatural practices. And, for the greater part of the time since, most nations of the world have been covered with gross darkness.

So it is at this day. Many nations are under *popish* darkness, and are in such gross delusions that they worship the Virgin Mary, and a great multitude of dead men, whom their church has canonized for saints; some real saints, and others abominably wicked men. So they worship the *bread* in the sacrament, and account it not only the real body of Christ, but real Christ in body and soul, and divinity. They carry a *wafer*, a small piece of bread, in procession, fall down before it, *adore* it, and account it Christ himself, both in his divine and human nature; and yet believe that the body of Christ is in heaven, and in ten thousand different places on earth at the same time. They think they can do works of *supererogation*; that is, *more* good works than they are *obliged* to do, whereby they bring God into debt to them. They whip themselves, and put themselves to other ridiculous penances and sufferings, whereby they think they appease the anger of God for their sins. And they pay money to the priests, to *buy* the pardon of their sins; yea, they buy indulgences for *future* crimes, or pardon for sins before they commit them. They think they defend themselves from evil spirits, by sprinkling holy water. They pay money to buy the souls of their departed friends out of purgatory; they worship the *relics* of dead saints; such as pieces of their bones, their teeth, their hair, pieces of their garments, and the like. And innumerable other such foolish delusions are they under.

A great part of the nations of the world are *Mahometans*; many of the articles of whose belief are too childish and ridiculous to be publicly mentioned in a solemn assembly.—But the greater part of the inhabitants of the world are to this day gross, barbarous *heathens*, who have not the knowledge of the true God, but worship *idols* and *devils*, with all manner of absurd and foolish rites and ceremonies; and are destitute of even common civility: multitudes of nations being like beasts in human shape.—Now this barbarous ignorance and gross delusion being of such great extent and continuance, shows that the cause is *general*, and that the defect is in the *corrupted nature* of mankind; man's natural blindness and proneness of his heart to delusion.

4. The sottish blindness and folly of the heart of men appears in their being so *prone* to fall into such gross delusions, *soon* after they have been favoured with *clear* light. Were not the minds of men exceeding dark, they never would entertain such absurd notions at all;

for they are as contrary as possible to reason: much less would they fall into them, after they had once been instructed in the truth. For, were it not very strange and great sottishness indeed, they would—when they come to be informed of the truth, and have opportunity to compare it with those gross errors—behold such a reasonableness in the truth, and such absurdity in those errors, that they would never be in danger of being deluded by them any more. But yet so it is; mankind, after they have been *fully instructed*, and have lived in *clear light*, have, time after time, presently lost the knowledge of the truth, and have exchanged it for the most barbarous and brutish notions.

So it was early after the flood, whereby the wicked world, those that were visibly so, were destroyed; and none were left but those who professed the true religion: and they had such an eminently holy man as Noah to instruct them. And though the true God had so wonderfully and astonishingly manifested himself in that great work of vengeance against his enemies; yet the posterity of Noah, in great part, presently lost the knowledge of the true God, and fell away to idolatry; and that even while Noah was living. And the ancestors of Abraham were tainted with that idolatry; even Terah his own father. “And Joshua said unto all the people, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood,” &c.<sup>257</sup> It seems as though Abraham was called away from his father’s house, and from his own country, for this reason, that the country was overrun with idolatry.

And even many of the posterity of *Abraham* and *Isaac*—Abraham’s posterity by Hagar and Keturah, and that part of Isaac’s posterity which were of Esau—though the true religion was so thoroughly taught and practised in the houses of those holy patriarchs, and God had from time to time so wonderfully and miraculously manifested himself to them, yet—soon cast off the true God, and fell away to idolatry. For, not very long after, we read of the posterity of Jacob as being the *only* people of God, that he had in all the earth.—And so the people of that part of the land of Canaan, who were under that holy king Melchizedeck, soon totally cast off the worship of the one only true God, which he taught and maintained. For before Joshua brought in the children of Israel, the inhabitants of that land were wholly given to idolatry. So the people of the land of Uz, who were under the government of so great and holy a man as Job, soon lost the knowledge of the true God, and all those religious truths which were then known among them, and sunk into gross idolatry.

So the posterity of *Jacob*, themselves—though God had manifested himself to them, and had wrought such wonders for them in the time of Jacob and Joseph, yet—presently fell to worship the gods of Egypt. This appears from the words of Joshua, “Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt.”<sup>258</sup> And how

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257 [Josh. iv. 2,3, 4.](#)

258 [Josh. xxiv. 14.](#)

soon did they fall to worship a golden calf in the wilderness, in the midst of the wonderful and miraculous manifestations of the one only true God! And notwithstanding idolatry was so strictly forbidden, and the folly and wickedness of it so clearly manifested, in the law of Moses and in God's providence; yet, how soon did they fall into idolatry after they were brought into the land of Canaan! And when God raised up eminent men, judges to instruct and govern them, and reclaim them from their idolatrous practices, from time to time; though they professed to be convinced of their foolish delusion, yet they would soon fall again into the most sottish idolatry. And this they did soon after such great light as they enjoyed in the time of Samuel, David, and Solomon; and so, from time to time, down to the Babylonish captivity.

And in the apostles' times, when such great things were done to rouse the attention of mankind, and such great light was spread over many nations, multitudes, after they had been instructed in the Christian religion by the apostles and others, fell away into the grossest heresies, and embraced the most corrupt and absurd notions.—After the Roman empire had been converted from heathenism to Christianity, and the light of the gospel had driven out the sottish ignorance and gross absurdities of pagan idolatry, in which they had continued so long; they soon began to fall away from the truth into *antiChristian* superstition and idolatry, in which are opinions and practices no less absurd than those of the heathen. And a great part of the christian world fell away to Mahometanism.

And since the *reformation*, wherein God wonderfully restored gospel light in a great part of the Christian world, which was but about two hundred years ago, many are fallen away again, some to *popery*, some to gross *heresies*, and some to *atheistical* principles: so that the reformed church is greatly diminished.—And as to our nation in particular, which has been a nation favoured with light, since the reformation, above most, if not any in the world; how soon has it in great part fallen away! A great part of it to *atheism*, *deism*, and gross *infidelity*; and others to Arminianism, and to the Socinian and Arian heresies, to believe that Christ is a created dependent God; and to hold other foolish absurdities! And many have of late openly disputed and denied the moral evil of some of the greatest and most heinous vices.

These things show how desperately prone mankind are to blindness and delusion, how addicted they are to darkness.—God now and then, by his instructions, lifts up some nations out of such gross darkness: but then, how do they sink down into it again, as soon as his hand is withdrawn! like a heavy stone, which, though it may be forced upwards, yet sinks down again; and will continue to sink lower and lower with a swift progress, if there be nothing to restrain it. That is the woeful tendency of the mind of man since the fall, notwithstanding his noble powers and faculties; even to sink down into a kind of brutality, to lose and extinguish all useful light, and to sink lower and lower into darkness.



5. The extreme and brutish blindness that possesses the hearts of men naturally, appears in their being so *confident* in gross errors and delusions. Some things mentioned already, show how confident and assured they are; particularly, their running such great ventures as offering up their children; and cutting and mangling themselves. Multitudes live and die in the most foolish and absurd notions and principles, and never seem to make any *doubt* of their being in the right.

The *Mahometans* seem to make no doubt but that, when they die, they shall go to such a paradise as Mahomet has promised them; where they shall live in all manner of sensual pleasures, and shall spend their time in gratifying the lusts of the flesh. Mahomet promised them, that all who die in war for the defence of the Mahometan religion, shall go to this paradise; and they make no doubt of it. Therefore, many of them, as it were, willingly rush on upon the point of the sword.

The *papists*, many of them at least, make no doubt of the truth of those foolish notions of a *purgatory*, and the power of the priests to deliver them out of it, and give them eternal life; and therefore will not spare vast sums of money to purchase deliverance from those imaginary torments. How confident are many *heretics* in the grossest heresies! and how bold are many *deists* in their infidelity!

6. The desperateness of that blindness which is in the heart of man, appears, in that no nation or people in the world ever have had any remedy or deliverance from such gross ignorance and delusion, from *themselves*. No instance can be mentioned of any people whatsoever, who have once fallen into heathenish darkness, or any other gross superstitions and ridiculous opinions in religion, that ever had any remedy by any wisdom of their *own*; or that have, of themselves, grown wiser by the improvement of their own faculties, and by instructing one another; or that ever had any remedy at all, by the teaching of any wise men, who did not professedly act as moved and directed of God; and did not declare, that they had their instructions, in the first place, from him.

Thus in the *heathen* world. Before Christ's time, the whole world, except the Jews, lay in their darkness for a great many hundred years, even beyond all time of which they had any certain history among them. And there was no remedy, nor any appearance of a remedy; they continued, ages after ages, waxing worse and worse, sinking deeper and deeper. Among all the many nations in the world, no one ever bethought themselves, and emerged out of their brutish darkness. There were indeed some nations that emerged out of slavery, cast off the yoke of their enemies, grew great, and conquered great part of the world; but they never conquered the blindness of their own hearts.

There were some nations who excelled in other knowledge; as the Greeks and Romans. They excelled in policy, and in the form of their civil government. They had wise political rulers; they had excellent laws for regulating their civil state; many of which have been imitated, as a pattern, by many Christian nations ever since. They excelled many other nations

in arts, government, and civility, almost as much as men in common do beasts. Yet they never could deliver themselves from their *heathenism*. Though they were so wise in other things, yet in matters of religion they were very absurd and brutish. For even the Greeks and Romans, in their most flourishing state, worshipped innumerable gods; and some to whom they ascribed great *vices*: and some they worshipped with most obscene and horrid rites. To some they offered *human* sacrifices. The Romans had a temple dedicated to the *furies*, which they worshipped. And they had a multitude of childish notions and fables about their gods.

And though there were raised up some wise men and philosophers among the Greeks and Romans, who borrowed some things concerning the true God from the Jews; yet their instructions never were effectual to deliver any one *people*, or even one *city* or *town*, from their barbarous heathenism, or so much as to get *any one society*, or company of men, to unite in the *public worship of the true God*. And these philosophers themselves had many grossly absurd opinions, mingled with those scraps of truth which they had gathered up.

And the Jews, when fallen away to idolatry, as they often did, never recovered of *themselves*. Never any remedy appeared, unless God raised up, and extraordinarily moved, some person to reprove and instruct them.—And in this age of knowledge, an age wherein learning is carried to a great height, even many learned men seem to be carried away with the gross errors and fooleries of the *popish* religion.

Europe is a part of the world the most famed for arts and sciences of any; and these things have been carried to a much greater height in this age than in many others: yet many learned men in Europe at this day, who greatly excel in human arts and literature, are still under popish darkness. A deceived heart has turned them aside; nor do they seem to have any power to deliver their souls; nor does it come into their minds, that there is a lie in their right hands.

Many men in *France* and in other countries, who are indeed men of great learning, knowledge, and abilities, yet seem really to think that the church of Rome is the only true church of Christ; and are zealous to uphold and propagate it. And though now, within this hundred years, human learning has been very much promoted, and has risen to a greater height than ever in the world; and has greatly increased not only in our nation, but in France and Italy, and other popish countries; yet there seems to be no such effect of it, as any considerable turning from popish delusions; but the church of Rome has rather increased of late, than otherwise.

And in *England*, a land wherein learning flourishes as much as in any in the world, and which is perhaps the most favoured with light of any; there are many men of vast learning, and great and strong reason, who have embraced, and do at this day embrace, the gross errors of the Arians and Deists. Our nation, in all its light and learning, is full of *infidels*, and those that are *further* from Christianity than the very Mahometans themselves. Of so little avail



is human strength, or human reason and learning, as a remedy against the extreme blindness of the human mind. The blindness of the mind, or an inclination to delusion in things of religion, is so strong, that it will overcome the greatest learning, and the strongest natural reason.

Men, if let alone, will not help one another; nor will they help themselves. The disease always proves without remedy, unless *God* delivers. This was observed of old: “And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burnt part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?”<sup>259</sup>

If God lets men alone, no light arises; but the darkness grows thicker and thicker. How is it now, at this very day, among all the nations where the light of the gospel has not come? Many of whose ancestors, without doubt, have been in the midnight darkness of heathenism for above three thousand years: and not one people have delivered themselves, who have not had the light of the gospel. And this is not owing to their want of as good *natural abilities* as we have; nor is it because they have an inclination more to neglect their natural abilities, or make a worse improvement of them than we.

7. The extreme blindness of man's heart, in matters of religion, appears, by men falling into gross delusions, or continuing in them, at the same time that they have been under *great means* of instruction from God. We have many instances of this; as Rachel in Jacob's family; and the Israelites in the wilderness, &c. These last had great means of instruction; yet they set up the golden calf, &c. And after Joshua's time, they persisted in their delusions and folly, from time to time, even under the reproofs of the prophets; and even in such horrid delusions, so contrary to natural affection, as offering their children in sacrifice to Moloch, burning them alive, in a most cruel manner.

In the time of Christ and the apostles, the Jews had great means of instruction, and most of the nations of the world were put under great advantages to come to the knowledge of the truth; yet what was the effect? It would be easy to pursue these remarks respecting the papists in the time of the reformation, and since—the Arians and Deists in our day, &c.—but what has been said may be quite sufficient, if the reader will but indulge reflection.

8. The exceedingly great blindness of men, in things of religion, appears in the endless *disputes* and controversies, that there have been, and are, among men, about those things which concern religion.—Of old, the wise men and philosophers among the *heathen*, were, so to speak, infinitely divided among themselves. Varro, who was one of them, reckons up several hundred opinions about that one point, *Wherein man's happiness consisted?* And

259 [Isa. xlv 19, 20.](#)

they were continually in disputes one with another. But the effect of their disputes was not any greater union, or any better agreement in their opinions. They were as much divided after they had disputed many ages, as they were at first; yea, much more.

So there have long been disputes in the *Christian* world about opinions and principles in religion. There is a vast variety of sects and opinions; and disputes have been carried on, age after age, with great warmth, and thousands of volumes have been written one against another. And all these disputes have not terminated the differences, but they still subsist as much as ever; yea, they increase and multiply more and more. Instead of ending controversies by disputing, one dispute only lays a foundation for another. And thus the world goes on jangling and contending, daily writing and printing; being as it were deluged with controversial books; and all to no purpose.

The increase of human learning does not bring these controversies to an issue, but does really increase and multiply them. There probably never was a time in our nation wherein there was such a vast variety of opinions in matters of religion, as at this day. Every now and then, a new scheme of things is broached, and various and contrary opinions are mixed and jumbled, divided and subdivided; and every new writer is willing to have the credit of some new notion.

And after this manner does this miserable world go on in endless confusion; like a great multitude of fool-hardy persons, who go on in the dark, stumbling and justling one against another, without perceiving any remedy for their own, or affording any for their neighbour's, calamity.—Thus I have shown how the extreme blindness that possesses the hearts of men is manifest in what appears in their *profession*.

SECT. III.

Men's extreme blindness manifested by inward experience, and especially in their practices under the gospel.

I come now to show, how this is manifest in those things that are found by inward experience, and are visible in men's *practices* under the light of the gospel.

1. This appears in their being so *prone to be deceived* so many ways, or being liable to such a *multiplicity* of deceits. There are thousands of delusions in things which concern the affairs of religion, that men commonly are led away with, who yet live under the light of the gospel.—They are many ways deceived about *God*. They think him to be an exceeding diverse kind of being from what he is; altogether such an one as themselves.<sup>260</sup> They are deceived about his *holiness*, they do not realize it, that he is such a holy being as he indeed is, or that he hates sin with such a hatred as he declares he does. They are not convinced of his *truth*, or that he certainly will fulfil his threatenings or his promises. They are not convinced of his *justice* in punishing sin, as he does. They have very wrong notions of *Christ*. They are not convinced of his *ability* to save them, or of the *sufficiency* of his sacrifice and righteousness; nor of his *willingness* to receive them.

Men are commonly subject to a great many errors about their *duty*. They are ready to bring their principles to agree with their practices, instead of bringing their practices to their principles, as they ought to do. They will put innumerable false glosses on the rules of God's word, to bend them to a compliance with their lusts; and so they " put darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

They are subject to deceits and delusions about the things of *this world*. They imagine that there is happiness and satisfaction to be found in the profits, pleasures, and honours, which are to be had here. They believe all the deluding flatteries and promises of a vain world. And they will hold that deceit and grand delusion, *that these things are the highest good*; and will act accordingly; will choose these things for their portion..And they will hold and practise upon that error, that these things are of long continuance, and are to be depended upon.

They are greatly deceived about the things of *another world*. They undervalue that heavenly glory, which is promised to the saints; and are not much terrified with what they hear of the damnation of hell; they cannot realize it, that its torments are so dreadful as they hear; and are very ready to imagine that they are not eternal, but will some time or other have an end.

They are deceived about the state of *good men*. They think they are not happy, but live a melancholy life. And they are deceived about the *wicked*. They envy the state of many of them, as accounting them well off. "They call the proud happy,<sup>261</sup> and bless the covetous,

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260 Psal. i. 21.

261 Mal. iii. 15.

whom God abhors.”<sup>262</sup> And they strive a great deal more after such enjoyments as these have, than after such as are the portion of the godly.

They are subject to a thousand deceits and delusions about *themselves*. They think themselves wise, when they are fools. They are deceived about their own hearts; they think them much better than they really are. They think they see many good things in themselves, when indeed there is nothing good there. They appear lovely in their own eyes, when their hearts are like the inside of a grave, full of dead men's bones and rotten flesh, crawling worms, and all uncleanness. Or rather, the inward vault of hell, that is a habitation of devils and every foul spirit. Those things in their hearts are highly esteemed by them, which are an abomination in the sight of God.

Men are very prone to be deceived about their own *state*; to think themselves something when they are nothing; and to suppose themselves ” rich and increased in goods, and to have need of nothing; when they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” They are greatly deceived about the *principles* they act from. They think they are sincere in that in which there is no sincerity; and that they do those things from love to God, which they do only from love to themselves. They call mere speculative or natural knowledge, spiritual knowledge; and put conscience for grace; a servile, for a childlike fear; and common affections, that are only from natural principles, and have no abiding effect, for high discoveries, and eminent actings of grace. Yea, it is common with men to call their vicious dispositions by the name of some virtue. They call their anger and malice, zeal for a righteous cause, or zeal for the public good; and their covetousness, frugality.

They are vastly deceived about their own *righteousness*. They think their affections and performances lovely to God which indeed are hateful to him. They think their tears, reformations, and prayers, sufficient to make atonement for their sins; when indeed if all the angels in heaven should offer themselves in sacrifice to God, it would not be sufficient to atone for one of their sins. They think their prayers and works, and religious doings, a sufficient price to purchase God's favour and eternal glory; when, as they perform them, they do nothing but merit hell.

They are greatly deceived about their *strength*. They think they are able to mend their own hearts, and work some good principles in themselves; when they can do no more towards it, than a dead corpse does towards raising itself to life. They vainly flatter themselves, they are able to come to Christ, when they are not. They are greatly deceived about the *stability* of their own hearts. They foolishly think their own intentions and resolutions of what good they will do hereafter, to be depended on; when indeed there is no dependence at all to be had on them. They are greatly deceived about their *opportunities*. They think that the long continuance of their opportunity is to be depended on, and that to-morrow it is to be

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262 [Psal. x. 3.](#)

boasted of; when indeed there is the utmost uncertainty of it. They flatter themselves that they shall have a better opportunity to seek salvation hereafter, than they have now; when there is no probability of it, but a very great improbability.

They are greatly deceived about their own actions and *practices*. Their own faults are strangely hid from their eyes. They live in ways that are very unbecoming Christians, but yet seem not to be at all sensible of it. Those evil ways of theirs, which are very plain to others, are hid from them. Yea, those very things, which they themselves account great faults in others, they will justify themselves in. Those things for which they will be very angry with others, they at the same time do themselves, and oftentimes in a much higher degree, and never once think of it. While they are zealous to pull the mote out of their brother's eye, they know not that a beam is in their own eye.

Those sins that they commit, which they are sensible are sins, they are woefully deceived about. They call great sins, little ones; and in their own imaginations, find out many excuses, which make the guilt very small; while the many heinous aggravations are hid from their eyes. They are greatly deceived about themselves, when they compare themselves with others. They esteem themselves better than their neighbours, who are indeed much better than themselves. They are greatly deceived about themselves, when they compare themselves with God. They are very insensible of the difference there is between God and them, and act in many things as if they thought themselves his equals; yea, as if they thought themselves above him. Thus manifold are the deceits and delusions that men fall into.

2. The desperate blindness that is natural to men, appears in their being so ignorant and blind in things that are so clear and *plain*. Thus if we consider how great God is, and how dreadful sin against him must be, and how much sin we are guilty of, and of what importance it is that his infinite Majesty should be vindicated; how plain is it, that man's righteousness is insufficient! And yet how greatly will men confide in it! how will they ascribe more to it, than can be ascribed to the righteousness of the sinless and glorious angels of heaven. What can be more plain in itself, than that eternal things are of infinitely greater importance than temporal things? And yet how hard is it thoroughly to convince men of it! How plain is it, that eternal misery in hell is infinitely to be dreaded. And yet how few appear to be thoroughly convinced of this! How plain is it, that life is uncertain! And yet how much otherwise do most men think! How plain is it, that it is the highest prudence in matters of infinite concern to improve the first opportunity, without trusting to another! But yet how few are convinced of this! How reasonable is it, considering that God is a wise and just being, to suppose that there shall be a future state of rewards and punishments, wherein every man shall receive according to his works! And yet, how does this seem like a dream to most men!

What can be in itself more plain and manifest, and easily to be known by us, if it were not for a strange blindness, than we are to ourselves, who are always with, never absent from ourselves; always in our own view, before our own eyes; who have opportunity to look into

our own hearts, and see all that passes there? And yet what is there that men are more ignorant of, than they are of themselves? There are many vicious practices, the unlawfulness of which is very plain; the sins are gross, and contrary not only to the word of God, but to the light of nature: and yet men will often plead, there is no harm in such sins; such as, many acts of gross uncleanness; and many acts of fraud, injustice and deceitfulness; and many others that might be mentioned.

There is no one thing whatsoever more plain and manifest, and more demonstrable, than the being of a God. It is manifest in ourselves, in our own bodies and souls, and in every thing about us wherever we turn our eye, whether to heaven, or to the earth, the air, or the seas. And yet how prone is the heart of man to call this into question! So inclined is the heart of man to blindness and delusion, that it is prone to even atheism itself.

3. The great blindness of the heart of man appears, in that so *little* a thing will deceive him, and confound his judgment. A little self-interest, or only the bait of some short gratification of a sensual appetite, or a little stirring of passion, will blind men's eyes, and make them argue and judge most strangely and perversely, and draw the most absurd conclusion; such as, if they were indifferent, they would see to be most unreasonable. The devil finds easy work to deceive them a thousand ways; an argument of the great weakness and blindness of our minds. As a little child, weak in understanding, is very easily deceived.

4. The woeful blindness that possesses the hearts of men naturally, appears in their being all totally ignorant of that in God, which they had most need to know; *viz.* the glory and *excellency* of his nature. Though our faculties, which we have above the beasts, were chiefly given us, that we might know this; and though without this knowledge all other will signify nothing to us; and our faculties are as capable of it, as of any other knowledge whatsoever—and which is as plainly and abundantly manifested as any thing whatsoever, innumerable ways, both in the word and works of God—yet all men naturally are totally ignorant of this; as ignorant as one born blind is of colours. Natural men of the greatest abilities and learning, are as ignorant of it, as the weakest and the most unlearned; yea, as ignorant as the very stocks and stones; for they see, and can see nothing at all of it.

5. It appears, in that they are so blind in those *same things* in religious matters, which they are sufficiently sensible of in other matters. In temporal things they are very sensible that it is a point of prudence to improve the first opportunity in things of great importance. But in matters of religion, which are of infinitely the greatest importance, they have not this discernment. In temporal matters they are sensible that it is a great folly long to delay and put off, when life is in danger, and all depends upon it. But in the concerns of their souls, they are insensible of this truth. So in the concerns of this world, they are sensible it is prudence to improve times of special advantage, and to embrace a good offer when made them. They are sensible that things of long continuance are of greater importance, than those of short duration; yet in religious concerns, none of these things are sensibly discerned.

In temporal things they are sufficiently sensible, that it is a point of prudence to lay up for hereafter, in summer to lay up for winter, and to lay up for their families, after they are dead; but men do not generally discern the prudence of making a proper provision for a future state.—In matters of importance in this world, they are sensible of the wisdom of taking thorough care to be on sure grounds; but in their soul's concerns they see nothing of this. Our Saviour observed this to be the case with the Jews when he was upon earth. "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth: but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" <sup>263</sup>

6. The desperate blindness that naturally possesses the hearts of men under the gospel, appears in their remaining so *stupidly insensible* and deceived, under so great means of instruction and conviction. If they were brought up under heathenish darkness, it would not be so full a demonstration of it: but thus they remain, though under the clearest light, under the glorious light of the gospel, where they enjoy God's own instructions in his word, in a great fulness and plainness, and have the evidence and truth of things set before them from time to time in the plainest manner. They have the arguments of God's being and perfection; and of another world. They are told how eternal things are of greater importance than temporal; and of what importance it is to escape eternal misery. How much it is worth while to take pains for heavenly glory; and how vain their own righteousness is: but yet to what little purpose!

And they have not only great means of instruction in God's word, but also in providence. They have the evidence of the shortness and uncertainty of life. "He seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others." Yet "their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour, abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings." <sup>264</sup> They find the world is vain and unsatisfactory; they find the great instability and treachery of their own hearts; and how their own good intentions and resolutions are not to be depended on. They often find by experience, that their attempts to make them better, fail; but, alas! with what small effect!

Such abundant evidence is there, both in what appears in the *open profession* of men; and also by what is *found* in their *inward experience*, and is *evident* in their *practice*, of the extreme and brutish ignorance and blindness, which naturally possess their hearts.

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263 [Luke xii. 56.](#)

264 [Psa. xlix. 10-13.](#)

SECT. IV.

Practical inferences and application of the subject.

Having shown how the truth of the doctrine is evident, both by what appears in men's *open profession*, and by those things which are *found* by *inward experience*, and are *manifest* by what is visible in men's *practice*; I proceed to improve the subject.

I. By this we may see how manifest are the *ruins* of the fall of man. It is observable in all the kinds of God's creatures that we behold, that they have those properties and qualities, which are every way proportioned to their end; so that they need no more, they stand in need of no greater degree of perfection, in order well to answer the special use for which they seem to be designed. The brute creatures, birds, beasts, fishes, and insects, though there be innumerable kinds of them, yet all seem to have such a degree of perception and perfection given them, as best suits their place in the creation, their manner of living, and the ends for which they were made. There is no defect visible in them; they are perfect in their kind; there seems to be nothing wanting, in order to their filling up their allotted place in the world. And there can be no reasonable doubt but that it was so at first with mankind. It is not reasonable to suppose, that God would make many thousands of kinds of creatures in this lower world, and one kind the highest of them all, to be the head of the rest; and that all the rest should be complete in their kinds, every way endowed with such qualifications as are proportioned to their use and end: and only this most noble creature of all, left exceeding imperfect, notoriously destitute of what he principally stands in need of to answer the end of his being. The principal faculty by which God has distinguished this noble creature from the rest, is his understanding: but would God so distinguish man in his creation from other creatures, and then seal up that understanding with such an extreme blindness, as to render it useless, as to the principal ends of it; and wholly to disenable him from answering the ends of an intelligent creature, and to make his understanding rather a misery than a blessing to him; and rendering him much more mischievous than useful? Therefore, if the Scripture had not told us so, yet we might safely conclude, that mankind are not now, as they were made at first; but that they are in a *fallen* state and condition.

II. From what has been said, plainly appears the *necessity* of divine *revelation*. The deists deny the Scripture to be the word of God, and hold that there is no revealed religion; that God has given mankind no other rule but his own reason; who is sufficient, without any word or revelation from heaven, to give man a right understanding of divine things, and of his duty. But how is it proved in fact? How much trial has there been, whether man's reason, without a revelation, would be sufficient or not! The whole world, excepting one nation, had the trial till the coming of Christ. And was not this long enough for trial, whether man's reason alone was sufficient to instruct him? Those nations, who all that time lay in such gross darkness, and in such a deplorable helpless condition, had the same natural reason



that the deists have. And during this time, there was not only one man, or a succession of single persons, that had the trial, whether their own reason would be sufficient to lead them to the knowledge of the truth; but all nations, who all had the same human faculties that we have. If human reason is really sufficient, and there be no need of any thing else, why has it never proved so? Why has it never happened, that so much as one nation, or one city or town, or one assembly of men, have been brought to tolerable notions of divine things, unless it be by the revelation contained in the Scriptures? If it were only one nation that had remained in such darkness, the trial might not be thought so great; because one particular people might be under some disadvantages, which were peculiar. But thus it has been with *all nations*, except those which have been favoured with the Scriptures, and in all ages. Where is any people, who to this day have ever delivered themselves by their own reason, or have been delivered without light fetched from the Scriptures, or by means of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

If human reason is sufficient without the Scripture, is it not strange that, in these latter ages—since navigation has been so improved, and America and many other parts of the world have been discovered, which were before unknown? no one nation has any where been found already enlightened, and possessed of true notions about the Divine Being and his perfections, by virtue of that human reason they have been possessed of so many thousand years? The many poor, barbarous nations here, in America, had the faculty of *reason* to do what they pleased with, *before* the Europeans came hither, and brought over the light of the gospel. If human reason alone was sufficient, it is strange, that no one people were found, in any corner of the land, who were helped by it, in the chief concern of man.

There has been a great trial, as to what men's reason can do without divine help, in those endless disputes that have been maintained. If human reason alone could help mankind, it might be expected that these disputes would have helped them, and have put an end to men's darkness. The heathen philosophers had many hundreds of years to try their skill in this way: but all without effect. That divine revelation, which the church of God has been possessed of, has been in the world "as a light shining in a dark place."<sup>265</sup> It is the only remedy which God has provided for the miserable, brutish blindness of mankind, a remedy without which this fallen world would have sunk down for ever in brutal barbarism without any remedy. It is the only means that the true God has made successful in his providence, to give the nations of the world the knowledge of himself; and to bring them off from the worship of false gods.

If human reason be the *only* proper means, the means that God has designed for enlightening mankind, is it not very strange, that it has not been sufficient, nor has answered this end in any one instance? All the right *speculative* knowledge of the true God, which the deists

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265 [2 Peter i. 19.](#)&gt;

themselves have, has been derived from divine revelation. How vain is it to dispute against fact, and the experience of so many thousand years and to pretend that human reason is sufficient without divine revelation, when so many thousand years' experience, among so many hundreds of nations, of different tempers, circumstances, and interests, has proved the contrary! One would think all should acknowledge, that so long a time is sufficient for a trial; especially considering the miseries that the poor nations of the world have been under all this while, for want of light: the innumerable *temporal* calamities and miseries—such as sacrificing children, and many other cruelties to others, and even to themselves—besides that *eternal* perdition, which we may reasonably suppose to be the consequence of such darkness.

III. This doctrine should make us sensible, how great a *mercy* it is to mankind, that God has sent his own Son into the world, to be the *light* of the world.—The subject shows what great need we stand in of some *teacher* to be sent from God. And even some of the wiser men among the *heathen* saw the *need* of this. They saw that they disputed and jangled among themselves without coming to a satisfying discovery of the truth; and hence they saw, and spoke of, the need there was of a teacher sent from *heaven*. And it is a wonderful instance of *divine mercy* that God has so beheld us in our low estate, as to provide such a glorious remedy. He has not merely sent some created *angel* to instruct us, but his *own Son*, who is in the bosom of the Father, and of the same nature and essence with him; and therefore infinitely better acquainted with him, and more sufficient to teach a blind world. He has sent him to be the light of the world, as he says of himself, “I am come a light into the world.”<sup>266</sup> When he came, he brought glorious light. It was like the day-spring from on high, visiting a dark world, as Zacharias observes. After Christ came, then the glorious gospel began to spread abroad, delivering those “that had sitten in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death.”<sup>267</sup> ”

What reason have we to rejoice, and praise God, that he has made such excellent provision for us; and has set so glorious a sun in our firmament, such a ” Sun of righteousness,” after we had extinguished the light which at first enlightened us; and had, as it were, brought the world into that state, in which it was when “without form, and void, and darkness was on the face of it.”<sup>268</sup> —The glory of that light which God has sent into the world, is fully answerable to the grossness of that darkness which filled it. For Christ who came to enlighten us, is truth and light itself, and the fountain of all light. “He is *the light*, and in him is no darkness at all.”<sup>269</sup>

266 [John xii. 46.](#)

267 [Luke i. 77, 78, 79.](#)

268 [. Jer. iv. 22, 23.](#)

269 [1 John i. 5.](#)

IV. Hence we may learn, what must be the thing which will bring to pass those glorious days of light, which are spoken of in God's word.—Though mankind be fallen into such darkness, and the world be mostly in the kingdom of darkness; yet the Scripture often speaks of a *glorious day*, wherein light shall fill the earth. “For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”<sup>270</sup> “And he will destroy in this mountain, the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.”<sup>271</sup> “The knowledge of God shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea.”<sup>272</sup>

By what we have heard, we may on good grounds conclude, that whenever this is accomplished, it will not be effected by human learning, or by the skill or wisdom of great men. What has been before observed of this learned age, is a presumptive evidence of it; wherein spiritual darkness increases with the increase of learning. God will again make foolish the wisdom of this world; and will, as it were, say in his providence, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?”

When this shall be accomplished, it will be by a remarkable pouring out of God's own Spirit, with the plain preaching of the gospel of his Son; the preaching of the spiritual, mysterious doctrine of Christ crucified, which to the learned men of this world are foolishness; those doctrine, which are the *stumbling-block of this learned age*. ” Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” It will not be by the enticing words of man's wisdom; but by the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. Not by the wisdom of this world, nor by the princes of this world, that come to nought: but by the gospel, that contains the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which none of the princes of this world, who have nothing to enlighten them but their own learning, know any thing of.

The Spirit of God, who searches all things, even the deep things of God, must reveal it. For let natural men be never so worldly wise and learned, they receive not the things of the Spirit: they are foolishness to them; nor can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned. This great effect, when it is accomplished, will be a glorious effect indeed: and it will be accomplished in such a manner, as most remarkably to show it to be the work of God, and his only. It will be a more glorious work of God than that which we read of in the beginning of Genesis. “And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters: and God said, Let there be light, and there was light.”<sup>273</sup> V. Hence we may learn the misery of all such

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270 [Isa. lx. 2, 3.](#)

271 [Isa. xxv. 7.](#)

272 [Isa. xi. 9.](#)

273 [Gen. i. 2, 3.](#)

persons, as are under the power of that darkness which naturally possesses their hearts. There are two degrees of this misery.

1. That of which all who are in a natural condition are the subjects. The doctrine shows, that all such as are in a natural condition, are in a miserable condition: for they are in an extremely dark and blind condition. It is uncomfortable living in darkness. What a sorrowful state would we all be in, if the sun should no more rise upon us, and the moon were to withdraw her shining, and the stars to be put out, and we were to spend the rest of our time in darkness! The world would soon perish in such darkness. It was a great plague in Egypt, when they had a total darkness for three days. They who are deprived of sight, are deprived of the most noble of the senses; they have no benefit of external light, one of the most excellent and needful of all the things which God has made in the visible creation. But they who are without spiritual sight and light, are destitute of that which is far more excellent and necessary.

That natural men are not *sensible* of their blindness, and the misery they are under by reason of it, is no argument that they are not miserable. For it is very much the nature of this calamity to be hid from itself, or from those who are under it. Fools are not sensible of their folly. Solomon says, "The fool is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason."<sup>274</sup> The most barbarous and brutish heathens are not sensible of their own darkness; are not sensible but that they enjoy as great light, and have as good understanding of things, as the most enlightened nations in the world.

2. Another degree of this misery, is of those who are judicially given up of God, to the blindness of their own minds. The Scripture teaches us that there are some such. "What then; Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."<sup>275</sup> "But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away."<sup>276</sup> "And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, and understand not; and see ye indeed, and perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed."<sup>277</sup> This judgment, when inflicted, is commonly for the contempt and abuse of light which has been offered, for the commission of presumptuous sins, and for being obstinate in sin, and resisting the Holy Ghost, and many gracious calls and counsels, warnings and reproofs.

Who the particular persons are, that are thus judicially given up of God to the blindness of their minds, is not known to men. But we have no reason to suppose that there are not

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274 [Prov. xxvi. 16.](#)

275 [Rom. xi. 7.](#)

276 [2 Cor. iii. 14.](#)

277 [Isa. vi. 6,10.](#)

multitudes of them; and most in places of the greatest light. There is no manner of reason to suppose, that this judgment, which is spoken of in Scripture, is in a great measure *peculiar* to those old times. As there were many who fell under it in the times of the prophets of old, and of Christ and his apostles; so doubtless there are now also. And though the persons are not known, yet doubtless there may be more reason to fear it concerning some than others. All who are under the power of the blindness of their own minds, are miserable; but such as are given up to this blindness, are especially miserable; for they are reserved, and sealed over to the blackness of darkness for ever.

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## SECT. V.

Address to sinners.

The consideration of what has been said of the desperate blindness which possesses the hearts of us all naturally, may well be terrifying to such as are yet in a Christless condition, in this place of light; where the gospel has been so long enjoyed, and where God has in times past so wonderfully poured out his Spirit.

And let such persons, for their awakening, consider the following things:

1. That they are blinded by the god of this world. Their blindness is from hell. This darkness which natural men are under, is from the prince of darkness. This the apostle says expressly of those who remain in unbelief and blindness under the gospel. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."<sup>278</sup> They belong to the kingdom of darkness. In that darkness which reigns in their souls, the devil reigns; and he holds his dominion there.

2. Consider how God in his word manifests his abhorrence and wrath towards those who remain so sottishly blind and ignorant, in the midst of light. How does God speak of them! "Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?"<sup>279</sup> "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways. Unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest."<sup>280</sup> "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah, sinful nation!—they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger."<sup>281</sup> "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour."<sup>282</sup> "My people is foolish, they have not known me, they are sottish children, and they have no understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."<sup>283</sup> "Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in the house of Judah, saying, Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not. Fear ye not me, saith the Lord; will ye not tremble at my presence?"<sup>284</sup>

3. Consider how much wilfulness there is in your ignorance. Sinners are ready wholly to excuse themselves in their blindness; whereas, as observed already, the blindness that

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278 2 Cor. iv. 3,4.

279 Psal. xiv. 4.

280 Psal. xcv. 10, 11.

281 Isa. i. 3,4.

282 Isa. xxvii. 10.

283 Jer. iv. 22.

284 Jer. v. 20, 21,22.

naturally possesses the hearts of men, is not a merely negative thing; but they are blinded by “the deceitfulness of sin.”<sup>285</sup> There is a perverseness in their blindness. There is not a mere absence of light, but a malignant opposition to the light; as God says, “they know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness.”<sup>286</sup> Christ observes, “that every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light.” And that “this is their condemnation, that light is come into the world, yet men loved darkness rather than light.”<sup>287</sup> And I may appeal to your own consciences, whether you have not wilfully rejected the many instructions you have had; and refused to hearken? Whether you have not neglected to seek after the light, and neglected your Bible? Whether you have not been a very negligent hearer of the word preached, and neglected other proper means of knowledge? Whether you have not neglected to cry to God for that wisdom which you need? Yea, have you not resisted the means of knowledge? Have you not resisted and quenched the motions of the Spirit, which at times you have had? And taken a course to make yourself more and more stupid, by stifling the convictions of your own conscience, and doing contrary to the light thereof; whereby you have done those things that have tended to sear your conscience, and make yourself more and more senseless and sottish?

4. Consider what is the course that God will take to teach those who will not be taught by the instructions of his word. He will teach them by briers and thorns, and by the flames of hell. Though natural men will remain to all eternity ignorant of the excellency and loveliness of God’s nature, and so will have no spiritual knowledge; yet God in another world will make them thoroughly to understand many things, which senseless unawakened sinners are sottishly ignorant of in this world. Their eyes in many respects shall be thoroughly opened in hell. Their judgments will be rectified. They shall be of the same judgment with the godly. They shall be convinced of the *reality* of those things which they would not be convinced of here; as the being of God; his power, holiness, and justice; that the Scriptures are the word of God; that Christ is the Son of God; and that time is short and uncertain. They will be convinced of the vanity of the world; of the blessed opportunity they had in the world; and how much it is men’s wisdom to improve their time. We read of the rich man, who was so sottishly blind in this world, that “in hell he lift up his eyes, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”<sup>288</sup> With many men, alas! the first time they open their eyes is in hell.

God will make all men to know the truth of those great things which he speaks of in his word, one way or another; for he will vindicate his own truth. He has undertaken to convince

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285 [Heb. iii. 13.](#)

286 [Psal. lxxii. 5.](#)

287 [John iii. 19,20.](#)

288 [Luke xvi. 23.](#)

all men. They who will not be convinced in this world, by the gentle and gracious methods which God uses with them now, shall be convinced hereafter by severe means. If they will not be convinced for salvation, they shall be convinced by damnation. God will make them know that he is the Lord. And he will make them know that he bears rule. “Consume them in wrath, that they may not be; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the earth.”<sup>289</sup> “Let them be confounded and troubled for ever: yea, let them be put to shame, and perish. That men may know that thou, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth.”<sup>290</sup>

What great care we had need all have, that we be not deceived in matters of religion. If our hearts are all naturally possessed with such an extreme brutish ignorance and blindness in things of religion, and we are exceedingly prone to delusion; then surely great care ought to be taken to avoid it. For that we are naturally prone to delusion, shows our danger: but the greater our danger of any calamity is, the greater had our watchfulness need to be—Let us therefore be hence warned to take heed that we be not deceived about our duty; about our own hearts; about our ways; about our state; and about our opportunities. Thousands are deceived in these things, and thousands perish by that means. Multitudes fall on our right hand and on our left, and are ruined eternally by their delusion in these things.

How foolish a thing it is for men to lean to their own understanding, and trust their own hearts. If we are so blind, then our own wisdom is not to be depended on; and that advice of the wise man is most reasonable; “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding.”<sup>291</sup> “And he that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool.”<sup>292</sup>—They therefore are fools, who trust to their own wisdom, and will question the mysterious Doctrine of religion; because they cannot see through them, and will not trust to the infinite wisdom of God.

Let us therefore become fools; be sensible of our own natural blindness and folly. There is a treasure of wisdom contained in that one sentence; “If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”<sup>293</sup> Seeing our own ignorance, and blindness, is the first step towards having true knowledge. “If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.”<sup>294</sup> Let us ask wisdom of God. If we are so blind in ourselves, then knowledge is not to be sought for out of our own stock, but must be sought from some other source. And we have no where else to go

289 [Psal. lix.13.](#)

290 [Psal. lxxxiii. 17,18.](#)

291 [Prov. iii. 5.](#)

292 [Prov. xxviii. 26.](#)

293 [1 Cor. iii. 18.](#)

294 [1 Cor. viii. 2.](#)



for it, but to the fountain of light and wisdom. True wisdom is a precious jewel; and none of our fellow-creatures can give it us, nor can we buy it with any price we have to give. It is the sovereign gift of God. The way to obtain it, is to go to him, sensible of our weakness, and blindness, and misery on that account. ” If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God.” <sup>295</sup>



THE

**DISTINGUISHING MARKS**

OF A

**WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD,**

**APPLIED TO THAT UNCOMMON OPERATION THAT HAS LATELY  
APPEARED ON THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW ENGLAND:**

WITH A

**PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION OF THE  
EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES WITH  
WHICH THIS WORK IS ATTENDED**

MR. COOPER'S PREFACE TO THE READER.

There are several *dispensations*, or days of grace, which the church of God has been under from the beginning of time. There is that under the patriarchs; that under the law of Moses; and there is that of the gospel of Jesus Christ, under which we now are. This is the brightest day that ever shone, and exceeds the other, for peculiar advantages. To us who are so happy as to live under the evangelical dispensation, may those words of our Saviour be directed, which he spake to his disciples, when he was first setting up the Messiah's kingdom in the world, and gospel-light and power began to spread abroad: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."<sup>296</sup>

The Mosaic dispensation, though darkened with types and figures, yet far exceeded the former: but the gospel dispensation so much exceeds in glory, that it eclipses the glory of the legal, as the stars disappear when the sun ariseth, and goeth forth in his strength.—And the chief thing that renders the gospel so glorious is, that it is the ministration of the Spirit. Under the preaching of it, the Holy Spirit was to be poured out in more plentiful measures; not only in miraculous gifts, as in the first times of the gospel, but in his internal saving operations, accompanying the outward ministry, to produce numerous conversions to Christ, and give spiritual life to souls that were before dead in trespasses and sins, and so prepare them for eternal life. Thus the apostle speaks, when he runs a comparison between the Old Testament and the New, the law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ: "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"<sup>297</sup>

This blessed time of the *gospel* hath several other denominations, which may raise our esteem and value for it. It is called by the evangelical prophet, "The acceptable year of the Lord."<sup>298</sup> Or, as it may be read, *the year of liking*, or of benevolence, or of the good will of the Lord; because it would be the special period in which he would display his grace and favour, in an extraordinary manner, and deal out spiritual blessings with a full and liberal hand.—It is also styled by our Saviour, the regeneration,<sup>299</sup> which may refer not only to that glorious restitution of all things, which is looked for at the close of the Christian dis-

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296 Luke x. 23, 21.

297 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8

298 Isa. lxi. 2.

299 Matt. xix. 28.

penetration, but to the renewing work of grace in particular souls, carried on from the beginning to the end of it. But few were renewed and sanctified under the former dispensations, compared with the instances of the grace of God in gospel-times. Such numbers were brought into the gospel-church when it was first set up, as to give occasion for that pleasing admiring question, which was indeed a prophecy of it, <sup>300</sup> “Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?” Then the power of the divine Spirit so accompanied the ministry of the word, as that thousands were converted under one sermon.—But notwithstanding this large effusion of the Spirit, when gospel-light first dawned upon the world—that pleasant spring of religion which then appeared on the face of the earth—there was a gradual withdrawing of his saving light and influences; and so the gospel came to be less successful, and the state of Christianity withered in one place and another.

Indeed at the time of the *Reformation* from popery, when gospel-light broke in upon the church, and dispelled the clouds of anti-Christian darkness that covered it, the power of divine grace so accompanied the preaching of the word, as that it had admirable success in the conversion and edification of souls; and the blessed fruits thereof appeared in the hearts and lives of its professors. That was one of “the days of the Son of man,” on which the exalted Redeemer rode forth, in his glory and majesty, on the white horse of the pure gospel, conquering and to conquer;” and the bow in his hand, like that of Jonathan, returned not empty. But what a dead and barren time has it now been, for a great while, with all the churches of the Reformation? The golden showers have been restrained; the influences of the Spirit suspended; and the consequence has been, that the gospel has not had any eminent success. Conversions have been rare and dubious; few sons and daughters have been born to God? and the hearts of Christians not so quickened, warmed, and refreshed under the ordinances, as they have been.

That this has been the sad state of religion among us in this land, for many years (except one or two distinguished places, which have at times been visited with a shower of mercy, while other towns and churches have not been rained upon,) will be acknowledged by all who have spiritual senses exercised, as it has been lamented by faithful ministers and serious Christians. Accordingly it has been a constant petition in our public prayers, from sabbath to sabbath, “That God would pour out his Spirit upon us, and revive his work in the midst of the years.” And besides our annual fast-days appointed by government, most of the churches have set apart days, wherein to seek the Lord by prayer and fasting, that he would “come and rain down righteousness upon us.”

And *now*,—“Behold! The Lord whom we have sought, has suddenly come to his temple.” The dispensation or grace we are now under, is certainly such as neither we nor our fathers have seen; and in some circumstances so wonderful, that I believe there has not been the

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300 Isa. lx. 8.

like since the extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit immediately after our Lord's ascension. The apostolical times seem to have returned upon us: such a display has there been of the power and grace of the divine Spirit in the assemblies of his people, and such testimonies has he given to the word of the gospel.

I remember a remarkable passage of the late reverend and learned Mr. Howe, which I think it may be worth while to transcribe here. It is in his discourse concerning the "the Prosperous State of the Christian Church before the End of Time, by a plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit," page 80. "In such a time," says he, "when the Spirit shall be poured forth plentifully, surely ministers shall have their proportionable share. And when such a time as that shall come, I believe you will hear much other kind of sermons (or they will who shall live to such a time) than you are wont to do now-a-days: souls will surely be dealt with at another rate. It is plain, (says he,) too sadly plain, there is a great retraction of the Spirit of God even from us. We know not how to speak living sense into souls; how to get within you: our words die in our mouths, or drop and die between you and us. We even faint when we speak; long experienced unsuccessfulness makes us despond: we speak not as persons that hope to prevail, that expect to make you serious, heavenly, mindful of God, and to walk more like Christians. The methods of alluring and convincing souls, even that some of us have known, are lost from amongst us in a great part. There have been other ways taken, than we can tell now how to fall upon, for the mollifying of the obdurate, and the awakening of the secure, and the convincing and persuading of the obstinate, and the winning of the disaffected. Surely there will be a large share, that will come even to the part of ministers, when such an effusion of the Spirit shall be, as it is expected: that they shall know how to speak to better purpose, with more compassion, with more seriousness, with more authority and allurements, than we now find we can."

Agreeable to the just expectation of this great and excellent man, we have found it in this remarkable day. A number of preachers have appeared among us, to whom God has given such a large measure of his Spirit, that we are ready sometimes to apply to them the character given of Barnabas, that "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith."<sup>301</sup> They preach the gospel of the grace of God from place to place, with uncommon zeal and assiduity.

The doctrine they insist on, are the doctrine of the reformation, under the influence whereof the power of godliness so flourished in the last century. The points on which their preaching mainly turns, are those important ones of man's guilt, corruption, and impotence; supernatural regeneration by the Spirit of God, and free justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; and the marks of the new birth.—The manner of their preaching is not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; howbeit, they speak wisdom among them that

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301 [Acts xi. 24.](#)

are perfect. An ardent love to Christ and souls, warms their breasts, and animates their labours. God has made those his ministers active spirits, a flame of fire in his service; and his word in their mouths has been “as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.” In most places where they have laboured, God has evidently wrought with them, and “confirmed the word by signs following.” Such a power and presence of God in religious assemblies, has not been known since God set up his sanctuary amongst us. He has indeed “glorified the house of his glory.”

This work is truly extraordinary, in respect of its *extent*. It is more or less in the several provinces that measure many hundred miles on this continent. “He sendeth forth his commandment on earth! His word runneth very swiftly.” It has entered and spread in some of the most populous towns, the chief places of concourse and business. And—blessed be God!—it has visited the seats of learning, both here, and in a neighbouring colony. O may the Holy Spirit constantly reside in them both, seize our devoted youth, and form them as polished shafts, successfully to fight the Lord’s battles against the powers of darkness, when they shall be called out to service!—It is extraordinary also with respect to the numbers that have been the subjects of this operation. Stupid sinners have been awakened by hundreds; and the inquiry has been general in some places, “What must I do to be saved.” I verily believe, that in this our metropolis, there were the last winter some thousands under such religious impressions as they never felt before.

The work has been remarkable also for the *various sorts* of persons that have been under its influence.—These have been of *all ages*. Some *elderly* persons have been snatched as brands out of the burning, made monuments of divine mercy, and born to God, though out of due time; as the apostle speaks in his own case.<sup>302</sup> But here, with us it has lain mostly among the young. Sprightly youth have been made to bow like willows to the Redeemer’s sceptre, and willingly to subscribe with their own hands to the Lord. And out of the mouths of babes, some little children, has God ordained to himself praise, to still the enemy and the avenger.—They have also been of all *ranks* and *degrees*. Some of the great and rich; but more of the low and poor.—Of other countries and nations. Ethiopia has stretched out her hand: some poor *negroes* have, I trust, been brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Of all *qualities* and *conditions*. The most *ignorant*; the foolish thing of the world, babes in knowledge, have been made wise unto salvation, and taught those heavenly truths, which have been hid from the wise and prudent. Some of the *learned* and knowing among men, have had those things revealed to them of the Father in heaven, which flesh and blood do not teach: and of these, some who had gone into the modern notions, and had no other than the polite religion of the present times, have had their prejudices conquered, their carnal reasonings overcome, and their understandings made to bow to gospel mysteries;

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302 I Cor. xv.

they now receive the truth as it is in Jesus, and their faith no longer “stands in the wisdom of man but in the power of God.” Some of the most *rude* and disorderly are become regular in their behaviour, and sober in all things. The *gay* and airy are become grave and serious.

Some of the *greatest sinners* have appeared to be turned into real saints: drunkards have become temperate; fornicators and adulterers of a chaste conversation; swearers and profane persons have learned to fear that glorious and fearful Name, the Lord their God; and carnal worldlings have been made to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Yea, deriders and scoffers at this work and its instruments, have come under its conquering power. Some of this stamp, who have gone to hear the preacher, (as some did Paul—“What will this babbler say?”)—have not been able to resist the power and the Spirit with which he spake; have sat trembling under the word, and gone away from it weeping; and afterward did cleave unto the preacher, as Dionysius the Areopagite did unto Paul.<sup>303</sup> Divers instances of this kind have fallen under my knowledge.

The *virtuous* and civil have been convinced that morality is not to be relied on for life; and so excited to seek after the new birth, and a vital union to Jesus Christ by faith. The *formal* professor likewise has been awakened out of his dead formalities, brought under the power of godliness; taken off from his false rests, and brought to build his hope only on the Mediator’s righteousness. At the same time, many of the *children of God* have been greatly quickened and refreshed; have been awakened out of the sleeping frames they were fallen into, and excited to give diligence to make their calling and election sure; and have had precious, reviving, and sealing times.—Thus extensive and general the divine influence has been at his glorious season.

One thing more is worthy of remark; and this is the *uniformity* of the work. By the accounts I have received in letters, and conversation with ministers and others, who live in different parts of the land where this work is going on, it is the same work that is carried on in one place and another: the method of the Spirit’s operation on the minds of the people is the same; though with some variety of circumstances, as is usual at other times: and the particular appearances with which this work is attended, that have not been so common at other times, are also much the same. These are indeed objected by many against the work; but though conversion is the same work, in the main strokes of it, wherever it is wrought; yet it seems reasonable to suppose that at an extraordinary season wherein God is pleased to carry on a work of his grace in a more observable and glorious manner, in a way which he would have to be taken notice of by the world; at such a time, I say, it seems reasonable to suppose, that there may be some particular appearances in the work of conversion, which are not common at other times—when yet there are true conversions wrought—or some circumstances attending the work may be carried to an unusual degree and height. If it were

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303 Acts xvii. 18, 24.

not thus, the work of the Lord would not be so much regarded and spoken of; and so God would not have so much of the glory of it. Nor would the work itself be like to spread so fast; for God has evidently made use of example and discourse in the carrying of it on.

And as to the *fruits* of this work, (which we have been bid so often to wait for,) blessed be God! So far as there has been time for observation, they appear to be abiding. I do not mean that none have lost their impressions, or that there are no instances of hypocrisy and apostasy. Scripture and experience lead us to expect these, at such a season. It is to me matter of surprise and thankfulness that as yet there have been no more. But I mean, that a great number of those who have been awakened are still seeking and striving to enter in at the strait gate. The most of those who have been thought to be converted, continue to give evidence of their being new creatures, and seem to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. To be sure, a new face of things continues in this town: though many circumstances concur to render such a work not so observable here,<sup>304</sup> as in smaller and distant places. Many things not becoming the profession of the gospel are in a measure reformed. Taverns, dancing-schools, and such meetings as have been called assemblies, which have always proved unfriendly to serious godliness, are much less frequented. Many have reduced their dress and apparel, so as to make them look more like the followers of the humble Jesus. And it has been both surprising and pleasant to see how some younger people, and of that sex too which is most fond of such vanities, have put off the "bravery of their ornaments," as the effect and indication of their seeking the inward glories of "the King's daughter." Religion is now much more the subject of conversation at friends' houses, than ever I knew it. The doctrine of grace are espoused and relished. Private religious meetings are greatly multiplied.—The public assemblies (especially lectures) are much better attended; and our auditors were never so attentive and serious. There is indeed an extraordinary appetite after "the sincere milk of the word."

It is more than a twelvemonth since an evening lecture was set up in this town; there are now several: two constantly on Tuesday and Friday evenings; when some of our most capacious houses are well filled with hearers, who by their looks and deportment seem to come to hear that their souls might live. An evening in God's courts is now esteemed better than many elsewhere. There is also great resort to ministers in private. Our hands continue full of work: and many times we have more than we can discourse with distinctly and separately.—I have been thus large and particular, that persons at a distance, who are desirous to know the present state of religion here, into whose hands these papers will come, may receive some satisfaction.

And now, can any be at a loss to *what spirit* to ascribe this work? To attribute it, as some do, to the devil, is to make the old serpent like the foolish woman, "who plucked down her

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304 i. e. Boston, in New England.



house with her hands.”<sup>305</sup> Our Saviour has taught us to argue otherwise in such a case as this. “Every kingdom divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how then shall his kingdom stand?”<sup>306</sup>

That some entertain *prejudices* against this work, and others revile and reproach it, does not make it look less like a work of God: it would else want one mark of its being so; for the spirit of this world, and the spirit which is of God, are contrary the one to the other. I do not wonder that Satan rages, and shows his rage in some that are under his influence, when his kingdom is so shaken, and his subjects desert him by hundreds, I hope by thousands.—The prejudices of some, I make no doubt, are owing to the want of opportunity to be rightly informed, and their having received misrepresentations from abroad. Others may be offended, because they have not experienced any thing like such a work in themselves; and if these things be so, they must begin again, and get another foundation laid than that on which they have built; and this is what men are hardly brought to. And others, perhaps, may dislike the present work, because it supports and confirms some principles which they have not yet embraced, and against which such prejudices hang about their minds, as they cannot easily shake off. For it is certain, these fruits do not grow on Arminian ground. I hope none dislike the work, because they have not been used as instruments in it. For if we love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, we shall rejoice to see him increase, though we should decrease. If any are resolutely set to disbelieve this work, to reproach and oppose it, they must be left to the free sovereign power and mercy of God to enlighten and rescue them. These, if they have had opportunity to be rightly informed, I am ready to think, would have been disbelievers, and opposers of the miracles and mission of our Saviour, had they lived in his days. The malignity which some of them have discovered, to me approaches near to the unpardonable sin; and they had need beware, lest they indeed sin the sin which is unto death: for as I believe it can be committed in these days, as well as in the days of the apostles, so I think persons are now in more danger of committing it than at other times. At least, let them come under the awe of that word, [Psal. xxviii. 5](#). “Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.”

But if any are disposed to receive conviction, have a mind open to light, and are really willing to know of the present work whether it be of God, it is with great satisfaction and pleasure I can recommend to them the following sheets; in which they will find the “distinguishing marks” of such a work, as they are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, applied to the uncommon operation that has been on the minds of many in this land. Here the matter is tried by the infallible touchstone of the Holy Scriptures, and is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, with great judgment and impartiality.

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305 [Prov. xiv. 1.](#)

306 [Matt. xii. 25, 26.](#)

A performance of this kind is seasonable and necessary; and I desire heartily to bless God, who inclined this his servant to undertake it, and has graciously assisted him in it. The Reverend Author is known to be “a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;” the place where he has been called to exercise his ministry has been famous for experimental religion; and he has had opportunities to observe this work in many places where it has powerfully appeared, and to converse with numbers that have been the subjects of it. These things qualify him for this undertaking above most. His arguments in favour of the work, are strongly drawn from Scripture, reason, and experience: and I shall believe every candid, judicious reader will say, he writes very free from an enthusiastic or a party spirit. The use of human learning is asserted; a methodical way of preaching, the fruit of study as well as prayer, is recommended; and the exercise of charity in judging others pressed and urged: and those things which are esteemed the blemishes, and are like to be the hinderances of the work, are with great faithfulness cautioned and warned against.—Many, I believe, will be thankful for this publication. Those who have already entertained favourable thoughts of this work, will be confirmed by it; and the doubting may be convinced and satisfied. But if there are any who cannot after all see the signatures of a divine hand on the work, it is to be hoped they will be prevailed on to spare their censures, and stop their oppositions, lest “haply they should be found even to fight against God.”

I had yet several things to say, which I see I must suppress, or I shall go much beyond the limits of a preface: and I fear I need to ask pardon both of the reader and the publishers for the length I have run already. Only I cannot help expressing my wish, that those who have been conversant in this work, in one place and another, would transmit accounts of it to such a hand as the Reverend Author of this discourse, to be compiled into a narrative, like that of the conversions at Northampton, which was published a few years ago; that so the world may know this surprising dispensation, in the beginning, progress, and various circumstances of it.

This, I apprehend, would be for the honour of the Holy Spirit, whose work and office has been treated so reproachfully in the Christian world. It would be an open attestation to the divinity of a despised gospel: and it might have a happy effect on the other places, where the sound of this marvelous work would by this means be heard. I cannot but think it would be one of the most useful pieces of church history the people of God are blessed with. Perhaps it would come the nearest to the Acts of the Apostles of any thing extant; and all the histories in the world do not come up to that: there we have something as surprising as in the book of Genesis; and a new creation, of another kind, seems to open to our view. But I must forbear.

I will only add my prayer, That the worthy Author of this discourse may long be continued a burning and shining light in the golden candlestick where Christ has placed him, and from thence diffuse his light through these provinces! That the divine Spirit, whose cause

is here espoused, would accompany this and the other valuable publications of his servant, with his powerful influences; that they may promote the Redeemer's interest, serve the ends of vital religion, and so add to the Author's present joy, and future crown!

Boston, Nov. 20, 1741.

W. COOPER.

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## THE

## MARKS OF A WORK OF THE TRUE SPIRIT.

## 1 John iv. 1.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

In the apostolic age, there was the greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God that ever was; both as to his extraordinary influences and gifts, and his ordinary operations, in convincing, converting, enlightening, and sanctifying the souls of men. But as the influences of the true Spirit abounded, so counterfeits did also abound: the devil was abundant in mimicking, both the ordinary and extraordinary influences of the Spirit of God, as is manifest by innumerable passages of the apostles' writings. This made it very necessary that the church of Christ should be furnished with some certain rules, distinguishing and clear marks, by which she might proceed safely in judging of the true from the false without danger of being imposed upon. The giving of such rules is the plain design of this chapter, where we have this matter more expressly and fully treated of than any where else in the Bible. The apostle, of set purpose, undertakes to supply the church of God with such marks of the true Spirit as may be plain and safe, and well accommodated to use and practice; and that the subject might be clearly and sufficiently handled, he insists upon it throughout the chapter, which makes it wonderful that what is here said is no more taken notice of in this extraordinary day, when there is such an uncommon and extensive operation on the minds of people, such a variety of opinions concerning it, and so much talk about the work of the Spirit.

The apostle's discourse on this subject is introduced by an occasional mention of the indwelling of the Spirit, as the sure evidence of an interest in Christ. "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Whence we may infer, that the design of the apostle is not only to give marks whereby to distinguish the true Spirit from the false, in his extraordinary gifts of prophecy and miracles, but also in his ordinary influences on the minds of his people, in order to their union to Christ, and being built up in him; which is also manifest from the marks themselves that are given, which we shall hereafter notice.

The words of the text are an introduction to this discourse of the distinguishing signs of the true and false Spirit.—Before the apostle proceeds to lay down these signs, he exhorteth Christians, first, against an over credulousness, and a forwardness to admit every specious appearance as the work of a true Spirit. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."<sup>307</sup> And, second, he shows, that there were many counterfeits, "because many false prophets were gone out into the world."<sup>308</sup> These did not only pretend

307 1 John iv. 1.

308 *ibid.*

to have the Spirit of God in his extraordinary gifts of inspiration, but also to be the great friends and favourites of heaven, to be eminently holy persons, and to have much of the ordinary saving, sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God on their hearts. Hence we are to look upon these words as a direction to examine and try their pretences to the Spirit of God, in both these respects.

My design therefore at this time is to show what are the true, certain, and distinguishing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves, or see in others. And here I would observe, that we are to take the *Scriptures* as our guide in such cases. This is the great and standing rule which God has given to his church, in order to guide them in things relating to the great concerns of their souls; and it is an infallible and sufficient rule. There are undoubtedly sufficient marks given to guide the church of God in this great affair of judging of spirits, without which it would lie open to woeful delusion, and would be remedilessly exposed to be imposed on and devoured by its enemies. And we need not be afraid to trust these rules. Doubtless that Spirit who indited the *Scriptures* knew how to give us good rules, by which to distinguish his operations from all that is falsely pretended to be from him. And this, as I observed before, the Spirit of God has here done of set purpose, and done it more particularly and fully than any where else: so that in my present discourse I shall go no where else for rules or marks for the trial of spirits, but shall confine myself to those that I find in this chapter.—But before I proceed particularly to speak to these, I would prepare my way by, first, observing *negatively*, in some instances, what are *not signs* or evidences of a work of the Spirit of God.



**SECT. 1.**

Negative Signs; or, What are no signs by which we are to judge of a work and especially, What are no evidences that a work is not from the Spirit of God.

I. Nothing can be certainly concluded from this, That a work is carried on in a way very unusual and extraordinary; provided the variety or difference be such, as may still be comprehended within the limits of scripture rules. What the church has been used to, is not a rule by which we are to judge; because there may be new and extraordinary works of God, and he has heretofore evidently wrought in an extraordinary manner. He has brought to pass new things, strange works; and has wrought in such a manner as to surprise both men and angels.

And as God has done thus in times past, so we have no reason to think but that he will do so still. The prophecies of Scripture give us reason to think that God has things to accomplish, which have never yet been seen. No deviation from what has hitherto been usual, let it be never so great, is an argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, if it be no deviation from his prescribed rule. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in his operation; and we know that he uses a great variety; and we cannot tell how great a variety he may use, within the compass of the rules he himself has fixed. We ought not to limit God where he has not limited himself.

Therefore it is not reasonable to determine that a work is not from God's Holy Spirit because of the extraordinary degree in which the minds of persons are influenced. If they seem to have an extraordinary conviction of the dreadful nature of sin, and a very uncommon sense of the misery of a Christless condition—or extraordinary views of the certainty and glory of divine things,—and are proportionably moved with very extraordinary affections of fear and sorrow, desire, love, or joy: or if the apparent change be very sudden, and the work be carried on with very unusual swiftness—and the persons affected are very numerous, and many of them are very young, with other unusual circumstances, not infringing upon scripture marks of a work of the Spirit—these things are no argument that the work is not of the Spirit of God.—The extraordinary and unusual degree of influence, and power of operation, if in its nature it be agreeable to the rules and marks given in Scripture, is rather an argument in its favour; for by how much higher the degree which in its nature is agreeable to the rule, so much the more is there of conformity to the rule; and so much the more evident that conformity. When things are in small degrees, though they be really agreeable to the rule, it is not so easily seen whether their nature agrees with the rule.

There is a great aptness in persons to doubt of things that are strange; especially elderly persons, to think that to be right which they have never been used to in their day, and have not heard of in the days of their day, and have not heard of in the days of their fathers. But if it be a good argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it is very unusual, then it was so in the apostles' days. The work of the Spirit then, was carried on in a manner

that, in very many respects, was altogether new; such as never had been seen or heard since the world stood. The work was then carried on with more visible and remarkable power than ever; nor had there been seen before such mighty and wonderful effects of the Spirit of God in sudden changes, and such great engagedness and zeal in great multitudes—such a sudden alteration in towns, cities, and countries; such a swift progress, and vast extent of the work—and many other extraordinary circumstances might be mentioned. The great unusualness of the work surprised the Jews; they knew not what to make of it, but could not believe it to be the work of God: many looked upon the persons that were the subjects of it as bereft of reason; as you may see in [Acts ii. 13. xxvi. 24.](#) and [1 Cor. iv. 10.](#)

And we have reason from scripture prophecy to suppose, that at the commencement of that last and greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God, that is to be in the latter ages of the world, the manner of the work will be very extraordinary, and such as never has yet been seen; so that there shall be occasion then to say, as in [Isa. lxvi. 8.](#) “Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” It may be reasonably expected that the extraordinary manner of the work then, will bear some proportion to the very extraordinary events, and that glorious change in the state of the world, which God will bring to pass by it.

II. A work is not to be judged of by any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily strength. The influence persons are under, is not to be judged of one way or other, by such effects on the body; and the reason is, because the Scripture nowhere gives us any such rule. We cannot conclude that persons are under the influence of the true Spirit because we see such effects upon their bodies, because this is not given as a mark of the true Spirit; nor on the other hand, have we any reason to conclude, from any such outward appearances, that persons are not under the influence of the Spirit of God, because there is no rule of Scripture given us to judge of spirits by, that does either expressly or indirectly exclude such effects on the body, nor does reason exclude them. It is easily accounted for from the consideration of the nature of divine and eternal things, and the nature of man, and the laws of the union between soul and body, how a right influence, a true and proper sense of things, should have such effects on the body, even those that are of the most extraordinary kind, such as taking away the bodily strength, or throwing the body into great agonies, and extorting loud outcries. There are none of us but do suppose, and would have been ready at any time to say it, that the misery of hell is doubtless so dreadful, and eternity so vast, that if a person should have a clear apprehension of that misery as it is, it would be more that his feeble frame could bear, and especially if at the same time he saw himself in great danger of it, and to be utterly uncertain whether he should be delivered from it, yea, and to have no security from it one day or hour. If we consider human nature, we must not wonder, that when persons have a

great sense of that which is so amazingly dreadful, and also have a great view of their own wickedness and God's anger, that things seem to them to forebode speedy and immediate destruction. We see the nature of man to be such that when he is in danger of some terrible calamity to which he is greatly exposed, he is ready upon every occasion to think, that *now* it is coming.—When persons' hearts are full of fear, in time of war, they are ready to tremble at the shaking of a leaf, and to expect the enemy every minute, and to say within themselves, *now* I shall be slain. If we should suppose that a person saw himself hanging over a great pit, full of fierce and glowing flames, by a thread that he knew to be very weak, and not sufficient to bear his weight, and knew that multitudes had been in such circumstances before, and that most of them had fallen and perished, and saw nothing within reach, that he could take hold of to save him, what distress would he be in! How ready to think that *now* the thread was breaking, that now, *this minute*, he should be swallowed up in those dreadful flames! And would not he be ready to cry out in such circumstances? How much more those that see themselves in this manner hanging over an infinitely more dreadful pit, or held over it in the hand of God, who at the same time they see to be exceedingly provoked! No wonder that the wrath of God, when manifested but a little to the soul, overbears human strength.

So it may easily be accounted for, that a true sense of the glorious excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his wonderful dying love, and the exercise of a truly spiritual love and joy, should be such as very much to overcome the bodily strength. We are all ready to own, that no man can see God and live, and that it is but a very small part of that apprehension of the glory and love of Christ, which the saints enjoy in heaven, that our present frame can bear; therefore it is not at all strange that God should sometimes give his saints such foretastes of heaven, as to diminish their bodily strength. If it was not unaccountable that the queen of Sheba fainted, and had her bodily strength taken away, when she came to see the glory of Solomon, much less is it unaccountable that she who is the antitype of the queen of Sheba, (*viz.*) the Church, that is brought, as it were, from the utmost ends of the earth, from being an alien and stranger, far off, in a state of sin and misery, should faint when she comes to see the glory of Christ, who is the antitype of Solomon; and especially will be so in that prosperous, peaceful, glorious kingdom, which he will set up in the world in its latter age.

Some object against such extraordinary appearances, that we have no instances of them recorded in the New Testament, under the extraordinary effusions of the Spirit. Were this allowed, I can see no force in the objection, if neither reason, nor any rule of Scripture, exclude such things; especially considering what was observed under the foregoing particular. I do not know that we have any express mention in the New Testament of any person's weeping, or groaning, or sighing through fear of hell, or a sense of God's anger; but is there any body so foolish as from hence to argue, that in whomsoever these things appear, their convictions are not from the Spirit of God? And the reason why we do not argue thus, is,



because these are easily accounted for, from what we know of the nature of man, and from what the Scripture informs us in general, concerning the nature of eternal things, and the nature of the convictions of God's Spirit; so that there is no need that any thing should be said in particular concerning these external, circumstantial effects. Nobody supposes that there is any need of express scripture for every external, accidental manifestation of the inward motion of the mind: and though such circumstances are not particularly recorded in sacred history, yet there is a great deal of reason to think, from the general accounts we have, that it could not be otherwise than that such things must be in those days. And there is also reason to think, that such great outpouring of the Spirit was not wholly without those more extraordinary effects on persons' bodies. The jailer in particular, seems to have been an instance of that nature, when he, in the utmost distress and amazement, came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. His falling down at that time does not seem to be a designed putting himself into a posture of supplication, or humble address to Paul and Silas; for he seems not to have said anything to them then; but he first brought them out, and then he says to them, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* [Acts xvi. 29, and 30](#). But his falling down seems to be from the same cause as his trembling. The psalmist gives an account of his crying out aloud, and a great weakening of his body under convictions of conscience, and a sense of the guilt of sin, [Psal. xxxii. 3, 4](#). "When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer."—We may at least argue so much from it, that such an effect of conviction of sin may well in some cases be supposed; for if we should suppose any thing of an *auxesis* in the expressions, yet the psalmist would not represent his case by what would be absurd, and to which no degree of that exercise of mind he spoke of, would have any tendency.—We read of the disciples, [Matt. xiv. 26](#). that when they saw Christ coming to them in the storm, and took him for some terrible enemy, threatening their destruction in that storm, "they cried out for fear." Why then should it be thought strange, that persons should cry out for fear, when God appears to them, as a terrible enemy, and they see themselves in great danger of being swallowed up in the bottomless gulf of eternal misery? The spouse, once and again, speaks of herself as overpowered with the love of Christ, so as to weaken her body, and make her faint. [Cant. ii. 5](#). "Stay my with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love." And [chap. v. 8](#). "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love." From whence we may at least argue, that such an effect may well be supposed to arise, from such a cause in the saints in some cases, and that such an effect will sometimes be seen in the church of Christ.

It is a weak objection, that the impressions of enthusiasts have a great effect on their bodies. That the Quakers used to tremble, is no argument that Saul, afterwards Paul, and the jailer, did not tremble from real convictions of conscience. Indeed all such objections from effects on the body, let them be greater or less, seem to be exceeding frivolous; they

who argue thence, proceed in the dark, they know not what ground they go upon, nor by what rule they judge. The root and course of things is to be looked at, and the nature of the operations and affections are to be inquired into, and examined by the rule of God's word, and not the motions of the blood and animal spirits.

III. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of people is not the work of the Spirit of God, that it occasions a great deal of noise about religion. For though true religion be of a contrary nature to that of the Pharisees—which was ostentatious, and delighted to set itself forth to the view of men for their applause—yet such is human nature, that it is morally impossible there should be a great concern, strong affection, and a general engagedness of mind amongst a people, without causing a notable, visible, and open commotion and alteration amongst that people.—Surely, it is no argument that the minds of persons are not under the influence of God's Spirit, that they are very much moved: for indeed spiritual and eternal things are so great, and of such infinite concern, that there is a great absurdity in men's being but moderately moved and affected by them; and surely it is no argument that they are not moved by the Spirit of God, that they are affected with these things in some measure as they deserve, or in some proportion to their importance. And when was there ever any such thing since the world stood, as a people in general being greatly affected in any affair whatsoever, without noise or stir? The nature of man will not allow it.

Indeed Christ says, [Luke xvii. 20](#). “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.” That is, it will not consist in what is outward and visible; it shall not be like earthly kingdoms, set up with outward pomp, in some particular place, which shall be especially the royal city, and seat of the kingdom; as Christ explains himself in the words next following, “Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there; for behold the kingdom of God is within you.” Not that the kingdom of God shall be set up in the world, on the ruin of Satan's kingdom, without a very observable, great effect: a mighty change in the state of things, to the observation and astonishment of the whole world: for such an effect as this is even held forth in the prophecies of Scripture, and is so by Christ himself, in this very place, and even in his own explanation of these forementioned words, [ver. 24](#). “For as the lightning that lightneth out of one part under heaven, shineth unto another part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in his day.” This is to distinguish Christ's coming to set up his kingdom, from the coming of false Christ's, which he tells us will be in a private manner in the deserts, and in the secret chambers; whereas this event of setting up the kingdom of God, should be open and public, in the sight of the whole world with clear manifestation, like lightning that cannot be hid, but glares in every one's eyes, and shines from one side of heaven to the other. And we find, that when Christ's kingdom came, by that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in the apostles' days, it occasioned a great stir every where. What a mighty opposition was there in Jerusalem, on occasion of that great effusion of the Spirit! And so in Samaria, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth,

and other places! The affair filled the world with noise, and gave occasion to some to say of the apostles, that they had turned the world upside down. [Acts xvii. 6.](#)

IV. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, that many who are the subjects of it, have great impressions made on their imaginations. That persons have many impressions on their imaginations, does not prove that they have nothing else. It is easy to be accounted for, that there should be much of this nature amongst a people, where a great multitude of all kinds of constitutions have their minds engaged with intense thought and strong affections about invisible things; yea, it would be strange if there should not. Such is our nature, that we cannot think of things invisible, without a degree of imagination. I dare appeal to any man, of the greatest powers of mind, whether he is able to fix his thoughts on God, or Christ, or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas attending his meditations? And the more engaged the mind is, and the more intense the contemplation and affection, still the more lively and strong the imaginary idea will ordinarily be; especially when attended with surprise. And this is the case when the mental prospect is very new, and takes strong hold of the passions, as fear or joy; and when the change of the state and views of the mind is sudden, from a contrary extreme, as from that which was extremely dreadful, to that which is extremely ravishing and delightful. And it is no wonder that many persons do not well distinguish between that which is imaginary and that which is intellectual and spiritual; and that they are apt to lay too much weight on the imaginary part, and are most ready to speak of that in the account they give of their experiences, especially persons of less understanding and of distinguishing capacity.

As God has given us such a faculty as the imagination, and so made us that we cannot think of things spiritual and invisible, without some exercise of this faculty; so, it appears to me, that such is our state and nature, that this faculty is really subservient and helpful to the other faculties of the mind, when a proper use is made of it; though oftentimes, when the imagination is too strong, and the other faculties weak, it overbears, and disturbs them in their exercise. It appears to me manifest, in many instances with which I have been acquainted, that God has really made use of this faculty to truly divine purposes; especially in some that are more ignorant. God seems to condescend to their circumstances, and deal with them as babes; as of old he instructed his church, whilst in a state of ignorance and minority, by types and outward representations. I can see nothing unreasonable in such a position. Let others who have much occasion to deal with souls in spiritual concerns, judge whether experience does not confirm it.

It is no argument that a work is not of the Spirit of God, that some who are the subjects of it have been in a kind of ecstasy, wherein they have been carried beyond themselves, and have had their minds transported into a train of strong and pleasing imaginations, and a kind of visions, as though they were rapt up even to heaven, and there saw glorious sights.

I have been acquainted with some such instances, and I see no need of bringing in the help of the devil into the account that we give of these things, nor yet of supposing them to be of the same nature with the visions of the prophets, or St. Paul's rapture into paradise. Human nature, under these intense exercises and affections, is all that need be brought into the account. If it may be well accounted for, that persons under a true sense of the glorious and wonderful greatness and excellency of divine things, and soul-ravishing views of the beauty and love of Christ, should have the strength of nature overpowered, as I have already shown that it may; then I think it is not at all strange, that amongst great numbers that are thus affected and overborne, there should be some persons of particular constitutions that should have their imaginations thus affected. The effect is no other than what bears a proportion and analogy to other effects of the strong exercise of their minds. It is no wonder, when the thoughts are so fixed, and the affections so strong—and the whole soul so engaged, ravished, and swallowed up—that all other parts of the body are so affected, as to be deprived of their strength, and the whole frame ready to dissolve. Is it any wonder that, in such a case, the brain in particular, (especially in some constitutions,) which we know is most especially affected by intense contemplations and exercises of mind, should be so affected, that its strength and spirits should for a season be diverted, and taken off from impressions made on the organs of external sense, and be wholly employed in a train of pleasing delightful imaginations, corresponding with the present frame of the mind. Some are ready to interpret such things wrong, and to lay too much weight on them, as prophetic visions, divine revelations and sometimes significations from heaven of what shall come to pass; which the issue, in some instances I have known, has shown to be otherwise. But yet, it appears to me that such things are evidently sometimes from the Spirit of God, though indirectly; that is, their extraordinary frame of mind, and that strong and lively sense of divine things which is the occasion of them, is from his Spirit; and also as the mind continues in its holy frame, and retains a divine sense of the excellency of spiritual things even in its rapture; which holy frame and sense is from the Spirit of God, though the imaginations that attend it are but accidental, and therefore there is commonly something or other in them that is confused, improper, and false.

V. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that example is a great means of it. It is surely no argument that an effect is not from God, that means are used in producing it; for we know that it is God's manner to make use of means in carrying on his work in the world, and it is no more an argument against the divinity of an effect, that this means is made use of, than if it was by any other means. It is agreeable to Scripture that persons should be influenced by one another's good example. The Scripture directs us to set good examples to that end, [Matt. v. 16.](#) [1 Pet. iii. 1.](#) [1 Tim. iv. 12.](#) [Titus ii. 7.](#) and also directs us to be influenced by the good examples of others, and to follow them, [2 Cor. viii. 1-7.](#) [Heb. vi. 12.](#) [Phil. iii. 17.](#) [1 Cor. iv. 16.](#) and [chap. xi. 1.](#) [2 Thess. iii. 9.](#) [1 Thess. i. 7.](#) By which it appears,

that example is one of God's means; and certainly it is no argument that a work is not of God, that his own means are made use of to effect it.

And as it is a *scriptural* way of carrying on God's work, by example, so it is a *reasonable* way. It is no argument that men are not influenced by reason, that they are influenced by example. This way of persons holding forth truth to one another, has a tendency to enlighten the mind, and to convince reason. None will deny but that for persons to signify things one to another by words, may rationally be supposed to tend to enlighten each other's minds; but the same thing may be signified by actions, and signified much more fully and effectually. Words are of no use any otherwise than as they convey our own ideas to others; but actions, in some cases, may do it much more fully. There is a language in actions; and in some cases, much more clear and convincing than in words. It is therefore no argument against the goodness of the effect, that persons are greatly affected by seeing other so; yea, though the impression be made only by seeing the tokens of great and extraordinary affection in others in their behaviour, taking for granted what they are affected with, without hearing them say one word.

There may be language sufficient in such a case in their behaviour only, to convey their minds to others, and to signify to them their sense of things more than can possibly be done by words only. If a person should see another under extreme bodily torment, he might receive much clearer ideas, and more convincing evidence of what he suffered by his actions in his misery, than he could do only by the words of an unaffected indifferent relater. In like manner he might receive a greater idea of any thing that is excellent and very delightful, from the behaviour of one that is in actual enjoyment, than by the dull narration of one which is inexperienced and insensible himself. I desire that this matter may be examined by the strictest reason. Is it not manifest, that effects produced in persons' minds are rational, since not only weak and ignorant people are much influenced by example, but also those that make the greatest boast of strength of reason, are more influenced by reason held forth in this way, than almost any other way. Indeed the religious affections of many when raised by this means, as by hearing the word preached, or any other means, may prove flashy, and soon vanish, as Christ represents the stony-ground hearers; but the affections of some thus moved by example, are abiding, and prove to be of saving issue.

There never yet was a time of remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, and great revival of religion, but that example had a main hand. So it was at the reformation, and in the apostles' days, in Jerusalem and Samaria, and Ephesus, and other parts of the world, as will be most manifest to any one that attends to the accounts we have in the Acts of the Apostles. As in those days one person was moved by another, so one city or town was influenced by the example of another, [1 Thess. i. 7, 8](#). "So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad."

It is no valid objection against examples being so much used, that the Scripture speaks of the word as the principal means of carrying on God's work; for the word of God is the principal means, nevertheless, by which other means operate and are made effectual. Even the sacraments have no effect but by the word; and so it is that example becomes effectual; for all that is visible to the eye is unintelligible and vain, without the word of God to instruct and guide the mind. It is the word of God that is indeed held forth and applied by example, as the word of the Lord sounded forth to other towns in Macedonia, and Achaia, by the example of those that believe in Thessalonica.

That example should be a great means of propagating the church of God seems to be several ways signified in Scripture: it is signified by Ruth's following Naomi out of the land of Moab, into the land of Israel, when she resolved that she would not leave her, but would go whither she went, and would lodge where she lodged; and that Naomi's people should be her people, and Naomi's God, her God. Ruth, who was the ancestral mother of David, and of Christ was undoubtedly a great type of the church; upon which account her history is inserted in the canon of Scripture. In her leaving the land of Moab and its gods, to come and put her trust under the shadow of the wings of the God of Israel, we have a type of the conversion not only of the Gentile church but of every sinner, that is naturally an alien and stranger, but in his conversion forgets his own people, and fathers house, and becomes a fellow-citizen with the saints and a true Israelite. The same seems to be signified in the effect the example of the spouse, when she was sick of love, has on the daughters of Jerusalem, i.e. Visible Christians, who are first awakened, by seeing the spouse in such extraordinary circumstances, and then converted. See [Cant. v. 8, 9.](#) and [vi. 1.](#) And this is undoubtedly one way that "the Spirit and the bride say, come." [Rev. xxii. 17.](#) i.e. The Spirit in the bride. It is foretold, that the work of God should be very much carried on by this means, in the last great outpouring of the Spirit, that should introduce the glorious day of the church, so often spoken of in Scripture, [Zech. viii. 21-23.](#) "And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people, and strong nations, shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

VI. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that many, who seem to be the subjects of it, are guilty of great imprudences and irregularities in their conduct. We are to consider that the end for which God pours out his Spirit, is to make men holy, and not to make them politicians. Is it no wonder that, in a mixed multitude of all sorts—wise and unwise, young and old, of weak and strong natural abilities, under strong impressions of mind—there are many who behave themselves imprudently. There are but few that know

how to conduct them under vehement affections of any kind, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature; to do so requires a great deal of discretion, strength, and steadiness of mind. A thousand imprudences will not prove a work to be not of the Spirit of God; yea, if there be not only imprudences, but many things prevailing that are irregular, and really contrary to the rules of God's holy word. That it should be thus may be well accounted for from the exceeding weakness of human nature, together with the remaining darkness and corruption of those that are yet the subjects of the saving influences of God's Spirit, and have a real zeal for God.

We have a remarkable instance, in the New Testament, of a people that partook largely of that great effusion of the Spirit in the apostles' days, among whom there nevertheless abounded imprudences and great irregularities; *viz.* The church at Corinth. There is scarcely any church more celebrated in the New Testament for being blessed with large measures of the Spirit of God, both in his ordinary influences, in convincing and converting sinners, and also in his extraordinary and miraculous gifts; yet what manifold imprudences, great and sinful irregularities, and strange confusion did they run into, at the Lord's supper, and in the exercise of church discipline! To which may be added, their indecent manner of attending other parts of public worship, their jarring and contention about their teachers, and even the exercise of their extraordinary gifts of prophecy, speaking with tongues, and the like, wherein they spake and acted by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God.

And if we see great imprudences, and even sinful irregularities, in some who are great instruments to carry on the work, it will not prove it not to be the work of God. The apostle Peter himself, who was a great, eminently holy, and inspired apostle—and one of the chief instruments of setting up the Christian church in the world—when he was actually engaged in this work, was guilty of a great and sinful error in his conduct; of which the apostle Paul speaks, [Gal. ii. 11-13](#). “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed; for before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision; and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch, that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.” If a great pillar of the Christian church—one of the chief of those who are the very foundations on which, next to Christ, the whole church is said to be built—was guilty of such an irregularity; is it any wonder if other lesser instruments, who have not that extraordinary conduct of the divine Spirit he had, should be guilty of many irregularities?

And in particular, it is no evidence that a work is not of God, if many who are either the subjects or the instrument of it, are guilty of too great forwardness to censure others as unconverted. For this may be through mistakes they have embraced concerning the marks by which they are to judge of the hypocrisy and carnality of others; or from not duly apprehending the latitude the Spirit of God uses in the methods of his operations; or, from want

of making due allowance for that infirmity and corruption that may be left in the hearts of the saints; as well as through want of a due sense of their own blindness and weakness, and remaining corruption, whereby spiritual pride may have a secret vent this way, under some disguise, and not be discovered.—If we allow that truly pious men may have a great deal of remaining blindness and corruption, and may be liable to mistakes about the marks of hypocrisy, as undoubtedly all will allow, then it is not unaccountable that they should sometimes run into such errors as these. It is as easy, and upon some accounts more easy to be accounted for, why the remaining corruption of good men should sometimes have an unobserved vent this way, than most other ways; and without doubt (however lamentable) many holy men have erred in this way.

Lukewarmness in religion is abominable, and zeal an excellent grace; yet above all other Christian virtues, this needs to be strictly watched and searched; for it is that with which corruption, and particularly pride and human passion, is exceedingly apt to mix unobserved. And it is observable, that there never was a time of great reformation, to cause a revival of zeal in the church of God, but that it has been attended, in some notable instances, with irregularity, and a running out some way or other into an undue severity. Thus in the apostles' days, a great deal of zeal was spent about unclean meats, with heat of spirit in Christians one against another, both parties condemning and censuring one another, as not true Christians; when the apostle had charity for both, as influenced by a spirit of real piety: "he that eats," says he, "to the Lord he eats, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." So in the church of Corinth, they had got into a way of extolling some ministers, and censuring others, and were puffed up one against another: but yet these things were no sign that the work then so wonderfully carried on, was not the work of God. And after this, when religion was still greatly flourishing in the world, and a spirit of eminent holiness and zeal prevailed in the Christian church, the zeal of Christians ran out into a very improper and undue severity, in the exercise of church discipline towards delinquents. In some cases they would by no means admit them into their charity and communion though they appeared never so humble and penitent. And in the days of Constantine the Great, the zeal of Christians against heathenism ran out into a degree of persecution. So in that glorious revival of religion, at the reformation, zeal in many instances appeared in a very improper severity, and even a degree of persecution; yea, in some of the most eminent reformers; as in the great Calvin in particular. And many in those days of the flourishing of vital religion, were guilty of severely censuring others that differed from then in opinion in some points of divinity.

VII. Nor are many errors in judgment, and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the work, any argument that the work in general is not of the Spirit of God. However great a spiritual influence may be, it is not to be expected that the Spirit of God should be given now in the same manner as to the apostles, infallibly to guide them in points of Christian



doctrine, so that what they taught might be relied on as a rule to the christian church. And if many delusions of Satan appear, at the same time that a great religious concern prevails, it is not an argument that the work in general is not the work of God, any more than it was an argument in Egypt, that there were no true miracles wrought there, by the hand of God, because Jannes and Jambres wrought false miracles at the same time by the hand of the devil. Yea, the same persons may be the subjects of much of the influences of the Spirit of God, and yet in some things be led away by the delusions of Satan, and this be no more of paradox than many other things that are true of real saints, in the present state, where grace dwells with so much corruption, and the new man and the old man subsist together in the same person; and the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil remain for a while together in the same heart. Many godly persons have undoubtedly in this and other ages, exposed themselves to woeful delusions, by an aptness to lay too much weight on impulses and impressions, as if they were immediate revelations from God, to signify something future, or to direct them where to go, and what to do.

VIII. If some, who were thought to be wrought upon, fall away into gross errors, or scandalous practices, it is no argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God. That there are some counterfeits, is no argument that nothing is true: such things are always expected in a time of reformation. If we look into church history, we shall find no instance of any great revival of religion, but what has been attended with many such things. Instances of this nature in the apostles' days were innumerable; some fell away into gross heresies, others into vile practices, though they seemed to be the subjects of a work of the Spirit—and were accepted for a while amongst those that were truly so, as their brethren and companions—and were not suspected till they went out from them. And some of these were teachers and officers—and eminent persons in the Christian church—whom God had endowed with miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; as appears by the beginning of the [6th chapter of the Hebrews](#). An instance of these was Judas, who was one of the twelve apostles, and had long been constantly united to, and intimately conversant with, a company of truly experienced disciples, without being discovered or suspected, till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice.

He had been treated by Jesus himself, in all external things, as if he had truly been a disciple, even investing him with the character of apostle, sending him forth to preach the gospel, and enduing him with miraculous gifts of the Spirit. For though Christ knew him, yet he did not then clothe himself with the character of omniscient Judge, and searcher of hearts, but acted the part of a minister of the visible church; (for he was his Father's minister;) and therefore rejected him not, till he had discovered himself by his scandalous practice; thereby giving an example to guides and rulers of the visible church, not to take it upon them to act the part of searcher of hearts, but to be influenced in their administrations by what is visible and open.—There were some instances then of such apostates, as were es-

teemed eminently full of the grace of God's Spirit. An instance of this nature probably was Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, who was looked upon by the Christians in Jerusalem, in the time of that extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit, as a man full of the Holy Ghost, and was chosen out of the multitude of Christians to that office, for that reason; as you may see in [Acts vi. 3, 5](#). Yet he afterwards fell away and became the head of a sect of vile heretics, of gross practices, called from his name the sect of the Nicolaitans,<sup>309</sup> [Rev. ii. 6, and 15](#).

So in the time of the reformation from popery, how great was the number of those who for a while seemed to join with the reformers, yet fell away into the grossest and most absurd errors, and abominable practices. And it is particularly observable, that in times of great pouring out of the Spirit to revive religion in the world, a number of those who for a while seemed to partake in it, have fallen off into whimsical and extravagant errors, and gross enthusiasm, boasting of high degrees of spirituality and perfection, censuring and condemning others as carnal. Thus it was with the Gnostics in the apostles' times; and thus it was with several sects at the reformation, as Anthony Burgess observes in his book called *Spiritual Refinings*, Part I. Sermon 23. P. 132. "The first worthy reformers, and glorious instruments of God, found a bitter conflict herein, so that they were exercised not only with formalists, and traditionary papists on the one side, but men that pretended themselves to be more enlightened than the reformers were, on the other side: hence they called those that did adhere to the Scripture, and would try revelations by it, Literists and Vowelists, as men acquainted with the words and vowels of the Scripture, having nothing of the Spirit of God: and wheresoever in any town the true doctrine of the gospel brake forth to the displacing of popery, presently such opinions arose, like tares that came up among the good wheat; whereby great divisions were raised, and the reformation made abominable and odious to the world; as if that had been the sun to give heat and warmth to those worms and serpents to crawl out of the ground. Hence they inveighed against Luther, and said he had only promulgated a carnal gospel."—Some of the leaders of those wild enthusiasts had been for a while highly esteemed by the first reformers, and peculiarly dear to them.—Thus also in England, at the time when vital religion much prevailed in the days of King Charles I, the interregnum, and Oliver Cromwell, such things as these abounded. And so in New England, in her purest days, when vital piety flourished, such kind of things as these broke out. Therefore the devil's sowing such tares is no proof that a true work of the Spirit of God is not gloriously carried on.

IX. It is no argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it seems to be promoted by ministers insisting very much on the terrors of God's holy law, and that with a great deal of pathos and earnestness. If there be really a hell of such dreadful and never-

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309 But through these heretics assumed his name, it does not follow that he countenanced their enormities. See Calmet's *Dict. Nicolas*

ending torments, as is generally supposed, of which multitudes are in great danger—and into which the greater part of men in Christian countries do actually from generation to generation fall, for want of a sense of its terribleness, and so for want of taking due care to avoid it—then why is it not proper for those who have the care of souls to take great pains to make men sensible of it? Why should they not be told as much of the truth as can be? If I am in danger of going to hell, I should be glad to know as much as possibly I can of the dreadfulness of it. If I am very prone to neglect due care to avoid it, he does me the best kindness, who does most to represent to me the truth of the case, that sets forth my misery and danger in the liveliest manner.

I appeal to every one, whether this is not the very course they would take in case of exposedness to any great temporal calamity? If any of you who are heads of families saw one of your children in a house all on fire, and in imminent danger of being soon consumed in the flames, yet seemed to be very insensible of its danger, and neglected to escape after you had often called to it—would you go on to speak to it only in a cold and indifferent manner? Would not you cry aloud, and call earnestly to it, and represent the danger it was in, and its own folly in delaying, in the most lively manner of which you was capable? If you should continue to speak to it only in a cold manner, as you are wont to do in ordinary conversation about indifferent matters, would not those about you begin to think you were bereft of reason yourself? This is not the way of mankind in temporal affairs of great moment, that require earnest heed and great haste, and about which they are greatly concerned. They are not wont to speak to other of their danger, and warn them but a little or in a cold and indifferent manner. Nature teaches men otherwise. If we who have the care of souls, knew what hell was, had seen the state of the damned, or by any other means had become sensible how dreadful their case was—and at the same time knew that the greater part of men went thither, and saw our hearers not sensible of their danger—it would be morally impossible for us to avoid most earnestly setting before them the dreadfulness of that misery, and their great exposedness to it, and even to cry aloud to them.

When ministers preach of hell, and warn sinners to avoid it, in a cold manner—though they may say in words that it is infinitely terrible—they contradict themselves. For actions, as I observed before, have a language as well as words. If a preacher's words represent the sinner's state as infinitely dreadful, while his behaviour and manner of speaking contradict it—showing that the preacher does not think so—he defeats his own purpose; for the language of his actions, in such a case, is much more effectual than the bare signification of his words. Not that I think that the law only should be preached: ministers may preach other things too little. The gospel is to be preached as well as the law, and the law is to be preached only to make way for the gospel, and in order that it may be preached more effectually. The main work of ministers is to preach the gospel: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." So that a minister would miss it very much if he should insist so much on the terrors of the

law, as to forget his Lord, and neglect to preach the gospel; but yet the law is very much to be insisted on, and the preaching of the gospel is like to be in vain without it.

And certainly such earnestness and affection in speaking is beautiful, as becomes the nature and importance of the subject. Not but that there may be such a thing as an indecent boisterousness in a preacher, something besides what naturally arises from the nature of his subject, and in which the matter and manner do not well agree together. Some talk of it as an unreasonable thing to fright persons to heaven; but I think it is a reasonable thing to endeavour to fright persons away from hell. They stand upon its brink, and are just ready to fall into it, and are senseless of their danger. Is it not a reasonable thing to fright a person out of a house on fire? The word *fright* is commonly used for sudden, causeless fear, or groundless surprise; but surely a just fear, for which there is good reason, is not to be spoken against under any such name. \_\_\_\_\_

## SECT. II.

What are distinguishing scripture evidences of a work of the Spirit of God.

Having shown, in some instances, what are not evidences that a work wrought among a people, is not a work of the Spirit of God, I now proceed, in the second place, as was proposed, to show positively, what are the sure, distinguishing scripture evidences and marks of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves, or see among a people, without danger of being misled.—And in this, as I said before, I shall confine myself wholly to those marks which are given us by the apostle in the chapter wherein is my text, where this matter is particularly handled, and more plainly and fully than any where else in the Bible. And in speaking to these marks, I shall take them in the order in which I find them in the chapter.

I When the operation is such as to raise their esteem of that Jesus who was born of the Virgin, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; and seems more to confirm and establish their minds in the truth of what the gospel declares to us of his being the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; is a sure sign that it is from the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle gives us in the [2d and 3d verses.](#) “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; and every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.” This implies a confessing not only that there was such a person who appeared in Palestine, and did and suffered those things that are recorded of him, but that he was Christ, i.e. The Son of God, anointed to be Lord and Saviour, as the name Jesus Christ implies. That thus much is implied in the apostle’s meaning, is confirmed by the [15th verse.](#), where the apostle is still on the same subject of signs of the true Spirit; “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” And it is to be observed that the word *confess*, as it is often used in the New Testament, signifies more then merely *allowing*: it implies an establishing and confirming of a thing by testimony, and declaring it with manifestation of esteem and affection; so [Matt. x. 32.](#) “Whosoever therefore shall *confess* me before men, him will I *confess* also before my Father which is in heaven.” [Rom. xv. 9.](#) “I will *confess* to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.” And [Phil. ii. 11.](#) “That every tongue shall *confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” And that this is the force of the expression, as the apostle John uses it in the place, is confirmed in the next chapter, [ver. 1.](#) “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.” And by that parallel place of the apostle Paul, where we have the same rule given to distinguish the true Spirit from all counterfeits, [1 Cor. xii. 3.](#) “Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed; (or will show an ill or mean esteem of him;) and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

So that if the spirit that is at work among a people is plainly observed to work so as to convince them of Christ, and lead them to him—to confirm their minds in the belief of the history of Christ as he appeared in the flesh—and that he is the Son of God, and was sent of God to save sinners; that he is the only Saviour, and that they stand in great need of him; and if he seems to beget in them higher and more honourable thoughts of him than they used to have, and to incline their affections more to him; it is a sure sign that it is the true and right Spirit; however incapable we may be to determine, whether that conviction and affection be in that manner, or to that degree, as to be saving or not.

But the words of the apostle are remarkable; the person to whom the Spirit gives testimony, and for whom he raises their esteem, must be that Jesus who appeared in the flesh, and not another Christ in his stead; nor any mystical fantastical Christ; such as the light within. This the spirit of Quakers extols, while it diminishes their esteem of and dependence upon an outward Christ—or Jesus as he came in the flesh—and leads them off from him; but the spirit that gives testimony for that Jesus, and leads to him, can be no other than the Spirit of God.

The devil has the most bitter and implacable enmity against that person, especially in his character of the Saviour of men; he mortally hates the story and doctrine of his redemption; he never would go about to beget in men more honourable thoughts of him, and lay greater weight on his instructions and commands. The Spirit that inclines men's hearts to the seed of the woman, is not the spirit of the serpent that has such an irreconcilable enmity against him. He that heightens men's esteem of the glorious Michael, that prince of angels, is not the spirit of the dragon that is at war with him.

II. When the spirit that is at work operates against the interests of Satan's kingdom, which lies in encouraging and establishing sin, and cherishing men's worldly lusts; this is a sure sign that it is a true, and not a false spirit. This sign we have given us in the [4th and 5th verses](#). "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Here is a plain antithesis: it is evident that the apostle is still comparing those that are influenced by the two opposite kinds of spirits, the true and the false, and showing the difference; the one is of God, and overcomes the spirit of the world; the other is of the world, and speaks and savours of the things of the world. The spirit of the devil is here called, "he that is in the world." Christ says, "My kingdom is not of this world." But it is otherwise with Satan's kingdom; he is "the god of this world."

What the apostle means by *the world*, or "the things that are of the world," we learn by his own words, in the 2d chapter of this epistle, [15th and 16th verses](#). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." So that by the world the apostle evidently

means every thing that appertains to the interest of sin, and comprehends all the corruptions and lusts of men, and all those acts and objects by which they are gratified.

So that we may safely determine, from what the apostle says, that the spirit that is at work amongst a people, after such a manner, as to lessen men's esteem of the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world, and to take off their hearts from an eager pursuit after these things; and to engage them in a deep concern about a future state and eternal happiness which the gospel reveals—and puts them upon earnestly seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and the spirit that convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, the guilt it brings, and the misery to which it exposes; must needs be the Spirit of God.

It is not to be supposed that Satan would convince men of sin, and awaken the conscience; it can no way serve his end, to make that candle of the Lord shine the brighter, and to open the mouth of that vicegerent of God in the soul. It is for his interest, whatever he does, to lull conscience asleep, and keep it quiet. To have that, with its eyes and mouth open in the soul, will tend to clog and hinder all his designs of darkness, and evermore to disturb his affairs, to cross his interest, and disquiet him, so that he can manage nothing to his mind without molestation. Would the devil, when he is about to establish men in sin, take such a course, in the first place, to enlighten and awaken the conscience to see the dreadfulness of sin, and make them exceedingly afraid of it, and sensible of their misery by reason of their past sins, and their great need of deliverance from their guilt? Would he make them more careful, inquisitive, and watchful to discern what is sinful; and to avoid future sins; and so more afraid of the devil's temptations, and more careful to guard against them? What do those men do with their reason, that suppose that the Spirit that operates thus, is the spirit of the devil?

Possibly some may say, that the devil may even awaken men's consciences to deceive them, and make them think they have been the subjects of a saving work of the Spirit of God, while they are indeed still in the gall of bitterness. But to this it may be replied, that the man who has an awakened conscience, is the least likely to be deceived of any man in the world; it is the drowsy, insensible, stupid conscience that is most easily blinded. The more sensible conscience is in a diseased soul, the less easily is it quieted without a real healing. The more sensible conscience is made of the dreadfulness of sin, and of the greatness of a man's own guilt, the less likely is he to rest in his own righteousness, or to be pacified with nothing but shadows. A man that has been thoroughly terrified with a sense of his own danger and misery, is not easily flattered and made to believe himself safe, without any good grounds. To awaken conscience, and convince it of the evil of sin, cannot tend to establish it, but certainly tends to make way for sin and Satan's being cut out. Therefore this is a good argument that the Spirit that operates thus, cannot be the spirit of the devil; except we suppose that Christ knew not how to argue, who told the Pharisees—who supposed that the Spirit by which he wrought, was the spirit of the devil—that *Satan would not cast out Satan*, [Matt.](#)

xii. 25, 26.—And therefore, if we see persons made sensible of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the displeasure of God against it; of their own miserable condition as they are in themselves, by reason of sin, and earnestly concerned for their eternal salvation—and sensible of their need of God’s pity and help, and engaged to seek it in the use of the means that God has appointed—we may certainly conclude that it is from the Spirit of God, whatever effects this concern has on their bodies; though it cause them to cry out aloud, or to shriek, or to faint; or, though it throw them into convulsions, or whatever other way the blood and spirits are moved.

The influence of the Spirit of God is yet more abundantly manifest, if persons have their hearts *drawn off* from the world, and weaned from the objects of their worldly lusts, and taken off from worldly pursuits, by the sense they have of the excellency of divine things, and the affection they have to those spiritual enjoyments of another world, that are promised in the gospel.

III. The spirit that operates in such a manner, as to cause in men a greater regard to the Holy Scriptures, and establishes them more in their truth and divinity, is certainly the Spirit of God. This rule the apostle gives us in the [6th verse](#). “We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us: hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” *We are of God*; that is, “We the apostles are sent forth of God, and appointed by him to teach the world, and to deliver those doctrine and instructions, which are to be their rule; *he that knoweth God, heareth us*,” &c.—The apostle’s argument here equally reaches all that in the same sense are *of God*; that is, all those that God has appointed and inspired to deliver to his church its rule of faith and practice; all the prophets and apostles, whose doctrine God has made the foundation on which he has built his church, as in [Eph. ii. 20](#). in a word, all the penmen of the Holy Scriptures. The devil never would attempt to beget in persons a regard to that divine word which God has given to be the great and standing rule for the direction of his church in all religious matters, and all concerns of their souls, in all ages. A spirit of delusion will not incline persons to seek direction at the mouth of God. To the law and to the testimony, is never the cry of those evil spirits that have no light in them; for it is God’s own direction to discover their delusions. [Isa. viii. 19, 20](#). “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” The devil does not say the same as Abraham did, “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them:” nor the same that the voice from heaven did concerning Christ, “Hear ye him.” Would the spirit of error, in order to deceive men, beget in them a high opinion of the infallible rule, and incline them to think much of it, and be very conversant with it? Would the prince of darkness, in order to promote his kingdom of darkness, lead men to the sun? The devil has ever shown a mortal spite and hatred towards



that holy book the Bible: he has done all in his power to extinguish that light; and to draw men off from it: he knows it to be that light by which his kingdom of darkness is to be overthrown. He has had for many ages experience of its power to defeat his purposes, and baffle his designs: it is his constant plague. It is the main weapon which Michael uses in his war with him: it is the sword of the Spirit, that pierces him and conquers him. It is that great and strong sword, with which God punishes Leviathan, that crooked serpent. It is that sharp sword that we read of, [Rev. xix. 15](#). That proceeds out of the mouth of him that sat on the horse, with which he smites his enemies. Every text is a dart to torment the old serpent. He has felt the stinging smart thousands of times; therefore he is engaged against the Bible, and hates every word in it: and we may be sure that he never will attempt to raise persons' esteem of it, or affection to it. And accordingly we see it common in enthusiasts, that they depreciate this written rule, and set up the light within or some other rule above it.

IV. Another rule to judge of spirits may be drawn from those compellations given to the opposite spirits, in the last words of the [6th verse](#). "The spirit of truth and the spirit of error." These words exhibit the two opposite characters of the Spirit of God, and other spirits that counterfeit his operations. And therefore, if by observing the manner of the operation of a spirit that is at work among a people, we see that it operates as a spirit of truth, leading persons to truth, convincing them of those things that are true, we may safely determine that it is a right and true spirit. For instance, if we observe that the spirit at work makes men more sensible than they used to be, that there is a God, and that he is a great and sin-hating God; that life is short, and very uncertain; and that there is another world; that they have immortal souls, and must give account of themselves to God, that they are exceeding sinful by nature and practice; that they are helpless in themselves; and confirms them in other things that are agreeable to some sound doctrine; the spirit that works thus operates as a spirit of truth; he represents things as they truly are. He brings men to the light; for whatever makes truth manifest is light; as the apostle Paul observes, [Eph. v. 13](#). "But all things that are reprov'd (or discovered, as it is in the margin) are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." And therefore we may conclude, that it is not the spirit of darkness that doth thus discover and make manifest the truth. Christ tells us that Satan is a liar, and the father of lies; and his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness. It is upheld and promoted only by darkness and error. Satan has all his power of dominion by darkness. Hence we read of the power of darkness. [Luke xxii. 53](#). And [Col. i. 13](#). And devils are called "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Whatever spirit removes our darkness, and brings us to the light, undeceives us, and, by convincing us of the truth, doth us a kindness. If I am brought to a sight of truth, and am made sensible of things as they really are, my duty is immediately to thank God for it, without standing first to inquire by what means I have such a benefit.

V. If the spirit that is at work among a people operates as a spirit of love to God and man, it is a sure sign that it is the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle insists upon from the [6th verse to the end of the chapter](#). “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love,” &c. Here it is evident, that the apostle is still comparing those two sorts of persons that are influenced by the opposite kinds of spirits; and mentions love as a mark by which we may know who has the true spirit: but this is especially evident by the [12th and 13th verses](#). “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.” In these verses love is spoken of as if it were that wherein the very nature of the Holy Spirit consisted; or, as if *divine love* dwelling in us, and the *Spirit of God* dwelling in us, were the same thing; as it is also in the last two verses of the foregoing chapter, and in the [16th verse](#) of this chapter. Therefore this last mark which the apostle gives of the true Spirit he seems to speak of as the most eminent: and so insists much more largely upon it, than upon all the rest; and speaks expressly of both love to God and men; of *love to men* in the [7th, 11th, and 12th verses](#); and of *love to God*, in the [17th, 18th, and 19th verses](#); and of both together, in the last two verses; and of love to men, as arising from love to God, in these last two verses.

Therefore, when the spirit that is at work amongst the people, tends this way, and brings many of them to high and exalting thoughts of the Divine Being, and his glorious perfections; and works in them an admiring, delightful sense of the excellency of Jesus Christ; representing him as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and makes him precious to the soul; winning and drawing the heart with those motives and incitements to love, of which the apostle speaks in that passage of Scripture we are upon, *viz.* The wonderful, free love of God in giving his only-begotten Son to die for us, and the wonderful dying love of Christ to us, who had no love to him, but were his enemies; must needs be the Spirit of God, as [ver. 9, 10](#). “In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” And [ver. 16](#). “And we have known, and believed, the love that God hath to us.” And [ver. 19](#). “We love him because he first loved us.” The spirit that excites to love on these motives, and makes the attributes of God as revealed in the gospel, and manifested in Christ, delightful objects of contemplation; and makes the soul to long after God and Christ—after their presence and communion, acquaintance with them, and conformity to them—and to live so as to please and honour them; the spirit that quells contentions among men, and gives a spirit of peace and good will, excites to acts of outward kindness, and earnest desires of the salvation of souls—and causes a delight in those that appear as the children God, and follow-

ers of Christ; I say, when a spirit operates after this manner among a people, there is the highest kind of evidence of the influence of a true and divine spirit.

Indeed there is a counterfeit love, that often appears among those who are led by a spirit of delusion. There is commonly in the wildest enthusiasts, a kind of union and affection, arising from self-love, occasioned by their agreeing in those things wherein they greatly differ from all others, and from which they are objects of the ridicule of all the rest of mankind. This naturally will cause them so much the more to prize those peculiarities that make them the objects of others' contempt. Thus the ancient Gnostics, and the wild fanatics that appeared at the beginning of the reformation, boasted of their great love one to another; one sect of them, in particular, calling themselves the *family of love*. But this is quite another thing, than that Christian love I have just described: it is only the working of a natural self-love, and no true benevolence, any more than the union and friendship which may be among a company of pirates, that are at war with all the rest of the world. There is enough said in this passage of the nature of a truly Christian love, thoroughly to distinguish it from all such counterfeits. It is love that arises from apprehension of the wonderful riches of the free grace and sovereignty of God's love to us, in Christ Jesus; being attended with a sense of our own utter unworthiness, as in ourselves the enemies and haters of God and Christ, and with a renunciation of all our own excellency and righteousness. See [ver. 9, 10, 11, and 19](#). The surest character of true divine supernatural love—distinguishing it from counterfeits that arise from a natural self-love—is, that the Christian virtue of *humility* shines in it; that which above all others renounces, abases, and annihilates what we term *self*. Christian love, or true charity, is an humble love. [1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5](#). “Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked.” When therefore we see love in persons attended with a sense of their own littleness, vileness, weakness, and utter insufficiency; and so with self-diffidence, self-emptiness, self-renunciation, and poverty of spirit; these are the manifest tokens of the Spirit of God.

He that thus dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him. What the apostle speaks of as a great evidence of the true Spirit, is God's love or Christ's love; as [ver. 12](#).—“his love is perfected in us.” What kind of love that is, we may see best in what appeared in Christ's example. The love that appeared in that Lamb of God, was not only a love to friends, but to enemies, and a love attended with a meek and humble spirit. “Learn of me,” says he, “for I am meek and lowly in heart.”—Love and humility are two things the most contrary to the spirit of the devil, of any thing in the world; for the character of that evil spirit, above all things, consists in pride and malice.

Thus I have spoken particularly to the several marks the apostle gives us of a work of the true Spirit. There are some of these things which the devil *would not* do if he could: thus he would not awaken the conscience, and make men sensible of their miserable state by reason of sin, and sensible of their great need of a Saviour; and he would not confirm men

in the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, or raise men's value and esteem of him: he would not beget in men's minds an opinion of the necessity, usefulness, and truth of the Holy Scriptures, or incline them to make much use of them; nor would he show men the truth, in things that concern their souls' interest; to undeceive them, and lead them out of darkness into light, and give them a view of things as they really are. And there are other things that the devil *neither can nor will do*; he will not give men a spirit of divine love, or Christian humility and poverty of spirit; nor *could* he if he would. He cannot give those things he has not himself: these things are as contrary as possible to his nature. And therefore when there is an extraordinary influence or operation appearing on the minds of a people, if these things are found in it, we are safe in determining that it is the work of God, whatever other circumstances it may be attended with, whatever instruments are used, whatever methods are taken to promote it; whatever means a sovereign God, whose judgments are a great deep, employs to carry it on; and whatever motion there may be of the animal spirits, whatever effects may be wrought on men's bodies. These marks, that the apostle has given us, are sufficient to stand alone, and support themselves. They plainly show the *finger of God*, and are sufficient to outweigh a thousand such little objections, as many make from oddities, irregularities, errors in conduct, and the delusions and scandals of some professors.

But here some may *object* to the sufficiency of the marks given, what the apostle Paul says in [2 Cor. xi. 13, 14](#). "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

To which I *answer*, that this can be no objection against the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true from the false spirit, in those false apostles and prophets, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light, because it is principally with a view to them that the apostle gives these marks; as appears by the words of the text, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God;" and this is the reason he gives, because many false prophets are gone out into the world: *viz.* "There are many gone out into the world who are the ministers of the devil, who transform themselves into the prophets of God, in whom the spirit of the devil is transformed into an angel of light; therefore try the spirits by these rules that I shall give you, that you may be able to distinguish the true spirit from the false, under such a crafty disguise." Those *false prophets* the apostle *John* speaks of, are doubtless the same sort of men with those *false apostles*, and deceitful workers, that the apostle *Paul* speaks of, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light: and therefore we may be sure that these marks are especially adapted to distinguish between the true Spirit, and the devil transformed into an angel of light, because they are given especially for that end; that is the apostle's declared purpose and design, to give marks by which the true Spirit may be distinguished from that sort of counterfeits.

And if we look over what is said about these false prophets, and false apostles, (as there is much said about them in the New Testament,) and take notice in what manner the devil was transformed into an angel of light in them, we shall not find any thing that in the least injures the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true Spirit from such counterfeits. The devil transformed himself into an angel of light, as there was in them a show, and great boast, of extraordinary knowledge in divine things; [Col. ii. 8.](#) [1. Tim. i. 6, 7.](#) and [chap. vi. 3-5.](#) [2 Tim. ii. 14-18.](#) [Tit. i. 10, 16.](#) Hence their followers called themselves *Gnostics*, from their great pretended knowledge: and the devil in them mimicked the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, in visions, revelations, prophecies, miracles, &c. Hence they are called false apostles, and false prophets: see [Matt. xxiv. 24.](#) Again, there was a false show of, and lying pretensions to, great holiness and devotion in words: [Rom. xvi. 17, 18.](#) [Ephes. iv. 14.](#) Hence they are called deceitful workers, and wells and clouds without water. [2 Cor. xi. 13.](#) [2 Pet. ii. 17.](#) [Jude 12.](#) There was also in them a show of extraordinary piety and righteousness in their superstitious worship: [Col. ii. 16-23.](#) So they had a false, proud, and bitter zeal: [Gal. iv. 17, 18.](#) [1 Tim. i. 6.](#) and [chap. vi. 4, 5.](#) And likewise a false show of humility, in affecting an extraordinary outward meanness and dejection, when indeed they were “vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind:” and made a righteousness of their humility, and were exceedingly lifted up with their eminent piety: [Col. ii. 18, 23.](#) But how do such things as these in the least injure those things that have been mentioned as the distinguishing evidences of the true Spirit?—Besides such vain shows which may be from the devil, there are common influences of the Spirit, which are often mistaken for saving grace; but these are out of the question, because though they are not saving, yet are the work of the true Spirit.

Having thus fulfilled what I at first proposed, in considering what are the certain, distinguishing marks, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any work that falls under our observation, whether it be the work of the Spirit of God or no; I now proceed to the Application.

SECT. III.

Practical inferences.

I. From what has been said, I will venture to draw this inference, *viz. That the extraordinary influence that has lately appeared, causing an uncommon concern and engagedness of mind about the things of religion, is undoubtedly, in the general, from the Spirit of God.* There are but two things that need to be known in order to such a work's being judged of, *viz. Facts and rules.* The rules of the word of God we have had laid before us; and as to facts, there are but two ways that we can come at them, so as to be in a capacity to compare them with the rules, either by our own observation, or by information from others who have had opportunity to observe them.

As to this work, there are many things concerning it that are notorious, and which, unless the apostle John was out in his rules, are sufficient to determine it to be in general the work of God. The Spirit that is at work, takes off persons' minds from the vanities of the world, and engages them in a deep concern about eternal happiness, and puts them upon earnestly seeking their salvation, and convinces them of the dreadfulfulness of sin, and of their own guilty and miserable state as they are by nature. It awakens men's consciences, and makes them sensible of the dreadfulfulness of God's anger, and causes in them a great desire and earnest care and endeavour to obtain his favour. It puts them upon a more diligent improvement of the means of grace which God has appointed; accompanied with a greater regard to the word of God, a desire of hearing and reading it, and of being more conversant with it than they used to be. And it is notoriously manifest, that the spirit that is at work, in general, operates as a spirit of truth, making persons more sensible of what is really true in those things that concern their eternal salvation: as, that they must die, and that life is very short and uncertain; that there is a great sin-hating God, to whom they are accountable, and who will fix them in an eternal state in another world; and that they stand in great need of a Saviour. It makes persons more sensible of the value of Jesus who was crucified, and their need of him; and that it puts them upon earnestly seeking an interest in him. It cannot be but that these things should be apparent to people in general through the land; for these things are not done in a corner; the work has not been confined to a few towns, in some remoter parts, but has been carried on in many places all over the land, and in most of the principal, the populous, and public places in it. Christ in this respect has wrought amongst us, in the same manner that he wrought his miracles in Judea. It has now been continued for a considerable time; so that there has been a great opportunity to observe the manner of the work. And all such as have been very conversant with the subjects of it, see a great deal more, that, by the rules of the apostle, does clearly and certainly show it to be the work of God.

And here I would observe, that the nature and tendency of a spirit that is at work, may be determined with much greater certainty, and less danger of being imposed upon, when it is observed in a great multitude of people of all sorts, and in various places, than when it is only seen in a few, in some particular place, that have been much conversant one with another. A few particular persons may agree to put a cheat upon others, by a false pretence, and professing things of which they never were conscious. But when the work is spread over great parts of a country, in places distant from one another, among people of all sorts and of all ages, and in multitudes possessed of a sound mind, good understanding, and known integrity; there would be the greatest absurdity in supposing, from all the observation that can be made by all that is heard from and seen in them—for many months together, and by those who are most intimate with them in these affairs, and have long been acquainted with them—that yet it cannot be determined what kind of influence the operation they are under, has upon people's minds, can it not be determined whether it tends to awaken their consciences, or to stupify them; whether it inclines them more to seek their salvation, or neglect it; whether it seems to confirm them in a belief of the Scriptures, or to lead them to deism; whether it makes them have more regard for the great truths of religion, or less?

And here it is to be observed, that for persons to profess that they are so convinced of certain divine truths, as to esteem and love them in a *saving manner*; and for them to profess, that they are *more convinced* or confirmed in the truth of them, than they used to be, and find that they have a greater regard to them than they had before, are two very different things. Persons of honesty and common sense, have much greater right to demand credit to be given to the latter profession, than to the former. Indeed in the former, it is less likely that a people in general should be deceived, than some particular persons. But whether persons' convictions, and the alteration in their dispositions and affections, be in a degree and manner that is saving, is beside the present question. If there be such effects on people's judgments, dispositions, and affections, as have been spoken of, whether they be in a degree and manner that is saving or no, it is nevertheless a sign of the influence of the Spirit of God. Scripture rules serve to distinguish the common influences of the Spirit of God, as well as those that are saving, from the influence of other causes.

And as, by the providence of God, I have for some months past been much amongst those who have been the subjects of the work in question; and particularly, have been in the way of seeing and observing those extraordinary things with which many persons have been offended;—such as persons' crying out aloud, shrieking, being put into great agonies of body, &c.—and have seen the manner and issue of such operations, and the fruits of them, for several months together; many of them being persons with whom I have been intimately acquainted in soul concerns, before and since; so I look upon myself called on this occasion to give my testimony, that—so far as the nature and tendency of such a work is capable of falling under the observation of a by-stander, to whom those that have been the subjects of

it have endeavoured to open their hearts, or can be come at by diligent and particular inquiry—this work has all those marks that have been pointed out. And this has been the case in very many instances, in *every article*; and in many others, all those marks have appeared in a very *great degree*.

The subjects of these uncommon appearances, have been of two sorts; either those who have been in great distress from an apprehension of their sin and misery; or those who have been overcome with a sweet sense of the greatness, wonderfulness, and excellency of divine things.

Of the multitude of those of the former sort, that I have had opportunity to observe, there have been very few, but their distress has arisen apparently from real proper conviction, and being in a degree sensible of that which was the truth. And though I do not suppose, when such things were observed to be common, that persons have laid themselves under those violent restraints to avoid outward manifestations of their distress, that perhaps they otherwise would have done; yet there have been very few in whom there has been any appearance of feigning or affecting such manifestations, and very many for whom it would have been undoubtedly utterly impossible for them to avoid them. Generally, in these agonies they have appeared to be in the perfect exercise of their reason; and those of them who could speak, have been well able to give an account of the circumstances of their mind, and the cause of their distress, at the time, and were able to remember, and give an account of it afterwards. I have known a very few instances of those, who, in their great extremity, have for a short space been deprived, in some measure, of the use of reason; but among the many hundreds, and it may be thousands, that have lately been brought to such agonies, I never yet knew one lastingly deprived of their reason. In some that I have known, melancholy has evidently been mixed; and when it is so, the difference is very apparent; their distresses are of another kind, and operate quite after another manner, than when their distress is from mere conviction. It is not truth only that distresses them, but many vain shadows and notions that will not give place either to Scripture or reason. Some in their great distress have not been well able to give an account of themselves, or to declare the sense they have of things, or to explain the manner and cause of their trouble to others, that yet I have had no reason to think were not under proper convictions, and in whom there has been manifested a good issue. But this will not be at all wondered at, by those who have had much to do with souls under spiritual difficulties: some things of which they are sensible, are altogether new to them; their ideas and inward sensations are new, and what they therefore know not how to express in words. Some who, on first inquiry, said they knew not what was the matter with them, have on being particularly examined and interrogated, been able to represent their case, though of themselves they could not find expressions and forms of speech to do it.

Some suppose, that terrors producing such effects are only a fright. But certainly there ought to be a distinction made between a very great fear, or extreme distress arising from



an apprehension of some dreadful truth—a cause fully proportionable to such an effect—and a needless, causeless fright. The latter is of two kinds; either, first, when persons are terrified with that which is not the truth; (of which I have seen very few instances unless in case of melancholy;) or, secondly, when they are in a fright from some terrible outward appearance and noise, and a general notion thence arising. These apprehend, that there is something or other terrible, they know not what; without having in their minds any particular truth whatever. Of such a kind of fright I have seen very little appearance, among either old or young.

Those who are in such extremity, commonly express a great sense of their exceeding wickedness, the multitude and aggravations of their actual sins; their dreadful pollution, enmity, and perverseness; their obstinacy and hardness of heart; a sense of their great guilt in the sight of God; and the dreadfulness of the punishment due to sin. Very often they have a lively idea of the horrible pit of eternal misery; and at the same time it appears to them that the great God who has them in his hands, is exceedingly angry, and his wrath appears amazingly terrible to them. God appears to them so much provoked, and his great wrath so increased; that they are apprehensive of great danger, and that he will not bear with them any longer; but will now forthwith cut them off, and send them down to the dreadful pit they have in view; at the same time seeing no refuge. They see more and more of the vanity of every thing they use to trust to, and with which they flattered themselves, till they are brought wholly to despair in all, and to see that they are at the disposal of the mere will of the God who is so angry with them. Very many, in the midst of their extremity, have been brought to an extraordinary sense of their fully deserving that wrath, and the destruction which was then before their eyes. They feared every moment, that it would be executed upon them; they have been greatly convinced that this would be altogether just, and that God is indeed absolutely sovereign. Very often, some text of Scripture expressing God's sovereignty, has been set home upon their minds, whereby they have been calmed. They have been brought, as it were, to lie at God's feet; and after great agonies, a little before light has arisen, they have been composed and quiet, in submission to a just and sovereign God; but their bodily strength much spent. Sometimes their lives, to appearance, were almost gone; and then light has appeared, and a glorious Redeemer, with his wonderful, all-sufficient grace, has been represented to them often, in some sweet invitation of Scripture. Sometimes the light comes in suddenly, sometimes more gradually, filling their souls with love, admiration, joy, and self-abasement: drawing forth their hearts after the excellent lovely Redeemer, and longings to lie in the dust before him; and that others might behold, embrace, and be delivered by him. They had longings to live to his glory; but were sensible that they can do nothing of themselves, appearing vile in their own eyes, and having much jealousy over their own hearts. And all the appearances of a real change of heart have followed; and grace has acted, from time to time, after the same manner that is used to act in those that were converted



formerly, with the like difficulties, temptations, buffetings, and comforts; excepting that in many, the light and comfort have been in higher degrees than ordinary. Many very young children have been thus wrought upon. There have been some instances very much like those (*Mark i. 26.* and *chap. ix. 26.*) of whom we read, that “when the devil had cried with a loud voice, and rent them sore, he came out of them.” And probably those instances were designed for a type of such things as these. Some have several turns of great agonies, before they are delivered; and others have been in such distress, which has passed off, and no deliverance at all has followed.

Some object against it as great confusion, when there is a number together in such circumstances making a noise; and say, God cannot be the author of it; because he is the God of order, not of confusion. But let it be considered, what is the proper notion of confusion, but the breaking that order of things, whereby they are properly disposed, and duly directed to their end, so that the order and due connexion of means being broken, they fail of their end. Now the conviction of sinners for their conversion is the obtaining of the end of religious means. Not but that I think the persons thus extraordinarily moved, should endeavour to refrain from such outward manifestations, what they well can, and should refrain to their utmost, at the time of their solemn worship. But if God is pleased to convince the consciences of persons, so that they cannot avoid great outward manifestations, even to interrupting and breaking off those public means they were attending, I do not think this is confusion, or an unhappy interruption, any more than if a company should meet on the field to pray for rain, and should be broken off from their exercise by a plentiful shower. Would to God that all the public assemblies in the land were broken off from their public exercises with such confusion as this the next sabbath day! We need not be sorry for breaking the order of means, by obtaining the end to which that order is directed. He who is going to fetch a treasure, need not be sorry that he is stopped, by meeting the treasure in the midst of his journey.

Besides those who are overcome with conviction and distress, I have seen many of late, who have had their bodily strength taken away with a sense of the glorious excellency of the Redeemer, and the wonders of his dying love; with a very uncommon sense of their own littleness and exceeding vileness attending it, with all expressions and appearances of the greatest abasement and abhorrence of themselves. Not only new converts, but many who were, as we hope, formerly converted, have had their love and joy attended with a flood of tears, and a great appearance of contrition and humiliation, especially for their having lived no more to God’s glory since their conversion. These have had a far greater sight of their vileness, and the evil of their hearts, than ever they had; with an exceeding earnestness of desire to live better for the time to come, but attended with greater self-diffidence than ever: and many have been overcome with pity to the souls of others, and longing for their salvation.—And many other things I might mention, in this extraordinary work, answering to

every one of those marks which have been insisted on. So that if the apostle John knew how to give signs of a work of the true Spirit, this is such a work.

Providence has cast my lot in a place where the work of God has *formerly* been carried on. I had the happiness to be settled in that place two years with the venerable Stoddard; and was then acquainted with a number who, during that season, were wrought upon under his ministry. I have been intimately acquainted with the experiences of many others who were wrought upon under his ministry, before that period, in a manner agreeable to the doctrine of all orthodox divines. And of late, a work has been carried on there, with very much of uncommon operations; but it is evidently the same work that was carried on there, in different periods, though attended with some new circumstances. And certainly we must throw by all talk of conversion and Christian experience; and not only so, but we must throw by our Bibles, and give up revealed religion; if this be not in general the work of God. Not that I suppose the degree of the Spirit's influence is to be determined by the degree of effect on men's bodies; or, that those are always the best experiences which have the greatest influence on the body. And as to the imprudencies, irregularities, and mixture of delusion that has been observed; it is not at all to be wondered at, that a reformation, after a long-continued and almost universal deadness, should at first, when the revival is new, be attended with such things. In the first creation God did not make a complete world at once; but there was a great deal of imperfection, darkness, and mixture of chaos and confusion, after God first said, "Let there be light," before the whole stood forth in perfect form. When God at first began his great work for the deliverance of his people, after their long-continued bondage in Egypt, there were false wonders mixed with the true for a while; which hardened the unbelieving Egyptians, and made them to doubt of the divinity of the whole work. When the children of Israel first went to bring up the ark of God, after it had been neglected, and had been long absent, they sought not the Lord after the due order, [1 Chron. xv. 13](#). At the time when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. And Solomon's ships, when they brought gold, and silver, and pearls, also brought apes and peacocks. When day-light first appears after a night of darkness, we must expect to have darkness mixt with light for a while, and not have perfect day and the sun risen at once. The fruits of the earth are first green before they are ripe, and come to their proper perfection gradually; and so, Christ tells us, is the kingdom of God. [Mark iv. 26, 27, 28](#). "So is the kingdom of God; as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day; and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how: for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

The imprudences and errors that have attended this work, are the less to be wondered at, if it be considered, that chiefly young persons have been the subjects of it, who have less steadiness and experience, and being in the heat of youth, are much more ready to run to

extremes. Satan will keep men secure as long as he can; but when he can do that no longer, he often endeavours to drive them to extremes, and so to dishonour God, and wound religion in that way. And doubtless it has been one occasion of much misconduct, that in many places, people see plainly that their ministers have an ill opinion of the work; and therefore, with just reason, durst not apply themselves to them as their guides in it; and so are without guides.—No wonder then that when a people are as sheep without a shepherd, they wander out of the way. A people in such circumstances, stand in great and continual need of guides, and their guides stand in continual need of much more wisdom than they have of their own. And if a people have ministers that favour the work, and rejoice in it, yet it is not to be expected that either the people or ministers should know so well how to conduct themselves in such an extraordinary state of things—while it is new, and what they never had any experience of before, and time to see their tendency, consequences, and issue. The happy influence of experience is very manifest at this day, in the people among whom God has settled my abode.

The work which has been carried on there this year, has been much purer than that which was wrought there six years before: it has seemed to be more purely spiritual; free from natural and corrupt mixtures, and any thing savouring of enthusiastic wildness and extravagance. It has wrought more by deep humiliation and abasement before God and men; and they have been much freer from imprudences and irregularities. And particularly there has been a remarkable difference in this respect, that whereas many before, in their comforts and rejoicings, did too much forget their distance from God, and were ready in their conversation together of the things of God, and of their own experiences, to talk with too much lightness; but now they seem to have no disposition that way, but rejoice with a more solemn, reverential, humble joy, as God directs. (*Psal. ii. 11.*) Not because the joy is not as great, and in many instances much greater. Many among us who were wrought upon in that former season, have now had much greater communications from heaven than they had then. Their rejoicing operates in another manner; it abases them, breaks their hearts, and brings them into the dust. When they speak of their joys, it is not with laughter, but a flood of tears. Thus those that laughed before, weep now, and yet by their united testimony, their joy is vastly purer and sweeter than that which before did more raise their animal spirits. They are now more like Jacob, when God appeared to him at Bethel, when he saw the ladder that reached to heaven, and said, “How dreadful is this place!” And like Moses, when God showed him his glory on the mount, when he made haste and “bowed himself unto the earth.”

II. Let us all be hence warned, *by no means to oppose, or do any thing in the least to clog or hinder, the work; but, on the contrary, do our utmost to promote it.* Now Christ is come down from heaven in a remarkable and wonderful work of his Spirit, it becomes all his professed disciples to acknowledge him, and give him honour.

The example of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, is enough to beget in those who do not acknowledge this work, a great jealousy of themselves, and to make them exceeding cautious of what they say or do. Christ then was in the world, and the world knew him not: he came to his own professing people, and his own received him not. That coming of Christ had been much spoken of in the prophecies of Scripture which they had in their hands, and it had been long expected; and yet because Christ came in a manner they did not expect, and which was not agreeable to their carnal reason, they would not own him. Nay, they opposed him, counted him a madman, and pronounced the spirit that he wrought by to be the spirit of the devil. They stood and wondered at the great things done, and knew not what to make of them; but yet they met with so many stumbling-blocks, that they finally could not acknowledge him. And when the Spirit of God came to be poured out so wonderfully in the apostles' days, they looked upon it as confusion and distraction. They were *astonished* by what they saw and heard, but not *convinced*. And especially was the work of God then rejected by those that were most conceited of their own understanding and knowledge, agreeable to [Isa. xxix. 14](#). "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." And many who had been in reputation for religion and piety, had a great spite against the work, because they saw it tended to diminish their honour, and to reproach their formality and lukewarmness. Some, upon these accounts, maliciously and openly opposed and reproached the work of the Spirit of God, and called it the work of the devil, against inward conviction, and so were guilty of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is another, a spiritual coming of Christ, to set up his kingdom in the world, that is as much spoken of in scripture prophecy as that first coming, and which has long been expected by the church of God. We have reason to think, from what is said of this, that it will be, in many respects, parallel with the other. And certainly, that low state into which the visible church of God has lately been sunk is very parallel with the state of the Jewish church, when Christ came; and therefore no wonder at all, that when Christ comes, his work should appear a strange work to most; yea, it would be wonder if it should be otherwise. Whether the present work be the beginning of that great and frequently predicted coming of Christ to set up his kingdom, or not, it is evident, from what has been said, that it is a work of the same Spirit, and of the same nature. And there is no reason to doubt, but that the conduct of persons who continue long to refuse acknowledging Christ in the work—especially those who are set to be teachers in his church—will be in like manner provoking to God, as it was in the Jews of old, while refusing to acknowledge Christ; notwithstanding what they may plead of the great stumbling-blocks that are in the way, and the cause they have to doubt of the work. The teachers of the Jewish church found innumerable stumbling-blocks, that were to them insuperable. Many things appeared in Christ, and

in the work of the Spirit after his ascension, which were exceeding strange to them; they seemed assured that they had just cause for their scruples. Christ and his work were to the Jews a stumbling-block; “But blessed is he,” says Christ, “whosoever shall not be offended in me.”<sup>310</sup> As strange and as unexpected as the manner of Christ’s appearance was, yet he had not been long in Judea working miracles, before all those who had opportunity to observe, and yet refused to acknowledge him, brought fearful guilt upon themselves in the sight of God; and Christ condemned them, that though “they could discern the face of the sky, and of the earth, yet they could not discern the signs of those times: and why,” says he, “even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?” [Luke xii](#). At the latter end.

It is not to be supposed that the great Jehovah had bowed the heavens, and appeared here now for so long a time, in such a glorious work of his power and grace in so extensive a manner, in the most public places of the land, and in almost all parts of it—without giving such evidences of his presence, that great numbers, and even many teachers in his church, can remain guiltless in his sight, without ever receiving and acknowledging him, and giving him honour, and appearing to rejoice in his gracious presence; or without so much as once giving him thanks for so glorious and blessed a work of his grace, wherein his goodness does more appear, than if he had bestowed on us all the temporal blessings that the world affords. A long-continued silence in such a case is undoubtedly provoking to God; especially in ministers. It is a secret kind a opposition, that really tends to hinder the work. Such silent ministers stand in the way of the work of God, as Christ said of old, “He that is not with us is against us.” Those who stand wondering at this strange work, not knowing what to make of it, and refusing to receive it—and ready it may be sometimes to speak contemptibly of it, as was the case with the Jews of old would do well to consider, and to tremble at St. Paul’s words to them, [Acts xiii. 40, 41](#). “Beware therefore lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.” Those who cannot believe the work to be true, because of the extraordinary degree and manner of it, should consider how it was with the unbelieving lord in Samaria, who said, “Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?” To whom Elisha said, “Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.”<sup>311</sup> Let all to whom this work is a cloud and darkness—as the pillar of cloud and fire was to the Egyptians—take heed that it be not their destruction, while it gives light to God’s Israel.

I would entreat those who quiet themselves, that they proceed on a principle of prudence, and are waiting to see the issue of things and what fruits those that are the subjects of this work will bring forth in their lives and conversations—to consider, whether this will justify

310 [Luke vii. 23](#)

311 [2 Kings vii. 19](#).

a long refraining from acknowledging Christ when he appears so wonderfully and graciously present in the land. It is probable that many of those who are thus waiting, know not for what they are waiting. If they wait to see a work of God without difficulties and stumbling-blocks, it will be like the fool's waiting at the river side to have the water all run by. A work of God without stumbling-blocks is never to be expected. "It must need be that offences come." There never yet was any great manifestation that God made of himself to the world, without many difficulties attending it. It is with the works of God, as with his word: they seem at first full of things that are strange, inconsistent, and difficult to the carnal unbelieving hearts of men. Christ and his work always was, and always will be, a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, a gin and a snare to many. The prophet Hosea, ([chap. xiv.](#)) speaking of a glorious revival of religion in God's church—when God would be as the dew unto Israel, who should grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, whose branches should spread, &c.—concludes all thus; "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."

It is probable that the stumbling-blocks that now attend this work, will in some respects be increased, and not diminished. We probably shall see more instances of apostacy and gross iniquity among professors. And if one kind of stumbling-blocks are removed, it is to be expected that others will come. It is with Christ's works as it was with his parables; things that are difficult to men's dark minds are ordered of purpose, for the trial of their dispositions and spiritual sense; and that those of corrupt minds and of an unbelieving, perverse, cavilling spirit, "seeing might see and not understand." Those who are now waiting to see the issue of this work, think they shall be better able to determine by and by; but probably many of them are mistaken. The Jews that saw Christ's miracles, waited to see better evidences of his being the Messiah; they wanted a sign from heaven; but they waited in vain; their stumbling-blocks did not diminish, but increase. They found no end to them, and so were more and more hardened in unbelief. Many have been praying for that glorious reformation spoken of in Scripture, who knew not what they have been praying for, (as it was with the Jews when they prayed for the coming of Christ,) and who, if it should come, would not acknowledge or receive it.

This pretended prudence, in persons waiting so long before they acknowledged this work, will probably in the end prove the greatest imprudence. Hereby they will fail of any share of so great a blessing, and will miss the most precious opportunity of obtaining divine light, grace, and comfort, heavenly and eternal benefits, that God ever gave in New England. While the glorious fountain is set open in so wonderful a manner, and multitudes flock to it and receive a rich supply for the wants of their souls, they stand at a distance, doubting, wondering, and receiving nothing, and are like to continue thus till the precious season is past.—It is indeed to be wondered at, that those who have doubted of the work, which has

been attended with such uncommon external appearances, should be easy in their doubts, without taking thorough pains to inform themselves, by going where such things have been to be seen, narrowly observing and diligently inquiring into them; not contenting themselves with observing two or three instances, nor resting till they were fully informed by their own observation. I do not doubt but that if this course had been taken, it would have convinced all whose minds are not shut up against conviction. How greatly have they erred, who only from the uncertain reproofs of others, have ventured to speak slightly of these things! That caution of an unbelieving Jew might teach them more prudence, [Acts v. 38, 39](#). “Refrain from these men and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God.” Whether what has been said in this discourse be enough to produce conviction, that this is the work of God or not; yet I hope that for the future, they will at least hearken to the caution of Gamaliel, now mentioned; so as not to oppose it, or say any thing which has even an indirect tendency to bring it into discredit, lest they should be found opposers of the Holy Ghost. There is no kind of sins so hurtful and dangerous to the souls of men, as those committed against the Holy Ghost. We had better speak against God the Father, or the Son, than to speak against the Holy Spirit in his gracious operations on the hearts of men. Nothing will so much tend for ever to prevent our having any benefit of his operations on our own souls.

If there be any who still resolutely go on to speak contemptibly of these things, I would beg of them to take heed that they be not guilty of the unpardonable sin. When the Holy Spirit is much poured out, and men’s lusts, lukewarmness, and hypocrisy are reproached by its powerful operations, then is the most likely time of any, for this sin to be committed. If the work goes on, it is well if among the many that show an enmity against it, some be not guilty of this sin, if none have been already. Those who maliciously oppose and reproach this work, and call it the work of the devil, want but one thing of the unpardonable sin, and that is, doing it against inward conviction. And though some are so prudent, as not openly to oppose and reproach this work, yet it is to be feared—at this day, when the Lord is going forth so gloriously against his enemies—that many who are silent and inactive, especially ministers, will bring that curse of the angel of the Lord upon themselves, [Judg. v. 23](#). “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”

Since the great God has come down from heaven, and manifested himself in so wonderful a manner in this land, it is vain for any of us to expect any other than to be greatly affected by it in our spiritual state and circumstances, respecting the favour of God, one way or other. Those who do not become more happy by it, will become far more guilty and miserable. It is always so; such a season as proves an acceptable year, and a time of great favour to them who accept and improve it, proves a day of vengeance to others. [Isa. lix. 2](#). When God sends



forth his *word*, it shall not return to him void; much less his *Spirit*. When Christ was upon earth in Judea, many slighted and rejected him; but it proved in the issue to be no matter of indifference to them. God made all that people to feel that Christ had been among them; those who did not feel it to their comfort, felt it to their great sorrow. When God only sent the prophet Ezekiel to the children of Israel, he declared that whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, yet they should know that there had been a prophet among them; how much more may we suppose that when God has appeared so wonderfully in this land, that he will make every one to know that the great Jehovah had been in New England.—I come now, in the last place,

III. To apply myself to those who are the friends of this work, who have been partakers of it, and are zealous to promote it. Let me earnestly exhort such to give diligent heed to themselves to avoid all errors and misconduct, and whatever may darken and obscure the work; and to give no occasion to those who stand ready to reproach it. The apostle was careful to cut off occasion from those that desired occasion. The same apostle exhorts Titus, to maintain a strict care and watch over himself, that both his preaching and behaviour might be such as “could not be condemned; that he who was of the contrary part might be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them,” *Tit. ii. 7, 8*. We had need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. It is of no small consequence that we should at this day behave ourselves innocently and prudently. We must expect that the great enemy of this work will especially try his utmost with us; and he will especially triumph if he can prevail in any thing to blind and mislead us. He knows it will do more to further his purpose and interest than if he prevailed against a hundred others. We had need to watch and pray, for we are but little children; this roaring lion is too strong for us, and this old serpent too subtle for us.

Humility and self-diffidence, and an entire dependence on our Lord Jesus Christ, will be our best defense. Let us therefore maintain the strictest watch against spiritual pride, or being lifted up with extraordinary experiences and comforts, and the high favours of heaven, that any of us may have received. We had need, after such favours, in a special manner to keep a strict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, lest there should arise self-exalting reflections upon what we have received, and high thoughts of ourselves, as being now some of the most eminent of saints and peculiar favourites of heaven, and that the secret of the Lord is especially with us. Let us not presume, that we above all are fit to be advanced as the great instructors and censors of this evil generation; and, in a high conceit of our own wisdom and discerning, assume to ourselves the airs of prophets, or extraordinary ambassadors of heaven. When we have great discoveries of God made to our souls, we should not shine bright in our own eyes. Moses, when he had been conversing with God in the mount, though his face shone so as to dazzle the eyes of Aaron and the people, yet he did not shine in his own eyes; “he wist not that his face shone.” Let none think themselves out of danger of this spiritual pride, even in their best frames. God saw that the apostle Paul (though probably

the most eminent saint that ever lived) was not out of danger of it, no not when he had just been conversing with God in the third heaven: see [2 Cor. xii. 7](#). Pride is the worst viper in the heart; it is the first sin that ever entered into the universe, lies lowest of all in the foundation of the whole building of sin, and is the most secret, deceitful, and unsearchable in its ways of working, of any lusts whatever. It is ready to mix with every thing; and nothing is so hateful to God, contrary to the spirit of the gospel, or of so dangerous consequence; and there is no one sin that does so much let in the devil into the hearts of the saints, and expose them to his delusions. I have seen it in many instances, and that in eminent saints. The devil has come in at this door presently after some eminent experience and extraordinary communion with God, and has woefully deluded and led them astray, till God has mercifully opened their eyes and delivered them; and they themselves have afterwards been made sensible that it was pride that betrayed them.

Some of the true friends of the work of God's Spirit have erred in giving too much heed to impulses and strong impressions on their minds, as though they were immediate significations from heaven to them, of something that should come to pass, or something that it was the mind and will of God that they should do, which was not signified or revealed any where in the Bible without those impulses. These impressions, if they are truly from the Spirit of God, are of a quite different nature from his gracious influences on the hearts of the saints: they are of the nature of the extraordinary *gifts* of the Spirit, and are properly inspiration, such as the prophets and apostles and others had of old; which the apostle distinguishes from the *grace* of the Spirit, [1 Cor. xiii](#).

One reason why some have been ready to lay weight on such impulses, is an opinion they have had, that the glory of the approaching happy days of the church would partly consist in restoring those *extraordinary gifts* of the Spirit. This opinion, I believe, arises partly through want of duly considering and comparing the nature and value of those two kinds of influences of the Spirit, *viz.* Those that are ordinary and gracious, and those that are extraordinary and miraculous. The former are by far the most excellent and glorious; as the apostle largely shows. ([1 Cor. xii. 31.](#), &c.) Speaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he says, "But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I show you a more excellent way;" *i.e.* a more excellent way of the influence of the Spirit. And then he goes on, in the next chapter, to show what that more excellent way is, even the grace of the Spirit, which summarily consists in charity, or divine love. And throughout that chapter he shows the great preference of that above inspiration. God communicates his own nature to the soul in saving *grace* in the heart, more than in all miraculous *gifts*. The blessed image of God consists in *that* and not in *these*. The excellency, happiness, and glory of the soul, immediately consists in the former. That is a root which bears infinitely more excellent fruit. Salvation and the eternal enjoyment of God is promised to divine grace, but not to inspiration. A man may have those extraordinary gifts, and yet be abominable to God, and go to hell. The spiritual

and eternal life of the soul consists in the grace of the Spirit, which God bestows only on his favourites and dear children. He has sometimes thrown out the other as it were to dogs and swine, as he did to Balaam, Saul, and Judas; and some who, in the primitive times of the Christian church, committed the unpardonable sin. ([Heb. vi.](#)) Many wicked men at the day of the judgment will plead, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works." The greatest privilege of the prophets and apostles, was not their being inspired and working miracles, but their eminent holiness. The grace that was in their hearts, was a thousand times more their dignity and honour, than their miraculous gifts. The things in which we find David comforting himself, are not his being a king, or a prophet, but the holy influences of the Spirit of God in his heart, communicating to him divine light, love, and joy. The apostle Paul abounded in visions, revelations, and miraculous gifts, above all the apostles; but yet he esteems all things but loss for the excellency of the spiritual knowledge of Christ. It was not the gifts but the grace of the apostles, that was the proper evidence of their names being written in heaven; in which Christ directs them to rejoice, much more than in the devils being subject to them. To have grace in the heart, is a higher privilege than the blessed Virgin herself had, in having the body of the second person in the Trinity conceived in her womb, by the power of the Highest overshadowing her: [Luke xi. 27, 28.](#) "And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him; Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that thou hast sucked! But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." See also to the same purpose, [Matt. xii. 47.](#), &c. The influence of the Holy Spirit, or divine charity in the heart, is the greatest privilege and glory of the highest archangel in heaven; yea, this is the very thing by which the creature has fellowship with God himself, with the Father and the Son, in their beauty and happiness. Hereby the saints are made partakers of the divine nature, and have Christ's joy fulfilled in themselves.

The ordinary sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God are the *end* of all extraordinary gifts, as the apostle shows, [Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13.](#) They are good for nothing, any further than as they are subordinate to this end; they will be so far from profiting any without it, that they will only aggravate their misery. This is, as the apostle observes, the most excellent way of God's communicating his Spirit to his church, it is the greatest glory of the church in all ages. This glory is what makes the church on earth most like the church in heaven, when prophecy, and tongues, and other miraculous gifts, cease. And God communicates his Spirit only in that more excellent way of which the apostle speaks, *viz. charity* or divine love, "which never faileth." Therefore the glory of the approaching happy state of the church does not at all require these extraordinary gifts. As that state of the church will be nearest of any to its perfect state in heaven, so I believe it will be like it in this, that all extraordinary gifts shall have ceased and vanished away; and all those stars, and the moon with the reflected

light they gave in the night, or in a dark season, shall be swallowed up in the sun of divine love. The apostle speaks of these gifts of inspiration as childish things, in comparison of the influence of the Spirit in divine love; things given to the church only to support it in its minority, till the church should have a complete standing rule established, and all the ordinary means of grace should be settled; but as things that should cease, as the church advanced to the state of manhood. [1 Cor. xiii. 11.](#) “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things;” compared with the three preceding verses.

When the apostle, in this chapter, speaks of prophecies, tongues, and revelations ceasing, and vanishing away in the church—when the Christian church should be advanced from a state of minority to a state of manhood—he seems to have respect to its coming to an adult state in this world, as well as in heaven; for he speaks of such a state of manhood, wherein those three things, Faith, Hope, and Charity, should remain after miracles and revelation had ceased; as in the [last verse.](#) and “now abideth (*μενει*, *remaineth*) Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three.” The apostle’s manner of speaking here shows an evident reference to what he had just been saying before; and here is a manifest *antithesis*, between *remaining*, and that *failing*, *ceasing*, and *vanishing away*, spoken of in the [8th verse.](#) The apostle had been showing how all those gifts of inspiration, which were the leading-strings of the Christian church in its infancy, should vanish away, when the church came to a state of manhood. Then he returns to observe, what things remain after those had failed and ceased; and he observes that those three things shall remain in the church, Faith, Hope, and Charity: and therefore the adult state of the church he speaks of, is the more perfect one at which it shall arrive on earth, especially in the latter ages of the world. And this was the more properly observed to the church at Corinth, upon two accounts; because the apostle had before observed to that church, that they were in a state of infancy, [chap. iii. 1, 2.](#) And because that church seems above all others to have abounded with miraculous gifts. When the expected glorious state of the church comes, the increase of light shall be so great that it will in some respect answer what is said, [ver. 12.](#) of *seeing face to face.* (See [Isa. xxiv. 23.](#) and [xxv. 7.](#))

Therefore I do not expect a restoration of these miraculous gifts in the approaching glorious times of the church, nor do I desire it. It appears to me, that it would add nothing to the glory of those times, but rather diminish from it. For my part, I had rather enjoy the sweet influences of the Spirit, showing Christ’s spiritual divine beauty, infinite grace, and dying love, drawing forth the holy exercises of faith, divine love, sweet complacence, and humble joy in God, one quarter of an hour, than to have prophetic visions and revelations the whole year. It appears to me much more probable that God should give immediate revelation to his saints in the dark times of prophecy, than now in the approach of the most glorious and perfect state of his church on earth. It does not appear to me that there is any need of those extraordinary gifts to introduce this happy state, and set up the kingdom of

God through the world; I have seen so much of the power of God in a more excellent way, as to convince me that God can easily do it without.

I would therefore entreat the people of God to be very cautious how they give heed to such things. I have seen them fail in very many instances, and know by experience that impressions being made with great power, and upon the minds of true, yea eminent,—saints even in the midst of extraordinary exercises of grace, and sweet communion with God, and attended with texts of Scripture strongly impressed on the mind—are no sure signs of their being revelations from heaven. I have known such impressions fail, in some instances, attended with all these circumstances. They who leave the sure word of prophecy which God has given us as a light shining in a dark place—to follow such impressions and impulses, leave the guidance of the polar star, to follow a *Jack with a lantern*. No wonder therefore that sometimes they are led into woeful extravagancies.

Moreover, seeing inspiration is not to be expected, *let us not despise human learning*. They who assert that human learning is of little or no use in the work of the ministry, do not well consider what they say; if they did, they would not say it. By human learning I mean, and suppose others mean, the improvement of common knowledge by human and outward means. And therefore to say, that human learning is of no use, is as much as to say that the education of a child, or that the common knowledge which a grown man has more than a little child, is of no use. At this rate, a child of four years old is as fit for a teacher in the church of God, with the same degree of grace—and capable of doing as much to advance the kingdom of Christ, by his instruction—as a very knowing man of thirty years of age. If adult persons have greater ability and advantage to do service, because they have more knowledge than a little child, then doubtless if they have more human knowledge still, with the same degree of grace, they would have still greater ability and advantage to do service. An increase of knowledge, without doubt, increases a man's advantage either to do good or hurt, according as he is disposed. It is too manifest to be denied, that God made great use of human learning in the apostle Paul, as he also did in Moses and Solomon.

And if knowledge, obtained by human means, is not to be despised, then it will follow that the means of obtaining it are not to be neglected, *viz. study*; and that this is of great use in order to a preparation for publicly instructing others. And though having the heart full of the powerful influences of the Spirit of God, may at some time enable persons to speak profitably, yea, very excellently, without study; yet this will not warrant us needlessly to cast ourselves down from the pinnacle of the temple, depending upon it that the angel of the Lord will bear us up, and keep us from dashing our foot against a stone, when there is another way to go down, though it be not so quick. And I would pray, that *method*, in public discourses, which tends greatly to help both the understanding and memory, may not be wholly neglected.

Another thing I would beg the dear children of God more fully to consider of, is, how far, and upon what grounds, the rules of the Holy Scriptures will truly justify their passing censures upon other professing Christians, as hypocrites, and ignorant of real religion. We all know that there is a judging and censuring of some sort or other, that the Scripture very often and very strictly forbids. I desire that those rules of Scripture may be looked into, and thoroughly weighed; and that it may be considered whether our taking it upon us to discern the state of other and to pass sentence upon them as wicked men, though professing Christians, and of a good visible conversation—be not really forbidden by Christ in the New Testament. If it be, then doubtless the disciples of Christ ought to avoid this practice, however sufficient they may think themselves for it, or however needful, or of good tendency, they may think it. It is plain that the sort of judgment which God claims as his prerogative, whatever that be, is forbidden. We know that a certain judging of the hearts of the children of men, is often spoken of as the great prerogative of God, and which belongs only to him; as in [1 Kings viii. 39](#). “Forgive, and do, and give unto every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.” And if we examine, we shall find that the judging of hearts which is spoken of as God’s prerogative, relates not only to the aims and dispositions of men’s hearts in particular actions, but chiefly to the state of their hearts as the professors of religion, and with regard to that profession. This will appear very manifest by looking over the following scriptures; [1 Chron. xxviii. 9](#). [Psal. vii. 9, 10, 11](#). [Psal. xxvi](#). Throughout. [Prov. xvi. 2](#). and [xvii. 3](#). and [xxi. 2](#). [Job ii. 23, 24, 25](#). [Rev. ii. 22, 23](#). That sort of judging which is God’s proper business, is forbidden, as [Rom. xiv. 4](#). “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.” “There is one lawgiver that is able to save or destroy; who are thou that judgest another?” [2 Cor. iv. 3, 4](#). “But with me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment; yea I judge not mine own self; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.”

Again, whatsoever kind of judging is the proper work and business of the day of judgment, is what we are forbidden, as in [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come; who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God.” But to distinguish hypocrites, that have the form of godliness and the visible conversation of godly men, from true saints; or, to separate the sheep from the goats, is the proper business of the day of judgment; yea, it is represented as the main business and end of that day. They therefore do greatly err who take it upon them positively to determine who are sincere, and who are not—to draw the dividing line between true saints and hypocrites, and to separate between sheep and goats, setting the one on the right hand and the other on the left—and to distinguish and gather out the tares from amongst the wheat. Many of the servants of the owner of the field are very ready to think themselves sufficient for this, and are forward to

offer their service to this end; but their Lord says, “May, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest;” and in the time of the harvest I will take care to see a thorough separation made; as [Matt. xiii. 28, 29, 30](#). Agreeably to that forementioned prohibition of the apostle, [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). “Judge nothing before the time.” In this parable, by the servants who have the care of the fruit of the field, is doubtless meant the same with the servants who have the care of the fruit of the vineyard, [Luke xx](#). And who are elsewhere represented as servants of the Lord of the harvest, appointed as labourers in his harvest. These we know are ministers of the gospel. *Now* is that parable in the [13th of Matthew](#). fulfilled: “While men sleep,” (during a long sleepy, dead time in the church,) “the enemy has sowed tares;” now is the time “when the blade is sprung up,” and religion is reviving; and now some of the servants who have the care of the field say, “Let us go and gather up the tares.”—I know there is a great aptness in men who suppose they have had some experience of the power of religion, to think themselves sufficient to discern and determine the state of others by a little conversation with them; and experience has taught me that this is an error. I once did not imagine that the heart of man had been so unsearchable as it is.

I am less charitable, and less uncharitable than once I was. I find more things in wicked men that may counterfeit, and make a fair show of, piety; and more ways that the remaining corruption of the godly may make them appear like carnal men, formalists, and dead hypocrites, than once I knew of. The longer I live, the less I wonder that God challenges it as his prerogative to try the hearts of the children of men, and directs that this business should be let alone till harvest. I desire to adore the wisdom of God, and his goodness to me and my fellow-creatures, that he has not committed this great business into the hands of such a poor, weak, and dim-sighted creature—one of so much blindness, pride, partiality, prejudice, and deceitfulness of heart—but has committed it into the hands of one infinitely fitter for it, and has made it his prerogative.

The talk of some persons, and the account they give of their experiences, is exceedingly satisfying, and such as forbids and banishes the thought of their being any other than the precious children of God. It obliges, and as it were forces, full charity; but yet we must allow the Scriptures to stand good that speak of every thing in the saint, belonging to the spiritual and divine life, as hidden. ([Col. iii. 3, 4.](#)) Their food is the hidden manna; they have meat to eat that others know not of; a stranger intermeddles not with their joys. The heart in which they possess their divine distinguishing ornaments, is the hidden man, and in the sight of God only, [1 Pet. iii. 4](#). Their new name, which Christ has given them, no man knows but he that receives it, [Rev. ii. 17](#). The praise of the true Israelites, whose circumcision is that of the heart, is not of men but of God, [Rom. ii. 29](#). that is, they can be certainly known and discerned to be Israelites, so as to have the honour that belongs to such, only of God; as appears by the use of the like expression by the same apostle, [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). Here he speaks

of its being God's prerogative to judge who are upright Christians, and what he will do at the day of judgment, adding, "and then shall every man have praise of God."

The instance of *Judas* is remarkable; whom though he had been so much amongst the rest of the disciples, all persons of true experience, yet his associates never seemed to have entertained a thought of his being any other than a true disciple, till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice.—And the instance of *Ahitophel* is also very remarkable; David did not suspect him, though so wise and holy a man, so great a divine, and had such a great acquaintance with Scripture. He knew more than all his teachers, more than the ancients, was grown old in experience, and was in the greatest ripeness of his judgment. He was a great prophet, and was intimately acquainted with *Ahitophel*, he being his familiar friend, and most intimate companion in religious and spiritual concerns. Yet David not only never discovered him to be a hypocrite, but relied upon him as a true saint. He relished his religious discourse, it was sweet to him and he counted him an eminent saint; so that he made him above any other man his guide and counsellor in soul matters; but yet he was not only no saint, but a notoriously wicked man, a murderous, vile wretch. *Psal. lv. 11-14*. "Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets: for it was not an open enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance: we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

To suppose that men have ability and right do determine the state of the souls of visible Christians, and so to make an open separation between saints and hypocrites, that true saints may be of one visible company, and hypocrites of another, separated by a partition that men make, carries in it an inconsistency: for it supposes that God has given men power to make another visible church, within his visible church; for by visible Christians or visible saints is meant, persons who have a right to be received as such in the eye of a public charity. None can have a right to exclude any one of this visible church but in the way of that regular ecclesiastical proceeding, which God has established in his visible church.—I beg of those who have a true zeal for promoting this work of God, well to consider these things. I am persuaded, that as many of them as have much to do with souls, if they do not hearken to me now, will be of the same mind when they have had more experience.

And another thing that I would entreat the zealous friends of this glorious work of God to avoid, is managing the controversy with opposers with too much heat, and appearance of an angry zeal; and particularly insisting very much in public prayer and preaching, on the persecution of opposers. If their persecution were ten times so great as it is, me thinks it would not be best to say so much about it. If it becomes Christians to be like lambs, not apt to complain and cry when they are hurt; it becomes them to be dumb and not to open their mouth, after the example of our dear Redeemer; and not to be like swine, that are apt



to scream aloud when they are touched. We should not be ready presently to think and speak of tire from heaven, when the Samaritans oppose us, and will not receive us into their villages. God's zealous ministers would do well to think of the direction the apostle Paul gave to a zealous minister, [2 Tim. ii. 24-26](#). "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

I would humbly recommend to those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and would advance his kingdom, a good attendance to that excellent rule of prudence which Christ has left us, [Matt. ix. 16, 17](#). "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." I am afraid the wine is now running out in some part of this land, for want of attending to this rule. For though I believe we have confined ourselves too much to a certain stated method and form in the management of our religious affairs; which has had a tendency to cause all our religion to degenerate into mere formality; yet whatever has the appearance of a great innovation—that tends much to shock and surprise people's minds, and to set them a talking and disputing—tends greatly to hinder the progress of the power of religion. It raises the opposition of some, diverts the mind of others, and perplexes many with doubts and scruples. It causes people to swerve from their great business, and turn aside to vain jangling. Therefore that which is very much beside the common practice, unless it be a thing in its own nature of considerable importance, had better be avoided. Herein we shall follow the example of one who had the greatest success in propagating the power of religion. [1 Cor. ix. 20-23](#). "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."



AN

**HUMBLE ATTEMPT**

TO PROMOTE

**EXPLICIT AGREEMENT AND VISIBLE UNION  
OF GOD'S PEOPLE,**

IN

**EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER,  
FOR THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHRIST'S  
KINGDOM ON EARTH.**



## A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

The following is the original title more at large; which the editors are disposed to preserve, as it contains a more particular exhibition of the nature and design of the work. How suitable the work itself is, in reference to the present state of things, we leave to the reader's own reflection.

*“An Humble Attempt to promote an explicit agreement and visible union of God's people through the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the revival, of religion, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth, pursuant to scripture promises and prophecies concerning the last time,*

*occasioned*

*By a late memorial published by a number of ministers in Scotland, and sent over to America; giving an account of a certain concert for prayer, which has already been come into by many ministers and others in Great Britain and some other parts, and in which they desire the general concurrence of their Christian brethren every where.*

*containing*

*A copy of the said memorial with a more particular view of the affair it relates to; a variety of arguments and persuasives to comply with the motion therein made, for united and extraordinary prayer; and answers to some objections.*

*together with*

*Seasonable considerations on the aspects of providence in many late wonderful dispensations, and the present state of things in the church and moral world; pointing out the fulfilling of the Scriptures, and the voice of God to his people, in these events.”*

## PREFACE BY A FORMER ENGLISH EDITOR.

If any inquire why the ensuing work is re-published, I would beg leave to lay before them the following intelligence.

At an association of the ministers and messengers of the Baptist Churches in the counties of Northampton, Leicester, &c. held at Nottingham, in the year 1784, a resolution was termed to establish through the association, *a meeting of prayer for the general revival and spread of religion*. This was to be observed the first Monday evening in every calendar month, by all the churches. It still continues.—In 1786, another Baptist association commonly called the *Midland*, held that year at Aulcester, in the county of Warwick, entered into the same resolution. Many other churches, particularly in Yorkshire, have adopted, and now follow, the above practice. We have the pleasure also to find, that several *Pædobaptist* churches stately meet on those evenings for the same purpose.

The re-publication of the following work is with the avowed design of promoting the above agreement and practice. Those concerned in its first institution, never intended it should be confined to any peculiar connexion, or particular denomination. Rather they ardently wished it might become general among the real friends of truth and holiness. The advocates of error are indefatigable in their endeavours to overthrow the distinguishing and interesting doctrine of Christianity; those doctrine which are the grounds of our hope, and sources of our joy. Surely it becomes the followers of Christ, to use every effort, in order to strengthen the things which remain.

By re-publishing the following work, I do not consider myself as becoming answerable for every sentiment it contains. An *author* and an *editor* are very distinct characters. Should any entertain different views respecting some of *the prophecies* in the inspired page, from those that are here advanced, yet such may, and I hope will, approve of the general design.

## PREFACE

In the present imperfect state, we may reasonably expect a diversity of sentiments upon religious matters. Each ought to think for himself; and every one has a right, on proper occasions, to show his opinion. Yet all should remember, that there are but two parties in the world, each engaged in opposite causes; the cause of God and of Satan; of holiness and sin; of heaven and hell. The advancement of the one, and the downfall of the other, must appear exceedingly desirable to every real friend of God and man. If such in some respects entertain different sentiments, and practise distinguishing modes of worship, surely they may unite in the above business. O for thousands upon thousands, divided into small bands in their respective cities, towns, villages, and neighbourhood, all met at the same time, and in pursuit of one end, offering up their united prayers, like so many ascending clouds of incense before

the Most High!—May he shower down blessings on all the scattered tribes of Zion! Grace, great grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! Amen!

*Olney, May 4th, 1789.*

JOHN SUTCLIFF.

P R E F A C E B Y T H E A M E R I C A N E D I T O R S .

The ruin of Satan's miserable kingdom, and the advancement of the universal and happy reign of Christ on the earth, were included, and hinted at, in the *sentence* denounced on the *serpent*, that *the seed of the woman should bruise his head*. What was a *terrible threatening to Satan*, in the surprised ears of *our first guilty parents*, implied a *joyful prophecy*, to keep them from despair, and enliven their hopes, for themselves and their descendants, of obtaining by *this seed of her* an eternal triumph over him who had so sadly foiled them. And it is likely, that their hope and faith immediately arose, laid hold on the reviving prophecy, earnestly desired its happy accomplishment, and transmitted it to their posterity.

But though this prophecy was at first only delivered in the form of a *threatening to Satan*, it was afterwards directly given in the form of a *promise to Abraham*, though still in general terms, that *in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed*. Yet this general promise was more clearly by degrees explained in the following ages, to mean a divine King, no other than the Son of God assuming *human nature* of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David; that should be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judah; and at first despised, abused, rejected, and put to death; but should rise to immortal life, ascend to heaven, and thence extend his blessed kingdom over all nations; not by outward force, but inward overcoming influence, by his *word* and *Spirit* making them *his willing people in the day of his power*; and reigning in glorious light and holiness, love and peace, for ever: and the advancement of this universal and happy reign has been the earnest *desire* and *prayer* of the *saints* in all ages to the present day.

But how great the honour, and how lively the encouragement, given in Scripture to those *their prayers*, by representing them as offered by Christ himself with the fragrant *incense* of his own merits and intercession, on the *golden altar before the throne*, and ascending together in one grateful perfume to God! And how cheering to every saint is that promise, *from the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering!* How pleasing to God and all the *heavenly hosts* to see, as the sun goes round the globe, this grateful incense rising from every part on high! and the more extensive and incessant are these prayers, ascending from the circle of the earth, the more does this blessed promise go into its desired fulfilment, and the holy God is more pleased and glorified. To promote the *increase* and constancy of these acceptable *prayers*, is the great intention both of the pious *memorial* of our reverend and dear *brethren*, in Scotland, and of the worthy *author* of this exciting *essay*. And this design we cannot but recommend to all who desire the coming of this blissful *kingdom* in its promised extent and glory, in this wretched world.

As to the author's ingenious observation on the *prophecies*, we entirely leave them to the reader's judgment; with only observing, though it is the apprehension of many learned

men, that there is to be a very *general slaughter of the witnesses of Christ*, when about finishing their testimony to the pure worship and truths of the gospel, about three or four years before the *seventh angel* sounds his trumpet for the ruin of *antichrist*;—yet we cannot see that this is any just objection against our joint and earnest *prayers* for the glorious age succeeding, or for the hastening of it.

For if such a terrible time is coming in Europe, which we in depending America are likely to share in; the more need we have of joining in earnest and constant prayers for extraordinary suffering graces for ourselves and others. And that such a time is coming on the *members* of Christ, is no more an objection against their *prayers* for the hastening of the following glory, than it was before the incarnation of him their head, that his most bitter sufferings were to precede the spreading of this joyous kingdom among nations. And the nearer the day approaches, the more need we have to be awakened to continual *watchfulness and prayer*.

May God pour out on all his people abundantly the *Spirit of grace and supplications*, and prepare them for the amazing changes hastening on the earth, both for previous trials and for following glories.<sup>312</sup>

*Boston, New England, January 12th, 1748.*

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312 This preface was signed by Joseph Sewell, Thomas Prince, John Webb, Thomas Foxcroft, and Joshua Gee.

A N

H U M B L E A T T E M P T , & C .

*Thus saith the Lord of hosts, It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before, the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.*

PART I.

THE TEXT OPENED, AND AN ACCOUNT GIVEN OF THE AFFAIR PROPOSED  
IN THE MEMORIAL FROM SCOTLAND.

SECT. I.

Explanatory Introduction.

In this chapter we have a prophecy of a future glorious advancement of the church of God; wherein it is evident, that something further is intended than ever was fulfilled to the *Jewish* nation under the Old Testament. For here are plain prophecies of such things as never were fulfilled before the coming of the *Messiah*; particularly, what is said in the two last verses in the chapter, of *many people and strong nations worshipping and seeking the true God*; and of so great an accession of *Gentile* nations to the church of God, that by far the greater part of the visible worshippers should consist of this new accession, so that they should be to the other as *ten to one*.—A certain number for an uncertain. There never happened any thing, from the time of the prophet *Zechariah* to the coming of Christ, to answer this prophecy: and it can have no fulfilment, but either, in the calling of the *Gentiles*, in and after the days of the *apostles*; or, in the future glorious enlargement of the church of God in the *latter ages* of the world, so often foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the prophet *Zechariah* in particular, in the latter part of his prophecy. It is most probable, that what the Spirit of God has chiefly respect to, is that *last* and greatest enlargement and most glorious advancement of the church of God on earth; in the benefits of which especially the *Jewish* nation were to have a share, a very eminent and distinguished share.

There is a great agreement between what is here said, and other prophecies that *must* manifestly have respect to the church's latter-day glory: As *Isa. lx. 2-4.* "The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee: and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee." That whole chapter, beyond all dispute, has respect to the most glorious state of the church of God on earth. So chap. *lxvi. 8.* "Shall the



earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?" ver. 10. "Rejoice ye with *Jerusalem*, and be glad with her, all ye that love her." ver. 12. "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream."—*Micah iv. 1*, &c. "But in the last day it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it; and many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of *Jacob*. —And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." See also *Isa. ii.* at the beginning.—There has been nothing yet brought to pass, in any measure, to answer these prophecies. And as the prophecy in my text, and the following verse, agrees with them, so there is reason to think it has a respect to the same times. And indeed there is a remarkable agreement in the description given throughout the chapter, with the representations made of those times elsewhere in the prophets.<sup>313</sup>

So that however the prophet, in some parts of this chapter, may have respect to future smiles of heaven on the *Jewish* nation, lately returned from the *Babylonish* captivity, and resettled in the land of *Canaan*, in a great increase of their numbers and wealth, and the return of more captives from *Chaldea* and other countries, &c. yet the Spirit of God has doubtless respect to things far *greater* than these, and of which these were but faint resemblances. We find it common in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that when the prophets are speaking of divine favours and blessings on the *Jews*, attending or following their return from the *Babylonish* captivity, the Spirit of God takes occasion from thence to speak of the incomparably greater blessings on the church, that shall attend and follow her deliverance from the spiritual or mystical *Babylon*, of which those were a type; and then speaks almost wholly of these latter and vastly greater things, so as to seem to forget the former.

And whereas the prophet, in this chapter, speaks of God *bringing his people again from the east and west to Jerusalem*, (*ver. 7, 8.*) *and multitudes of all nations taking hold of the skirts of the Jews*; so far as this means literally that nation of the posterity of *Jacob*, it cannot chiefly respect any return of the *Jews* from *Babylon* and other countries, in those ancient times before *Christ*; for no such things attended any such return. It must therefore have respect to the great calling and gathering of the *Jews* into the fold of *Christ*, and their being

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313 As may be seen by comparing ver. 3. with *Isa. lx. 14.*—ver. 4. with *Isa. lxxv. 20, 22.* and *Isa. xxxiii. 24.*—ver. 6, 7, & with *Ezek. xxxvii. 2, 11, 12, 21.*—ver. 7. with *Isa. xliii. 5, 6.* and *xlix. 12.* and *lix. 19.*—ver. 12, 13. with *Hos. ii. 21, 22.* and *Ezek. xxxiv. 22-39.* ver. & 12, 13. with *Ezek. xxxvi. 28-30.*—ver. 13. with *Zeph. iii. 20.* and *Isa. xix. 24.*—ver. 19, with *Isa. lxi. 3.* and *Jer. xxxi. 12, 13, 14.*

received to the blessings of his kingdom, after the fall of *antichrist*, or the destruction of mystical Babylon.

## SECT. II

Observations on the text.

In the text we have an account *how* this future glorious advancement of the church of God should be introduced; *viz.* By great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a *joint resolution*, and coming into an express and *visible agreement*, that they will, by united and extraordinary *prayer*, seek to God, that he would come and manifest himself, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence.—Particularly we may observe,

1. The *duty*, with the attendance on which the glorious event foretold shall be brought on; *viz.* The duty of *prayer*.—Prayer, some suppose, is here to be taken *synechdochically* for the whole of divine *worship*; prayer being a *principal part* of worship in the days of the gospel, when sacrifices are abolished. If so, this is to be understood only as a prophecy of a great *revival* of religion, and of the true worship of God among his visible people, the *accession* of others to the church, and turning of multitudes from idolatry to the worship of the true God. But it appears to me reasonable to suppose, that something more *special* is intended, with regard to the duty of prayer; considering that prayer is here expressly and repeatedly mentioned; and also considering how parallel this place is with many other prophecies, that speak of an *extraordinary* spirit of prayer, as preceding and introducing that glorious day of religious revival, and advancement of the church's peace and prosperity, so often foretold. Add to this, the agreeableness of what is here said, with what is said afterwards by the same prophet, of the *pouring out of a spirit of grace and supplication*, as that with which this great revival of religion shall begin. (Chap. xii. 10.)

2. The *good*, that shall be sought by prayer; which is God himself. It is said once and again, "They shall go to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts." <sup>314</sup> This is the *good* they ask for, and seek by prayer, *The Lord of hosts* himself. To *seek God*, as the expression may perhaps be sometimes used in Scripture, may signify no more than seeking the *favour* or *mercy* of God. And if it be taken so here, *praying before the Lord*, and *seeking the Lord of hosts*, must be synonymous expressions. And it must be confessed to be a common thing in Scripture, to signify the same thing repeatedly, by various expressions of the same import, for the greater emphasis.

But certainly that expression of *seeking the Lord*, is very commonly used to signify something more; it implies that *God himself* is the great *good* desired and sought after; that the blessings pursued are God's gracious presence, the blessed manifestations of him, union and intercourse with him; or, in short, God's *manifestations* and *communications* of himself

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314 Zech. viii. 21.

by his Holy Spirit. Thus the psalmist *desired God, thirsted after him, and sought him.* (Psal. lxxiii. 1, 2, 8.) “O God, thou art my God; early will I *seek thee.* My flesh longeth for *thee,* in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. My soul followeth hard after thee.” (Psal. lxxiii. 25.) “Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” The psalmist earnestly pursued after GOD, *his soul thirsted after him, he stretched forth his hands unto him, &c.* (Psal. cxliiii. 6.) And therefore it is in Scripture the peculiar character of the saints, that they are *those who seek God.* (Psal. xxiv. 6.) “This is the generation of them that seek him.” (Psal. lxxix. 32.) “Your heart shall live that seek *God.*” If the expression in the text be understood agreeably to this sense, then by *seeking the Lord of hosts,* we must understand a seeking, that God who had withdrawn, or as it were hid himself for a long time, would return to his church, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence, and those blessed communications of his Spirit to his people, and to mankind on earth, which he had often promised, and which his church had long waited for.

And it seems reasonable to understand the phrase, *seeking the Lord of hosts,* in this sense here; and not as *merely* signifying the same thing with *praying* to God: not only because the expression is repeatedly *added* to *praying before the Lord,* in the text; but also because the phrase, taken in this sense, is exactly agreeable to other parallel prophetic representations. Thus God’s people seeking, by earnest prayer, the promised restoration of the church of God, after the *Babylonish* captivity, and the great apostacy that occasioned it, is called their seeking God, and searching *for him;* and God’s granting this promised revival and restoration is called his being found *of them.* Jer. xxix. 10, 14. “For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at *Babylon,* I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye go and call upon me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall *seek me* and *find me,* when ye shall *search for me* with all your heart; and I will be *found* of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity.” And the prophets, from time to time, represent God, in a low and afflicted state of his church, as being *withdrawn,* and *hiding himself.* Isa. xlv. 15. “Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” (Chap. lvii. 17.) “I hid me, and was wroth.” And they represent God’s people, while his church is in such a state, before God delivers and restores the same, as *seeking him, looking for him, searching and waiting for him, and calling after him.* (Hos. v. 15.) “I will go and return unto my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face from the house of *Jacob,* and I will look for him.”

And when God, in answer to their prayers and succeeding their endeavours, delivers, restores, and advances his church, according to his promise, then he is said to *answer,* and *come,* and *say, Here am I,* and to *show himself;* and they are said to *find him,* and *see him*

plainly. (Isa. lviii. 9.) “Then shall thou cry, and he shall say, *Here I am*“ (Isa. xlv. 19.) “I said not unto the seed of Jacob, *Seek ye me* in vain.” Chap. xxv. 8, 9.) “The Lord will wipe away the tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off the earth. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have *waited for him*, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have *waited for him*; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.” Together with the next chap.” ver. 8, 9. we have waited for thee; “the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I *seek thee* early. For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” Isa. lii. 6-8. “Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: *behold, it is I*. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

3. We may observe *who* they are, that shall be *united* in thus seeking the Lord of hosts: *the inhabitants of many cities*, and of many countries, *yea, many people, and strong nations*, great multitudes in different parts of the world shall conspire in this business. From the representation made in the prophecy, it appears rational to suppose, that it will be fulfilled something after this manner: There shall be given much of a spirit of prayer to God’s people, in many places, disposing them to come into an express *agreement*, unitedly to pray to God in an extraordinary manner, that he would appear for the help of his church, and in mercy to mankind, and *pour out his Spirit, revive his work*, and advance his spiritual *kingdom* in the world, as he has promised. This disposition to prayer, and union in it, will gradually spread more and more, and increase to greater degrees; with which at length will gradually be introduced a *revival of religion*, and a disposition to greater engagedness in the worship and service of God, amongst his professing people. This being observed, will be the means of awakening others, making them sensible of the wants of their souls, and exciting in them a great concern for their spiritual and everlasting good, and putting them upon earnestly crying to God for spiritual mercies, and disposing them to join in that extraordinary seeking and serving of God.

In this manner *religion* shall be *propagated*, till the awakening reaches those that are in the *highest stations*, and till *whole nations* be awakened, and there be at length an accession of many of the chief nations of the world to the church of God. Thus after the inhabitants of many cities of Israel, or of God’s professing people, have taken up and pursued a joint resolution, to go and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts, others shall be drawn to worship and serve him with them; till at length *many people and strong nations* shall join themselves to them; and there shall, in process of time, be a vast accession to the church, so that it shall be *ten* times as large as it was before; yea, at length, all nations shall be converted



unto God. Thus (Zech. viii. 23.) “ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, of the skirt of him that is a Jew,” (in the sense of the apostle, Rom. ii. 28, 29.) “saying, We will go with you; for we have heard, that God is with you.” And thus shall be fulfilled, Psal. lxxv. 2. “O thou that hearest prayer, *unto thee shall all flesh come.*”

4. We may observe, the *mode* of their *union* in this duty. It is a *visible* union, an union by *explicit agreement*, a joint resolution declared by one to another, being first proposed by some, and readily and expressly followed by others. The inhabitants of *one city* shall apply themselves to the inhabitants of *another*, saying, *Let us go*, &c. Those to whom the motion is made, shall *comply* with it, the proposal shall take with many, it shall be a *prevailing, spreading* thing; one shall follow another’s example, one and another *shall say, I will go also*. Some suppose, that those words, *I will go also*, are to be taken as the words of him that makes the proposal; as much as to say, I do not propose *that* to you, which I am not willing to do myself. I desire *you* to go, and am ready to go *with you*. But this is to suppose no more to be expressed in these latter words, than was expressed before in the proposal itself; for these words, *let us go*, signify as much. It seems to me much more natural, to understand these latter words as importing the *consent* of those to whom the proposal is made, or the *reply* of one and another that falls in with it. This is much more agreeable to the plain design of the text, which is to represent the *concurrence* of great numbers in this affair; and more agreeable to the representation made in the next verse, of one following another, many *taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew*.

And though, if the words be thus understood, we must suppose an *ellipsis* in the text, something understood that is not expressed, as if it had been said, *those of other cities shall say, I will go also*; yet, this is not difficult to be supposed, for such *ellipses* are very common in Scripture. We have one exactly parallel with it in Jer. iii. 22. “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God,” *i. e.* the backsliding children shall say, “Behold, we come unto thee,” &c. And in Cant. iv. 16. and v. 1. “Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse,” *i. e.* her beloved shall say, “I am come into my garden.” We have the like throughout that song. So Psal. l. 6, 7. “The heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak,” *i. e.* the Judge shall say, “Hear, O my people,” &c. So Psal. lxxxii. 1, 2. The psalms and prophets abound with such figures of speech.

5. We may observe the *manner of prayer* agreed on, or the manner in which they agree, to *engage in and perform the duty*. *Let us go SPEEDILY to pray*; or as it is in the margin, *Let us go continually*. The words literally translated are, *Let us go in going*. Such an ingemination, or doubling of words, is very common in the Hebrew language, when it is intended that a thing shall be very *strongly* expressed. It generally implies the *superlative degree* of a thing; as the *holy of holies* signifies the most holy. But it commonly denotes, not only the utmost

*degree* of a thing, but also the utmost *certainty*; as when God said to Abraham, “In multiplying, I will multiply thy seed,” (*Gen. xxii. 17.*) it implies both that God would *certainly* multiply his seed, and also multiply it *exceedingly*. So when God said to Adam, “In the day that thou eatest thereof, in dying thou shall die,” (as the words are in the original,) it implies, both that he should *surely die*, and also that he should die most *terribly*, should utterly perish, and be destroyed to the utmost degree.

In short, as the ingemination of words in the Hebrew, generally denotes the strength of expression, so it is used to signify almost all those things that are wont to be signified by the various forms of strong speech in other languages. It signifies not only the utmost *degree* of a thing, and its great *certainty*; but also the *peremptoriness* and *terribleness* of a threatening, the *greatness* and *positiveness* of a promise, the *strictness* of a command, and the *earnestness* of a request. When God says to Adam, “Dying thou shall die,” it is equivalent to such strong expressions in English, as, *Thou shalt die surely, or indeed*; or, *Thou shalt die with a witness*. So when it is said in the text, “Let us go in going, and pray before the Lord,” the strength of the expression represents the *earnestness* of those that make the proposal, their great *engagedness* in the affair. And with respect to the *duly* proposed, it may be understood to signify that they should be *speedy, fervent, and constant* in it; or, in one word, that it should be *thoroughly* performed.

6. We may learn from the tenor of this prophecy, together with the context, that this union in such prayer is foretold as a *becoming* and *happy* thing, what would be acceptable to God, and attended with glorious success.

From the whole we may infer, that it is a very *suitable* thing, and *well-pleasing to God*, for many people, in different parts of the world, by express *agreement*, to come into a *visible union* in extraordinary, speedy, fervent, and constant *prayer*, for those great effusions of the *Holy Spirit*, which shall bring on that *advancement* of Christ’s church and kingdom, that God has so often promised shall be in the *latter ages* of the world. And so from hence I would infer the *duty* of God’s people, with regard to the *Memorial* lately sent over into *America* from *Scotland*, by a number of ministers there, proposing a *method* for such an *union* as has been spoken of, in extraordinary prayer, for this great mercy.

And it being the special design of this discourse, to persuade such as are friends to the interests of Christ’s kingdom, to a *compliance* with the proposal and request made in that *Memorial*, I shall, First, give a short *historical* account of *the affair* to which it relates, from letters, papers, and pamphlets, that have come over from *Scotland*. Secondly, I shall annex the *Memorial* itself. And then, I shall offer *some arguments* and *motives*, tending to induce the friends of religion to fall in with what is proposed; and lastly, make answer to some *objections* that may possibly be made against it.

SECT. III.

An historical account of the concert to which the Memorial relates.

In October, A. D. 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, taking into consideration the state of God's church, and of the world of mankind, judged that the providence of God, at such a day, did loudly call upon such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to *united extraordinary* applications to the God of all grace, suitably acknowledging him as the fountain of all the spiritual benefits and blessings of his church, and earnestly praying to him, that he would *appear in His glory*, and favour Zion, and manifest his compassion to the world of mankind, by an abundant effusion of his *Holy Spirit* on all the churches, and the whole habitable earth, to revive true religion in all parts of *Christendom*, and to deliver *all nations* from their great and manifold spiritual calamities and miseries, and bless them with the unspeakable benefits of the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, and *fill the whole earth, with his glory*. Consulting one another on the subject, they looked upon *themselves*, for their own part, obliged to engage in this duty; and, as far as in them lay, to persuade *others* to the same: and to endeavour to find out and fix on some *method*, that should most effectually tend to promote and uphold such extraordinary application to heaven among God's people.

After seeking to God by prayer for direction, they determined on the following method, as what they would conform to in their own practice, and propose to be practised by others, for the *two years* next following, *viz.* To set apart some time on *Saturday evening*, and *sabbath morning*, every week, for the purpose aforesaid, as other duties would allow to every one respectively; and more solemnly, the first Tuesday of each quarter, (beginning with the first Tuesday of November, then next ensuing,) either the whole day, or part of the day, as persons find themselves disposed, or think their circumstances will allow: the time to be spent either in *private* praying societies, or in *public* meetings, or alone in *secret*, as shall be found most practicable, or judged most convenient, by such as are willing, in some way or other, to join in this affair. Not that any should make promises, or be looked upon as under strict bonds in any respect, constantly and without fail to observe every one of these days, whatever their circumstances should be, or however other duties and necessary affairs might interfere; or that persons should look upon themselves bound with regard to these days in any wise as though the time were holy, or the setting of them apart for religious purposes were established by sacred authority. But yet, as a proper guard against negligence and unsteadiness, and a prudent preservative from yielding to a disposition to which persons might be liable, through the prevalence of indolence and listlessness to excuse themselves on trivial occasions, it was proposed, that those who united in this affair should resolve with themselves, that if, by urgent business, or otherwise, they were hindered from joining with others on the very day agreed on, yet they would not wholly neglect bearing their part in the duty proposed, but would take the first convenient day following for that purpose.



The reason why *Saturday evening* and *Lord's-day morning* were indeed most convenient for the *weekly* seasons, was, that these times being so near the time of dispensing *gospel ordinances* through the Christian world, which are the great means, in the use of which God is wont to grant his *Spirit* to mankind, and the principal means that the Spirit of God makes use of to carry on his *work of grace*, it may be well supposed that the minds of Christians in general will at these seasons be especially disengaged from secular affairs, and disposed to pious meditations and the duties of devotion, and more naturally led to seek the communications of the Holy Spirit, and success of the means of grace. And as to the *quarterly* times, it was thought helpful to memory, that they should be on one or other of the *first* days of each quarter: Tuesday was preferred to Monday, because in some places people might have public prayers and a sermon on the stated day, which might not be so convenient on Monday, as on some day at a greater distance from the sabbath.

It was reckoned a *chief use* of such an agreement and method as this, that it would be a good expedient for maintaining and keeping up, amongst the people of God, the great Christian duty of *prayerfulness for the coming of Christ's kingdom*. Those things to which we are too little inclined, through sloth, carnality, or a fulness of our own worldly and private concerns and which are to be attended to at some seasons or other, but have no special seasons stated for them are apt to be *forgotten*, or put *off* from time to time, and as it were adjourned *without a day*. But when we fix on certain seasons, which we resolve, unless extraordinarily hindered, to devote to the duty, it tends to prevent forgetfulness, and a settled negligence of it. The certain returns of the season will naturally refresh the memory; will tend to put us in mind of the precept of Christ, and the obligations that lie on all his followers, to abound in such a *duty*, and renewedly engage us to the consideration of the importance, necessity, and unspeakable value of the *mercy* sought; and so, by frequent renovation, to keep alive the consideration and sense of these things at *all times*.

Thus the first promoters of this *agreement* judged, that it would be subservient to more abundant *prayerfulness* for effusions of the Holy Spirit *at all times* through the *year*, both in secret and social worship; particularly as to this last, in congregations, families, and other praying societies. And they also judged, that such an *agreed union* would tend to *animate* and *encourage* God's people in the duty proposed; and that particular persons and societies, knowing that great multitudes of their fellow-Christians, in so many distant places, were at the *same time* (as a token of the union of their hearts with them in this affair) by agreement engaged in the *same holy exercise*, would naturally be *enlivened* in the duty by such a consideration.

It was not thought best to propose, at first, a longer time for the continuance of *this* precise method, than *two years*: it being considered, that it is not possible, before any trial, so well to judge of the *expedience* of a particular *method*, and certain *circumstances* of managing such an affair, as after some time of experience. And it was not known, but that



after long consideration, and some trial, it might be thought best to *alter* some circumstances; or whether others, that had not yet been consulted, might not propose a *better* method. The time *first* agreed on, though but short, was thought sufficient to give opportunity for judgment and experience, and for such as were disposed to unite in an affair of such a nature, in distant places, mutually to communicate their sentiments on the subject.

The *way* which those who first projected, and came into this agreement, thought best for giving *notice* of it, and proposing it to *others*, was not by the *press*, but by *personal conversation* with such as they could conveniently have immediate access to, and by *private correspondence* with others at a distance. At first it was intended, that some *formal paper*, proposing the matter, should be sent about for proper amendments and improvements, and then concurrence: but on more mature deliberation, it was considered how this might give a handle to *objections*; (which they thought it best, to the utmost, to avoid in the *infancy* of the affair;) and how practicable it was, without any such formality, to spread the substance of the proposal by private *letters*, together with a request to their correspondents mutually to communicate their thoughts. Therefore this was fixed on, as the preferable method at the beginning. Accordingly, they proposed, and endeavoured to promote the affair, in this way; and with such success, that great numbers in *Scotland* and *England* fell in with the proposal, and some in *North America*. As to *Scotland*, it was complied with by numbers in, the four chief towns, *Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee*, and many country towns and congregations in various parts of the land. One of the ministers who was primarily concerned in this affair, in a letter to one of his correspondents, speaks of an explicit declaration of the concurrence of the praying societies in *Edinburgh*, which they had made in a letter. The number of the praying societies in that city is very considerable. Mr. *Kobe*, of *Kilsyth*, (in a letter to Mr. *Prince*, of *Boston*, dated *Nov. 3, 1743*.) says, there were then above *thirty* societies of *young* people there newly erected, some of which consisted of upwards of *thirty* members. As to *Glasgow*, this union was unanimously agreed to by about *forty-five* praying societies there; as an eminent minister in that city informs in a letter.

The *two years* first agreed on ended last *November*. A little before this time expired, a number of ministers in *Scotland* agreed on a *Memorial* to be printed, and sent abroad to their brethren in various parts, proposing to them, and requesting of them, to join in the continuance of this method of united prayer, and endeavouring to promote it. Copies of which Memorial have lately been sent over to *New England*, (to the number of near 500,) directed to be distributed in almost every country in this province of the *Massachusetts Bay*, and also in several parts of *Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia*. Most of these, I suppose, were sent to one of the congregational ministers in *Boston*, with a letter subscribed by twelve ministers in *Scotland*, about the affair: many of them to another of the said ministers of

*Boston*; and some to a minister in *Connecticut*. It being short, I shall here insert a copy of it at length.

#### SECT. IV.



A memorial from several ministers in *Scotland*, to their brethren in different places, for continuing a Concert for Prayer, first entered into in the year 1744.

Whereas it was the chief scope of this concert to promote more abundant application to a duty that is perpetually binding, *prayer that our Lord's kingdom may come*, joined with praises: and it contained some circumstantial expedients, apprehended to be very subservient to that design, relating to stated times for such exercises, so far as this would not interfere with other duties; particularly a part of *Saturday evening* and *sabbath morning*, every week; and more solemnly of some one of the *first days* of each of the four great divisions of the year, that is, of each *quarter*; as the first *Tuesday*, or first convenient day after;<sup>315</sup> and the concert, as to this circumstance, was extended only to *two years*; it being intended, that before these expired, persons engaged in the concert should reciprocally communicate their sentiments and inclinations, as to the *prolonging* of the time, with or without alteration, as to the circumstance mentioned: and it was intended by the first promoters, that others at a distance should propose such circumstantial *amendments* or *improvements*, as they should find proper: it is hereby earnestly entreated, that such would communicate their sentiments accordingly, now that the time first proposed is near expiring.

II. To induce those already engaged to adhere, and others to accede to this concert; it seems of importance to observe, that *declarations of concurrence*, the communicating and spreading of which are so evidently useful, are to be understood in such a *latitude*, as to keep at the greatest distance from *entangling* men's minds: not as binding men to set apart any stated days from secular affairs, or even to fix on any part of such and such precise days, whether it be *convenient* or not: not as *absolute* promises in any respect; but as *friendly, harmonious resolutions*, with liberty to alter circumstances as shall be found expedient. On account of all which latitude, and that the circumstantial part extends only to a few years, it is apprehended, the concert cannot be liable to the objections against *periodical* religious times of human appointment.

III. It is also humbly offered to the consideration of ministers, and others furnished with gifts for the most public instructions, whether it might not be of great use, by the blessing of God, if short and nervous scriptural *persuasives* and *directions to the duty in view, were composed and published*, (either by particular authors, or several joining together; which last way might sometimes have peculiar advantages,) and that from time to time,

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315 The meaning is, the first Tuesdays of February, May, August, and November, or the first convenient days after these.

without top great intervals; the better to keep alive on men's minds a just sense of the obligations to a duty so important in itself, and in which many may be in danger to faint and turn remiss, without such repeated incitements: and *whether it would not also be of great use, if ministers would be pleased to preach frequently on the importance and necessity of prayer for the coming of our Lord's kingdom*; particularly near the quarterly days, or on these days themselves, where there is public worship at that time.

IV. They who have found it incumbent on them to publish this *Memorial* at this time, having peculiar advantages for spreading it, do entreat that the desire of *concurrence* and *assistance* contained in it, may by no means be understood as restricted to any particular *denomination* or *party*, or to those who are of such or such opinions about any former instances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to *all*, who shall vouchsafe any attention to this paper, and have at heart the interest of *vital Christianity*, and the *power of godliness*; and who, however differing about other things, are convinced of the importance of fervent *prayer*, to promote that common interest, and of scripture persuasives to promote such prayer.

V. As the first printed account of this *concert* was not a *proposal* of it, as a thing then to begin, but a narration of it, as a design *already* set on foot, which had been brought about with much harmony, by means of private *letters*; so the farther continuance, and, it is hoped, the farther spreading of it, seems in a promising way of being promoted by the same means; as importunate desires of *renewing the concert* have been transmitted already from a very distant corner abroad, where the regard to it has of late increased: but notwithstanding what may be done by private letters, it is humbly expected, that a *memorial* spread in this manner, may, by God's blessing, further promote the good ends in view; as it may be usefully referred to in letters, and may reach where they will not.

VI. Whereas in a valuable letter, from the corner just now mentioned, as a place where a regard to the *concert* has lately increased, it is proposed, that it should be continued for *seven years*, or at least for a much longer time than what was specified in the first agreement; those concerned in this *Memorial*, who would wish rather to receive and spread *directions* and *proposals* on this head, than to be the first authors of any, apprehend no inconvenience, for their part, in agreeing to the *seven years*, with the *latitude* above described, which reserves liberty to make such circumstantial alterations, as may be hereafter found expedient: on the contrary it seems of importance, that the labour of spreading a *concert*, which has already extended to so distant parts, and may, it is hoped, extend further, may not need to be *renewed* sooner, at least much sooner; as it is uncertain but *that* may endanger the *dropping* of it; and it seems probable, there will be less zeal in spreading it, if the time proposed for its continuance be too inconsiderable. Meantime, declarations of *concurrence* for a *less* number of years may greatly promote the good ends in view; though it seems very expedient, that

it should exceed what was first agreed on; seeing it is found on trial, that that time, instead of being too long, was much too short.

VII. If any person who formerly agreed to this *concert*, should now *discontinue* it; would it not look too like that *fainting in prayer*, against which we are so expressly warned in Scripture? And would not this be the more unsuitable at *this time*, in any within the British dominions, when they have the united calls of such *public chastisements* and *deliverances*,<sup>316</sup> to more concern than ever about *public reformation*, and consequently about that which is the *source* of all thorough reformation, the *regenerating* and *sanctifying* influence of the Almighty Spirit of God: August 26, 1746.

N. B. The minister in Boston afore-mentioned to whom most of the copies of this *Memorial* were sent, who, I suppose, has had later and more full intelligence than I have had concerning the proposal, in a letter, *The motions seem to come from above, and to be wonderfully spreading in Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, and in North America.*

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316 Alluding, probably, to the rebellion in 1743, and the defeat of the rebels.-W.

## PART II.

## MOTIVES TO A COMPLIANCE WITH WHAT IS PROPOSED IN THE MEMORIAL.

I now proceed to the second thing intended in this Discourse, *viz.* to offer to consideration some things, which may tend to induce the people of God to comply with the proposal and request, made to them in the *Memorial*.

## SECT. I.

The latter-day glory not yet accomplished.

It is evident from the Scripture, that there is *yet remaining* a great *advancement* of the interest of *religion* and the *kingdom of Christ* in this world, by an *abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God*, far greater and more extensive than ever yet has been. It is certain, that many things, which are spoken concerning a *glorious* time of the church's *enlargement* and *prosperity* in the *latter days*, have never yet been fulfilled. There has never yet been any propagation and prevalence of religion, in any wise, of that *extent* and *universality* which the prophecies represent. It is often foretold and signified, in a great variety of strong expressions, that there should a time come, when *all nations*, throughout the whole habitable world, should embrace the true religion, and be brought into the church of God. It was often promised to the patriarchs, that "in their seed all the nations, or (as it is sometimes expressed) all the families of the earth shall be blessed."<sup>317</sup> Agreeably to this, it is said of the Messiah, [Psal. lxxii. 11.](#) "That all nations shall serve him;" and in [ver. 17.](#) "Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed." And in [Isa. ii. 2.](#) it is said, that "all nations shall flow unto the mountain of the house of the Lord." And [Jer. iii. 17.](#) "That all nations shall be gathered unto the name of the Lord to Jerusalem, and shall walk no more after the imagination of their evil heart." "That all flesh shall come and worship before the Lord," [Isa. lxvi. 23.](#) "And that all flesh should see the glory of God together," [Isa. xl. 5.](#) "And that all flesh should come to him that hears prayer," [Psal. lxxv. 2.](#) Christ compares the *kingdom of heaven* in this world "to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened;" [Matt. xiii. 33.](#)

It is natural and reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should finally be given to Christ, as one whose right it is to reign, as the proper heir of him who is originally the King of all nations, and the possessor of heaven and earth. And the Scripture teaches us, that God the Father hath constituted his Son, as God-man, in his kingdom of grace, or mediatorial kingdom, to be the *heir of the world*, that he might in this kingdom have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for his possession." [Heb. i. 2.](#) and [ii. 8.](#) [Psal. ii. 6, 7, 8.](#) Thus Abraham is said to be *the heir of the world*, not in himself, but in *his seed*,

317 See [Gen. xii. 3.](#) [xiii. 18.](#) [xxii. 18.](#) [xxvi. 4.](#) and [xxviii. 14.](#)

which is Christ, [Rom. iv. 13](#). And how was this to be fulfilled to Abraham, but by God's fulfilling that great promise, that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed?" For that promise is what the apostle is speaking of: which shows, that God has appointed Christ to be the heir of the world in his kingdom of grace, and to possess and reign over all nations, through the propagation of his gospel, and the power of his Spirit communicating the blessings of it. God hath appointed him to this universal dominion by a most solemn oath; [Isa. xlv. 23](#). "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." (Compared with [Phil. ii. 10, 11](#).) Though the solemn oath of God the Father is to be understood in so comprehensive a sense, as to extend to what shall be accomplished at the day of judgment, yet it is evident by the foregoing and following verses, that the thing most directly intended, is what shall be fulfilled by spreading the gospel of his salvation, and the power of the Spirit of grace, bringing "all the ends of the earth to look to him that they may be saved," and come to him for "righteousness and strength, that in him they might be justified, and might glory."

God has suffered many earthly princes to extend their conquests over a great part of the face of the earth, and to possess a dominion of vast extent, and one monarchy to conquer and succeed another, the latter being still the greater; it is reasonable to suppose, that a much greater glory in this respect should be reserved for Christ, God's own Son and rightful heir, who has purchased the dominion by so great and hard a service: it is reasonable to suppose, that his dominion should be far the largest, and his conquests vastly the greatest and most extensive. And thus the Scriptures represent the matter, in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, and the prophet's interpretation, [Daniel ii](#). There are four great monarchies of the earth, one succeeding another, are represented by the great image of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay; but at last a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, smites the image upon his feet, which breaks the iron, clay, brass, silver and gold in pieces, that all become as the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carries them away, that no place is found for them; but the stone waxes great, becomes a great mountain, *and fills the whole earth*: signifying the kingdom which the Lord God of heaven should set up in the world, last of all, which should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Surely this representation leads us to suppose, that this last kingdom shall be of much greater extent than any of the preceding.

The like representation is made in the [7th chapter of Daniel](#); there the four monarchies are represented by four great beasts that arose successively, one conquering and subduing another; the fourth and last of these is said to be dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and to have great iron teeth, and to devour and break in pieces, and stamp the residue with his feet; yea, it is said, [ver. 23](#). that the kingdom represented by this beast shall devour the whole earth: but last of all, one like the Son of man appears, coming to the Ancient of days,

and being brought near before him, and receiving of him a dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, *that all people, nations, and languages* should serve him. This last circumstance, of the vast extent and universality of his dominion, is manifestly spoken of as one thing greatly distinguishing this holy kingdom from all the preceding monarchies. Although of one of the former it was said, that it should *devour the whole earth*, yet we are naturally led, both by the much greater emphasis and strength of the expressions, as well as by the whole connexion and tenor of the prophecy, to understand the universality here expressed in a much more extensive and absolute sense. And the terms used in the interpretation of this vision are such, that scarcely any can be devised more strong, to signify an absolute universality of dominion over the inhabitants of the face of the earth; [ver. 27](#). “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the most high God.” Agreeably to this, the gospel is represented as “preached unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people,” [Rev. xiv. 6](#).

The universal prevalence of true religion in the latter days, is sometimes expressed by its reaching to the “utmost ends of the earth,” ([Psal. ii. 8](#).) “To all the ends of the earth, and of the world, ([Psal. xxii. 27](#). [Psal. lxxvii. 7](#). [Psal. xcvi. 3](#). [Isa. xlv. 22](#).) “All the ends of the earth, with those that are far off upon the sea,” ([Psal. lxxv. 5](#).) “From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,” ([Psal. cxiii. 3](#). [Mal. i. 11](#).) “The outgoing of the morning and of the evening,” ([Psal. lxxv. 8](#).) It seems that all the most strong expressions, that were in use among the *Jews* to signify the habitable world in its utmost extent, are used to signify the extent of the church of God in the latter days. And in many places, a *variety* of these expressions is used, and there is an accumulation of them, expressed with great force.

It would be unreasonable to say, these are only bold *figures*, used after the manner of the *eastern* nations, to express the great extent of the Christian church, at and after the days of *Constantine*. To say so, would be in effect to say, that it would have been impossible for God, if he had desired it, plainly to have foretold any thing that should absolutely have extended to all nations of the earth. I question whether it be possible to find out a more strong expression, to signify an absolute universality of the knowledge of the true religion through the habitable world, than that in [Isa. xi. 9](#). “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, *as the waters cover the sea*.” Which is as much as to say, as there is no place in the vast ocean where there is not water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind where there is not the knowledge of the Lord; as there is no part of the wide bed or cavity possessed by the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the habitable world that shall not be covered by the light of the gospel, and possessed by the true religion. *Waters* are often in prophecy put for nations and multitudes of people. So the waters of the main ocean seem sometimes to be put for the inhabitants of the earth in general; as in Ezekiel’s vision of the waters of the sanctuary, ([Ezek. xlvii](#).) which flowed from the sanctuary, and

ran east, till they came to the ocean, and were at first a small stream, but continually increased till they became a great river; and when they came to the sea, the water even of the vast ocean was *healed*, (ver. 8.) representing the conversion of the world to the true religion in the latter days.

It seems evident, that the time will come, when there will not be one nation remaining in the world, which shall not embrace the true religion, in that God has expressly revealed, that no one such nation shall be left standing on the earth; Isa. lx. 12. “the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.” God has declared that heathen idolatry and all the worship of false gods shall be wholly abolished, in the most universal manner, so that it shall be continued in no place under the heavens, or upon the face of the earth; Jer. x. 11. “The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.” Ver. 15. “They are vanity, and the work of errors, in the time of their visitation they shall perish.” This must be understood as what shall be brought to pass while *this earth* and these *heaven* remain, *i. e.* before the end of the world. Agreeable to this is Isa. liv. 1, 2. “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation: spare not, lengthen thy cords, strengthen thy stakes.” Ver. 5. “For thy Maker is thy husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; *The God of the whole earth shall he be called.*”

The prophecies of the *New Testament* do no less evidently show, that a time will come when the gospel shall universally prevail, and the kingdom of Christ be extended over the whole habitable earth, in the most proper sense. Christ says, (John xii. 32.) “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” It is fit, that when the Son of God becomes man, he should have dominion over all mankind. It is fit, that since he became an inhabitant of the earth, and shed his blood on the earth, he should possess the whole earth. It is fit, seeing here he became a servant, and was subject to men, and was arraigned before them, and judged, condemned, and executed by them, and suffered ignominy and death in a most public manner, before *Jews* and *Gentiles* being *lifted up* to view on the cross upon a hill, near that populous city *Jerusalem*, at a most public time, when there were many hundred thousand spectators, from all parts that should be rewarded with an universal dominion over mankind; and it is here declared he shall be.

The apostle, in the Rom. xi. 11th of Romans, teaches us to look on that great outpouring of the Spirit, and ingathering of souls into Christ’s kingdom, in those days, first of the *Jews* and then of the *Gentiles*, to be but as the *first-fruits* of the intended harvest, both with regard to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as a sign that all should in due time be gathered in; ver. 16. “For if the *first-fruit* be holy, *the lump* is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” And in that context, the apostle speaks of the fulness of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as what shall



hereafter be brought in, distinctly from the ingathering from among both, in those primitive ages of Christianity. In [ver. 12.](#) we read of the *fulness of the Jews*, and in the 25th, of the *fulness of the Gentiles*. And in [ver. 30-32.](#) the apostle teaches us to look upon that infidelity and darkness, which first prevailed over all Gentile nations, before Christ came, and *afterwards* over the *Jews*, as what was wisely permitted for the manifestation of the glory of God's mercy, in due time, on the whole world, constituted of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." These things plainly show, that the time is coming when the *whole world* of mankind shall be brought into the church of Christ; the *fulness* of both, *the whole lump*, all the nation of the *Jews*, and all the world of *Gentiles*.

In the last great conflict between the church of Christ and her enemies, before the commencement of the glorious time of the church's peace and rest, *the kings of the earth, and the WHOLE WORLD*, are represented as *gathered together*, [Rev. xvi. 14.](#) And then *the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air*, which limits the kingdom of Satan, as god of this world; and that kingdom is represented as utterly overthrown, [ver. 17.](#), &c. In another description of that great battle, ([chap. xix.](#)) Christ is represented as riding forth, having on his head *many crowns*, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Which we may well suppose signifies, that he is now going to that conquest, whereby he shall set up a kingdom, in which he shall be *King of kings*, in a far more extensive manner than either *Babylonish, Persian, Grecian, or Roman* monarchs were. And in [ver. 17.](#), and following, *an angel appears standing in the sun*, that overlooks the whole world, calling on [Rev. xix. 17, 18.](#) "all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, to come and eat the flesh of kings," &c. And in consequence of the great victory Christ gains at that time, "an angel comes down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and lays hold on the devil, and binds him, and casts him into the bottomless pit, and shuts him up, and sets a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more."<sup>318</sup> "Satan being dispossessed of that highest monarchy on earth, the *Roman empire*, and cast out in the time of *Constantine* is represented ([chap. xii.](#)) by his being *cast down from heaven to the earth*, but now there is something far beyond that; he is *cast out of the earth*, and is shut up in *hell*, and confined to that alone, so that he has no place left him in this world of mankind, high or low.

Now will any be so unreasonable as to say, that all these things do not signify more than that one *third* part of the world should be brought into the church of Christ; beyond which it cannot be pretended that the Christian religion has ever yet reached, in its greatest extent? Those countries which belonged to the *Roman empire*, that were brought to the profession of Christianity after the reign of *Constantine*, are but a small part of what the habitable world

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318 [Rev. xx. 1-3.](#)

now is. As to extent of ground, they altogether bear, I suppose, no greater proportion to it, than the land of *Canaan* did to the *Roman* empire. And our Redeemer in his kingdom of grace has hitherto possessed but a little part of the world, in its most flourishing state, since arts are arisen to their greatest height; and a very great part of the world is but lately discovered, and much remains undiscovered to this day. These things make it very evident, that the *main fulfilment* of those prophecies, that speak of the glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom on *earth*, is still to come.

And as there has been nothing as yet, with regard to the flourishing of religion, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, of such *extent* as to answer the prophecies, so neither has there been any thing of that *duration* that is foretold. The prophecies speak of *Jerusalem* being made *the joy of the whole earth*, and also the *Joy of many generations*. ([Psal. xlviii. 2.](#) [Isa. lx. 15.](#) That "God's people should long enjoy the work of their hands," ([Isa. lxxv. 22.](#)) That they should "reign with Christ a thousand years," ([Rev. xx.](#)) by which we must at least understand a very long time. But it would be endless to mention all the places, which signify that the time of the church's great peace and prosperity should be of long continuance. Almost all the prophecies, that speak of her latter-day glory, imply it; and it is implied in very many of them, that when once this day of the church's advancement and peace is begun, it shall never end till the world ends; or, at least, that there shall be no more a return of her troubles and adversity for any considerable continuance. Then "the days of her mourning shall be ended;" her tribulations "be as the waters of *Noah*, unto God, that as he has sworn that the waters of *Noah* should no more pass over the earth, so he will swear that he will no more be wroth with his people, or rebuke them." It is implied that "God's people should no more walk after the imagination of their evil hearts; *that* God would hide himself no more from the house of *Israel*; because he has poured out his Spirit upon them; *that* their sun should no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itself; *that* the light should not be clear and dark," (*i. e.* there should be no more an interchange of light and darkness, as used to be,) but that it *should be all one continued day; not day and night* (for so the words are in the original in [Zech. xiv. 7.](#)) alternately, "but it shall come to pass, that at evening time (*i. e.* at the time that night and darkness used to be) it shall be light; *and that* the nations should beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and that nation should not lift up sword against nation, nor learn war any more; *but that there* should be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

But the church of Christ has never yet enjoyed a state of peace and prosperity for any *long* time; on the contrary, the time for her rest, and of the flourishing state of religion, have ever been very *short*. Hitherto the church may say, (as in [Isa. lxxiii. 17, 18.](#)) "Return, for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance; the people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while." The quietness that the church of God enjoyed after the beginning of *Constantine's* reign, was very short. The peace the empire enjoyed, in freedom from war,

was not more than twenty years; no longer nor greater than it had enjoyed under some of the heathen emperors. After this the empire was rent in pieces by intestine wars, and wasted almost every where by the invasions and incursions of barbarous nations; and the Christian world, soon after, was all in contention and confusion, by heresies and divisions in matters of religion. And the church of Christ has never as yet been, for any long time, free from persecution; especially when truth has prevailed, and true religion flourished. It is manifest, that hitherto the people of God have been kept under, and *Zion* has been in a low afflicted state, and her enemies have had the chief sway.

Another thing which makes it exceedingly manifest, that the day of the church's greatest advancement on earth, which is foretold in Scripture, has never yet come, is, that it is so plainly and expressly revealed, this day shall succeed the *last* of the four monarchies, even the *Roman*, in its *last* state, wherein it is divided into *ten kingdoms*, and after the destruction of *antichrist*, signified by the *little horn*, whose reign is contemporary with the reign of the ten kings. These things are very plain in the [2d and 7th chapters of Daniel](#), and also in the *Revelation of St. John*. And it is also plain by the [9th chapter of Romans](#). that it shall be after the national conversion of the *Jews*, *which shall be as life from the dead to the Gentiles*, and *the fulness of both Jews and Gentiles shall be come in*, all the nation of the *Jews*, and all other nations, shall *obtain mercy*, and there shall be that general ingathering of the *harvest* of the whole earth, of which all that had been converted before, either of *Jews* or *Gentiles*, were but the *first fruits*. Thus it is meet, that the *last kingdom* which shall take place on *earth*, should be the kingdom of God's own *Son* and *heir*, whose right it is to rule and reign; and that whatever revolutions and confusions there may be in the world, for a long time, the cause of truth, the righteous cause, shall finally prevail, and God's holy people should at last *inherit the earth*, and *reign on earth*; and that the world should continue in tumults and great revolutions, following one another, from age to age, the world being as it were in *travail*, till truth and holiness are brought forth. It is meet, that all things should be *shaken*, till that comes which is true and right, and agreeable to the mind of God, which *cannot be shaken*; and that the wisdom of the Ruler of the world should be manifested in bringing all things ultimately to so good an issue. The world is made for the Son of God; his kingdom is the end of all changes, that come to pass in the state of the world. All are only to prepare the way for this; it is fit, therefore, that the last kingdom on earth should be his. It is wisely and mercifully ordered of God, that it should be so, on this account, as well as many others, *viz.* That the church of God, under all preceding changes, should have this consideration to encourage her, and maintain her hope, and animate her faith and prayers, from generation to generation, that God has promised, her cause should finally be maintained and prevail in the world.

## SECT. II.

The latter-day glory unspeakably great,

The future promised advancement of the kingdom of Christ is an event unspeakably happy and glorious. The Scriptures speak of it as a time wherein God and his Son Jesus Christ will be most eminently glorified on earth; a time, wherein God, who till then had *dwelt between the cherubims* and concealed himself in the holy of holies, in the secret of his tabernacle, behind the *veil*, in the thick darkness should openly *shine forth, and all flesh should see his glory*, and God's people in *general* have as great a privilege as the *High Priest* alone had once a year, or as Moses had in the mount. A time this, wherein the "temple of God in heaven should be opened, and there should be seen the ark of his testament;" (Rev. xi. 19.) a time, wherein both God will be greatly glorified, and his saints made unspeakably happy in the view of his glory; a time, wherein God's people should not only *once* see the light of God's glory, as Moses, or see it *once a year* with the high priest, but should  *dwell and walk continually* in it, and it should be their constant daily light, instead of the light of the sun; (Isa. ii. 5. Psal. lxxxix. 15. Isa. lx. 19.) which light should be so much more glorious than the light of the sun or moon, that "the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts should reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before his ancients gloriously;" (Isa. xxiv. 23.)

It is represented as a time of vast increase of *knowledge* and *understanding*, especially in divine things; a time wherein God would "destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil spread over all nations;" (Isa. xxv. 7.) wherein "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold," (Isa. xxx. 26.) "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge," (Isa. xxxii. 3, 4.) "And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, because they shall all know him from the least to the greatest, (Jer. xxxi. 34.) It is declared to be a time of general *holiness*, (Isa. lx. 30.)<sup>319</sup> "Thy people shall be all righteous." A time of prevailing *eminent* holiness, when little *children* shall, in spiritual attainments, be as though they were *a hundred years old*, (Isa. lxxv. 20.) wherein "he that is feeble among God's people shall be as David," (Zech. xii. 8.) A time wherein holiness should be as it were *inscribed on every thing*, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life, all shall be dedicated to God, and improved to holy purposes. (Isa. xxiii. 18.) "Her merchandise and hire shall be holiness to the Lord." (Zech. xiv. 20, 21.) "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, *holiness unto the Lord*; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts."

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319 Isa. lx. 21.

A time shall come wherein religion and true Christianity shall in every respect be *uppermost* in the world; wherein God will cause his church to “arise and shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, and sit down on a throne; and the poor shall be raised from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, and shall be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of God’s glory;” a time wherein vital piety shall take possession of thrones and palaces, and those that are in most exalted stations shall be eminent in holiness, (Isa. xlix. 23.) “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” (Chap. lx. 16.) “Thou shalt suck the breasts of kings.” (Isa. xiv. 12.) “The daughter of Tyre shall lie there with a gift, the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.” A time of wonderful *union*, and the most universal peace, love, and sweet harmony; wherein the nations shall “beat their swords into plow-shares,” &c. and God will “cause wars to cease to the ends of the earth, and break the bow, and cut the spear in sunder, and burn the chariot in the fire; and the mountains shall bring forth peace to God’s people, and the little hills by righteousness; wherein the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c. and wherein God’s people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and quiet resting places;” (Isa. xxxii. 17, 18. and Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21.)

A time shall come wherein all *heresies* and false doctrine shall be exploded, and the church of God shall not be rent with a variety of jarring opinions, (Zech. xiv. 9.) “The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.” All superstitious ways of worship shall be abolished, and all agree in worshipping God in his own appointed way, and agreeably to the purity of his institutions; (Jer. xxxii. 39.) “I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them.” A time wherein the whole earth shall be united as one holy city, one heavenly family, men of all nations shall as it were dwell together, and sweetly correspond one with another, as brethren and children of the same father; as the prophecies often speak of God’s people at that time as the children of God, and brethren one to another, all “appointing over them one head,” gathered to one “house of God, to worship the King, the Lord of hosts.”

A time approaches wherein this whole great society shall appear in glorious beauty, in genuine amiable Christianity and excellent order, as “a city compact together, the perfection of beauty, an eternal excellency,” shining with a reflection of the glory of Jehovah risen upon it, which shall be attractive and ravishing to all kings and nations, and it shall appear “as a bride adorned for her husband.” A time of great temporal prosperity; of great health; (Isa. xxxiii. 24.) “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick” of long life; (Isa. Iv. 22.) “As the days of a tree, are the days of my people.” A time wherein the earth shall be abundantly fruitful; (Psal. lxxvii. Isa. vi. 23, 24. Amos ix. 16. and many other places.) A time wherein the world shall be delivered from that multitude of sore calamities which before had prevailed, (Ezek. xlvi. 20.) and there shall be an universal blessing of God upon mankind, in soul and body,

and in all their concerns, and all manner of tokens of God's presence and favour, and "God shall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, and the mountains shall as it were drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk;" (Joel iii. 18.)

A time of great and universal joy, we are taught to expect, will take place through all the earth, when "from the utmost ends of the earth shall be heard songs, even glory to the righteous," and God's people "shall with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation." God shall "prepare in his holy mountain a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," which feast is represented, Rev. xix. as *the marriage supper of the Lamb*. Yea, the Scriptures represent it not only as a time of universal joy on earth, but extraordinary joy in heaven, among the angels and saints, the holy apostles and prophets there; (Rev. xviii. 20. and Rev. xix. 1-9.) Yea, the Scriptures represent it as a time of extraordinary rejoicing with Christ himself, the glorious head, in whom all things in heaven and earth shall then be gathered together in one; (Zech. iii. 17.) "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." And the very fields, trees, and mountains shall then as it were rejoice, and break forth into singing; (Isa. Iv. 12.) "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." (Isa. xlv. 23.) "Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."

Such being the state of things in this future promised glorious day of the church's prosperity, surely it is worth *praying* for. Nor is there any one thing whatsoever, if we viewed things aright, for which a regard to the glory of God, a concern for the kingdom and honour of our Redeemer, a love to his people, pity to perishing sinners love to our fellow-creatures in general, compassion to mankind under their various and sore calamities and miseries, a desire of their temporal and spiritual prosperity, love to our country, our neighbours, and friends, yea, and to our own souls would dispose us to be so much in prayer, as for the dawning of this happy day, and the accomplishment of this glorious event.

### SECT. III.

How much Christ prayed and laboured and suffered, in order to the glory and happiness of that day.

the sum of the blessings Christ sought, by what he did and suffered in the work of redemption, was the *Holy Spirit*. Thus is the affair of our redemption constituted; *the Father* provides and gives the Redeemer, and the price of redemption is offered to him, and he grants the benefit purchased; *the Son* is the Redeemer who gives the price, and also is the price offered; and the *Holy Spirit* is the grand blessing obtained by the price offered, and bestowed on the redeemed. The Holy Spirit, in his indwelling presence, his influences and

fruits, is the sum of all grace, holiness, comfort, and joy; or, in one word, of all the spiritual good Christ *purchased* for men in this world: and is also the sum of all perfection, glory, and eternal joy, that he purchased for them in another world. The Holy Spirit is the subject matter of the promises, both of the eternal covenant of redemption, and also of the covenant of grace. This is the grand subject of the *promises* of the Old Testament, so often recorded in the *prophecies* of Messiah's kingdom; and the chief subject of the promises of the New Testament; and particularly of the covenant of grace delivered by Jesus Christ to his disciples, as his last will and testament, in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John; the grand legacy that he bequeathed to them, in his last and dying discourse with them. Therefore the Holy Spirit is so often called the *Spirit of promise*, and emphatically, *the promise, the promise of the Father, &c.*<sup>320</sup>

This being the great blessing Christ purchased by his labours and sufferings on earth, it was that which he *received of the Father* when he ascended into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, that he might communicate it to those whom he had redeemed. [John xvi. 7.](#) "It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." [Acts ii. 33.](#) "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." This is the sum of those *gifts*, which Christ *received for men, even for the rebellious*, at his ascension; and of the *benefits* Christ obtains for men by his *intercession*; [John xiv. 16, 17.](#) "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth." Herein consists Christ's communicative *fulness*, even in his being full of the Spirit; and so full of grace and truth, that we might of *this fulness receive, and grace for grace*. He is *anointed with the Holy Ghost*, and this is *the ointment that goes down from the head to the members*. "God gives the Spirit not by measure unto him, that every member might receive according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This therefore was the great blessing he prayed for in that wonderful *prayer* which he uttered for his disciples and all his future church, the evening before he died, [John xvii.](#) The blessing he prayed for to the Father, in behalf of his disciples, was the same he had insisted on in his preceding discourse with them; and this, doubtless, was the blessing he prayed for, when, as our High Priest, he *offered up strong crying and tears*, with his blood, [Heb. v. 6, 7.](#) As for this he shed his blood, for this he also shed tears, and poured out prayers.

But of all the time we have been speaking of, this is the *chief season* for the bestowment of this blessing; the *main season* of success to all that Christ did and suffered in the work of our redemption. Before this, the Spirit of God is given but very sparingly, and but few are

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320 [Luke xxiv. 49.](#) [Acts i. 4.](#) and [Acts. ii. 33, 39.](#) [Gal. iii. 14.](#) [Eph. i. 13.](#) and [Eph. iii. 6.](#)

saved; but *then* it will be far otherwise; wickedness shall be rare then, as virtue and piety had been before: and undoubtedly, by far the greatest number of them that ever receive the benefits of Christ's redemption, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, will receive it in that time.<sup>321</sup>

This time is represented in Scripture, as the *proper appointed* season of Christ's *salvation*; eminently the elect season, *the accepted time*, and *day of salvation*.<sup>322</sup> "The year of Christ's redeemed," *Isa. lxiii. 4*. This period is spoken of as the proper time of the Redeemer's *dominion*, and the reign of his redeeming love, in the *2d and 7th chapters of Daniel*., and many other places; the proper time of his *harvest*, or ingathering of his fruits from this fallen world; the appointed day of his triumph over *Satan*, the great destroyer; and the appointed day of his *marriage* with his elect spouse, (*Rev. xix. 7.*) The time given to the *Sun of righteousness* to rule, as the day is the time God has appointed for the natural sun to bear rule. Therefore the bringing on of this time is called "Christ's coming in his kingdom;" wherein



321 The number of the inhabitants of the earth will doubtless then be vastly multiplied; and the number of redeemed ones much more. If we should suppose that glorious day to last no more than literally a thousand years, and that at the beginning of that thousand years the world of mankind should be but just as numerous as it is now, and that the number should be doubled, during that time of great health and peace and the universal blessing of heaven, once only in a hundred years, the number at the end of a thousand years would be more than n thousand times greater than it is now; and if it should be doubled once in fifty years, (which probably the number of the inhabitants of New England has ordinarily been, in about half that time.) then at the end of the thousand years, there would be more than a million inhabitants on the face of the earth, where there is one now. And there is reason to think that through the greater part of this period, at least, the number of saints will, in their increase, bear a proportion to the increase of the number of inhabitants. And it must be considered, that if the number of mankind at the beginning of this period be no more than equal to the present number, yet we may doubtless conclude, that the number of true saints will be immensely greater; when instead of the few true and thorough Christians now in some few countries, every nation on the face of the whole earth shall be converted to Christianity, and every country shall be full of true Christians; so that the successive multiplication of true saints through the thousand years, will begin with that vast advantage, beyond the multiplication of mankind; where the latter is begun from units, the other doubtless will begin with hundreds, if not thousands. How much greater then will be the number of true converts, that will be brought to a participation of the benefits of Christ's redemption, during that period, than in all other times put together! I think, the foregoing things considered, we shall be very moderate in our conjectures, if we say, it is probable that there will be a hundred thousand times more, that will actually be redeemed to God by Christ's blood, during that period of the church's prosperity, than ever had been before, from the beginning of the world to that time.

322 *Isa. xlix. 8.* and so on to *Isa. xlix. 23.ver. 23.* and *Isa. lix. 2. chap. lxi. 2.* taken with the context in that and the preceding and following chapters.



“he will rend the heavens and come down, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise,” (Mal. iv. 2. and Isa. lx. 1.

The comparatively *little* saving good there is in the world, as the fruit of Christ’s redemption, before that time, is as it were granted by way of *anticipation*; as we anticipate something of the sun’s light by reflection before the proper time of the sun’s rule; and as the first-fruits are gathered before the *harvest*. Then more especially will be the fulfilment of those great promises, made by God the Father to the Son, for his pouring out his soul unto death; (Isa. liii. 10-12.) then “shall he see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand;” then “shall he see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, and shall justify many by his knowledge;” then “will God divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;” then shall Christ in an eminent manner obtain his chosen spouse, that “he loved and died for, that he might sanctify and cleanse her, with the washing of water, by the word, and present her to himself, a glorious church.” He will obtain “the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame,” chiefly in the events and consequences of that day: that day, as was observed before, which is often represented as eminently the time of the “rejoicing of the bridegroom.” The foreknowledge and consideration of it was what supported him, and that in which his soul exulted, at a time when it had been troubled at the view of his approaching sufferings; as may be seen in John xii. 23, 24, 27, 31, 32.

Now therefore, if this is what *Jesus Christ*, our great Redeemer and the head of the church, did so much desire, and set his heart upon, from all eternity, and for which he did and suffered so much, offering up *strong crying and team*, and *his precious blood*, to obtain it; surely his disciples and members should also earnestly seek it, and be much in prayer for it.

#### SECT. IV.

The whole creation travails in pain.

the *whole, creation* is, as it were, *earnestly waiting* for that day, and constantly *groaning and travailing in pain* to bring forth the felicity and glory of it. For that day is above all other times, excepting the day of judgment, the day of *the manifestation of the sons of God*, and of their *glorious liberty*: and therefore, that elegant representation the apostle makes of the earnest expectation and travail of the creation, in Rom. viii. 19-22. is applicable to the glorious event of this day; “the earnest, expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” The visible world has now for many ages been subject to *sin*, and made, as it were, a servant

to it, through the abuse that man, who has the dominion over the creatures, puts the creatures to. Thus the sun is a sort of servant to all manner of wickedness, as its light, and other beneficial influences, are abused by men, and made subservient to their lusts and sinful purposes. So of the rain, the fruits of the earth, the brute animals, and all other parts of the visible creation; they all serve men's corruption, and obey their sinful will. And God doth, in a sort, subject them to it; for he continues his influence and power to make them obedient, according to the same law of nature, whereby they yield to men's command when used to good purposes.

It is by the immediate influence of God upon things according to those constant methods which we call the laws of nature, that they are ever obedient to man's will, or that we can use them at all. This influence God continues in order to make them obedient to man's will, though wicked. This is a sure sign, that the present state of things is not lasting; it is confusion; and God would not suffer it to be, but that he designs in a little time to put an end to it. Seeing it is to be but a little while, God chooses rather to subject the creature to man's wickedness, than to disturb and interrupt the course of nature according to its stated laws: but it is, as it were, a force upon the creature; for the creature is abused in it, perverted to far meaner purposes, than those for which the author of its nature made and adapted it. The creature therefore is unwillingly subject; and but for a short time; and, as it were, hopes for an alteration. It is a bondage which the creature is subject to, from which it was partly delivered when Christ came, and when the gospel was promulgated in the world; and will be more fully delivered at the commencement of the glorious day we are speaking of, and perfectly at the day of judgment. This agrees with the context; for the apostle was speaking of the present suffering state of the church. The reason why the church in this world is in a suffering state, is, that the world is subject to the sin and corruption of mankind. By *vanity and corruption* in Scripture, is very commonly meant sin, or wickedness; as might be shown in very many places, would my intended brevity allow.

Though the creature is thus subject to vanity, yet does not it rest in this subjection, but is constantly acting and exerting itself, in order to that glorious liberty that God has appointed at the time we are speaking of, and, as it were, reaching forth towards it. All the changes brought to pass in the world, from age to age, are ordered by infinite wisdom, in one respect or other to prepare the way for that glorious issue of things, when truth and righteousness shall finally prevail, and he, whose right it is, shall take the kingdom. All the creatures, in all their operations and motions, continually tend to this. As in a clock, all the motions of the whole system of wheels and movements, tend to the striking of the hammer at the appointed time. All the revolutions and restless motions of the sun and other heavenly bodies,

from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, are continually tending thither; as all the many turnings of the winds of a chariot, in a journey, tend to the appointed journey's end. The mighty struggles and conflicts of nations, those vast successive changes which are brought to pass in the kingdoms and empires of the world, from one age to another, are, as it were, travail-pangs of the creation, in order to bring forth this glorious event. And the Scriptures represent the last struggles and changes that shall immediately precede this event, as being the greatest of all; as the last pangs of a woman in travail are the most violent.

The creature thus earnestly expecting this glorious manifestation and liberty of the children of God, and travailing in pain in order to it, the Scriptures, by a like figure, very often show, that when this shall be accomplished, the whole inanimate creation shall greatly rejoice: "That the heavens shall sing, the earth be glad, the mountains break forth into singing, the hills be joyful together, the trees clap their hands, the lower parts of the earth shout, the sea roar and the fulness thereof, and the floods clap their hands."<sup>323</sup>

All the intelligent elect creation, all God's holy creatures in heaven and earth, are truly and properly waiting for, and earnestly expecting, that event. It is abundantly represented in Scripture as the spirit and character of all true saints, that they set their hearts upon, love, long, wait, and pray for the promised glory of that day; they are spoken of as those that "prefer Jerusalem to their chief joy," (Ps. cxxxvii. 6.) "That take pleasure in the stones of Zion, and favour the dust thereof," (Ps. cii. 13, 14.) "That wait for the consolation of Israel," (Luke ii. 25. and ver. 38.) It is the language of the church of God, and the breathing of every true saint, (Ps. xiv. 7.) "O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." And Cant. ii. 17. "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel." And chap. viii. 14. "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices." Agreeable to this was the spirit of old Jacob, which he expressed when he was dying, exercising faith in the great promise made to him, and Isaac, and Abraham, that "in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," Gen. xlix. 18. "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." The same is represented as the spirit of his true children, or the family of Jacob, Isa. viii. 17. "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth himself from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." "They that love Christ's appearing," is a name that the apostle gives to true Christians, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

The glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world the saints and angels there, who rejoice when one sinner repents are earnestly waiting, in an assured and joyful dependence on God's promises of that conversion of the world and marriage of the Lamb, which shall take place when that glorious day comes: and therefore they are represented as all with one accord

323 See Isa. xlv. 23. Isa. xlix. 13. Psal. lxxix. 34. 35. Psal. xcvi. 11, 12. and Psal. xcvi. 7, 8.

rejoicing, and praising God with such mighty exultation and triumph, when it is accomplished, [Rev. xix.](#)

## SECT. V.

Precepts, encouragements, and examples.

the word of God is full of *precepts, encouragements, and examples*, tending to excite and induce the people of God to be much in *prayer* for this mercy. The Spirit of God is the *chief* of blessings, for it is the *sum* of all spiritual blessings; which we need infinitely more than others, and wherein our true and eternal happiness consists. That which is the sum of the blessings Christ purchased, is the sum of the blessings Christians have to pray for; but that, as was observed before, is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the disciples came to Christ, desiring him to teach them to pray, ([Luke xi.](#)) and he accordingly gave them particular directions for the performance of this duty; he adds, [ver. 13.](#) “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” From which words of Christ, we may also observe, that there is no blessing we have so great encouragement to pray for, as the Spirit of God. The words imply, that our heavenly Father is especially ready to bestow his Holy Spirit on them that ask him. The more excellent the nature of any benefit is, which we stand in need of, the more ready God is to bestow it, in answer to prayer. The infinite goodness of God’s nature is the more gratified, the grand design of our redemption is the better answered, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, has the greater success in his undertaking and labours; and those desires which are expressed in prayer for the most excellent blessings, are the most excellent desires, and consequently such as God most approves of, and is most ready to gratify.

The Scriptures do not only direct and encourage us, in general, to pray for the Holy Spirit above all things else; but it is the expressly revealed will of God, that his church should be *very much* in prayer for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit, which is to be in the latter days, and for what shall be accomplished by it. God, speaking of that blessed event, [Ezek. xxxvi.](#) under the figure of “cleansing the house of Israel from all their iniquities, planting and building their waste and ruined places, and making them to become like the garden of Eden, and filling them with men like a flock, like the holy flock, the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts,” <sup>324</sup> he says, [ver. 37.](#) “Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” Which doubtless implies it is the will of God, that extraordinary prayerfulness in his people for this mercy should precede the bestowment of it.

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324 In this passage the prophet doubtless has respect to the same glorious restoration and advancement of his church that is spoken of in the next chapter, and in all the following chapters to the end of the book.

I know of no place in the Bible, where so strange an expression is made use of to signify *importunity in prayer*, as is used in [Isa. lxii. 6, 7.](#) where the people of God are called upon to be importunate for this mercy: “Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” How strong is the phrase! And how loud is this call to the church of God, to be fervent and incessant in their cries to him for this great mercy! How wonderful the words used, concerning the manner in which such worms of the dust should address the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity! And what encouragement is here, to approach the mercy-seat with the greatest freedom, humble boldness, earnestness, constancy, and full assurance of faith, to seek of God this greatest favour that can be sought in Christian prayer!

It is a just observation of a certain eminent minister of the church of Scotland, in a discourse lately published on *social prayer*, in which, speaking of pleading for the success of the gospel, as required by the *Lord's prayer*, he says, “That notwithstanding of its being so compendious, yet the one half of it, that is, three petitions in six, and these the first prescribed, do all relate to this great case: so that to put any one of these petitions apart, or all of them together, is upon the matter, to pray that the dispensation of the gospel may be blessed with divine power.” That glorious day is the proper and appointed time, above all others, for bringing to pass the things requested in each of these petitions. The prophecies every where represent *that* as the time, which God has especially appointed for glorifying his own great name in this world, causing “his glory to be revealed, that all flesh may see it together,” causing it “openly to be manifested in the sight of the heathen,” filling the whole world with the light of his glory to such a degree, that “the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed” before that brighter glory; the appointed time for glorifying and magnifying the name of Jesus Christ, causing “every knee to bow and every tongue to confess to him.” This is the proper time of *God's kingdom coming*, or of *Christ coming in his kingdom*: that is, the very time foretold in the [Dan. ii. 2d](#) of Daniel, when the *Lord God of heaven shall set up a kingdom*, in the latter times of the last monarchy, when it is divided into ten kingdoms.

And that is the very time foretold in the [Dan. vii. 7th](#) of Daniel, when there should be “given to one like the Son of man, dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve them; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall he given to the people of the saints of the most high God,” after the destruction of the *little horn*, that should continue *for a time, times, and the dividing of time*. And that is the time wherein “God's will shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven;” when *heaven* shall, as it were, be *bowed*, and *come down* to the earth, as “God's people shall be all righteous, *and* holiness to the Lord shall be written on the bells of the horses,” &c. So that the three first petitions of the Lord's prayer are, in effect, no other than requests for bringing on this glorious day. And as the Lord's prayer begins with asking for this, in the three first petitions, so it concludes with it in these words, “For thine

is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” Which words imply a request, that God would take to himself his great power, and reign, and manifest his power and glory in the world. Thus Christ teaches us, that it becomes his disciples to seek this above all other things, and make it the first and the last in their prayers, and that every petition should be put up in subordination to the advancement of God’s kingdom and glory in the world.

Besides what has been observed of the Lord’s prayer, if we look through the whole Bible, and observe all the *examples* of prayer that we find there recorded, we shall not find so many prayers for any other mercy, as for the deliverance, restoration, and prosperity of the *church*, and the advancement of *God’s glory* and *kingdom of grace* in the world. If we well consider the prayers recorded in the book of *Psalms*, I believe we shall see reason to think, that a very great, if not the greater, part of them, are prayers uttered, either in the name of *Christ*, or in the name of the *church*, for such a mercy: and, undoubtedly, the greatest part of the book of *Psalms* is made up of prayers for this mercy, prophecies of it, and prophetic praises for it.<sup>325</sup>

In order to Christ being mystically born, in the advancement of true religion, and the great increase of true converts, who are spoken of as having *Christ formed in them*, the Scriptures represent it as requisite, that the *church* should first be “in travail, crying in pain to be delivered;” *Rev. xii. 1, 2, 5*. And we have good reason to understand by it her exercising strong desires, wrestling and agonizing with God in *prayer*, for this event; because we find such figures of speech used in this sense elsewhere: so *Gal. iv. 19*. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you.” *Isa. xxvi. 16, 17*. “Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.” And certainly it is fit, that the *church* of God should be in travail for that, for which the whole *creation* travails in pain.

The Scripture does not only abundantly manifest it to be the duty of God’s people to be much in prayer for this great mercy, but it also abounds with manifold considerations to *encourage* them in it, and animate them with hopes of *success*. There is perhaps no one thing that the Bible so much promises, in order to encourage the faith, hope, and prayers of the saints, as this; which affords to God’s people the clearest evidences that it is their *duty* to be much in prayer for this mercy. For, undoubtedly, that which God abundantly makes

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325 The prophets, in their prophecies of the restoration and advancement of the church, very often speak of it as what shall be done in answer to the prayers of God’s people. *Isa. xxv. 9. Isa. xxvi. 9, 12, 13, 16, 17*, to the end. Chap. *Isa. xxxiii. 2. Psal. cii. 13-22. Jer. iii. 21. Isa. lxxv. 24. Isa. xli. 17. Hos. v. 15. with vi. 1, 2, 3. and Hos. xiv. 2*, to the end. *Zech. x. 6. Zech. xii. 10. and Zech. xiii. 9. Isa. lv. 6. with ver. 12, 13. Jer. xxxiii. 3*. The prophecies of future glorious times of the church are often introduced with a prayer of the church for her deliverance and advancement, prophetically uttered: as in *Isa. li. 9, &c. Chap. Isa. lxiii. 11*, to the end, and *Isa. lxiv.* throughout.

the subject of his promises, God's people should abundantly make the subject of their *prayers*. It also affords them the strongest assurances that their prayers shall be *successful*. With what confidence may we go before God, and pray for that, of which we have so many exceeding precious and glorious promises to plead! The *very first* promise of God to fallen man, ([Gen. iii. 15.](#)) *It shall bruise thy head*, is to have its chief fulfilment at *that day*. And the whole Bible *concludes* with a promise of the glory of *that day*, and a prayer for its fulfilment. [Rev. xxii. 20.](#) "He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The Scripture gives us great reason to think, that when once there comes to appear much of a *spirit of prayer* in the church of God for this mercy, then it will soon be accomplished. It is evidently with reference to this mercy, that God makes the promise in [Isa. xli. 17-19.](#) "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of *Israel*, will not forsake them; I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water; I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together." *Spiritual waters* and *rivers* are explained by the apostle John, to be the *Holy Spirit*, ([John vii. 37-39.](#)) It is now a time of scarcity of these spiritual waters; there are, as it were, *none*. If God's people, in this time of great drought, were but made duly sensible of this calamity, and their own emptiness and necessity, and brought earnestly to *thirst* and *cry* for needed supplies, God would, doubtless, soon fulfil this blessed promise. We have another promise much like this, in [Psal. cii. 16, 17.](#) "When the Lord shall build up *Zion*, he shall appear in his glory; he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." And remarkable are the words that follow in the next verse, "This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord." Which seems to signify, that this promise shall be left on record to encourage some *future generation* of God's people to pray and cry earnestly for this mercy, to whom he would *fulfil* the promise, and thereby give them, and great multitudes of others who should be converted through their prayers, occasion to *praise* his name.

Who knows but that the generation here spoken of, may be this *present* generation? *One* thing mentioned in the character of that future generation, is certainly true concerning the present, *viz.* That it is *destitute*. The church of God is in very low, sorrowful, and needy circumstances; and if the *next* thing there supposed, were also verified in us, *viz.* That we were made *sensible* of our great calamity, and brought to *cry earnestly* to God for help, I am persuaded the *third* would be also verified, *viz.* That our *prayers* would be turned into joyful *praise*, for God's gracious answers of them. It is spoken of as a sign and evidence, that *the time to favour Zion is come*, when God's *servants* are brought by their prayerfulness for her restoration, in an eminent manner, to show that *they favour her stones and dust*; ([ver. 13,](#)

14.) “Thou shall arise, and have mercy upon *Zion*; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come; for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.”

God has *respect* to the *prayers* of his saints in all his *government* of the *world*; as we may observe by the representation made [Rev. viii.](#) at the beginning. There we read of *seven angels* standing before the throne of God, and receiving of him *seven trumpets*, at the sounding of which, great and mighty changes were to be brought to pass in the world, through many successive ages. But when these angels had received their trumpets, they must stand still, and all must be in silence, not one of them must be allowed to *sound*, till the *prayers of the saints* are attended to. The angel of the covenant, as a glorious high priest, comes and stands at the altar, with much incense, to offer with the *prayers of all saints* upon the golden altar, before the throne; and the smoke of the incense, with the *prayers of the saints*, ascends up with acceptance before God, out of the angel’s hand: and *then* the angels prepare themselves to sound. And God, in the events of every trumpet, remembers those *prayers*: as appears at last, by the great and glorious things he accomplishes for his church, in the issue of all, in *answer* to these prayers, in the event of the *last trumpet*, which brings the glory of the *latter*

*days*, when these prayers shall be turned into *joyful praises*. [Rev. xi. 15-17.](#) “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art and wast and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” Since it is the pleasure of God so to honour his people, as to carry on all the designs of his kingdom in this way, *viz.* By the prayers of his saints; this gives us great reason to think, that whenever the time comes that God gives an extraordinary spirit of prayer for the promised advancement of his kingdom on earth which is God’s great aim in all preceding providences, and the main thing that the spirit of prayer in the saints aims at then the fulfilment of this event is nigh.

God, in wonderful grace, is pleased to represent himself, as it were, *at the command* of his people with regard to mercies of this nature, so as to be ready to bestow them whenever they shall earnestly pray for them; [Isa. xlv. 11.](#) “Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me.” What God is speaking of, in this context, is the restoration of his church; not only a restoration from temporal calamity and an outward captivity, by *Cyrus*; but also a spiritual restoration and advancement, by God’s commanding the heavens to “drop down from above, and the skies to pour down righteousness, and causing the earth to open and bring forth salvation, and righteousness to spring up together,” [ver. 8.](#) God would have his people ask of him, or inquire of him by earnest prayer, to do this for them;



and manifests himself as being at the command of earnest prayers for such a mercy: and a reason why God is so ready to hear such prayers is couched in the words, *viz.* Because it is prayer for his own church, his chosen and beloved people, “his sons and daughters, and the work of his hands;” and he cannot deny any thing that is asked for their comfort and prosperity.

God speaks of himself as standing ready to be *gracious* to his church, and to appear for its restoration, and only *waiting* for such an opportunity to bestow this mercy, when he shall hear the cries of his people for it, that he may bestow it in answer to their prayers. [Isa. xxx. 18, 19.](#) “Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious to thee: and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem. Thou shalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.” The words imply, that when God once sees his people much engaged in praying for this mercy, it shall be no longer delayed. Christ desires to “hear the voice of his spouse, who is in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs;” <sup>326</sup> in a low and obscure state, driven into secret corners; he only waits for this, in order to put an end to her state of affliction, and cause “the day to break, and the shadows to flee away.” If he once heard her voice in earnest prayer, he would come swiftly over the *mountains of separation* between him and her, *as a roe, or young hart;* ([Sol. Song ii. 14.](#) &c.)

When his church is in a low state, and oppressed by her enemies, and cries to him, he will swiftly fly to her relief, *as birds fly* at the cry of their young; ([Isa. xxxi. 5.](#)) Yea, when that glorious day comes, “before they call, he will answer them, and while they are yet speaking, he will hear;” and in answer to their prayers, he will make “the wolf and the lamb feed together,” &c. ([Isa. lxv. 24, 25.](#)) When the spouse prays for the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the coming of Christ, by granting the tokens of his spiritual presence in the church, ([Cant. iv. 16.](#)) “Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out; let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits;” there seems to be an immediate answer to her prayer, in the next words, in “I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” <sup>327</sup>

Scripture instances and examples of *success* in prayer give great encouragement to pray for this mercy. Most of the remarkable deliverances and restorations of the church of God, mentioned in the Scriptures, were in answer to prayer. For instance, the redemption of the

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326 [Sol. Song ii. 14.](#)

327 [Cant. v. 1.](#)

church of God from the *Egyptian* bondage.<sup>328</sup> It was in answer to prayer, that the sun stood still over *Gibeon*, and the moon in the valley of *Aijalon*, and God's people obtained that great victory over their enemies; in which wonderful miracle, God seemed to have some respect to a future more glorious event to be accomplished for the Christian church, in the day of her victory over her enemies, in the latter days; even that event foretold, *Isa. xl. 20.* "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself."

It was in answer to prayer, that God delivered his church from the mighty hosts of the *Assyrians*, in Hezekiah's time; which dispensation is a type of the great things God will do for the Christian church in the latter days. The restoration of the church of God from the *Babylonish* captivity, as abundantly appears both by scripture prophecies, and histories, was in answer to extraordinary prayer.<sup>329</sup> This restoration of the Jewish church, after the destruction of *Babylon*, is evidently a type of the glorious restoration of the Christian church, after the destruction of the kingdom of *antichrist*; which is abundantly spoken of in the revelation of St. John, as the antitype of *Babylon*. Samson out of weakness received strength to pull down *Dagon's* temple, through prayer. So the people of God, in the latter days, will out of weakness be made strong, and will become the instruments of pulling down the kingdom of Satan by prayer.

The Spirit of God was poured out upon Christ himself, in answer to prayer; *Luke iii. 21, 22.* "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and *praying*, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." The Spirit descends on the church of Christ, the same way, in this respect, that it descended on the head of the church. The greatest effusion of the Spirit that ever yet has been, even that which was in the primitive times of the Christian church, which began in *Jerusalem*, on the day of *Pentecost*, was in answer to extraordinary prayer. When the disciples were gathered together to their Lord, a little before his ascension, "he commanded them that they should not depart from *Jerusalem*, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me," *i. e.* the promise of the Holy Ghost; *Acts i. 4.* What they had their hearts upon was the restoration of the kingdom of *Israel*: "Lord, (say they,) wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to *Israel*?" (*ver. 6.*) And according to Christ's direction, after his ascension, they returned to *Jerusalem*, and continued in *united fervent prayer* and supplication. It seems they spent their time in it from day to day, without

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328 *Exod. ii. 23.* and *Exod. iii. 7.* The great restoration of the church in the latter day, is spoken of as resembled by this; as *Isa. lxiv. 1-4.* *Isa. xi. 11, 15. 16.* *Isa. xliii. 2, 3, 16-19.* *li. 10, 11, 15.* *Isa. lxiii. 11, 12, 13.* *Zech. 10, 11.* *Hos. ii. 14, 15.*

329 See *Jer. xxix. 10-14.* and *Jer. l. 4. 5.* *Dan. ix.* throughout. *Ezra. viii. 21.* &c. *Neh. i. 4.* to the end. *Neh. iv. 4, 5.* and chap. *Neh. ix.* throughout.

ceasing; till the Spirit came down in a wonderful manner upon them, and that work was begun which never ceased, and all the chief nations were converted to Christianity. And that glorious deliverance and advancement of the Christian church, that was in the days of *Constantine the Great*, followed the extraordinary cries of the church of God, as the matter is represented, [Rev. vi.](#) at the opening of the fifth seal. The church in her suffering state, is represented crying with a loud voice, “How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” And the opening of the next seal brings on that mighty revolution, in the days of *Constantine*, compared to those great changes that shall be at the end of the world.

As there is so great and manifold reason from the word of God, to think that if a spirit of earnest prayer for that great effusion of the Spirit of God which I am speaking of, prevailed in the Christian church, the mercy would be soon granted; so those that are engaged in such prayer might well expect the first benefit, God will come to those that are seeking him and waiting for him; [Isa. xxv. 9.](#) and [xxvi. 8.](#) When Christ came in the flesh, he was first revealed to them who were *waiting for the consolation of Israel*, and *looking for redemption in Jerusalem*, [Luke i. 25, 38.](#) And in that great outpouring of the Spirit that was in the days of the apostles, which was attended with such glorious effects among the Jews and Gentiles, the Spirit came down first on those that were engaged in united earnest prayer for it. A special blessing is promised to them that love and pray for the prosperity of the church of God, [Psalm cxxxii. 6.](#) “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee.”

## SECT. VI.

Motives to excite us.

we are presented with many motives in the dispensations of divine *providence*, at this day, to excite us to be much in prayer for this mercy. There is much in providence to show us our *need* of it, and put us on *desiring* it. The great outward calamities, in which the world is involved; and particularly the bloody war that embroils and wastes the nations of Christendom, and in which our nation has so great a share, may well make all that believe God’s word, and love mankind, earnestly long and pray for that day, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares.

But especially do the spiritual calamities and miseries of the present time, show our great need of that blessed effusion of God’s Spirit: there having been, for so long a time, so great a withholding of the Spirit, from the greater part of the Christian world, and such dismal consequences of it, in the great decay of vital piety, and the exceeding prevalence of infidelity, heresy, and all manner of vice and wickedness. Of this a most affecting account has lately been published in a pamphlet, printed in *London*, and reprinted in *Scotland*, entitled *Britain’s Remembrancer*; by which it seems that luxury, and wickedness of almost every kind, is well nigh come to the utmost extremity in the nation; and if vice should continue

to prevail and increase for one generation more, as it has the generation past, it looks as though the nation could hardly continue in being, but must sink under the weight of its own corruption and wickedness.

And the state of things in the other parts of the *British* dominions, besides *England*, is very deplorable. The church of *Scotland* has very much lost her glory, greatly departing from her ancient purity, and excellent order; and has of late been bleeding with great and manifold wounds, occasioned by their divisions and hot contentions. And there are frequent complaints from thence, by those that lament the corruptions of that land, of sin and wickedness of innumerable kinds, abounding and prevailing of late, among all ranks of men. And how lamentable is the moral and religious state of these *American* colonies! of *New England* in particular! How much is that kind of religion which was professed, much experience, and practice, in *the first* and apparently the *best* times in *New England*, grown and growing out of credit! What fierce and violent contentions have been of late among ministers and people, about things of a religions nature! How much is the gospel-ministry grown into contempt! and the work of the ministry, in many respects, laid under uncommon difficulties, and even in danger of sinking amongst us! How many of our congregations and churches rending in pieces! Church discipline weakened, and ordinances less and less regarded! What wild and extravagant notions, gross delusions of the devil, and strange practices, have prevailed, and do still prevail in many places, under a pretext of extraordinary purity, spirituality, liberty, and zeal against formality, usurpation, and conformity to the world! How strong, deeply rooted, and general, are the prejudices that prevail against vital religion and the power of godliness, and almost every thing that appertains to it, or tends to it! How apparently are the hearts of people, every where, uncommonly shut up against all means and endeavours to awaken sinners and revive religion! Vice and immorality, of all kinds, withal increasing and unusually prevailing! May not an attentive view and consideration of such a state of things well influence the people that favour the dust of *Zion*, to earnestness in their cries to God for a general outpouring of his Spirit, which alone can be an effectual remedy for these evils?

Besides, the fresh attempts made by the antiChristian powers against the protestant interest, in their late endeavours to restore a popish government in *Great Britain*, the chief bulwark of the protestant cause; as also the persecution lately revived against the protestants in *France*; may well give occasion to the people of God, to renewed and extraordinary earnestness in their prayers to him, for the fulfilment of the promised downfall of antichrist, and that liberty and glory of his church that shall follow.

As there is much in the present state of things to show us our great need of this mercy, and to cause us to desire it; so there is very much to convince us, that *God alone can bestow it*; and show us our entire and absolute dependence on him for it. The insufficiency of human abilities to bring to pass any such happy change in the world as is foretold, or to afford any

remedy to mankind from such miseries as have been mentioned, does now remarkably appear. Those observations of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. "The world by wisdom knows not God, and God makes foolish the wisdom of this world," never were verified to such a degree as they are now. Great discoveries have been made in the arts and sciences, and never was human learning carried to such a height, as in the present age; and yet never did the cause of religion and virtue run so low, in nations professing the true religion. Never was there an age wherein so many learned and elaborate treatises have been written, in proof of the truth and divinity of the Christian religion; yet never were there so many infidels, among those that were brought up under the light of the gospel. It is an age, as is supposed, of great light, freedom of thought, discovery of truth in matters of religion, detection of the weakness and bigotry of our ancestors, and of the folly and absurdity of the notions of those who were accounted eminent divines in former generations; which notions, it is imagined, destroyed the very foundations of virtue and religion, and enervated all precepts of morality, and in effect annulled all difference between virtue and vice; and yet vice and wickedness did never so prevail, like an overflowing deluge. It is an age wherein those mean and stingy principles, as they are called, of our forefathers, which are supposed to have deformed religion, and led to unworthy thoughts of God, are very much discarded and grown out of credit, and thoughts of the nature of religion, and of the Christian scheme, supposed to be more free, noble, and generous, are entertained. But yet never was there an age, wherein religion in general was so much despised and trampled on, and Jesus Christ and God Almighty so blasphemed and treated with open, daring contempt.

The exceeding *weakness* of mankind, and their *insufficiency* in themselves for bringing to pass any thing great and good in the world, with regard to its moral and spiritual state, remarkably appears in many things that have attended and followed the extraordinary religious commotion, that has lately been in many parts of *Great Britain* and *America*. The infirmity of human nature has been manifested, in a very affecting manner, in the various passions of men, and the innumerable ways in which they have been moved, as a reed shaken with the wind, on occasion of the changes and incidents, both public and private, of such a state of things. How many errors and extremes are we liable to! How quickly blinded, misled, and confounded! And how easily does *Satan* make fools of men, if confident in their own wisdom and strength, and left to themselves! Many, in the late wonderful season, were ready to admire and trust in men, as if all depended on such and such instruments; at least, ascribed too much to their skill and zeal, because God was pleased to employ them a little while to do extraordinary things; but what great things does the skill and zeal of instruments do now, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn?

As the present state of things may well excite earnest desires after the promised general revival and advancement of true religion, and serve to show our dependence on God for it, so there are many things in *providence*, of late, that tend to *encourage* us in prayer for such

a mercy. That infidelity, heresy, and vice do so prevail, and that corruption and wickedness are risen to such an extreme height, is exceeding deplorable; but yet, I think, considering God's promises to his church, and the ordinary method of his dispensations, hope may justly be gathered from it, that the present state of things will not last long, but that a happy change is nigh. We know, that God never will desert the cause of truth and holiness, nor suffer the gates of hell to prevail against the church; and that usually, from the beginning of the world, the state of the church has appeared most dark, just before some remarkable deliverance and advancement: "Many a time, may Israel say, Had not the Lord been on our side, then our enemies would have swallowed us up quick. The waters had overwhelmed us."<sup>330</sup> The church's extremity has often been God's opportunity for magnifying his power, mercy, and faithfulness towards her. The interest of vital piety has long been in general decaying, and error and wickedness prevailing; it looks as though the disease were now come to a crisis, and that things cannot remain long in such a state, but that a change may be expected in one respect or other.

And not only God's manner of dealing with his church in former ages, and many things in the promises and prophecies of his word, but also several things appertaining to present and late aspects of divine providence, seem to give reason to hope that the change will be such, as to magnify God's free grace and sovereign mercy, and not his revenging justice and wrath. There are certain times, which are days of vengeance, appointed for the more special displays of God's justice and indignation. God has also his days of mercy, accepted times, chosen seasons, wherein it is his pleasure to show mercy, and nothing shall hinder it; times appointed for the magnifying of the Redeemer and his merits, and for the triumphs of his grace, wherein his grace shall triumph over men's unworthiness in its greatest height. And if we consider God's late dealings with our nation and this land, it appears to me that there is much to make us think that this is such a day.<sup>331</sup>

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330 [Psal. cxxiv. 1-4.](#)

331 Particularly God's preserving and delivering the nation, when in so great danger of ruin by the late rebellion; and his preserving New England, and the other British colonies in America, in so remarkable a manner, from the great armament from France, prepared and sent against us the last year; and the almost miraculous success given us against our enemies at Cape-Breton the year before, disappointing their renewed preparations and fresh attempt against these colonies, this present year, (1747.) by delivering up the strength of their fleet into the hands of the English, as they were in their way hither And also in protecting us from time to time from armies by land that have come against us from Canada, since the beginning of the present war with France. Besides many strange instances of protection of particular forts and settlements, showing a manifest interposition of the hand of heaven, to the observation of some of our enemies, and even of the savages. And added to these, the late unexpected restoring of the greater part of our many captives in Canada, by those that held them prisoners there. It appears to me, that God has gone much out of his usual way. in his exercises of mercy, patience, and long suffering, in these instances.

God's patience was very wonderful of old, towards the ten tribes, and the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and afterwards to the Jews in the times of Christ and the apostles; but it seems to me, all things considered, not equal to his patience and mercy to us. God does not only forbear to destroy us, notwithstanding all our provocations. but he has wrought great things for us, wherein his hand has been most visible, and his arm made bare; especially those two instances in *America*, God succeeding us against *Cape-Breton*, and confounding the Armada from *France* the last year; dispensations of providence, which, if considered in all their circumstances, were so wonderfully and apparently manifesting an extraordinary divine interposition, that they come perhaps the nearest to a parallel with God's wonderful works of old, in the times of Moses, Joshua, and Hezekiah, of any that have been in these latter ages of the world. And it is to my present purpose to observe, that God was pleased to do great things for us in both these instances, in answer to extraordinary *prayer*. Such remarkable appearances of a spirit of prayer, on any particular public occasion, have not been in the land, at any time within my observation and memory, as on occasion of the affair of *Cape-Breton*. And it is worthy to be remembered, that God sent that great storm on the fleet of our enemies the last year, that finally dispersed, and utterly confounded them, and caused them wholly to give over their designs against us, the very night after our day of public fasting and prayer, for our protection and their confusion.

Thus, although it be a day of great apostacy and provocation, yet it is apparently a day of the wonderful works of God; wonders of power and mercy; which may well lead us to think on those two places of Scripture; [Psal. cxix. 126](#). "It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy law." And [Psal. lxxv. 1](#). "That thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare." God appears, as it were, loth to destroy us, or deal with us according to our iniquities, great and aggravated as they are; and shows that mercy pleases him. Though a corrupt time, it is plain, by experience, that it is a time wherein God may be found, and he stands ready to show mercy in answer to prayer. He that has done such great things, and has so wonderfully and speedily answered prayer for temporal mercies, will much more give the Holy Spirit if we ask him. He marvellously preserves us, and waits to be gracious to us, as though he chose to make us monuments of his grace, and not of his vengeance, and waits only to have us open our mouths wide, that he may fill them.

The late remarkable *religious awakenings*, in many parts of the Christian world, may justly encourage us in prayer for the promised glorious and universal outpouring of the Spirit of God. "About the year 1732 or 1733, God was pleased to pour out his Spirit on the people of *Saltzburg* in *Germany*, who were living under popish darkness, in a most uncommon manner; so that above twenty thousand of them, merely by reading the Bible, which they made a shift to get in their own language, were determined to throw off popery, and embrace the reformed religion; yea, and to become so very zealous for the truth and gospel of Jesus Christ, as to be willing to suffer the loss of all things in the world, and actually to

forsake their houses, lands, goods, and relations, that they might enjoy the pure preaching of the gospel; with great earnestness, and tears in their eyes, beseeching protestant ministers to preach to them, in different places where they came, when banished from their own country." In the year 1734 and 1735, there appeared a very great and general awakening, in the county of *Hampshire*, in the province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, and also in many parts of Connecticut. Since this, there has been a far more extensive awakening of many thousands in England, Wales, and Scotland, and almost all the British provinces in North America. There has also been something remarkable of the same kind, in some places in the united Netherlands; and about two years ago, a very great awakening and reformation of many of the Indians, in the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania, even among such as never embraced Christianity before: and within these two years, a great awakening in Virginia and Maryland.

Notwithstanding the great diversity of opinions about the issue of some of these awakenings, yet I know of none, who have denied that there have been great awakenings of late, in these times and places, and that multitudes have been brought to more than common concern for their salvation, and for a time were made more than ordinarily afraid of sin, and brought to reform their former vicious courses, and take much pains for their salvation. If I should be of the opinion of those who think, that these awakenings arid striving of God's Spirit have been generally not well improved, and so, as to most, have ended in enthusiasm and delusion; yet, that the Spirit of God has been of late so wonderfully striving with such multitudes in so many different parts of the world, and even to this day, in one place or other, continues to awaken men is what I should take great encouragement from, that God was about to do something more glorious, and would, before he finishes, bring things to a greater ripeness, and not finally suffer this work of his to be frustrated and rendered abortive by *Satan's* crafty management. And may we not hope, that these unusual commotions are the forerunners of something exceeding glorious approaching; as the wind, earthquake, and fire at mount *Sinai*, were forerunners of that voice wherein God was in a more eminent manner? ([1 Kings xix. 11, 12.](#))

## SECT. VII.

The beauty and good tendency of such union.

HOW *condecant*, how *beautiful*, and of *good tendency* would it be, for multitudes of Christians, in various parts of the world, by *explicit agreement*, to unite in such prayer as is proposed to us. *Union* is one of the most *amiable* things that pertains to human society; yea, it is one of the most beautiful and happy things on earth, which indeed makes earth most like heaven. God has made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth; hereby teaching us this moral lesson, that it becomes mankind all to be united as one family. And this is agreeable to the nature God has given men, disposing them to society;



and the circumstances in which he has placed them, so many ways obliging and necessitating them to it. A *civil* union, or an harmonious agreement among men in the management of their secular concerns, is amiable; but much more a *pious* union, and sweet agreement in the great business for which man was created, even the business of religion; the life and soul of which is love. Union is spoken of in Scripture as the peculiar beauty of the church of Christ, [Cant. vi. 9](#). “My dove, my undefiled, is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her; the daughters saw her and blessed her, yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.” [Psal. cxxii. 5](#). “Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.” [Eph. iv. 3-6](#). “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” [Ver. 16](#). “The whole body fitly framed together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying itself in love.”

As it is the glory of the church of Christ, that in all her members, however dispersed, she is thus *one*, one holy society, one city, one family, one body; so it is very desirable, that this union should be *manifested*, and become visible. It is highly desirable, that her distant members should act as *one*, in those things that concern the common interest of the whole body, and in those duties and exercises wherein they have to do with their common Lord and Head, as seeking of him the common prosperity. As it becomes all the members of a particular family, who are strictly united, and have in so many respects one common interest, to unite in prayer to God for the things they need; and as it becomes a nation, at certain seasons, visibly to unite in prayer for those public mercies that concern the interest of the whole nation: so, it becomes the church of Christ which is one holy nation, a peculiar people, one heavenly family, more strictly united, in many respects, and having infinitely greater interests that, are common to the whole, than any other society visibly to unite, and expressly to agree together, in prayer to God for the *common prosperity*; and above all, that common prosperity and advancement, so unspeakably great and glorious, which God hath so abundantly promised to fulfil in the latter days.

It becomes Christians, with whose character a narrow selfish spirit, above all others, disagrees, to be much in prayer for that public mercy, wherein consists the welfare and happiness of the whole body of Christ, of which they are members, and the greatest good of mankind. And union or agreement in prayer is especially becoming, when Christians pray for that mercy, which above all other things concerns them unitedly, and tends to the relief, prosperity, and glory of the whole body, as well as of each individual member.

Such an union in prayer for the general outpouring of the Spirit of God, would not only be beautiful, but *profitable* too. It would tend very much to promote union and charity between distant members of the church of Christ, to promote public spirit, love to the church

of God, and concern for the interest of *Zion*; as well as be an amiable exercise and manifestation of such a spirit. Union in religious duties, especially in the duty of prayer, in praying one with and for another, and jointly for their common welfare, above almost all other things, tends to promote mutual affection and endearment. And if ministers and people should, by particular agreement and joint resolution, set themselves, in a solemn and extraordinary manner, from time to time, to pray for the revival of religion in the world, it would naturally tend more to awaken in them a concern about things of this nature, and more of a desire after such a mercy. It would engage them to more attention to such an affair, make them more inquisitive about it, more ready to use endeavours to promote what they, with so many others, spend so much time in praying for. It would make them more ready to rejoice, and praise God, when they see or hear of any thing of that nature or tendency. And, in a particular manner, it would naturally tend to engage ministers the business of whose lives it should be, to seek the welfare of the church of Christ, and the advancement of his kingdom to greater diligence and earnestness in their work; and it would have a tendency to the spiritual profit and advantage of each particular person. For persons to be thus engaged in extraordinary prayer for the revival and flourishing state of religion in the world, will naturally lead each one to reflect on *himself*, and consider how religion flourishes in his own heart, and how far his example contributes to that for which he is praying.

On the whole there is great and particular *encourage-went* given in the word of God, to express *union* and *agreement*, in prayer. *Daniel*, when he had a great thing to request of God, *viz.* That he by his Holy Spirit would miraculously reveal to him a great secret, which none of the wise men, astrologers, magicians, or soothsayers of Babylon could find out, he goes to *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah*, his companions, and they *agree together*, that they will *unitedly desire* mercies of the God of heaven, concerning this secret; and their joint request was soon granted. God put great honour upon them, above all the wise men of *Babylon*, not only to their great joy, but also to the admiration and astonishment of *Nebuchadnezzar*, insomuch, that the great and haughty monarch, as we are told, fell upon his face and worshipped *Daniel*, and owned that *his God was of a truth a God of gods*, and he greatly promoted *Daniel* and his praying companions in the province of *Babylon*, *Esther*, when she had a yet more important request to make, for the saving of the church of God, and whole *Jewish* nation, dispersed through the empire of *Persia*, when on the brink of ruin, sends to all the *Jews* in the city *Shushan*, to pray and fast with her and her maidens; and their *united prayers* prevail; so that the event was wonderful. Instead of the intended destruction of the *Jews*, their enemies are destroyed every where, and they are defended, honoured, and promoted; their sorrow and distress is turned into great gladness, feasting, triumph, and mutual joyful congratulations.

The encouragement to explicit agreement in prayer is great from such instances as these; but it is yet greater from those wonderful words of our blessed Redeemer, [Matt. xviii. 19.](#) “I

say unto you, that if any two of you shall agree on earth, touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” Christ is pleased to give this great encouragement to the union of his followers in this excellent and holy exercise of seeking and serving God; a holy union and communion of his people being that which he greatly desires and delights in; that which he came into the world to bring to pass; that which he especially prayed for with his dying breath; ([John xvii.](#)) that which he died for; and which was one chief end of the whole affair of our redemption by him; [Eph. i.](#) “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.”



PART III.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

I COME now, as was proposed, in the *third* place, to answer and obviate some objections, which some may be ready to make against what has been proposed to us.

SECT. I.

Such agreement superstitions, answered.

some may be ready to say, that for Christians in such a manner to set apart *certain seasons*, every week, and every quarter, to be religiously observed and kept for the purposes proposed, from year to year, would be, in effect, to *establish* certain periodical times of *human* invention and appointment, to be *kept holy to God*; and so to do the very thing, that has ever been objected against, by a very great part of the most eminent Christians and divines among protestants, as what men have no right to do; it being for them to *add* to God's institutions, and introduce their own inventions and establishments into the stated worship of God, and lay unwarrantable bonds on men's consciences, and do what naturally tends to *superstition*.

To this I would say, there can be no justice in such an objection against this proposal, as made to us in the fore-mentioned *Memorial*. Indeed, that caution appears in the project itself, and in the manner in which it is proposed to us, that there is not so much as any colour for the objection. The proposal is such, and so well guarded, that there seems to be no room for the weakest Christian who well observes it, to understand those things to be implied in it, which have indeed been objected against by many eminent Christians and divines among protestants, as entangling men's consciences, and adding to divine institutions, &c. Here is no pretence of establishing any thing by *authority*; no appearance of any claim of *power* in the proposers, or *right* to have any regard paid to their determinations or proposals, by virtue of any deference due to *them*, in any respect. So far from that, they expressly propose what they have thought of to others, for their amendments and improvements, declaring that they choose rather to receive and spread the directions and proposals of others, than to be the first authors of any.

No times, not sanctified by God's own institution, are proposed to be observed more than others, under any notion of such times being, in any respect, more holy, or more honourable, or worthy of any preference, or distinguishing regard; either as being sanctified, or made honourable, by authority, or by any great events of divine providence, or any relation to any holy persons or things; but only as circumstantially convenient, helpful to memory, especially free from worldly business, near to the times of the administration of public ordinances, &c. None attempts to lay any bonds on others, with respect to this matter; or to desire that they should lay any bonds on themselves; or look on themselves as under any

obligations, either by power or promise; or so much as come into any absolute determination in their own minds, to set apart any stated days from secular affairs; or even to fix on any part of such days, without liberty to alter circumstances, as shall be found expedient; and also liberty left to a future alteration of judgment, as to expediency, on future trial and consideration. All that is proposed is, that such as fall in with what is proposed in their judgments and inclinations, while they do so should strengthen, assist, and encourage their brethren that are of the same mind, by visibly consenting and joining with them in the affair. Is here any thing like making laws in matters of conscience and religion, or adding men's institutions to God's; or any show of imposition, or superstitious esteeming and preferring one day above another, or any possible ground of entanglement of any one's conscience?

For men to go about by *law* to establish and limit circumstances of worship, not established or limited by any law of God, such as precise time, place, and order, may be in many respects of dangerous tendency. But surely it cannot be unlawful or improper, for Christians to come into some agreement, with regard to these circumstances: for it is impossible to carry on any social worship without it. There is no institution of Scripture requiring any people to meet together to worship God in such a spot of ground, or at such an hour of the day; but yet these must be determined by agreement; or else there will be no social worship, in any place, or any hour. So we are not determined by institution, what the precise order of the different parts of worship shall be; what shall precede, and what shall follow; whether praying or singing shall be first, and what shall be next, and what shall conclude: but yet some order must be agreed on, by the congregation that unite in worship; otherwise they cannot jointly carry on divine worship, in any way of method at all. If a congregation of Christians agree to begin their public worship with *prayer*, next to *sing*, then to attend on the *preaching* of the word, and to conclude with *prayer*; and do by consent carry on their worship in this order from year to year; though this order is not appointed in Scripture, none will call it *superstition*. And if a great number of congregations, through a whole land, or more lands than one, do, by a common consent, keep the same method of public worship; none will pretend to find fault with it. But yet for any to go about to bind all to such a method, would be usurpation and imposition. And if such a precise order should be regarded as sacred, as though no other could be acceptable to God, this would be superstition. If a particular number of Christians shall agree, that besides the stated public worship of the sabbath, they will, when their circumstances allow, meet together, to carry on some religious exercises, on a sabbath-day night, for their mutual edification; or if several societies agree to meet together in different places at that time; this is no superstition; though there be no institution for it. If people in different congregations, voluntarily agree to take turns to meet together in the house of God, to worship him and hear a public lecture, once a month, or once in six weeks; it is not unlawful though there be no institution for it: but yet, to do this as a thing sacred, indispensable, and binding on men's consciences, would be superstition.

If Christians of several neighbouring congregations, instead of a lecture, agree on some special occasion to keep a *circular fast*, each congregation taking its turn in a certain time and order, fixed on by consent; or if, instead of keeping fast by turns, on different days, one on one week and one on another, they shall all agree to keep a fast on the *same day*, and to do this either once or frequently, according as they shall judge their own circumstances, or the dispensations of the divine providence, or the importance of the mercy they seek, require; is there any more superstition in this?

## SECT. II.

That such agreement is whimsical and pharisaical, answered.

some may be ready to say, there seems to be something *whimsical* in its being insisted on that God's people in different places should put up their prayers for this mercy *at the same time*; as though their prayers would be more *forcible* on that account; and as if God would not be so likely to hear prayers offered up by many, though they happened not to pray at the same time, as he would if he heard them all at the same moment.

To this I would say, if such an objection be made, it must be through misunderstanding. It is not signified or implied in any thing said in the proposal, or in any arguments made use of to enforce it, that I have seen, that the prayers of a great number in different places, will be more forcible, merely because of that circumstance, of their being put up at the same time. It is indeed supposed, that it will be very expedient, that certain times for united prayer should be agreed on: which it may be, without implying the thing supposed in the objection, on the following accounts.

1. This seems to be a proper expedient for promoting and maintaining an *union* among Christians of distant places, in *extraordinary prayer* for such a mercy. It appears, from what was before observed, that there ought to be *extraordinary* prayers among Christians for this mercy; and that it is fit God's people should agree and unite in it. Though there be no reason to suppose that prayers will be more prevalent, merely from the circumstance, that different persons pray exactly *at the same time*; yet there will be more reason to hope, that prayers for such mercy will be prevalent, when God's people are *very much in prayer* for it, and when many of them are *united* in it. If therefore agreeing on certain times for united and extraordinary prayer, be a likely means to promote an union of many in extraordinary prayer, then there is more reason to hope, that there will be *prevalent* prayer for such a mercy, on occasion of certain times for extraordinary prayer being agreed on. But that agreeing on certain times for united extraordinary prayer, is a likely and proper means to promote and maintain such prayer; I think will be easily evident to any one that considers the matter. If there should be only a loose agreement or consent to it as a duty, or a thing fit and proper, that Christians should be much in prayer for the revival of religion, and much more in it than they used to be, without agreeing on particular times, how liable would such

a lax agreement be to be soon forgotten, and that extraordinary prayerfulness, which is fixed to no certain times, to be totally neglected! To be sure, distant parts of the church of Christ could have no confidence in one another, that this would not be the case. If these ministers in *Scot/and*, for instance, instead of the proposal they have made, had sent abroad only a general proposal, that God's people should, for the time to come, be much in more prayer for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, than had been common among Christians heretofore; and they should hear their proposals were generally allowed to be good; and that ministers and people, in one place and another, owned that it was a very proper thing; could they, from this only, have the like grounds of dependence, that God's people, in various parts of the Christian world, would indeed henceforward act unitedly, in maintaining extraordinary prayer for this mercy? and how much more promising would it be, if they should not only hear, that the duty in general was approved of, but also that particular times were actually fixed on for the purpose, and an agreement and joint resolution was come into, that they would, unless extraordinarily hindered, set apart such particular seasons to be spent in this duty, from time to time, maintaining this practice for a certain number of years!

2. For God's people in distant places to agree on certain times for extraordinary prayer, wherein they will unitedly put up their requests to God, is a means fit and proper to be used, in order to the *visibility* of their union in such prayer. Union among God's people in prayer is truly beautiful, as before shown; it is beautiful in the eyes of Christ, and it is justly beautiful and amiable in the eyes of Christians. And if so, then it must needs be desirable to Christians that such union should be visible. If it would be a lovely sight in the eyes of the church of Christ, and much to their comfort, to behold various and different parts of the church *united* in extraordinary prayer for the general outpouring of the Spirit, then it must be desirable to them that such an union should be *viable*, that they may behold it. But the agreement and union of a multitude in their worship becomes visible, by an agreement in some external visible circumstances. Worship itself becomes visible worship, by something external and visible belonging to the worship, and no other way: therefore, union and agreement of many in worship becomes visible no other way, but by union and agreement in the external and visible acts and circumstances of the worship. Such union and agreement becomes visible, particularly by an agreement in those two visible circumstances, *time and place*. When a number of Christians live near together, and their number and situation is convenient, and they have a desire visibly to unite in any acts of worship, they are wont to make their union and agreement visible by an union in both these circumstances. But when a much greater number of Christians, dwelling in distant places so that they cannot unite by worshipping in the same place, yet desire a visible union in some extraordinary worship; they are wont to make their union and agreement visible, by agreeing only in the former of those circumstances, *viz.* that of *time*. This is common in the appointment of public fasts and thanksgivings; the *same day* is appointed, for the performance of that extraordinary worship, as a

visible note of union. To this common sense leads Christians in all countries. And the wisdom of God seems to dictate the same thing in appointing that his people, in their stated and ordinary public worship every week, should manifest this union and communion one with another, as one holy society; by offering up their worship on the same day; for the greater glory of their common Lord, and the greater edification and comfort of the whole body.

If any yet find fault with the proposal of certain times to be agreed on by God's people in different places, in the manner set forth in the *Memorial*, I would ask, Whether they object against *any such thing*, as a visible agreement of God's people, in different parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the coming of Christ's kingdom? Whether such a thing being visible, would not be much for the public honour of God's name? And whether it would not tend to Christians' assistance, and encouragement in the duty, and also to their mutual comfort, by a manifestation of that union which is amiable to Christ and Christians, and to promote a Christian union among professing Christians in general? And whether we have not reason to think from the word of God, that before that great revival of religion foretold is accomplished, there will be a visible union of the people of God, in various parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer for this mercy? If these things are allowed, I would then ask further, whether any method can be thought of or devised, whereby an express agreement, and visible union of God's people, in different parts of the world, can be maintained, but this, or some other equivalent to it? If there be any express agreement about any extraordinary prayer at all, it must first be proposed by some, and others must fall in, as represented in my text. And if extraordinary prayer be agreed on, and maintained by many in different places, visibly one to another, then it must be agreed with regard to some circumstances, what extraordinary prayer shall be kept up; and this must be seen and heard of, from one to another. But how shall this be, when no *times* are agreed upon, and it is never known, by those in different parts, when, or how often, any others do attend this extraordinary prayer? The consequence must necessarily be, that it can never be known how far, or in what respect, others join with them in extraordinary prayer, or whether they do it at all; and not so much as one circumstance of extraordinary prayer will be *visible*; and indeed nothing will be visible about it. So that I think any body that well considers the matter, will see that he who determines to oppose such a method as is proposed to us in the *Memorial*, and all others equivalent to it, is, in effect, determined to oppose there ever being any such thing at all, as an agree and visibly united extraordinary prayer, in the church of God, for a general outpouring of the Spirit.

3. Though it would not be reasonable to suppose, that merely such a circumstance, as many people praying at the same time, will directly have any prevalence with God; yet such a circumstance may reasonably be supposed to have influence on the minds of *men*. Will any deny, that it has any reasonable tendency to encourage, animate, or in any respect to help the mind of a Christian in serving God in any duty of religion, to join with a Christian



congregation, and to see an assembly of his dear brethren around him, at the same time engaged with him in the same duty? And supposing one in this assembly of saints is blind, but has ground of satisfaction that there is present a multitude of God's people united with him in the same service; will any deny, that his supposing this, and being satisfied of it, can have any reasonable influence upon his mind, to excite and encourage him, or in any respect to assist him, in his worship? The encouragement that one has in worship, by others being united with him, is not merely by the external senses, but by the knowledge the mind has of that union, or the satisfaction the understanding has that others, at that time, have their minds engaged with him in the same service; which may be, when those unitedly engaged are at a distance one from another, as well as when they are present. If one be present in a worshipping assembly, and sees their external behaviour; their *union* with him in worship, he does not see; and what he sees, encourages him in worship, only as an evidence of that union and concurrence which is out of sight. And a person may have such evidence of this, concerning *absent* worshippers, as may give him satisfaction of their union with him, no less than if they were present. And therefore the consideration of others being at the same time engaged with him in worship, though absent, may as reasonably animate and encourage him in his worship, as if they were present.

There is no wisdom in finding fault with human nature, as God has made it. Things that exist now, are in themselves no more important, than the like things, in time past, or in time to come: yet, it is evident, that the consideration of things being present, at least in most cases, especially affects human nature. For instance, if a man could be certainly informed, that his dear child at a distance was now under some extreme suffering; or, that an absent most dear friend was at this time thinking of him, and in the exercise of great affection towards him, or in the performance of some great deed of friendship; or, if a pious parent should know that now his child was in the act of some enormous wickedness; or that, on the contrary, he was now in some eminent exercise of grace, and in the performance of an extraordinary deed of virtue and piety; would not those things be more affecting to human nature, for being considered as things at the present time, than if considered as at some distance of time, either past or future? Hundreds of other instances might be mentioned wherein it is no less plain, that the consideration of the present existence of things, gives them advantage to affect the minds of men. Yea, it is undoubtedly so with things in general, that take any hold at all of our affections, and towards which we are not indifferent. And if the mind of a particular child of God is disposed to be affected by the consideration of the religion of other saints, and of their union and concurrence with him in any particular duty or act of religion, I can see no reason why the human mind should not be more moved by the object of its affection, when considered as present, as well in this case, as in any other case: yea, I think, we may on good grounds determine there is none.

Nor may we look upon it as an instance of the peculiar *weakness* of human nature, that men are more affected with things considered as *present*, than those that are distant: but it seems to be a thing common to finite minds, and so to all created intelligent beings. Thus, the angels in heaven have peculiar joy, on occasion of the conversion of a sinner, when recent, beyond what they have in that which has been long past. If any therefore shall call it silly and whimsical in any, to value and regard such a circumstance, in things of religion, as their existing at the present time, so as to be the more affected with them for that; they must call the host of angels in heaven a parcel of silly and whimsical beings.

I remember, the *Spectator*, (whom none will call a whimsical author,) somewhere speaking of different ways of dear, friends mutually expressing their affection, and maintaining a kind of intercourse, in absence one from another, mentions such an instance as this, with much approbation, *viz.* That two friends, who were greatly endeared one to another, when about to part, and to be for a considerable time necessarily absent, that they might have the comfort of the enjoyment of daily mutual expressions of friendship in their absence; agreed that they would, every day, precisely at such an hour, retire from all company and business, to pray for one another. Which agreement they so valued and so strictly observed, that when the hour came, scarce any thing would hinder them. And rather than miss this opportunity, they would suddenly break off conversation, and abruptly leave company they were engaged with. If this be a desirable way of intercourse of particular friends, is it not a desirable and amiable way of maintaining intercourse and fellowship between brethren in Christ Jesus, and the various members of the holy family of God, in different parts of the world, to come into an agreement, that they will set apart certain times, which they will spend with one accord, in extraordinary prayer to their heavenly Father, for the advancement of the kingdom, and the glory of their common dear Lord and Saviour, and for each other's prosperity and happiness, and the greatest good of all their fellow-creatures through the world?

Some perhaps may suppose, that it looks too much like *Pharisaism*, when persons engage in any such extraordinary religious exercises, beyond what is appointed by express institution, for them thus designedly to make it manifest abroad in the world, and so openly to distinguish themselves from others. But all open engagement in extraordinary exercises of religion, not expressly enjoined by institution, is not *Pharisaism*, nor has ever been so reputed in the Christian church. As when a particular church or congregation of Christians agree together to keep a day of fasting and prayer, on some special occasion; or when public days of fasting and thanksgiving are kept, throughout a Christian province or country: and though it be ordinarily the manner for the civil magistrate to lead in setting apart such days; yet that alters not the case: if it be *Pharisaism* in the society openly to agree in such extraordinary exercises of religion, it is not less *Pharisaism*, for the heads of the society leading in the affair. And if the civil magistrate was not of the society of Christians, nor concerned himself in their affairs;

yet this would not render it the less suitable for Christians, on proper occasions, jointly, and visibly one to another, to engage in such extraordinary exercises of religion, and to keep days of fasting and thanksgiving by agreement.

It cannot be objected against what is proposed in the *Memorial*, that it would look like affecting singularity, and open distinction from others in extraordinary religion, like the *Pharisees* of old: because it is evident the very design of the *Memorial* is not to promote singularity and distinction, but as much as possible to avoid and prevent it. The end of the *Memorial* is not to limit the thing proposed, that it may be practised only by a few, in distinction from the generality; but on the contrary to make it as general among professing Christians as possible. Some had complied with the extraordinary duty proposed, and therein had been distinguished from others, for two years, before the *Memorial* was published; and they were more distinguished than they desired; and therefore sent abroad this *Memorial*, that the practice might be more spread, and become more general, that they might be less distinguished. What they evidently seek, is to bring to pass as general a compliance as possible of Christians of all denominations, *entreating, that the desire of concurrence and assistance, contained in the Memorial, may by no means be understood as restricting to any particular denomination or party, or those who me of such or such opinions about any former instances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to all, who shall vouchsafe any attention to the proposal, and have at heart the interest of vital Christianity, and the power of godliness: and who, however differing about otherthings, are convinced of the importance of fervent prayer, to promote that common interest, and of scripture persuasives, to promote such prayer.*

### SECT. III

That such agreement is premature, answered.

another objection, very likely to arise in the minds of many against such extraordinary prayer for the speedy coming of Christ's kingdom, is, that we have *no reason to expect it*, till there first come a time of most extreme *calamity* to the church, and a prevalence of her *antiChristian* enemies against her; even that which is represented in *by the slaying of the witnesses; but have reason to determine the contrary.*

It is indeed an opinion that seems pretty much to have obtained, that before the fulfilment of the promises relating to the church's latter-day glory, there must come a most terrible time, a lime of extreme suffering, and dreadful persecution of the church of Christ; wherein *Satan* and *antichrist* are to obtain their greatest victory over her, and she is to be brought lower than ever by her enemies. This opinion has chiefly risen from the manner of interpreting and applying the fore-mentioned prophecy of the slaying of the witnesses; and must needs be a great hinderance, with regard to such an affair as is proposed to us in the *Memorial*. If persons expect no other, than that the more the glorious times of Christ's kingdom are hastened, the sooner will come this dreadful time, wherein the generality of God's people

must suffer so extremely, and the church of Christ be almost extinguished, and blotted out from under heaven; how can it be otherwise than a great damp to their hope, their courage and activity, in praying for, and reaching after the speedy introduction of those glorious promised times? As long as this opinion is retained, it will undoubtedly ever have this unhappy influence on the minds of those that wish well to *Zion*. It will tend to damp and keep down joyful expectation in prayer; and even in great measure to prevent all earnest, animated, and encouraged prayer, in God's people, for this mercy, at any time before it is actually fulfilled. For they who proceed on this hypothesis in their prayers, must, at the same time that they pray for this glorious day, naturally conclude within themselves, that they shall never live to see on earth any dawning of it, but only the dismal time that shall precede it; in which the far greater part of God's people who shall live till then, shall die under the extreme cruelties of their persecutors. And the more they expect that God will answer their prayers, by speedily bringing on the promised glorious day, the more must they expect themselves to have a share in those dreadful things, that nature shrinks at, and also expect to see what a renewed nature dreads; even the prevailing of God's enemies, and the almost total extinction of true religion in the world. And on this *hypothesis*, these discouragements are like to attend the prayers of God's people, till that dismal time be actually come: and when that is come, those who had been prophesying and praying in sackcloth, shall generally be slain: and after that time is over, then the glorious day shall immediately commence. So that this notion tends to discourage all earnest prayer in the church of God for that glorious coming of Christ's kingdom, till it be actually come; and that is to hinder its ever being at all.

This opinion being of such hurtful tendency, it is a thousand pities it should be retained, if truly there be no good ground for it. Therefore in answer to this objection,

I would, with all humility and modesty, examine the foundation of that opinion, of such a dreadful time of victory of antichrist over the church, yet to be expected: and particularly shall endeavour to show that the *slaying of the witnesses*, foretold, [Rev. xi. 7-10.](#) is not an event that remains yet to be fulfilled. To this end, I would propose the following things to consideration.

1. The time wherein the *witnesses lie dead in the streets of the great city*, doubtless, signifies the time wherein the true church of Christ is lowest of all, most of all prevailed against by antichrist, and nearest to an utter extinction; the time wherein there is left the least visibility of the church of Christ yet subsisting in the world, least remains of any thing appertaining to true religion, whence a revival of it can be expected, and wherein all means of it are most abolished, and the state of the church is in all respects furthest from any hopes of its ever flourishing again. For before this, the witnesses *prophesy in sackcloth*; but now they are *dead*: before this, they were kept low indeed, yet there was life, and power to bring plagues on their enemies, and so much of true religion left, as to be a continual torment to them. But now their enemies rejoice and feast, have a general public triumph, as having obtained a

full victory over them. They have now entirely extirpated them, are completely delivered from them, and from all that might give them any fear of being troubled with them any more. This time, wherever it be fixed, doubtless, is the time, not only wherein fewest professors of the true religion are left in the world; but a time wherein the truth shall be farthest put of sight, and out of reach, and most forgotten; wherein there are left fewest beams of light, or traces of truth, fewest means of information, and opportunities of coming to the knowledge of the truth; and so a time of the most barbarous ignorance, most destitute of all history, monuments, and memory of things appertaining to true religion, or things the knowledge of which hath any tendency to bring truth again to light; and most destitute of learning, study, and inquiry.

Now, if we consider the present state of mankind, is it credible that a time will yet come, exceeding, in these respects, all times before the reformation? and that such a time will come before the fall of antichrist, unless we set that at a much greater distance, than the farthest that any have yet supposed? It is next to impossible, that such a change should be brought about in so short a time: it cannot be without a miracle. In order to it, not only must the popish nations so prevail, as utterly to extirpate the protestant religion through the earth; but must do many other things, far more impossible for them to effect, in order to cover the world with so gross and confirmed a darkness, and to bury all light and truth in so deep an oblivion, and so far out of all means and hopes of a revival. And not only must a vast change be made in the *protestant* world, but the *popish* nations must be strangely metamorphosed; and they themselves must be terribly persecuted by some other power, in order to bring them to such a change: nor would persecution without extirpation be sufficient for it. If there should be another universal deluge, it might be sufficient to bring things to such a pass; provided a few ignorant barbarous persons only were preserved in an ark: and it would require some catastrophe not much short of this to effect it

2. At the *reformation*, in the days of *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others their contemporaries, the threatened destruction of antichrist, the dreadful enemy that had long oppressed and worn out the saints, was *begun*. Nor was it a small beginning; for antichrist hath fallen, at least half-way to the ground, from that height of power and grandeur he was in before. Then began the vials of God's wrath to be *poured out on the throne of the beast*, to the great shaking of its foundations, and diminution of its extent; so that the *pope* lost near half of his former dominions: and as to degree of authority and influence over what is left, he is not possessed of what he had before. God now at length, in answer to the long-continued cries of his people, awakened as one out of sleep, and began to deliver his church from her exceeding low state, under the great oppression of this grand enemy, and to restore her from her exile and bondage in the spiritual *Babylon* and *Egypt*. It is not agreeable to the analogy of God's dispensations, that after this he should desert his people, hide himself from them even more than before, leave them more than ever in the hands of their enemy; and is it

credible that all this advantage of the church against antichrist should be entirely given up and lost, his power and tyranny be more confirmed, the church more entirely subdued than ever before, and further from all help and means of recovery? This is not God's way of dealing with his people, or with their enemies. His work of salvation is perfect: when he has begun such a work he will carry it on: when he once causes the day of deliverance to dawn to his people, after such a long night of dismal darkness, he will not extinguish the light, and cause them to return again to midnight darkness. When he has begun to enkindle the blessed fire, he will not quench the smoking flax, till he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. When once the church, after her long and sore travail, has brought forth her man-child, and wrought some deliverance, her enemies shall never be able to destroy this child, though an infant; but it shall ascend up to heaven, and be set on high out of their reach.

The destruction that God often foretold and threatened to ancient *Babylon* (which is often referred to in the revelation, as a great type of the anti-Christian church) was gradually accomplished, by various steps at a great distance of time one from another. It was begun in the conquest of *Cyrus*; and was further accomplished by *Darius*, about *eighteen* years after, by a yet greater destruction, wherein it was brought much nearer to utter desolation; but it was about *two hundred and twenty-three* years after this, before the ruin of it was perfected, and the prophecies against it fully accomplished, in its being made an utter and perpetual desolation, without any human inhabitant, becoming the dwelling-place for owls, dragons, and other doleful creatures. But yet when God had once begun to destroy her, he went on till he finished, and never suffered her any more to recover and establish her former empire. So the restitution of the Jewish church, after the Babylonish captivity, was by various steps; there were several times of return of the Jews from captivity, and several distinct decrees of the Persian emperors, for restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem, and re-establishing, the Jewish church and state. It was also done in turbulent times; there were great interruptions, checks, and violent oppositions, and times wherein the enemy did much prevail. But yet when God had once begun the work, he also made an end; he never suffered the enemies of the Jews to bring Jerusalem to such a state of desolation as it had been in before, till the promised restoration was complete. Again, the deliverance of God's church from the oppression of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, (another known type of antichrist,) was gradual; they were first assisted a little by the Maccabees; afterwards, the promised deliverance was completed in the recovery of Jerusalem, the restoration of the temple, the miserable end of Antiochus, and the consequent more full deliverance of the whole land. But after God once began to appear for the help of his church in that instance, though it had seemed dead and past all hope, he never suffered Antiochus to prevail to that degree again. The utmost strength of this great monarch was used, from time to time, in order to it, and his vast empire was engaged against a handful that opposed them; yet God never forsook the work of his own hands; when he had begun to deliver his people, he also made an end. And so Haman, that



proud and inveterate enemy of the Jews, who thought to extirpate the whole nation, (who also was probably another type of antichrist,) when he began to fall before Esther and Mordecai, never stayed, till his ruin and the church's deliverance were complete; Haman's wife speaks of it as an argument of his approaching inevitable full destruction, that he "had begun to fall," [Esth. vi. 16](#).

3. If *antiChristian* tyranny and darkness should hereafter so prevail against the protestant church the true religion and every thing appertaining to it as to bring things to the pass fore-mentioned, this would not so properly *answer the prophecy* of slaying the *two witnesses*; for doubtless, one reason why they are called *two witnesses*, is, that the number of witnesses for the truth was (though sufficient yet) *very small*. This was remarkably the case in the dark times of popery; but since the reformation, the number of those appearing on the side of true religion has not been so small. The visible church of Christ has been vastly large, in comparison of what it was before. The number of protestants has sometimes been thought nearly equal to that of the papists; and, doubtless, the number of true saints has been far greater than before.

4. It seems to be signified in prophecy, that after the reformation *antichrist* should *never* prevail against the church of Christ any more, as he had done before. I cannot but think, that whoever reads and well considers what the learned Mr. Lowman has written on the five first vials, ([Rev. xvi.](#)) in his late exposition on the *Revelation*, must think it to be very manifest, that what is said ([ver. 10.](#)) of the pouring out of the fifth vial *on the throne of the beast* (for so it is in the original) is a prophecy of the reformation. Then the vial of God's wrath was poured out on the throne of the beast, *i. e.* according to the language of Scripture, on his authority and dominion, greatly to weaken and diminish it, both in extent and degree. But when this is represented in the prophecy, then it is added, "and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain."<sup>332</sup> If we consider what is commonly intended by similar phrases in the Scripture, I think we shall be naturally, and as it were necessarily, led to understand those words thus: their *policy*, by which heretofore they have prevailed, shall now fail them; their *authority* shall be weakened, their *dominion* greatly diminished, and all their *subtlety* shall not avail them to support the throne of the beast, or even again to extend his authority so far as it had been before extended, and to recover what is lost. All their crafty devices to this end shall be attended with vexatious, tormenting disappointment; they who have the management of the beast's kingdom, shall henceforward grope as in the dark, and stumble, and be confounded in their purposes, plots, and enterprises. Formerly their policy was greatly successful, as a light to guide them to their ends; but now their kingdom shall be full of darkness, and their wisdom shall fail them in all their devices to subdue the church of God.

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332 [Rev. xvi. 10.](#)

The Scripture takes notice of the great policy and subtlety of the powers that support this kingdom, [Dan. vii. 8.](#) “And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.” So it is said of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, that great type of antichrist, [Dan. viii. 23.](#) “A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.” [Ver. 25.](#) “And through his policy also, shall he cause craft to prosper in his hand.” This understanding and policy is the light of this kingdom, as true wisdom is the light of the spiritual *Jerusalem*; and therefore, when the light fails, then may the kingdom of this spiritual *Egypt* be said to be full of darkness. God henceforward will defend his people from these mystical *Egyptians*, as he defended *Israel* of old from *Pharaoh* and his host, when pursuing after them, by placing a cloud and darkness in their way, and so not suffering them to come nigh. He will protect his church from the men of *that city that is spiritually called Sodom*, as *Lot’s* house, wherein were the angels, was defended from the men of *Sodom*, by their being; smitten with darkness or blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door; and as God defended the city in which was *Elisha*, the prophet and witness of the Lord, from the *Syrians*, when they compassed it about with horses and chariots, and a great host, to apprehend him, by smiting them with blindness. The Scripture teaches us, that God is wont in this way to defend his church and people from their crafty and powerful enemies; [Job v. 11.](#), &c. “To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety: he disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise: he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong: they meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night; but he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.” (See also [Psal. xxxv. 4, 6.](#)) On account of such defence of God’s protestant church, with the disappointment and confusion of all the subtle devices, deep-laid schemes, and furious attempts of their antiChristian enemies, to root them out, while they see them still maintaining their ground, in spite of all they do, it makes them as it were gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for mere rage and vexation; agreeably to [Psal. cxxii. 9, 10.](#) “His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour: the wicked shall see it and be grieved, and gnash with his teeth and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.”

Hitherto this prophecy has been very signally fulfilled; since the reformation, the kingdom of antichrist has been remarkably filled with darkness in this respect. Innumerable have been the crafty devices and great attempts of the church of *Rome*, wherein they have exerted their utmost policy and power, to recover their lost dominions, and again to subjugate the protestant nations the *northern heresy*, as they call it. They have wearied themselves in these endeavours for more than *two hundred* years past; but have hitherto been disappointed, and have often been strangely confounded. When their matters seemed to be brought to a degree of ripeness, and they triumphed as though their point was gained, their joy and triumph have suddenly turned into vexation and torment. How many have been their politic



and powerful attempts against the protestant interest in our nation, in particular! And how wonderfully has God disappointed them from time to time! And as God has hitherto so remarkably fulfilled his word in defending his protestant church from antichrist, so I think we have ground to trust in him, that he will defend it to the end.

5. The *hypothesis* of those who suppose that the slaying of the witnesses yet remains to be fulfilled, makes the prophecies of the *Revelation* to be *inconsistent* one with another. According to their *hypothesis*, that battle ([Rev. xi. 7.](#)) wherein the beast makes war with the witnesses, overcomes, and kills them, is the last and greatest conflict between antichrist and the church of Christ, which is to precede the utter overthrow of the antiChristian kingdom. And they must suppose so; for they suppose that immediately after the sufferings the church shall endure in that war, she shall arise, and as it were ascend into heaven; *i. e.* as they interpret it, the church shall be directly advanced to her latter-day rest, prosperity, and glory. And consequently, this conflict must be the same with that great battle between antichrist and the church, described ([chap. xvi. 13.](#), to the end, and more largely [chap. xix. 11.](#), to the end. For that which is described in these places, is most indisputably the greatest and last conflict between the church and her antiChristian enemies; on which the utter downfall of antichrist, and the church's advancement to her latter-day glory, shall be immediately consequent. And so the earthquake that attends the resurrection of the witnesses, [chap. xi. 13.](#) must be the same with that great earthquake described, [chap. xvi. 18.](#) And the falling of the tenth part of the city must be the same with that terrible and utter destruction of antichrist's kingdom, [chap. xvi. 17. to the end.](#)

But these things cannot be. The battle, [chap. xi. 7.](#) cannot be the same with that last and great battle between the church and antichrist, described, [chap. xvi. and xix.](#) For the things that are said of one and the other, and their issue, are in no wise consistent. In that battle, [chap. xi.](#) the church of God conflicts with her enemies in sorrow, sackcloth, and blood: but in the other the matter is represented exceedingly otherwise; the church goes forth to fight with antichrist, not in sackcloth and blood, but clothed in white raiment, Christ himself before them, as their captain, going forth in great pomp and magnificence, upon a "white horse, and on his head many crowns, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords.*"<sup>333</sup> And the saints who follow so glorious a leader to this great battle, follow him on "white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," in garments of strength, joy, glory, and triumph; in the same kind of raiment that the saints appear in, when they are represented as triumphing with Christ, with palms in their hands, [chap. vii. 9.](#) And the issue of the latter of these conflicts is quite the reverse of the former. In the battle, [chap. xi. 7.](#) "The beast makes war with the witnesses, and *overcomes them, and kills them:*" the same is foretold, [Dan. vii. 21.](#) "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints,

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333 [Rev. xix. 11-16.](#)

and prevailed against them.” And [Rev. xii. 7.](#) “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.” But in the issue of that last and great battle, which the church shall have with her antiChristian enemies, the church shall OVERCOME THEM, AND KILL THEM; [Rev. xvii. 14.](#) “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful,” <sup>334</sup>

In the conflict that the beast shall have with the witnesses, the “beast kills them, and their dead bodies lie unburied;” as though they were to be meat for the beasts of the earth, and fowls of heaven: but in the last battle, it is represented that Christ and his church “shall slay their enemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the fowls of heaven.” ([Chap. xix. 17.](#), &c.) There is no appearance, in the descriptions given of that last great battle, of any advantages gained in it by the enemies of the church, before they themselves are overcome; but all appearance of the contrary. The descriptions in the [16th and 19th chapters of the Revelation.](#) will by means allow of such an advantage, as overcoming God’s people, and slaying them; their lying dead for some time, and unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuse, trample on, and make sport with. In [chap. xvi.](#) we read of their being gathered together against the church, a mighty host, into the place called *Armageddon*; and then the first thing we hear of, is, the pouring out of the seventh vial of God’s wrath, and a voice saying, “It is done.” And so in the 19th chap, we have an account of the “beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, being gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” And then the next thing we hear of, is, that the “beast is taken, and with him the false prophet; *and that* these are both cast alive into the lake of fire; *and that* the remnant of their vast army are slain, and all the fowls filled with their flesh.” The issue of the conflict of the beast with the witnesses, in the triumph of the church’s enemies over God’s people, looking on them as entirely vanquished, and their interest utterly ruined, past all recovery; “they that dwell on the earth shall see the dead bodies of the saints lying in the streets of the great city, and shall rejoice over them and make merry, and send gifts one to another.” But the issue of that great and last battle is quite the reverse; it is the church’s triumph over her enemies, as being utterly and for ever destroyed. <sup>335</sup>

334 Compared with [chap. xix. 16.](#) and following verses, and [Rev. xvi. 16, 17.](#)chap. xvi. 16,17.

335 Here if any one shall say, that the ascension of the witnesses into heaven in the sight of their enemies, may, as has more generally been supposed, signify the church’s last victory and triumph over her antiChristian enemies, and final deliverance from them and yet the battle between antichrist and the witnesses, spoken of, [Rev. xi. 7.](#) wherein the witnesses are slain, may not be the same with the last and greatest battle between antichrist and the church, [chap. xvi. and xix.](#) which immediately precedes and issues in the church’s final victory and deliverance they will say that which the prophecies give no reason, nor allow any room, to suppose. That last battle between the church and antichrist, wherein Christ and his people obtain a complete victory, is evidently one of the greatest and most remarkable events foretold in all the Apocalypse; and there is no one thing, unless it be

the consummation of all things, in the two last chapters, that is described in so solemn and august a manner. And the description shows that it is an event which with its circumstances must take up much time. There is vast preparation made for it by the church's enemies: the devils, in order to stir men up, and gather them together, to this "battle of that great day of God Almighty, go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world," to propagate various kinds of delusions, far and wide, all over the world: which, undoubtedly, must take up many years time: [chap. xvi. 13, 14](#). And then great preparation is made in the church of God, to make opposition; [chap. xix. 11-17](#). Now can any reasonably suppose, in what is represented, [chap. xi.](#) of a great conflict between antichrist and God's people wherein the latter are overcome and slain, lie dead three days (or three year) and a half, their enemies triumphing over them: but yet, rising again from the dead in the midst of this triumph of their enemies, and ascending into heaven, while the enemies stand astonished and amazed spectators that before they ascend they continue long to encounter with antichrist in a new conflict? For, is it not plain that herein their enemies, after long time to prepare, should engage with them with vastly greater preparations, strength, and violence than before, and should wage war with them with the mightiest army that ever was gathered against the church. and in the greatest battle that ever was fought? Besides, the witnesses ascending into heaven in the sight of their enemies, spoken of, [chap. xi.](#) cannot be the same with the church's gaining a glorious ascendant over her enemies, in her final victory over antichrist, spoken of, [chap. xvi. xix.](#) because the descriptions of the events by no means answer each other. For, observe, it is said, that when the witnesses "arose, and stood on their feet, and ascended into heaven the same hour there was a great earthquake;" but this does not seem to answer to what is described, [chap. xvi. 18](#). "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." It was said, that, at the time of the first earthquake, ([chap. xi. 13.](#)) "the tenth part of the city fell:" but how far does this fall short of what is described, as attending the great earthquake! ([chap. xv. 19. 20.](#)) "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." It is said of the earthquake, [chap. xi.](#) "And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand:" but how far is this from answering the slaughter described, [chap. xix. 17,](#) &c.! For that is represented as a general slaughter of the kings, captains, mighty men, horses, and armies of the earth, and of the whole world; so that all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, as far as the sun shines, are filled with the flesh of the dead carcasses, it being the "flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Compare [chap. xvi. 14.](#)) Who can think, that this great slaughter, thus represented, should in [chap. xi.](#) be only called a "slaying seven thousand men?" If we read this very eleventh chapter through, we shall see that the felling of the tenth part of the city, and the witnesses arising and ascending into heaven, are entirely distinct from the final destruction of antichrist, and that advancement of the church to her latter-day glory, that is consequent upon it The judgments here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another woe; and the benefits bestowed on the church, are under another trumpet. For immediately after the account of the rising and ascending of the witnesses, the tenth part of the city falling, and the slaying of the seven thousand men, the affrighting of the rest, and their Riving glory to the God of heaven, follow these words, ([ver. 14, 15.](#)) "The second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying. The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." And

in the following verses we have an account of the praises sung to God on this occasion. And then in that last verse, we have a brief hint of that same earthquake, the great bait, and those thunders, lightnings, and voices, that we have an account of in the latter part of [chap. xvi.](#) so that the earthquake mentioned in the last verse of [chap. xi.](#) is that great earthquake that attends the last great conflict of the church and her enemies; and not that mentioned [ver. 13.](#) The three woes, are the woes of God on antichrist and his subjects; and the last of them evidently signifies the terrible judgments of God on antichrist, by which God's wrath upon him shall be fulfilled in his utter destruction. But the calamities on antichrist, attending the rising and ascending of the witnesses such as the falling of the tenth part of the city, and slaying seven thousand men do not belong to this last woe, and therefore do not signify the final destruction of antichrist For the words of [ver. 14.](#) will by no means allow of such a supposition; for there, immediately after giving an account of these calamities, it is added, "the second woe a past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly:" making a most plain and express distinction between the calamities which had already been just mentioned, and those which belong to the third woe, that yet remain to be mentioned. For by being passed, the prophet b to be understood no otherwise, than passed in the declaration and representation; as much as to say, thus an account has been given of the calamities upon antichrist that belong to the second woe; now I proceed to give an account of those dispensations of providence that belong to the third and last woe, which shall prove antichrist's final destruction, and end in the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. What was fulfilled in the reformation, well answers the representation made concerning the witnesses. [Rev. xi. 11, 12.](#) "Of the spirit of life from God entering into them, and their standing on their feet, and ascending up to heaven, in the sight of their enemies." A little before the reformation, the state of the church of God and of true religion was lowest of all, and nearest to utter extinction. Antichrist had, after great and long struggles, prevailed against the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemians. The war with the Albigenses seems especially to be intended by the war of the beast with the witnesses spoken of [ver. 7.](#) These witnesses to the truth, were the most numerous and considerable, and were those that most tormented the church of Rome. And the war that was maintained against them, was by far the greatest that ever antichrist had against any of the professors of the truth, before the reformation; and was properly the war of the beast It was the pope that proclaimed the war, that raised the soldiers by his emissaries and priests, preaching the cross, gathering innumerable multitudes of pilgrims from all parts of Christendom, and raising one Crusade after another, which were conducted and managed by the pope's legates. It was the pope that paid the soldiers with pardons, indulgences, promises of paradise, and such like trumpery. When antichrist had gradually prevailed against these witnesses, with much difficulty and long-continued violent struggling, and after innumerable vexations, disasters, and disappointments; the church of God, in the time of Luther and other reformers, revives on a sudden, in a wonderful manner, when such an event was least expected, to the surprise and amazement of their antiChristian enemies, and appears in such strength, that the reformed are able to stand on their own legs, and to withstand all the power and rage of the church of Rome. Presently after this revival, the people of God are set on high, having the civil magistrate in many countries on their side, and henceforward have the power of many potent princes engaged for their protection. And this, in sight of their enemies, and greatly to their grief and vexation; who though from time to time they exert their utmost, never are able to prevail against them any more, as they had done in former wars. Oftentimes in Scripture, God's church dwelling in safety, out of the reach of their enemies, is represented by their dwelling on high, or being set on high, as [Psal. lix. 1.](#) [Psal. lxxix. 29.](#)

[Psal. xci. 14.](#) [Psal. cvii. 41.](#) [Prov. xxix. 25.](#) [Isa. xxxiii. 16.](#) The children of Israel, in their deliverance out of Egypt from their cruel task-masters, who would fain have brought them into bondage again, were said to be "carried on eagle's wings," which flies away towards heaven; so that the Egyptians could not come at them; and they were protected by the cloud that went with them; as the witnesses are said to be caught up to heaven in a cloud. Compare this with [Isa. iv. 5.](#) "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion. and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence." I shall not pretend to explain the mystery of the three days and a half of the witnesses lying dead, or to determine the precise duration signified by that mystical representation. Possibly no particular measure of time may be intended by it; and yet it may not be without significance: [Note: Mr. Lowman, in the preface to his paraphrase on the Revelation, page 8 observes as follows: "Prophetic numbers do not always express a determinate duration, or space of time, any more than they always express a certain number. Prophecy, I acknowledge, uses numbers sometimes, as other expressions, in a figurative meaning, as symbols and hieroglyphics. Thus the number seven sometimes does not denote the precise number seven; but figuratively denotes perfection, or a full and complete number: and the number ten sometimes does not mean precisely ten in number, but many in general, or a considerable number." ] as no particular number of persons is intended by the two witnesses, but in general it intends a small yet a efficient number for less than two witnesses was not sufficient so, perhaps, no particular duration of that low state of the church before the reformation, may be intended by three days and a half. But in general it may be hereby signified, that this time of the triumphing of the wicked, and extremity of God's church, should be but short. Possibly, three days and a half may be mentioned, because that is the utmost space of time that a dead body can be ordinarily supposed to lie without putrefaction; signifying that at this time the church should be brought to the very brink of utter ruin, yet should be preserved, and made to revive again. And half a day may be mentioned to signify the particular care of Providence in exactly determining this time of his church's extremity. And probably there may be some reference to the three times (or three years) and a half of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; the more apparently to show the disproportion between the time of the church's welfare, and the time of her enemies' victory and triumph. The time of the church's affliction and conflict may be long, and in the issue she may be overcome; but the time of this victory shall be but short in comparison with the other, but as a day to a year. She may as it were be killed, and lie dead, till she comes to the very brink of utter and hopeless ruin; yet God will not suffer her to see corruption. But at that very time when her enemies expected that she should putrify, she shall rise; and be set on high, out of their reach, greatly to their astonishment. The grand objection against all this, is, that it is said. The witnesses should prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth; and when they have finished their testimony, the beast should make war against them, and kill them, &c. And it seems manifest, that after this they are no longer in sackcloth; for henceforward they are in an exalted state in heaven: therefore, seeing the time of their wearing sackcloth is twelve hundred and sixty days, which is the time of the continuance of antichrist; hence their being slain and rising again must be at the conclusion of this period, and so at the end of antichrist's reign. In answer to which I would say, that we can justly infer no more from this prophecy than this. viz. That the twelve hundred and sixty days is the proper time of the church's trouble and bondage, or being clothed in sackcloth; because it is the appointed time of the reign of antichrist. But this does not hinder, but that God, out of his great compassion to his church, should in some respect shorten the days, and grant that she should, in some measure, anticipate

Upon the whole, I think there appears to be no reason from the prophecy concerning the *two witnesses*. [Rev. xi.](#) to expect any such general and terrible *destruction* of the church of Christ, before the utter downfall of *antichrist*, as some have supposed; but good reason to determine the contrary. It is true, there is abundant evidence in Scripture, that there is yet remaining a *mighty conflict* between the church and her enemies the most violent struggle of *Satan* and his adherents in opposition to true religion, and the most general commotion that ever was in the world, since the foundation of it to that time and many particular Christians may suffer hard things in this conflict. But in the general, *Satan* and *antichrist* shall not get the victory, nor greatly prevail; on the contrary, they shall be entirely conquered, and utterly overthrown, in this great battle. So that I hope this prophecy of the *slaying of the witnesses* will not stand in the way of a compliance with the proposal made to us in the *Memorial*, as a prevalent objection and discouragement.



the appointed great deliverance that should be at the end of those days. This he has in fact done at the reformation; whereby the church has had a great degree of restoration granted, from the darkness and power of antichrist, before her proper time, which is not the end of the twelve hundred and sixty days. Thus the church of Christ, through the tender mercies of her Father and Redeemer, in some respects anticipates her deliverance from her sorrows and sackcloth: as many parts of the church are hereby brought from under the dominion of the anti-Christian powers, into a state of power and liberty; though in other respects, the church may be said to continue in sackcloth, and in the wilderness, till the ends of the days; many parts of it still remaining under grievous persecution. What we render. When they shall have finished their testimony, Mr. Lowman (from Mr. Daubuz) renders. While they shall perform their testimony: and observes, that the original may mean the time of their testimony, as well as the end of it. I might here observe, that we have other instances of God shortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the beginning or end, very parallel with what has been now supposed in the case of the witnesses. Thus the proper time of predicted bondage to the posterity of Abraham in Egypt was four hundred years; [Gen. xv. 13.](#) But yet God in mercy deferred the beginning of their bondage; whereby the time was much shortened. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the whole land of Israel should be a desolation and an astonishment, and the land should enjoy her sabbaths, by the Babylonish captivity, was seventy years; ([Jer. xxv. 11, 12.](#)) and these seventy years are dated ([2 Chron. xxxvi. 20, 21.](#)) from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet, from that captivity to Cyrus's decree, was but fifty-two years; though it was indeed seventy years before the more full restoration of the Jewish church and state by Darius decree. [Ezra vi.](#) So the proper time of the oppression and bondage of the Jewish church under Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein both the sanctuary and host should be trodden under foot by him, was two thousand three hundred days; [Dan. viii. 13, 14.](#) The time from Antiochus's taking Jerusalem, and polluting the sanctuary, to his death, seems to have been about so long. But God shortened the days, by granting remarkable help to his people by means of the Maccabees, before that time. Yea, the temple and sanctuary were restored, and the altar rebuilt, and dedicated, before that period.

## SECT. IV.

That the fall of antichrist is at a great distance, answered.

A very learned and ingenious expositor of the *Revelation*, Mr. Lowman, sets the fall of *antichrist*, and consequently the coming of Christ's kingdom, at *great distance*; supposing that the *twelve hundred and sixty* years of antichrist's reign did not begin till the year seven *hundred and fifty-six*; and consequently that it will not end till after the year *two thousand*; and this opinion he confirms by a great variety of arguments.

If this objection be allowed to be valid, and that which ought to determine persons in an affair of this nature, in connexion with the duty before proved, then the following things must be supposed; *viz.* That it is the will of God his people be much in prayer for this event; and particularly, that a little before its accomplishment his people be earnestly seeking, and importunately crying to God for it; but yet that it was God's design, before this time of extraordinary prayer and importunity, his church should understand precisely when the appointed time should be; and that accordingly he has now actually brought the fixed time to light, by means of Mr. Lowman. But is it reasonable to suppose, that this should be God's manner of dealing with his church; first to make known to them the precise time which he has unalterably fixed for showing this mercy to *Zion*, and then make it the duty of his church, in an extraordinary manner, to be by prayer inquiring of him concerning it, and saying, "How long, Lord!" that he would come quickly, hide himself no longer, have mercy upon *Zion*, awake as one out of sleep, openly manifest himself, and make bare his holy arm for the salvation of his people? That "they who make mention of the Lord should not keep silence, nor give him any rest, till he establish and make *Jerusalem* a praise in the earth?" <sup>336</sup> "And that the church should then say to Christ, "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart on the mountain of spices?" <sup>337</sup> "

It may be many ways for the comfort and benefit of God's church in her afflicted state, to know that the reign of antichrist is to be no more than one thousand two hundred and sixty years; and some things in general may be argued concerning the approach of it, when it is near: as the *Jews* could argue the approach of Christ's first coming, from *Daniel's* prophecy of the seventy weeks, though they knew not precisely when that seventy weeks would end. But it is not reasonable to expect that God should make known to us beforehand the *precise* time of Christ's coming in his kingdom. The disciples desired to know this, and manifested their desire to their Lord; but he told them plainly, that "it was not for them to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power;" (*Acts i. 6, 7.*) and there is no reason to think that it is any more for us than for them; or for Christ's disciples

336 [Isa. lxii. 6-7.](#)

337 [Song of Sol. ii. 17.](#)

in these days any more than for his apostles in those days. God makes it the duty of his church to be importunately praying for it, and praying that it may come *speedily*; and not only to be praying for it, but to be seeking for it, in the use of proper means; endeavouring that religion may now revive every where, and *Satan's* kingdom be overthrown; and always to be waiting for it, being in a constant preparation for it, as servants that wait for the coming of their Lord, or virgins for the coming of the bridegroom, not knowing at what hour he will come. But God's making known beforehand the precise time of his coming, does not well consist with these things.

It is the revealed will of God, that he should be inquired of by his people, by extraordinary prayer, concerning this great mercy, to do it for them, before it be fulfilled. And if any suppose, that it is now found out precisely when the time is to be, and (the time being at a considerable distance) that now is not a proper season to begin this extraordinary prayer, I would, on this supposition, ask, When we shall begin? How long before the fixed and known time of the bestowment of this mercy comes, shall we begin to cry earnestly to God that this mercy may come, and that Christ would make haste and be like a roe, &c. For us to delay, supposing that we know the time to be far off, is not agreeable to the language of God's people in my text, "Come, let us go *speedily*, and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts." <sup>338</sup>

I acknowledge that Mr. Lowman's Exposition of the *Revelation* is, on many accounts, excellently written, giving great light into some parts of that prophecy; and especially his interpretation of the five first vials; yet his opinion with respect to the *time, times, and half* a time of antichrist's reign, is the less to be regarded, because it is expressly declared it should be sealed up and hid, and not known till *the time of the end* of this period. *Daniel*, in the last chapter of his prophecy, gives us an account, how the angel told him of a future time of great trouble and affliction to the church of *God*, and then said to him, [ver. 4](#). "But thou, O Daniel, *shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end*. And then the prophet proceeds to give an account of a vision he had of one earnestly inquiring of the angel of the Lord *how long it would be to the end* of this remarkable time of the church's trouble, saying, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? [ver. 5, 6](#). The answer was, that "it should be for a time, times, and an half," and that when so long a time was past, then this wonderful affliction and scattering of the holy people should be finished, [ver. 7](#). But then *Daniel* tells us, in the [next verse](#), that "he heard, but he understood not," and said, "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" He did not understand that general and mystical answer, that those things should have an end at the end of "a time, times, and an half;" he did not know by it, when this period would have an end: and therefore he inquires more particularly what the time of the end was. But the angel replies, [ver. 9](#). "Go thy

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338 [Zech. viii. 21.](#)



way, Daniel, the words are closed and sealed up, till the time of the end.” I do not know what could have been more express. The angel gently rebukes this over-inquisitiveness of *Daniel*, very much as Christ did a like inquisitiveness of the disciples concerning the same matter, when he said to them, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons, that the Father hath put in his own power.”<sup>339</sup>

I think there can be no doubt but that this space of the church’s great trouble, about the end of which *Daniel* inquires, is the same with what is spoken of, [chap. vii. 25.](#) and [Rev. xii. 14.](#) as the time of antichrist’s reign, and the church’s being in the wilderness; and not merely the time of the church’s troubles by *Antiochus Epiphanes*. But we see, when *Daniel* has a mind to know particularly when this time would come to an end, he is bid to go away, and rest contented in ignorance of this matter: for, says the man clothed in linen, *the words are closed up, and sealed, till the time of the end.* That is, very plainly, the matter that you inquire about, shall not be known, but kept a great secret, till the time of the end actually comes, and all attempts to find it out before shall be in vain. And therefore when a particular divine appears, who thinks he has found it out, and has unsealed this matter, we may well think he is mistaken.<sup>340</sup>

Though it is not for us to know the precise time of the fall of antichrist, yet I humbly conceive that we have no reason to suppose the event principally intended in the prophecies of antichrist’s destruction to be at so great a *distance*, as Mr. Lowman places it; but have reason to think it to be much nearer. Not that I would set up myself as a person of equal judgment with Mr. Lowman in matters of this nature. As he differs from most other approved

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339 [Acts i. 7.](#)

340 Mr. Lowman’s own words in his preface, p. 24, 25. are here worthy to be related: “It will (says he) ever be a point of wisdom, not to be over-busy or over-confident in any thing, especially in fixing periods of time, or determining seasons; which it may be are not to be determined, it may be are not fit to be known. It is a maxim of greater wisdom than is usually thought. ‘Seek not to know what should not be revealed.’ Such are many future events. The precise time of our Saviour’s coming to judgment was not revealed, because not fit to be revealed. The uncertainty of his appearance was of greater service to preserve a care of religion, than the revelation of it would have been; for the uncertainty itself gives many useful exhortations: ‘Watch, for ye know not what hour the Son of man cometh. Suppose then some of the events described in this prophecy should be of doubtful application suppose the precise time of the downfall of the beast, the slaying and resurrection of the witnesses, and the beginning of the thousand years’ happy state of the church, should not be so determined, but it would admit co different calculations; may it not be wise, and therefore fit, it should be so? The certainty of those events in a proper time, though that time should not be precisely determined, will answer the greater ends of useful instruction. And if the revelation should go no further than this, it would yet be a revelation of great benefit and advantage; as the certainty of the day of judgment in its proper time surely is, though of that day and hour knoweth no man.”

expositors of the *Apocalypse* in this matter; so I hope it will not appear vanity and presumption in me to differ from this particular expositor, and to agree with the greater number. And since his opinion stands so much in the way of that great and important affair, to promote which is the very end of this whole discourse, I hope it will not look as though I affected to appear considerable among the interpreters of prophecy, and as a person of skill in these mysterious matters, when I offer some reasons against Mr. Lowman's opinion. It is surely great pity that it should be received as a thing clear and abundantly confirmed, that the glorious day of antichrist's fall is at so great a distance, so directly tending to discourage all earnest endeavours after its speedy accomplishment, unless there be good and plain ground for it. I would therefore offer some things to consideration, which I think may justly make us look upon the opinion of this learned interpreter not so indubitable, as to hinder our praying and hoping for its being fulfilled much sooner.

The period of antichrist's reign, as this author has fixed it, seems to be the main point insisted on in his Exposition of the Revelation; which he supposes a great many things in the scheme of prophecies delivered in that book concur to establish. But there are several things in that scheme which appear to me justly liable to exception.

Whereas it is represented, [Rev. xvii. 10, 11.](#) that there are seven different successive heads of the beast; that five were past, and another was to come, and to continue a short space, that might on some accounts be reckoned a seventh; and that antichrist was to follow next after this, as the eighth; but yet the foregoing not being properly one of the heads of the beast, he was properly the seventh. Mr. Lowman does not think with others, that "by the seventh that was to continue a short space, which would not be properly one of the heads of the beast, is meant *Constantine*, and the other Christian emperors; for he thinks they are reckoned as properly belonging to the sixth head of the beast; but that hereby is intended the government of Rome under the Gothic princes, and the exarchate of Ravenna, after the imperial form of government in Rome ceased in Augustulus, till the pope was invested with his temporal dominion, called St. Peter's patrimony, by Pepin king of France, in the year 756. And he supposes, that the wounding of one of the heads of the beast with a sword of death, [chap. xiii. 3-14.](#) was not fulfilled in the destruction of the heathen empire, and the giving of the imperial power unto Christians, but in the destruction of the imperial form of government by the sword of the Goths, in the time of Augustulus, But it seems to me to be very unlikely, that the Spirit of God should reckon *Constantine* and the Christian emperors as proper members, and belonging to one of the heads of that monstrous wild and cruel beast, compared to a leopard, a bear, and a devouring lion, that had a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and that rules by the power and authority of the dragon, or the devil;<sup>341</sup> which beast is represented in this 17th chapter, as full of names of blasphemy, and



341 The word Therion, signifies a wild savage beast, as Mr. Lowman himself observes, page 187.

of a bloody colour, denoting his cruelty in persecuting the Christian church. For *Constantine*, instead of this, was a member of the Christian church, set by God in the most eminent station in his church; and was honoured, above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the persecuting power of that cruel scarlet-coloured beast. Mr. Lowman himself styles him *a Christian prince, and protector of the Christian religion*. God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the visible subjects of *Satan*, [Numb. xxiii. 9](#). “The people shall not be reckoned among the nations.” If that happen to be among them, he will be careful to set a mark upon them, as a note of distinction; [Rev. vii. 3](#), &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out those that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were sealed, [Rev. viii.](#) those idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Christ, [Matt. i.](#) those princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, especially such Christian princes as have been the most eminent instruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongst idolaters: and as members and heads of that kingdom that is noted in Scripture as the most notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, opposition and cruelty to the true worshippers of God. And especially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of those seven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of *blasphemy*; ([Rev. xiii. 1.](#)) which Mr. Lowman himself supposes to signify *idolatry*.

It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the several successive heads of this beast, and *Constantine* and his successors came in the way, and there was occasion to mention them, to set a mark, or note of distinction, on them, signifying that they did not properly belong to the beast, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads; and therefore are to be skipped over in the reckoning; and antichrist, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the seventh head of the beast. This appears to me abundantly the most just and natural interpretation of [Rev. xvii. 10, 11](#). It is reasonable to suppose, that God would take care to make such a note in this prophetic description of this dreadful beast, and not by any means to reckon *Constantine* as belonging properly to him. If we reckon *Constantine* as a member of this beast having seven heads and ten horns, described [chap. xvii.](#) and as properly one of his heads, then he was also properly a member of the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, that warred with the woman, [chap. xii.](#) For the seven heads and ten horns of that dragon are plainly the same with the seven heads and ten horns of the beast. So that this makes *Constantine* a visible member of the devil; for we are told expressly of that dragon, [ver. 9](#). that he was *that old serpent, called the devil and Satan*. And to suppose that *Constantine* is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make these prophecies inconsistent with themselves. For in the [12th chapter.](#), we have represented a war between the dragon and the woman clothed with the sun; which woman, as all agree, is the church;

but *Constantine*, as all do also agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the Christian church, and was on that side in the war against the dragon; yea, was the main instrument of that great victory obtained over the dragon, ([ver. 9-12.](#)) What an inconsistency therefore is it, to suppose that he was at the same time a member and head of that very dragon which fought with the woman, and yet which *Constantine* himself fought with, overcame, and gloriously triumphed over! It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to distinguish *Constantine* from the proper heads of the beast: it would have been a wonder if he had not. God seems to have been careful to *distinguish* him, not only in his word, but in his *providence*, by so ordering it that this Christian emperor should be removed from Rome, the city which God had given up to the seat of the power of the beast and of its heads, and that he should have the seat of his empire elsewhere.

*Constantine* was the instrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire; and giving it a mortal wound in its *head*, *viz.* the heathen emperors then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius. But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious gospel, by which *Constantine* himself was converted, and so became the instrument of the overthrow of the heathen empire in the east and west. The change that was then brought to pass, is represented as the destruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world; and therefore seems to be compared to that dissolution of heaven and earth that shall be at the day of judgment. ([Rev. vi. 12.](#) &c.) And therefore well might the heathen empire under the head which was then reigning, be represented as wounded to death, ([chap. xiii. 3.](#)) It is much more likely, that the wound the beast had by a sword in his head, ([ver. 14.](#)) was the wound the heathen empire had in its head by that sword which ([chap. i. 16.](#) and [Rev. xix. 15.](#)) proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, than the wound that was given to the *Christian* empire and emperor by the sword of the heathen *Goths*. It is most likely that this deadly wound was by that sword with which Michael made war with him, and overcame him, and cast him to the earth, ([chap. xii. 9.](#)) and that the deadly wound was given him at that very time. It is most likely, that the sword which gave him this deadly wound, after which he strangely revived, as though he rose from the dead, was the same sword with that which shall at last utterly destroy him, so that he shall never rise more, ([chap. xix. 1.5, 19, 20, 21.](#)) This wounding of the head of the beast by the destruction of the heathen empire, and conversion of the emperor to the Christian truth, was a glorious event indeed of divine providence, worthy to be so much spoken of in prophecy. It is natural to suppose, that the mortal wounding of the head of that savage cruel beast, represented as constantly at war with the woman, and persecuting the church of Christ, should be some relief to the Christian church; but on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman speaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the Christian church *over her*, and the wound received *from them*.

It is said of that head of the empire that shall be next after the sixth head, and next before antichrist, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beast, that “when it comes, it shall continue a short space.” chap. xvii. 10. By which we may understand, at least, that it shall be one of the shortest, in its continuance, of the successive heads. But the government seated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors, (which Mr. Lowman supposes to be meant by the head,) continued, as Mr. Lowman himself takes notice, very near three hundred years. And if so, its continuance was one of the longest of the heads mentioned.

Besides, if the government Rome was under, from the time that Augustulus abdicated to the time when the pope was confirmed in his temporal dominion, was meant by the *seventh* head that was to be *between* the imperial head and the papal, there would doubtless have been *two* different heads mentioned, instead of one, between the emperor and the pope; *viz.* First, the *Gothic* princes, who reigned near one hundred years. Secondly, the *exarchs* of *Ravenna*, who governed for about one hundred and eighty-five years. The *Gothic* kingdom was much more properly a *distinct* government from the imperial, than the exarchate of *Ravenna*. For during the exarchate, *Rome* was under the government of the emperor, as much as it was in *Constantine’s* time.

In Rev. xvii. 12. it is said, the “ten horns are ten kings, which are to receive power as kings one hour with the beast,” or (as Mr. Lowman says it ought to have been translated) *the same hour or point of time with the beast*. This will not allow the time when antichrist first receives power as king, to be so late as Mr. Lowman supposes. This division of the empire into many kingdoms, denoted by the number *ten*, was about the year four hundred and fifty-six, after *Genesericus* had taken the city of *Rome*: but Mr. Lowman places the beginning of the reign of antichrist in the year seven hundred and fifty-six, which is three hundred years later. I know, such an expression as in *one hour*, or *the same hour*, may allow of some latitude; but surely not such a latitude as this. This is a much longer time than it was from the time of the vision to *Constantine*; much longer than the space of all the first six seals; longer than if was from Christ’s ascension to *Constantine*; and near as long as the time of all the reigns of the heathen emperors put together, from *Augustus Cæsar* to *Constantine*. An hour is every where else in this book used to signify a very short time; as may be seen in places cited in the margin.<sup>342</sup> And the expression, *The same hour*, every where else in the Bible, intends near the same point of time.<sup>343</sup> The phrase *one hour* is used several times in the next chapter, speaking of the downfall of antichrist;<sup>344</sup> and in each evidently signifies

342 Rev. xviii. 10, 17, 19. Chap. iii. 3, 10. Rev. viii. 1. Rev. ix. 15. Rev. xiv. 7.

343 Dan. iii. 6. Dan. iv. 33. Dan. v. 3. Matt. viii. 13. Matt. x. 19. Luke vii. 21. Luke xii. 12. Luke xx. 19. Luke xxiv. 33. John iv. 53. Acts xvi. 18, 33. Acts xxii. 13. Rev. xi. 13.

344 Ver. 10, 17, 19.

*a very short space of time.* And there is no reason why we should not understand the same phrase in the same sense, when used here concerning the rise of antichrist.<sup>345</sup>

345 Mr. Lowman greatly insists upon it, that what is spoken as continuing one thousand two hundred and sixty days, is not so much any spiritual authority or ecclesiastical power of the pope over the nations of christendom, as his temporal government and dominion in that individual city of Rome; and therefore to determine when these one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years began, and when they will end, we must consider when the pope first received this his temporal power over the city of Rome, and the neighbouring regions, called St. Peter's patrimony. But I can see no good reason for this. Indeed it is strange if it be so. God has been pleased in the revelations and prophecies, which he has given for the benefit of his church in general, to speak much concerning an antiChristian power that should persecute the saints, and scatter the power of the holy people, and be an occasion of great affliction to the church of Christ; and has declared often, that his dominion shall continue so long, and no longer; and for the comfort of his church in general, Christ hath sworn with great solemnity, that the continuance of this persecuting power shall be limited; [Dan. xii. 7.](#) Now it would be strange, if in all this the thing principally intended is not that dominion of this antiChristian power which chiefly concerns the church of Christ in general, but merely his temporal dominion over one province in Italy, called St. Peter's patrimony. Doubtless, that dominion of antichrist which the prophecies describe, is the dominion whose duration and limits those prophecies declare. But the dominion of antichrist which the prophecies describe, is not any dominion over a particular province in Italy, but the dominion by which he succeeds the four great monarchies of the world; ([Dan. vii.](#) the dominion by which he succeeds the dragon in his power, throne, and great authority; ([Rev. xiii. 2.](#)) the dominion in which he has power given him over all kindreds, tongues, and nations; ([ver. 7.](#)) the dominion by which the great whom sits on many waters; ([chap. xvii. 1.](#)) which the angel explains to be peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues; ([ver. 15.](#)) and the dominion in which he reigns over the ten kings, into which the Roman empire is divided; ([Rev. xiii. 1.](#) and [xvii. 3, 12, 13.](#)) The beast that had ten horns. is not the city of Rome, and the neighbouring region, but the Roman empire; they are the horns. or the kings, not of the city, but of the empire. If we consider what is expressed in the passages themselves, which speak of the three years and a half of antichrist, they will lead us to understand something very diverse from the duration of his temporal dominion over St. Peter's patrimony. In [Dan. vii. 25.](#) the time, times, and half, of the little horn, is expressly the continuance of time wherein it shall be given to him to change times and laws, and wear out the saints of the Most High: and in [chap. xii. 7.](#) it is spoken of as the time of his scattering the power of the holy people. In [Rev. xi. 2.](#) the forty and two months is spoken of as the time of antichrist's treading under foot the court of the temple and the holy city: i. e. the external and visible Christian church abroad in the world, or the nations of Christendom. In [ver. 3.](#) the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of antichrist are spoken of as the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and in [chap. xii. 6, and 14.](#) the time of the woman's being in the wilderness, which was through the great power antichrist had over the Christian world, and not his small temporal dominion in Italy. It is true, some regard is had in the prophecies to the city of Rome, the city built on seven hills: which being the fountain of all rule and authority in the Roman monarchy, and the capital city of the empire, from whence the whole empire was denominated, and the place where the head of the empire usually resided, was properly used by the angel, ([Rev. xvii. 9, 18.](#)) to show what empire antichrist should rule over, and

what city he should usually reside in. And this is all that can be meant by the words of the angel; and not that those streets and walls were such main and essential things in what the prophecy intended by the beast; that when antichrist's dominion ceases in that place, then the beast ceases. For, if so, then it will follow, that the beast had his head wounded to death a second time, and ceased to be, when the popes resided at Avignon in France, for the best part of a century; when not only the popes did not reside in Rome, nor any part of St. Peter's patrimony, nor any part of Italy; but some of them were neither Romans, nor Italians. Though the angel says of the great whore, [Rev. xvii. 18.](#) "The woman which thou sawest, is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth:" yet by the city, in this case, is not meant so much what was contained within those Roman walls, as the Roman empire; as is evident by [chap. xi. 8.](#) "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt." Here, by that great city, neither Mr. Lowman himself, nor I suppose any other protestant interpreter, understands the city of Rome, strictly speaking, but the Roman monarchy. And though it be true, as Mr. Lowman observes, the pope's ecclesiastical monarchy, power, and influence through christendom, was greatly established and advanced by Pepin making him temporal prince over the exarchate of Ravenna; yet, I would ask, whether the pope's power and influence in the world, and his ability to disturb the quiet of the nations of christendom, and (as expressed in Daniel) to change times and laws, and to carry his own designs, in the various countries and kingdoms of Europe, was not greater before Pepin, than it is now, and has been for a long time? And yet Mr. Lowman supposes that now is properly the time of antichrist's reign, that the 1260 years of his reign continues, and will continue for about 270 years longer; though his power be now so small, and has been declining ever since the reformation, and still declines continually. One thing Mr. Lowman supposes, which confirms his opinion of so late a beginning of the 1260 years of the reign of the beast, is the order of the several periods of this prophecy, and the manner of their succeeding one another. As to his particular scheme of the seven periods, so divided and limited, and so obviously ranked in such order, and following one another in such direct and continual succession, and each ending in a state of peace, safety, and happiness to the church of God, it seems to me to be more ingenious than solid, and that many things might be said to demonstrate it not to be founded in the truth of things, and the real design of the divine author of this prophecy. But not to enter into a particular and full examination of it, I would now only observe, which directly concerns my present purpose, that to make out this scheme, Mr. Lowman supposes that the fifth and sixth trumpets, that bring on the two first woes, and the whole [9th chapter of Revelation](#), altogether respects the Saracens. But it appears to me not very credible, that the Saracens should have so much said of them in this prophecy, as to have a whole chapter taken up about them, and not a word in the prophecy be said about the Turks, who immediately succeeded them in the same religion; who proceeded on the same principles, were so much more considerable, brought vastly greater calamities on the Christian world, have set up and long maintained one of the greatest, strongest, and most extraordinary empires that ever the world saw, and have been the most terrible scourge to Christendom that ever Divine Providence made use of, and one of the greatest of all God's plagues on the world of mankind. For though it be true, that the reign of Othman or Ottoman, who began what they call the Ottoman empire, was a long time after this; yet the Turks themselves, under other princes, in the government they set up in territories that had formerly been possessed by Christians, and in their overrunning and ravaging Christian countries, immediately succeeded the Saracens; and from thenceforward have been a terrible, and almost continual, scourge to the church. Mr. Lowman. in pursuance of his scheme, also supposes, which is yet more incred-

However, I do not deny that the time when Mr. Lowman supposes the reign of the beast began, even the time when *Pepin* confirmed to the pope his temporal dominions in Italy, was a time of the great increase and advancement of the power of antichrist in the world, and a notable *epoch*. And if I may be allowed humbly to offer what appears to me to be the truth with relation to the rise and fall of antichrist; it is this: As the power of antichrist, and the corruption of the apostate church, rose *not at once*, but by several notable steps and degrees; so it will IN THE LIKE MANNER FALL: and, that DIVERS steps and seasons of destruction to the spiritual Babylon, and revival of the true church, are prophesied of under one. And yet it may be true, that there is some particular event, which prevails above all others in the intention of the prophecy, some remarkable season of the destruction of the church of Rome, the papal power and corruption, and advancement of true religion.<sup>346</sup>



ible, this period of the trumpets ends in a state of safety, peace, and happiness to the church of God, so that, on that occasion, “there are great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,” *Rev. xi. 15*. [Note: Preface of his paraphrase, &c. p. 13, 14, and 16.] And yet he supposes, that it issues in setting up the kingdom of antichrist; and that about that very time, when these heavenly voices so joyfully proclaimed this, the beast was enthroned, and the time, times, and half, or 1260 days of his reign began, which, is spoken of every where as the time of the church’s greatest darkness and trouble, the time wherein the “little horn should wear out the saints of the Most High,” *Dan. vii. 25*. “The time appointed for his scattering the power of his holy people,” *Dan. xii. 7*. “The time of the woman’s being in the wilderness,” *Rev. xii. 6, 14*. “The time of treading under foot the court of the temple,” *Rev. xi. 2*. And “the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth,” *Rev. xi. 3*.

346 It was certainly thus with regard to the prophecies of the destruction of old Babylon, and the church’s deliverance from captivity and oppression by that city and kingdom; which is abundantly alluded to in these prophecies of the Revelation, as a noted type of the oppression of the church of Christ by the church of Rome, calling the latter so often by the name of Babylon, and the church of Christ, Jerusalem. The captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians was not perfected at once, but was brought on by several notable steps. So neither was the restoration of the Jewish church, after the captivity, perfected at once. It was several times foretold, that the duration of the captivity should be seventy years; and also that after seventy years were accomplished, God would destroy Babylon; (*Jer. xxv. 11, 12, &c.*) But this period had manifestly several different beginnings, and several endings. Thus from Jehoiakim’s captivity to Cyrus’s decree for the return of the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem was seventy years. And from Zedekiah’s captivity to Darius’s decree, (*Ezra vi.*) seventy years. And from the last carrying away of all, (*Jer. lii. 30.*) to the finishing and dedication of the temple, was also seventy years. So also the prophecies of Baby-ton’s destruction were fulfilled by several steps. These prophecies seem to have a principal respect to that destruction that was accomplished by Cyrus, at the end of the first seventy years fore-mentioned, but there were other things in the very same prophecies not fulfilled till the fourth year of Darius; when what remained of Babylon was subject to another dreadful destruction. This in a great measure completed its desolation; which was at the end of the second seventy years, and when the restoration of the Jews



was perfected by the decree of Darius. [Note: \*Prideaux's Connection, part I. p. 183, 184, and 267, 268, 269, Edit. 9. and p. 271, and 272.] But yet, there were many other things contained in the same prophecies of Babylon's destruction rendering it thenceforward perfectly and perpetually desolate, and the haunt of serpents and wild beasts that were not fulfilled till more than 200 years after, in the time of Selcucus king of Syria. [Note: †Prid. Connect. part I. p. 808- 612.] So also it was with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of Tyre, in the [26th, 27th, and 28th chapters of Ezekiel](#); from which many of the expressions used in Revelation, concerning the destruction of the kingdom of antichrist, are taken, and which is evidently made use of in Scripture as a type of the latter. These prophecies of the destruction of Tyre were fulfilled by various steps. Many things were fulfilled in the destruction of the old city by Nebuchadnezzar; [Note: ‡Ibid. 128, 129, 130.] and yet other parts of the same prophecy were fulfilled by Alexander, [Note: §Ibid. p. 693.] which was about 240 years afterwards. And yet both these desolations are prophesied of under one. And thus it seems to me very probable, that it will prove, with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of mystical Babylon. It is, I think, pretty manifest by the prophecies, that this anti-Christian hierarchy and apostate church will at last be so destroyed, that there shall be no remainder of it left, and shall have as perfect a desolation, before God has done with her, as old Babylon had; there shall be no such thing as pope or church of Rome in the world. [Note: ||See [Rev. xviii. 21-23.](#) and [Rev. xix. 20, 21. Dan vii. 26, 27.](#)] It seems also pretty manifest, that after that event which is chiefly intended in the prophecies of antichrist's destruction, there will be some remains of the Romish church. This appears by that most particular and large description of that destruction, [Rev. xviii.](#) There it seems to be implied; not only that many shall yet remain of the church of Rome, who shall bewail her overthrow, of her people and clergy; ([ver. 11, 15, 17, 18.](#)) but that there should be some princes among them, "Kings of the earth, that have committed fornication, and lived deliriously with her;" ([Rev. xviii. 9, 10.](#)) And it is exceeding improbable in itself, that every papist, in each quarter of the world, should be destroyed, or cease from the world, at one blow. And as long as so considerable a number remains, as may be gathered from the prophecy, they will doubtless have an hierarchy; and one among them that will bear the name of a pope, although the church of Rome shall be mainly destroyed, and the interest of popery shall be sunk very low in the world. So that there will yet remain a papal church and hierarchy in the world, to be wholly extirpated at another period, sometime after that great overthrow principally insisted on in the prophecies. And this second destruction of antichrist, or rather extirpation of his remains, together with the complete extirpation of all remains of Mahometanism, heathenism, and heresy through the world and the finishing stroke towards the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, and so the beginning of the millennium, or spiritual rest of the world may, for ought I know, be about the time Mr. Lowman speaks of; agreeable to the opinion of the ancient Jews, and many Christian divines who have followed them, that the world would stand six thousand years; and then, the seventh thousand years should be the world's rest or sabbath. The ruin of the popish interest is but a small part of what is requisite, in order to introduce and settle such a state of things, as the millennium described. For then, [Rev. xx.](#) Satan's visible kingdom is every where totally extirpated, and a perfect end put to all heresies, delusions, and false religions whatsoever, through the whole earth. Satan thenceforth deceives the nations no more, and has no place any where but in hell. This is the sabbatism of the world; when all shall be in a holy rest, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend; there shall be abundance of peace, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the seas, and God's people shall dwell in quiet resting-places. There is not the least reason

to think, that all this will be brought to pass as it were at one stroke; or that, from the present lamentable state of things, there shall be brought about and completed the destruction of the church of Rome the entire extirpation of all infidelity, heresies, superstitions, and schisms, through all Christendom the conversion of all the Jews, the full enlightening and conversion of all Mahometan and heathen nations, through the whole earth the full settlement of all in the pure Christian faith and order and all by means of the victory of the church in one great conflict with her enemies. This would contradict many things in Scripture, which represent this great event to be brought to pass by a gradual progress of religion; as leaven that gradually spreads, till it has diffused itself through the whole lump; and a plant of mustard, which from a very small seed, gradually becomes a great tree; ([Matt. xiii. 31, 32, 33.](#)) “And like seed which a man casts upon the ground, that springs and grows up, night and day; and first brings forth the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.” And especially would this contradict the prophetic representation of [Ezek. xlvii.](#) where the progress of religion is represented by the gradual increase of the waters of the sanctuary. At first, they are a small spring issuing out from under the threshold of the temple; then, after they had run a thousand cubits, they are up to the ankles; at the end of another thousand cubits, up to the knees; at the end of another thousand, up to the loins. Afterwards they become a great river, that could not be passed over; and are finally brought into the sea, healing the waters even of the vast ocean. If the Spirit of God should be immediately poured out, and that work of God’s power and grace should now begin, which in its progress and issue should complete this glorious effect; there must be an amazing and unparalleled progress of the work and manifestation of divine power to bring so much to pass, by the year 2000. Would it not be a great thing to be accomplished in one half-century, that religion, in the power and purity of it, should so prevail, as to gain the conquest over all those many things that stand in opposition to it among protestants, and gain the upper hand through the protestant world? And if in another, it should go on so to prevail, as to get the victory over all the opposition and strength of the kingdom of antichrist, so as to gain the ascendancy in that which is now the popish world? And if in a third half-century, it should prevail and subdue the greater part of the Mahometan world, and bring in the Jewish nation, in all their dispersions? And would it not be wonderful if in, the next whole century, the whole heathen world should be enlightened, and converted to the Christian faith. throughout all parts of Africa, Asia, America, and Terra Australia, and be thoroughly settled in Christian faith and order, without any remainders of their old delusions and superstitions; and this attended with an utter extirpation of the remnant of the church of Rome, and all the relics of Mahometanism, heresy, schism, and enthusiasm a suppression of all remains of open vice and immorality, every sort of visible enemy to true religion, through the whole earth an end of all the unhappy commotions, tumults, and calamities occasioned by such great changes and all things be so adjusted and settled that the world thenceforward should enjoy a holy rest or sabbatism? I have thus distinguished what belongs to a bringing of the world from its present state, to the happy state of the millennium, the better to give a view of the greatness of the work; and not. that I pretend so much as to conjecture, that things will be accomplished just in this order. The whole work is not the less great and wonderful, to be accomplished in such a space of time, in whatever order the different parts of it succeed each other. They that think that what has been mentioned would not be swift progress, yea, amazingly swift, do not consider how great the work is, and the vast and innumerable obstacles that are in the way. It was a wonderful thing, when the Christian religion, after Christ’s ascension, so prevailed, as to get the ascendancy in the Roman empire in about 300 years; but that was nothing to this.

There are, as I apprehend, good reasons to hope, that the work of God's Holy Spirit which in its progress will overthrow the kingdom of antichrist, and in its issue destroy *Satan's* visible kingdom on earth, will begin in a like time. The prophecy of the 6th vial, ([Rev. xvi. 12-16.](#)) if we take it in its connexion with the other vials, and consider those providential events by which the preceding vials have manifestly been fulfilled, I humbly conceive, affords just ground for such a hope.

It is very plain, from [this whole chapter.](#), as also the [preceding.](#) and [following.](#), that all these seven vials are vials of God's wrath on *antichrist*; one is not poured out on the Jews, another on the *Turks*, another on *pagans*, another on the church of *Rome*; but they all signify God's successive judgments or plagues on the beast and his kingdom, which is in this chapter, and almost every where in this book, called great *Babylon*. And therefore undoubtedly, when it is said, [Rev. xvi. 12.](#) "The sixth angel poured out his vial on the river *Euphrates*, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared;" by the river *Euphrates* is meant something some way appertaining to this mystical *Babylon*; as the river *Euphrates* appertained to the literal *Babylon*. And it is very manifest, that in the prophecy of this vial there is an allusion to that by which the way was prepared for the destruction of *Babylon* by *Cyrus*. This was done by turning the channel of the river *Euphrates*, which ran through the midst of the city. Hereby the way of the kings of the east, the princes of *Media* and *Persia*, was prepared to come in, under the walls of the city, at each end, and to destroy it; as they did that night wherein *Daniel* interpreted the hand-writing on the wall, against *Belshazzar*. [Dan. v. 30.](#)

The prophecies of *Babylon's* destruction, from time to time, take notice of this way of destroying her, by drying up the waters of the river *Euphrates*, to prepare the way for her enemies; [Isa. xlv. 27, 28.](#) "That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of *Cyrus*, He is my servant, and shall perform all my pleasure." [Jer. li. 31, 32.](#) "One post shall run to meet another, to show the king of *Babylon* that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted." And [ver. 36.](#) "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." The *Medes* and *Persians*, the people that destroyed *Babylon*, dwelt to the eastward of *Babylon*, and are spoken of as coming from the east to her destruction; [Isa. xlvi. 11.](#) "Calling a ravenous bird from the east; the man that executeth my counsel, from a far country." And the princes that joined with this ravenous bird from the east, in this affair of destroying *Babylon*, are called *kings*, [Jer. li. 11.](#) "The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the *kings* of the *Medes*; for his device is against *Babylon* to destroy it." [Ver. 28.](#) "Prepare against her the nations, with the *kings* of the *Medes*, the captains thereof, and the rulers thereof." The drying of the channel of the river *Euphrates*, to prepare the way for these kings and captains of the east, to enter into that city, under its high walls, was the last thing done by the besiegers of *Babylon*, before her actual destruction. In like manner, the sixth is the last vial but one of God's wrath on the

mystical *Babylon*; and the effect of it is the drying up of the channel, the last thing done against it before its actual destruction by the seventh vial. This opens the way for those who fight in a spiritual war against it, speedily to bring on its ruin.

Hence I think it may without dispute be determined, that by the river *Euphrates* in the prophecy of this vial, is meant something appertaining to the mystical *Babylon*, or the anti-Christian church and kingdom, that serves it, in a way answerable to that in which the river *Euphrates* served old *Babylon*, and the removal of which will in like manner prepare the way for the enemies to destroy her. And therefore what we have to do in the first place, in order to find out what is intended by the river *Euphrates* in this prophecy, is to consider how the literal *Euphrates* served old *Babylon*. And it may be noted, that *Euphrates* was of remarkable benefit to that city in two respects: it served the city as a *supply*; it was let through the midst of the city by an artificial canal, and ran through the midst of the palace of the king of *Babylon*; that part of his palace called the *old palace*, standing on one side, and the other part called the *new palace*, on the other; with communications from one part to another, above the waters, by a bridge, and under the waters, by a vaulted or arched passage; that the city, and especially the palace, might be plentifully supplied with water. Another way that the waters of *Euphrates* served *Babylon*, was as an *impediment* and *obstacle* in the way of its enemies, to hinder their access to destroy it. For there was a last moat round the city, without the walls, of prodigious width and depth, filled with the water of the river, to hinder the access of her besiegers: and at each end of the city, the river served instead of walls. And therefore when *Cyrus* had dried up the river, the moat was emptied, and the channel of the river under the walls left dry; and so his way was prepared.

Therefore it is natural to suppose, that by *drying up the waters* of the river *Euphrates*, in the prophecy of the destruction of the new *Babylon*, to prepare the way of her enemies, is meant the drying up her *incomes* and *supplies*; and the removal of those things which hitherto have been the chief *obstacles* in the way of those who in this book are represented as at war with her, and seeking her destruction; ([Rev. xix. to the end.](#), and [chap. xii. 7.](#)) those things which have hindered their progress and success, or have been the chief *impediments* in the way of the protest-ant religion. The first thing is the drying of the streams of wealth, the temporal supplies, revenues, and vast incomes of the *Romish* church, and the riches of the popish dominions. *Waters* in scripture language very often signify *provision* and *supplies*, both temporal and spiritual.<sup>347</sup> The temporal supplies of a people are very often in Scripture called waters; as [Isa. v. 13.](#) "Therefore my people is gone into captivity, and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst," *i. e.* deprived of the supports and supplies of life. And the drying up of the waters of a city or kingdom, is often used in

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<sup>347</sup> See [Prov. ix. 17.](#) [Isa. xxxiii. 16.](#) [Isa. xliiii. 23.](#) [Isa. lv. 1.](#) and [Isa. lviii. 11.](#) [Jer. ii. 13.](#) and [18. Jer. xvii. 8.](#) and [13.](#) and in other places innumerable.

scripture prophecy for depriving them of their *wealth*, as the Scripture explains itself, [Hos. xiii. 15](#). “His spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up; he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels.” [Isa. xv. 6, 7](#). “The waters of Nimrim shall be desolate; for the hay is withered; the grass faileth; there is no green thing. Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows.” The *brook of the willows* seems to refer to the waters of *Assyria* or *Chaldea*, whose streams abounded with willows. (Compare [Psal. cxxxvii. 2](#).) So that the carrying away of the treasures of *Moab*, and the adding of them to the treasures of *Assyria*, is here represented by the figure of turning away the waters of *Nimrim* from the country of *Moab*, and adding them to the waters of *Assyria*, as the prophecy explains itself. Yea, even in the prophecies of the destruction of *Babylon* itself, the depriving her of her treasures, seems to be one thing intended by the drying up of her waters. This seems manifest by the words of the prophecy in [Jer. 1. 37, 38](#). “A sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed; a drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.” Compared with chap. [Jer. li. 13](#). “O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures:” with [ver. 36](#). “I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.” The wealth, revenues, and vast incomes of the church of *Rome*, are the *waters* by which that *Babylon* has been nourished and supported; these are the waters which the popish clergy and members of the *Romish* hierarchy thirst after, and are continually drinking down, with insatiable appetite; and they are waters that have been flowing into that spiritual city like a great river; ecclesiastical persons possessing a very great part of the popish dominions. Accordingly, this *Babylon* is represented as vastly rich, in the prophecy of the *Apocalypse*, especially in [the 17th and 18th chapters](#). These are especially the waters that supply the palace of the king of this new *Babylon*, *viz.* the pope; as the river *Euphrates* ran through the midst of the palace of the king of old *Babylon*. The *revenues* of the pope have been like *waters of a great river*, coming into his palace, from innumerable fountains, and by innumerable lesser streams, coming from many various and distant countries.

This prophecy represents to us two cities very contrary the one to the other; *viz.* *New Babylon* and the *New Jerusalem*, and a river running through the midst of each. The *New Jerusalem*, which signifies the church of Christ, especially in her best estate, is described as having “a river running through the midst of it,” [Rev. xxii. 1, 2](#). This river, as might easily be made most evident, by comparing this with abundance of other scriptures, undoubtedly signifies the *divine supplies*; the rich and abundant spiritual incomes and provision of that holy city. Mr. Lowman, in his Emposition, says, *It represents a constant provision for the comfortable and happy life of all the inhabitants of this city of God*. And in his notes on the same place, he observes as follows: “Water, (says he,) as necessary to the support of life, and as it contributes in great cities, especially in hot eastern countries, to the ornament of the place, and delight of the inhabitants, is a very proper representation of the enjoyment of all things, both for the support and pleasure of life.” As the river that runs through the new

*Jerusalem*, the church of Christ, refreshing that holy spiritual society, signifies their spiritual supplies, to satisfy their spiritual thirst; so the river that runs through the new *Babylon*, the antiChristian church, that wicked carnal society, signifies, according to the opposite character of the city, her worldly, *carnal supplies*, to satisfy their carnal desires and thirstings.

The new *Jerusalem* is called in this book the *Paradise of God*; and therefore is represented as having the tree of life growing in it, ([Rev. ii.7.](#) chap. ii. 7. and [Rev. xxii. 2.](#)) And it being described, as though a river ran through the midst of it, there seems to be some allusion to the ancient paradise in *Eden*, of which we are told that there ran a river through the midst of it to water it; ([Gen. ii. 10.](#)) *i. e.* to supply the plants of it with nourishment. And this river was this very same river *Euphrates*, which afterwards ran through *Babylon*. And in one and the other, it represented the divers *supplies* of two opposite cities. In *Eden*, it represented the *spiritual supplies* and wealth of the true Christian church, in her spiritual advancement and glory; ([Rev. xxii. 1, 2.](#)) In the other, it represented the outward *carnal supplies* of the false antiChristian church, in her worldly pomp and vain glory, ([chap. xvi. 12.](#))

When the waters that supply this mystical *Babylon* come to be dried up in this sense, it will prepare the way for *the enemies of antiChristian corruption*, that seek her overthrow. The *wealth* of the church of *Rome*, and of the powers that support it, is very much its *defence*. After the streams of her revenues and riches are dried up, or very greatly diminished, her walls will be as it were broken down, and she will become weak and defenceless, and exposed to easy ruin.<sup>348</sup>

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348 When Joab had taken that part of the city of Rabbah which was called the city of waters, whence the city had its supply of water, the fountains of the brook Jabbok being probably there and which was also called the royal city, probably because there the king had his palace and gardens, on account of its peculiar pleasantness the conquest of the rest of the city was easy. His message to David implies, that the city now might be taken at pleasure, ([2 Sam. xii. 27, 28.](#)) It is possible that by the pouring out of the sixth vial to dry up the river of the mystical *Babylon*, there might be something like the taking of the city of waters in Rabbah. Some chief one of the popish powers that has been the main strength and support of the popish cause, or from whence that church has its chief supplies may be destroyed, or converted, or greatly reduced. But these events must determine. In the prophecies of Egypt's destruction, it is signified, that when their rivers and waters should be dried up, in that sense, that the streams of their temporal supplies should be averted from them, their defence would be gone; [Isa. xix. 4.](#) &c. "The Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord and the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up, and the reeds and flags shall wither; Every thing sown by the brooks shall wither: the fishers also shall mourn." Those whose way was prepared to come in and destroy *Babylon*, by drying up the river *Euphrates*, were the army that was at war with *Babylon*. Cyrus and his host, who sought her overthrow. There seems also to be all reason to suppose, that those whose way will be prepared to destroy mystical *Babylon*, by drying up the mystical *Euphrates*, are that king and army who are in the book of Revelation represented as at war with antichrist. And

As the river *Euphrates* served the city *Babylon* for *supply*; so, as before observed, it served as an *impediment* or *obstacle* to hinder the access of its enemies: for there was a vast moat round the city, filled with the water of the river, which was left empty when *Euphrates* was dried up. And therefore we may suppose, that another thing meant by the effect of the sixth vial, is the removal of those things which hitherto have been the *chief obstacles* to the progress of true religion, and the victory of the church of Christ over her enemies. These have been the corrupt doctrine and *practices* which have prevailed in protestant countries, the *doubts* and *difficulties* that attend many doctrine of the true religion, and the many *divisions* and *contentions* that subsist among protestants. The removal of those would wonderfully prepare the way for Christ and his armies to go forward and prevail against their enemies, in a glorious propagation of true religion. So that this vial, which is to prepare the way for Christ and his people, seems to have respect to that remarkable *preparing of the way* for Christ, by *levelling mountains, exalting valleys, drying up rivers, and removing stumbling-blocks*, which is often spoken of in the prophecies, as what shall next precede the church's latter-day glory; (as *Isa. xlii. 13.*, &c.) "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall stir up jealousy as a man of war; he shall prevail against his enemies. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools; and I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, and I will load them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (*Chap. xl. 3-5.*) "Prepare ye the way of

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what king and army that is, we may see in *chap. xii.7.* and *xix. 11.*, to the end; Michael the king of angels, and his angels; he "whose name is called the word of God," and "that has on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords; and the heavenly armies that follow him, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," Cyrus, the chief of the kings of the east, that destroyed Babylon, redeemed God's church from thence, and restored Jerusalem, seems in that particular affair very manifestly to be spoken of as a type of Christ God calls him "his shepherd, to perform his pleasure, to say to Jerusalem, Thou shall be built, and to the temple. Thy foundation shall be laid," &c; (*Isa. xlii. 28.*) God calls him his Messiah; (*chap. xlv. 1.*) "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, (in the original, to his Messiah,) to Cyrus." He is spoken of as one "that God had raised up in righteousness, that he might build his city, and freely redeem his captives, or let them go without price or reward," (*chap. xlv. 13.*) He is said to be one, whom "God had loved;" (*chap. xlviii. 14.*) as the Messiah is said to be "God's elect, in whom his soul delighteth." As by Babylon, in the Revelation, is meant that antiChristian society which is typified by old Babylon; so by the kings of the east, that should destroy this antiChristian church, must be meant those enemies of it who were typified by Cyrus, and other chieftains of the east, that destroyed old Babylon; viz. Christ, who was born, lived, died, and rose in the east, together with those spiritual princes that follow him, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and those ministers and saints that are kings and priests, and shall reign on earth; especially those leaders and heads of God's people, those Christian ministers and magistrates, that shall be distinguished as public blessings to his church, and chief instruments of the overthrow of antichrist.

the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God: every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” (Chap. xi. 15, 16.) “And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams thereof, and make men go over dry-shod: and there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left from *Assyria*, like as it was to *Israel*, in the day that he came out of the land of *Egypt*.” (Chap. lvii 14.) “Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.” And, (chap. lxii. 10.) “Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.” (Zech. x. 10-12.) “I will bring them again also out of the land of *Egypt* and gather them out of *Assyria*.; and I will bring them into the land of *Gilead* and *Lebanon*; and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves of the sea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of *Assyria* shall be brought down, and the sceptre of *Egypt* shall depart away: and I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.” And it is worthy to be remarked, that as *Cyrus* destroying *Babylon*, letting go God’s captives from thence, and restoring *Jerusalem*, is certainly typical of Christ’s destroying mystical *Babylon*, delivering his people from her tyranny, and gloriously building up the spiritual *Jerusalem* in the latter days; so God preparing *Cyrus*’s way, by drying up the river *Euphrates*, is spoken in similar terms, to signify the preparing of Christ’s way, when he shall come to accomplish the latter event Thus God says concerning *Cyrus*, (Isa. xlv. 2.) “I will go before thee, and *make crooked places straight*.” And, (ver. 13.) “I will direct, or make straight, (as it is in the margin,) all his ways.” This is like chap. xl. 2, 4. “Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. The crooked things shall be made straight.” (Chap. xlii. 16.) “I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight.”<sup>349</sup>

349 If any should object against understanding the river *Euphrates*, in *Rev. xvi. 12.* as signifying what has been supposed, that in another place in this prophecy, it is manifestly not so to be understood, viz. in *chap. ix. 14.* “saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet. Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river *Euphrates*.” and that there is no reason to understand it in the vision of the sixth vial, as signifying something diverse from what is meant by the same river in the vision of the sixth trumpet: I answer, That there appears to me to be good reason for a diverse understanding of the river *Euphrates* in these two different places: the diversity of the scene of the vision, and of the kind of representation in these two parts of this prophecy, naturally requires it. It is in this book, as in the Old Testament: when the river *Euphrates* is spoken of in the Old Testament, both in the histories and prophecies, it is mentioned with regard to a two-fold relation; 1st, in its relation to *Babylon*; as its defence and supply. 2dly, in its relation to the land of *Israel*, God’s visible people. And as it was related to that, it was its eastern boundary. (*Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7. and Deut. xi. 24. Josh. i. 4. 2 Sam. viii.*



3. 1 Chron. xviii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21. Ezra iv. 20.) Agreeable to this diverse relation of this river, under which it is mentioned in the Old Testament, so must we understand it differently in different parts of the prophecy of this book of Revelation, according as the nature and subject of the vision requires. In the 15th chapter, where the vision is of God's plagues on Babylon, preparing the way for her destruction, there, when the river Euphrates is mentioned, we are naturally and necessarily led to consider it as something appertaining to the mystical Babylon, as Euphrates did to old Babylon. But we cannot understand it so in the 9th chapter, for there the prophecy is not about Babylon. To mention Euphrates there, as something belonging to Babylon, would have been improper; for the nature of the vision, and prophetic representation, did not lead to it, nor allow it. John had no vision of Babylon; that kind of representation had not been made to him; not a word is said about Babylon till we come to the second part of this prophecy, after John had the vision of the second book, and Christ had said to him, Thou must prophesy again before peoples, and nations, and kings," chap. xi. The scene of the vision in the former part of the prophecy, had been more especially the land of Israel; and the vision is concerning two sorts of persons there, viz. Those of the tribes of Israel who had the seal of God in their foreheads, and those wicked apostate Israelites who had not his mark. (Compare chap. vii. 3-8. and chap. ix. 4.) The vision in this ninth chapter, is of God's judgments on those of the tribes of Israel, or in the land of Israel, which had not the seal of God in their foreheads. And therefore when mention is made (ver. 14.) of a judgment coming on them from the river Euphrates, it must mean in the former respect, with relation to the land of Israel, as its eastern border; and there by we must understand that God would bring some terrible calamity on Christendom from its eastern border, as he did when the Turks were let loose on Christendom. If these things are intended in the prophecy of the sixth vial, it affords, as I conceive, great reason to hope that the beginning of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which in its progress and issue will overthrow antichrist, and introduce the glory of the latter days, is not very far off. Mr. Lowman has, I think, put it beyond all reasonable doubt, that the fifth vial was poured out in the time of the reformation. It also appears, by his Exposition, that take one vial with another, it has not been, from the beginning of one vial to the beginning of another, but about 184 years. But it is now about 230 years since the fifth vial began to be poured; and it is a long time since the main effects of it have been finished. And therefore, if the sixth vial has not already begun to be poured out, it may well be speedily expected. But with regard to drying up the fountains and streams of wealth, the temporal incomes and supplies of the antiChristian church and territories, I would propose it to consideration, whether or no many things that have come to pass within these twenty years past, may not be looked upon as probable beginnings of & fulfilment of this prophecy. Particularly, what the kings of Spain and Portugal did some years since when displeased with the pope, forbidding any thenceforward going to Rome for investitures, &c. thereby cutting off two great streams of the pope's wealth, from so great and rich a part of the popish world; and its becoming so frequent a thing of late for popish princes, in their wars, to make bold with the treasure of the church, and to tax the clergy within their dominions, as well as the laity; or which is equivalent, to oblige them to contribute great sums, under the name of a free gift. To which may be added, the late peeling; and impoverishing of the pope's temporal dominions in Italy, by the armies of the Austrians, Neapolitans, and Spaniards, passing and repassing through them, and living so much at discretion in them, of which the pope has so loudly complained in vain, receiving nothing but menaces, when he has objected against giving liberty for the like passage in future. These things make it hopeful, that the time is coming when the princes of Europe, "the ten horns, shall hate the whore, and make her desolate

and naked, and eat her flesh:" (Rev. xvii. 16.) which will prepare the way for what next follows, her being burnt with fire; even as the sixth vial poured out to consume the supplies of antichrist, and "strip him naked" of his wealth, and as it were "to pick his flesh off from his bones" will make way for what next follows, the seventh vial, that will consume antichrist by the fierceness of God's wrath. Besides the things already mentioned, there are also some others that have lately happened to dry up the wealthy fountains and streams of the antiChristian dominions. Among these we may reckon the almost ruined trade of France and Spain, the two chief popish kingdoms, the main support of the popish cause, and from whence the kingdom of antichrist has had of late its main supplies. The almost miraculous taking of Cape-Breton, in the year 1745, whereby was dried up one of the principal sources of the wealth of the kingdom of France; and the no less, but yet more wonderful, disappointment of the French, in their great attempt to repossess themselves of it, and the confounding of their great Armada, under the Duke D'Anville, by a most visible hand of God against them, the last year; and in now again baffling a second attempt of our obstinate enemies, this year, by delivering up their men of war, with their warlike forces and stores, in their way to America, into the hands of the English admirals Anson and Warren. Moreover, the strange and unaccountable consuming of the great magazines of the French East-India company at Port L'Orient, with their magnificent buildings, the last year scarce any thing of the great stores there laid up being saved out of the flames the awful destruction by an earthquake, the last year, of that great and rich city Lima, the centre of the South-Sea trade, and the capital of Perut the richest country in the world, from whence comes more of its silver and gold than any other country from whence Spain is principally supplied with its wealth, and where the French had a great trade; the destruction of the city being attended with the destruction of all the ships in the harbour, which were dashed to pieces, as it were, in a moment, by the immediate hand of God; many of which were doubtless laden with vast treasures. I might have mentioned the taking of Porto Rello, not long before this, by a very small force, though a place of very great strength, where the Spanish galleons used principally to go, to carry the wealth of Peru to Spain. Besides the taking from the French and Spaniards so many of their ships, laden with vast riches, trading to the South-Seas, the East and West Indies, and the Levant. And here it is especially worthy of notice, that when the French seemed to have gotten so great an advantage of the English factory at Madras, they were so frustrated, as to the benefit and gains they expected, by the hand of Heaven against them, immediately pursuing the conquerors with tempest, wrecking their ships laden with spoils; and after that delivering up into the hands of the English their East-India fleet, with their stores and immense treasures, intended for confirming to themselves the advantage they seem to have gained by the forementioned conquest: at the same instant also delivering into our hands their strong force intended for the regaining that great fountain of their wealth, which they had lost at Cape-Breton. And since that, delivering into the hands of Sir Peter Warren so great a part of their vast and rich fleet from the West Indies. And one thing with relation to the taking of Cape-Breton, though it may seem trivial, yet I do not think to be altogether inconsiderable in the present case; and that is, that thereby the antiChristian dominions are deprived of a very great part of their fish, which makes no small part of the food and support of popish countries; their superstition forbidding them to eat any flesh for near a third part of the year. This they were supplied with much more from Cape-Breton than from any place in the world in the possession of papists. And the contention of France with the Dutch, deprives them of most of their supplies of this sort, which they had elsewhere. When the prophet Isaiah foretells the depriving Egypt of its wealth and temporal supplies, under the figure of drying up their rivers, this is partic-

It is true, we do not know how long this vial may continue running, and so Christ's way preparing, before it is fully prepared: but yet, if there be reason to think the effect of this vial is begun, or is near, then there is reason also to think that the beginning of that great work of God's Spirit, in the revival of religion, which, before it is finished, will issue in anti-christ's ruin, is not far off. For it is pretty manifest, that the *beginning* of this work will accompany the *sixth* vial. For the gathering together of the armies on both sides, on the side of Christ and antichrist, to that great battle that shall issue in the overthrow of the latter, will be under this vial; (compare [Rev. xvi. 12, 13, 14.](#) with [chap. xix. 11, to the end.](#)) And it is plain, that Christ manifesting himself, wonderfully appearing, after long hiding himself, to plead his own and his people's cause, and riding forth against his enemies in a glorious

ularly mentioned, that they should be deprived of their fish. [Isa. xix. 4.](#) &c. "And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord. And the waters shall fall from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up; and they shall turn the rivers far away, and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up. The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish." This is expressed in the prophecies of drying up the waters, i.e. the supplies of Egypt; and this probably is implied in the prophecies of drying up the waters of that city which is spiritually called Egypt. And it may be noted, that this is not only a supply that the church of antichrist has literally out of the waters, but is that part which is eminently the supply and food of their anti-Christian superstition, or which their popish religion makes necessary for them. These things duly considered, I imagine, afford us ground to suppose, not only that the effect of this sixth vial is already begun, but that some progress is already made in it, and that this vial is now running apace. And when it shall be finished, there is all reason to suppose that the destruction of antichrist will very speedily follow; and that the two last vials will succeed one another more closely than the other vials. When once the river Euphrates was dried up, and Cyrus's way was prepared, he delayed not, but immediately entered into the city to destroy it. Nor is it God's manner, when once his way is prepared, to delay to deliver his church, and show mercy to Zion. When once impediments are removed, Christ will no longer remain at a distance, but will be like a roe or a young hart, coming swiftly to the help of his people. When that cry is made, [Isa. lvii. 14.](#) "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way." &c. the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, is represented as very near to revive the spirit of the contrite, and deliver his people with whom he had been wroth, ([ver. 15,](#) to the end.) When that cry is made, [Isa. xl.](#) "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God; every valley shall be exalted," &c. God tells his church, that her warfare is accomplished, and the time to comfort her is come, and that the glory of the Lord now shall be revealed, and all flesh see it together, [ver. 1-5.](#) And agreeable to these things, Christ on the pouring out the sixth vial, says, "Behold, I come," [Rev. xvi. 15.](#) The sixth vial is the forerunner of the seventh or last, to prepare its way. The angel that pours out this vial is the harbinger of Christ; and when the harbinger is come, the king is at hand. John the Baptist, Christ's harbinger, who came to level mountains and fill up valleys, proclaimed, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and when he had prepared Christ's way, the "Lord suddenly came into his temple, even the messenger of the covenant." [Mal. iii. 1.](#)

manner and his people following him in pure linen, or *the practice of righteousness and pure religion* will be the alarm to antichrist, and cause him to gather that vast host to make the utmost opposition. But this alarm and gathering together is represented as being under the sixth vial. So that it will be a great *revival*, and a mighty *progress* of true religion under the sixth vial, eminently threatening the speedy and utter overthrow of *Satan's* kingdom on earth, that will so mightily rouse the old serpent to exert himself with such exceeding violence, in that greatest conflict and struggle that ever he had with Christ and the church, since the world stood.

All the seven vials bring terrible *judgments* upon antichrist, but there seems to be something distinguishing in the three last, the *fifth, sixth* and *seventh, viz. That they more directly tend to overthrow his kingdom*; and accordingly, each of them is attended with a great reviving of religion. *The fifth* vial was attended with such a revival and reformation, as greatly weakened and diminished the *throne* or kingdom of the beast, and went far towards its ruin. It seems as though the *sixth* vial should be much more so; for it is the distinguishing note of this vial that it is the *preparatory*, which more than any other vial *prepares the way* for Christ's coming to destroy the kingdom of *antichrist*, and to set up his own kingdom in the world.

Besides, those things which belong to the *preparation of Christ's way*, so often represented by levelling mountains, drying up rivers, &c. *viz. Unravelling intricacies, and removing difficulties attending Christian doctrine; distinguishing between true religion and its false appearances; detecting and exploring errors and corrupt principles; reforming the wicked lives of professors*, which have been the chief stumbling-blocks and obstacles that have hitherto hindered the progress of true religion: these things are the proper work of the Spirit of God, promoting and advancing divine light and true piety, and can be the effect of nothing else.

And that the *beginning* of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which shall finally bring on the church's latter-day glory, will accompany that other effect of this vial turning the streams of the wealth of the world, bringing its treasures, and the gains of its trade and navigation, into the true protestant church of Christ seems very manifest, because this very effect is spoken of as that which shall be at the beginning of this glorious work. *Isa. lx. 8, 9.* "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish *first*, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." So that it is to be hoped, that before this effect, now probably begun, is at an end, the Spirit of God will so *influence the hearts of the protestants*, that they will be disposed to devote to the service of God the silver and gold they take from their popish enemies, and the gains of their trade and navigation, both to the *East* and *West Indies*, so that *their merchandise and hire shall be holiness to the Lord*.

Agreeably to what has been supposed, that an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit of God is to accompany this *sixth* vial; so the beginning of a work of extraordinary awakening has already attended the probable beginning of it, continued in one place or other for many years past: although it has been, in some places, mingled with much enthusiasm, after the manner of things in their first beginnings, unripe, and mixed with much crudity. But it is to be hoped a far more pure, extensive, and glorious revival of religion is not far off, which will more properly be the beginning of that work which in its issue shall overthrow the kingdom of antichrist and of *Satan* through the world. But God *will be inquired of for this, by the house of Israel, to do it for them.*

If, notwithstanding all I have said, it be still judged there is sufficient reason to determine, that the ruin of antichrist is at a *very great distance*; and if all I have said as arguing that the beginning of that glorious revival of religion, which in its continuance and progress will destroy the kingdom of antichrist, is not very far off be judged to be of no force; yet it will not follow, that our complying with what is proposed to us in the late *Memorial* from *Scotland*, will be in vain, or not followed with such spiritual blessings, as will richly recompense the pains of such extraordinary prayer for the Holy Spirit, and the revival of religion. If God does not grant that greatest of all effusions of his Spirit, so soon as we desire; yet we shall have the conscious satisfaction of having employed ourselves in a manner that is certainly agreeable to Christ's will and frequent commands in being much in prayer for this mercy, much more than has heretofore been common with Christians and there will be all reason to hope, that we shall receive some blessed token of his acceptance. If the fall of mystical *Babylon*, and the work of God's Spirit that shall bring it to pass, be at several hundred years distance; yet, it follows not that there will be no happy *revivals of religion* before that time, which shall be richly worth the most diligent, earnest, and constant prayer.

### SECT. V.

The charge of novelty, answered.

I would say something to one objection more, and then hasten to the conclusion of this discourse. Some may be ready to object, that what is proposed in this *Memorial* is a *new thing*, such as never was put in practice in the church of God before.

If there be something *circumstantially* new in it, this cannot be a sufficient objection. The duty of prayer is no new duty. For many of God's people expressly to agree, as touching *something they shall ask* in prayer, is no new thing. For God's people to agree on circumstances of *time and place* for united prayer, according to their own discretion, is no new thing. For *many*, in *different places*, to agree to offer up *extraordinary prayers* to God, at the *same time*, as a token of their union, is no new thing; but has been commonly practised in the appointment of days of fasting and prayer for special mercies. And if the people of God should engage in the duty of prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in a *new manner*

that they resolve not to be so negligent in this duty, as has been common with professors of religion heretofore, but will be more frequent and fervent in it this would be such a new thing as *ought* to be, and would be only to *reform a former negligence*. And for the people of God in various parts of the world, visibly, and by express agreement, to *unite* for this extraordinary prayer, is no more than their duty; and no more than what it is foretold the people of God should *actually* do, before the time comes of the church's promised glory on earth. And if this be a *duty*, then it is a duty to come into some *method* to render this *practicable*: but it is not practicable (as was shown before) but by *this method*, or some other *equivalent*.

And as to *this particular method*, proposed to promote union in extraordinary prayer God's people in various parts setting apart fixed seasons, to return at certain periods, wherein they agree to offer up their prayers at the same time it is not so new as some may possibly imagine. This may appear by what follows; which is a part of a paper, dispersed abroad in *Great Britain and Ireland*, from London, in the year 1712, being the latter end of Queen *Anne's* reign, and very extensively complied with, entitled, "A serious call from the city to the country, to join with them in setting apart some time, *viz.* from seven to eight, every Tuesday morning, for the solemn seeking of God, each one in his closet, now in this so critical a juncture. [Jonah i. 6.](#) 'Call upon God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.'" What follows is an extract from it:

"You have formerly been called upon to the like duty, and have complied with it; and that not without success. It is now thought highly seasonable to renew the call. It is hoped that you will not be more backward, when it is so apparent that there is even greater need. It is scarce imaginable how a professing people should stand in greater need of prayer, than we do at this day. You were formerly bespoken from that very pertinent text, [Zech. viii. 21.](#) "The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, (or, as the marginal reading, more expressive of the original reading, is,) continually, from day to day, to entreat the face of the Lord." According to this excellent pattern, we of this city, the metropolis of our land, think ourselves obliged to call upon our brethren in *Great Britain and Ireland*, at a time when our hearts cannot but meditate terror, and our flesh tremble for fear of God, and are afraid of his righteous judgments: those past being for the most part forgotten; and the signs of the times foreboding evil to come, being by the generality little, if at all, regarded: we cannot therefore but renew our earnest request, that all who make conscience of praying for the peace of *Jerusalem*, who wish well to *Zion*, who would have us and our posterity a nation of *British* protestants, and not of popish bigots and *French* slaves, would give us (as far as real and not pretended necessity will give leave) a meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour mentioned; there to wrestle with God, for turning away his anger from us, for our deliverance from the hands of his and our enemies, for turning the councils of all *Ahitophels*, at home and abroad, into foolishness; for mercy

to the queen and kingdom; for a happy peace, or successful war so long as the matter shall continue undetermined; for securing the protestant succession in the illustrious house of *Hanover*, (by good and evil wishes to which, the friends and enemies of our religion and civil rights are so essentially distinguished,) and especially for the influences of divine grace upon the rising generation, particularly the seed of the righteous, that the offspring of our Christian heroes may never be the plague of our church and country. And we desire that this solemn prayer be begun the first Tuesday after sight, and continued at least the summer of this present year, 1712. And we think every modest, reasonable, and just request, such as this, should not on any account be denied us; since we are not laying a burden on others, to which we will not most willingly put our own shoulders; nay, indeed, count it much more a blessing than a burden. We hope this will not be esteemed by serious protestants, of any denomination, a needless step; much less do we fear being censured by any such, as fanciful and melancholy, on account of such a proposal. We with them believe a providence, know and acknowledge that our God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture recordeth, and our age is not barren of instances, of God's working marvellous deliverances for his people in answer to humble, believing, and importunate prayer; especially when prayer and reformation go together; which is what we desire. Let this counsel be acceptable to us, in this day of the church's calamity, and our common fears. Let us seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Let us go and pray unto our God, and he will hearken unto us. We shall seek him and find him, when we search for him with all our hearts. Pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*: they shall prosper that love her. And may *Zion's* friends and enemies both cry out with wonder, when they see the work of God; Behold they pray! What hath God wrought! Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

*Postscript.* It is desired and hoped, that if any are hindered from attending this work at the above mentioned hour, they will nevertheless set apart an hour weekly for it."

God speedily and wonderfully heard and answered those who were united in that extraordinary prayer, in suddenly scattering those black clouds which threatened the nation and the protestant interest with ruin, at that time; in bringing about, in so remarkable a manner, that happy change in the state of affairs in the nation, which was after the queen's death, by bringing in King *George* the First, just at the time when the enemies of the religion and liberties of the nation had ripened their designs to be put in speedy execution. And we see in the beginning of this extract, that what is proposed, is mentioned as being no new thing, but that God's people in *Great Britain* had *formerly* been called upon to the like duty, and had complied, not without *success*. Such agreements have several times been proposed in *Scotland*, before this which is now proposed to us; there was a proposal published for this very practice, in the year 1732, and another in 1735. So that it appears this objection of *novelty* is built on a mistake.

## SECT. VI.

Concluding considerations.

NOW, upon the whole, I desire every serious Christian who may read this discourse, calmly and deliberately to consider, whether he can excuse himself from complying with what has been proposed to us, and requested of us, by those ministers of Christ in *Scotland*, who are the authors of the late *Memorial*. God has stirred up a part of his church, in a distant part of the world, to be in an extraordinary manner seeking and crying to him, that he would appear to favour *Zion*, as he has promised. And they are applying themselves to us, to join with them; and make that very proposal to us, which is spoken of in my text, and in like manner and circumstances. The members of one church, in one country, are coming to others in distant countries, saying, *Let us go speedily and constantly to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts*. Will it not become us readily to say, *I will go also*? What these servants of Christ ask of us, is not silver or gold, or any of our outward substance, or that we would put ourselves to any cost, or do any thing that will be likely to expose us to any remarkable trouble, difficulty, or suffering in our outward interest; but only that we would help together with them, by our prayers to God, for the greatest mercy in the world; a mercy which as much concerns us as them; for the glory of their Lord and ours; for the great advancement of our common interest and happiness, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures, through all nations; a mercy, of which, at this day especially, there is great need; a mercy, which we, in this land, do stand in particular need of; a mercy, which the word of God requires us to make the subject matter of our prayers above all other mercies, and gives us more encouragement to pray earnestly and unitedly to him for, than any other mercy; and a mercy, which the providence of God towards the world of mankind, at this day, loudly calls the people of God to pray for. I think, we cannot reasonably doubt but that these ministers have acted a part becoming disciples of the great Messiah, and ministers of his kingdom; and have done the will of God, according to his word, in setting forward such an affair at this day, and in proposing it to us. And therefore, I desire it may be considered, whether we shall not really sin against God, in refusing to comply with their proposal and request, or in neglecting it, and turning it by, with but little notice and attention; therein disregarding that which is truly a call of God to us.

The ministers that make this proposal to us, are no separatists or schismatics; are no promoters of public disorders, nor of any wildness or extravagance in matters of religion; but are quiet, peaceable members and ministers of the church of *Scotland*, who have lamented the late divisions and breaches of that church. If any shall say, they cannot judge of their character, but must take it on trust from others, because they conceal their names; in answer to this, I would say, That I presume no sober person will say that he has any reason to suspect them to be any other than gentlemen of honest intention. Be assured, there is no appearance of any thing else but an upright design in their proposal; and that



they have not mentioned their names, is an argument of it. It may well be presumed, from the manner of their expressing themselves in the *Memorial* itself, they concealed their names from what perhaps may be called an excess of modesty; choosing to be at the greatest distance from appearing to set forth themselves to the view of the world, as the heads of a great affair, and the first projectors and movers of something extraordinary. And therefore, they are careful to tell us, that they do not propose the affair, but as a thing already set on foot; and do not tell us who first projected it. The proposal is made to us in a very proper and prudent manner, with all appearance of Christian modesty and sincerity, and with a very prudent guard against any thing that looks like superstition, or whatsoever might entangle a tender conscience. Far from any appearance of design to promote a particular party, or denomination of Christians, in opposition to others, with all appearance of the contrary, it is their charitable request, that none would by any means conceive of any such thing to be in their view, and that all of every denomination and opinion concerning the late religious commotions would join with them in seeking the common interest of the kingdom of Christ. And therefore, I think, none can be in the way of their duty in neglecting a proposal in itself excellent, and which they have reason to think is made with upright intentions, merely because the proposers modestly conceal their names. I do not see how any serious person, who has even an ill opinion of late religious stirs, can have any colour of reason to refuse a compliance with this proposal, on that account. The more disorders, extravagancies, and delusions of the devil have lately prevailed, the more need have we to pray earnestly to God, for his Holy Spirit, to promote *true religion*, in opposition to the grand deceiver, and all his works. And the more such prayer as is proposed, is answered, the more effectually will all that is contrary to sober and pure religion be extirpated and exploded.

One would think that each who favours the dust of *Zion*, when he hears that God is stirring up a considerable number of his ministers and people to unite in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion and the advancement of his kingdom, should greatly *rejoice* on this occasion. If we lay to heart the present calamities of the church of Christ, and long for that blessed alteration which God has promised, one would think it should be natural to rejoice at the appearance of something in so dark a day, which is so promising a token. Would not our friends that were lately in captivity in *Canada*, who earnestly longed for deliverance, have rejoiced to have heard of any thing that seemed to forebode the approach of their redemption? And particularly, may we not suppose such of them as were religious persons, would greatly have rejoiced to have understood that there was stirred up in Goers people an extraordinary spirit of prayer for their redemption? I do not know why it would not be as natural for us to rejoice at the like hopeful token of the redemption of *Zion*, if we made her interest our own, and preferred *Jerusalem* above our chief joy.

If we are indeed called of God to comply with the proposal now made to us, then let me beseech all who sincerely love the interest of real Christianity, notwithstanding any diversity

of opinion and former disputes, now to unite, in this affair, with one heart and voice: and *let us go speedily to pray before the Lord*. There is no need that one should wait for another. If we can get others our neighbours to join with us, and so can conveniently spend the quarterly seasons with praying societies, this is desirable; but if not, why should we wholly neglect the duty proposed? Why should not we perform it by ourselves, uniting in heart and practice, as far as we are able, with those who in distant places are engaged in that duty at that time?

If it be agreeable to the mind and will of God, that we should comply with the *Memorial*, by praying for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in the manner therein proposed, then doubtless it is the duty of all to comply in that respect also, *viz.* in endeavouring, as for as in us lies, to *promote others joining in such prayer*, and to render this union and agreement as *extensive* as may be. Private Christians may have many advantages and opportunities for this; but especially ministers, inasmuch as they not only are by office overseers of whole congregations of God's people, and their guides in matters of religion, but ordinarily have a far more extensive acquaintance and influence abroad, than private Christians in common have.

And I hope, that such as are convinced it is their duty to comply with and encourage this design, will remember we ought not only to go *speedily* to pray before the Lord, and to seek his mercy, but also to go *constantly*. We should unite in our practice these two things, which our Saviour unites in his precept, PRAYING and not fainting. If we should continue some years, and nothing remarkable in providence should appear as though God heard and answered, we should act very unbecoming believers, if we should therefore begin to be disheartened, and grow dull and slack in seeking of God so great a mercy. It is very apparent from the word of God, that he is wont often to try the faith and patience of his people, when crying to him for some great and important mercy, by withholding the mercy sought, for a season; and not only so, but at first to cause an increase of dark appearances. And yet he, without fail, at last succeeds those who continue instant in prayer with all perseverance, and "will not let him go except he blesses." It is now proposed that this extraordinary united prayer should continue for *seven years*, from *November 1746*. Perhaps some who appear forward to engage, may begin to think the time long, before the seven years are out; and may account it a dull story, to go on for so long time, praying in this extraordinary method, while all yet continues *dark* without any dawns of the wished-for light, or appearance in providence of the near approach of the desired mercy. But let it be considered, whether it will not be a poor business, if our faith and patience is so short-winded, that we cannot be willing to wait upon God for seven years, in a way of taking this little pains, in seeking a mercy so infinitely vast. For my part, I sincerely wish and hope, that there may not *be an end of extraordinary united prayer*, among God's people, for the effusions of the blessed Spirit, when the seven years are ended; but that it will be continued, either in this method,

or some other, by a *new agreement*, that will be entered into with greater engagedness, and more abundant alacrity, than this is; and that extraordinary united prayer for such a mercy will *be further propagated and extended*, than it can be expected to be in seven years. But, at the same time, I hope God's people, who unite in this agreement, will see some tokens for good before these seven years are out, that shall give them to see, God has not said to the seed of *Jacob*, Seek ye me in vain; and shall serve greatly to animate and encourage them to go on in *united prayers for the advancement of Christ's kingdom*, with increasing fervency. But whatever our hopes may be in this respect, we must be content to be ignorant of *the times and seasons*, which the Father hath put in his power; and must be willing that God should answer prayer, and fulfil his own glorious promises, in *his own time*; remembering such instructions, counsels, and promises, of the word of God as these, [Psal. xxvii. 14](#). "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." [Hab. ii. 3, 4](#). "For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but in the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." [Micah vii. 7](#). "I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me." [Isa. xxv. 8, 9](#). "God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is JEHOVAH! we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Amen.

THE  
**LIFE AND DIARY**  
OF  
**THE REV. DAVID BRAINERD**  
WITH  
**NOTES AND REFLECTIONS.**



**PREFACE.**

THERE are two ways of representing and recommending true religion and virtue to the world; the one, by doctrine and precept; the other, by instance and example; both are abundantly used in the *Holy Scriptures*. Not only are the grounds, nature, design, and importance of religion clearly exhibited in the doctrine of scripture its exercise and practice plainly delineated, and abundantly enforced, in its commands and counsels but there we have many excellent *examples* of religion, in its power and practice, set before us, in the histories both of the Old and New Testament.

JESUS CHRIST, the great Prophet of God, when he came to be “the light of the world” to teach and enforce true religion, in a greater degree than ever had been before made use of both these methods. In his doctrine, he not only declared the mind and will of God the nature and properties of that virtue which becomes creatures of our make and in our circumstances more clearly and fully than ever it had been before; and more powerfully enforced it by what he declared of the obligations and inducements to holiness; but he also in his own *practice* gave a most perfect *example* of the virtue he taught. He exhibited to the world such an illustrious pattern of humility, divine love, discreet zeal, self-denial, obedience, patience, resignation, fortitude, meekness, forgiveness, compassion, benevolence, and universal holiness, as neither men nor angels ever saw before.

God also in his *providence* has been wont to make use of *both* these methods to hold forth light to mankind, and inducements to their duty, in all ages. He has from time to time raised up eminent *teachers*, to exhibit and bear testimony to the truth by their doctrine, and to oppose the errors, darkness, and wickedness of the world; and he has also raised up some eminent persons who have set bright *examples* of that religion which is taught and prescribed in the word of God; whose examples have, in the course of divine providence, been set forth to public view. These have a great tendency both to engage the attention of men to the doctrine and rules taught, and also to confirm and enforce them; especially when these bright examples have been exhibited in the *same persons* who have been eminent *teachers*. Hereby the world has had opportunity to see a confirmation of the truth, efficacy, and amiableness of the religion taught, in the practice of the same persons who have most clearly and forcibly taught it; and above all, when these bright examples have been set by *eminent* teachers, in a variety of unusual circumstances of remarkable *trial*; and when God has withal remarkably distinguished them with wonderful *success* of their instructions and labours.

Such an instance we have in the *excellent person*, whose *life* is published in the following pages. His example is attended with a great variety of circumstances tending to engage the attention of religious people, especially in these parts of the world. He was one of distinguished natural abilities; as all are sensible, who had acquaintance with him. As a minister

of the gospel, he was called to unusual services in that work; and his ministry was attended with very remarkable and unusual events. His course of religion began *before* the late times of extraordinary religious commotion; yet he was not an idle spectator, but had a near concern in many things that passed at that time. He had a very extensive acquaintance with those who have been the subjects of the late religious operations, in places far distant, in people of different nations, education, manners, and customs. He had a peculiar opportunity of acquaintance with the false appearances and counterfeits of religion; was the instrument of a most remarkable awakening, a wonderful and abiding alteration and moral transformation of subjects who peculiarly render the change rare and astonishing.

In the following account, the reader will have an opportunity to see, not only what were the *external circumstances* and remarkable incidents of the life of this person, and how he spent his time from day to day, as to his external behaviour; but also what passed in *his own heart*. Here he will see the wonderful *change* he experienced in his mind and disposition, the manner in which that change was brought to pass, how it continued, what were its consequences in his inward frames, thoughts, affections, and secret exercises, through many vicissitudes and trials, for more than eight years.

He will also see, how all ended at last, in his sentiments, frame, and behaviour, during a long season of the gradual and sensible approach of death, under a lingering illness; and what were the effects of his religion in dying circumstances, or in the last stages of his illness. The account being written, the reader may have opportunity at his leisure to compare the various parts of the story, and deliberately to view and weigh the whole, and consider how far what is related is agreeable to the dictates of right reason and the holy word of God.

I am far from supposing, that Mr. Brainerd's inward exercises and experiences, or his external conduct, were free from all imperfections. The example of *Jesus Christ* is the only example that ever existed in human nature as altogether perfect; which therefore is a rule to try all other examples by; and the dispositions, frames, and practices of others must be commended and followed no further, than they were *followers of Christ*.

There is one thing in Mr. Brainerd, easily discernible by the following account of his life, which may be called an *imperfection* in him, which though not properly an imperfection of a *moral* nature, yet may possibly be made an objection against the extraordinary appearances of religion and devotion in him, by such as seek for objections against every thing that can be produced in favour of true vital religion; and that is, that he was, by his constitution and natural temper, so prone to *melancholy* and dejection of spirit. There are some who think that all serious strict religion is a melancholy thing, and that what is called Christian experience, is little else besides *melancholy vapours* disturbing the brain, and exciting enthusiastic imaginations. But that Mr. Brainerd's temper or constitution inclined him to despondency, is no just ground to suspect his extraordinary *devotion* to be only the fruit of a warm imagination. I doubt not but that all who have well observed mankind, will

readily grant, that not all who by their natural constitution or temper are most disposed to *dejection*, are the most susceptible of lively and strong impressions on their imagination, or the most subject to those vehement affections, which are the fruits of such impressions. But they must well know, that many who are of a very *gay* and *sanguine* natural temper are vastly more so; and if their affections are turned into a religious channel, are much more exposed to *enthusiasm*, than many of the former. As to Mr. Brainerd in particular, notwithstanding his inclination to despondency, he was evidently one of those who usually are the furthest from a teeming imagination; being of a penetrating genius, of clear thought, of close reasoning, and a very exact judgment; as all know, who knew him. As he had a great insight into human nature, and was very *discerning* and *judicious* in general; so he excelled in his judgment and knowledge in divinity, but especially in things appertaining to inward experimental religion. He most accurately distinguished between real, solid piety, and enthusiasm; between those affections that are rational and scriptural having their foundation in light and judgment and those that are founded in whimsical conceits, strong impressions on the imagination, and vehement emotions of the animal spirits. He was exceedingly sensible of men's exposedness to these things; how much they had prevailed, and what multitudes had been deceived by them; of their pernicious consequences, and the fearful mischief they had done in the Christian world. He greatly abhorred such a religion, and was abundant in bearing testimony against it, living and dying; and was quick to discern when any thing of that nature arose, though in its first buddings, and appearing under the most fair and plausible disguises. He had a talent for describing the various workings of this *imaginary, enthusiastic* religion evincing its falseness and vanity, and demonstrating the great difference between this and true *spiritual* devotion which I scarcely ever knew equalled in any person.

His judiciousness did not only appear in distinguishing among the experiences of *others*, but also among the various exercises of *his own mind*; particularly in discerning what within himself was to be laid to the score of *melancholy*; in which he exceeded all melancholy persons that ever I was acquainted with. This was doubtless owing to a peculiar strength in his *judgment*; for it is a rare thing indeed, that melancholy people are well sensible of their own disease, and fully convinced that such and such things are to be ascribed to it, as are its genuine operations and fruits. Mr. Brainerd did not obtain that degree of skill at once, but gradually; as the reader may discern by the following account of his life. In the *former* part of his religious course, he imputed much of that kind of gloominess of mind and those dark thoughts to spiritual *desertion*, which in the latter part of his life he was abundantly sensible were owing to the disease of *melancholy*; accordingly he often expressly speaks of them in his diary as arising from this cause. He often in conversation spoke of the difference between melancholy and godly sorrow, true humiliation and spiritual desertion, and the great danger of mistaking the one for the other, and the very hurtful nature of melancholy; discoursing

with great judgment upon it, and doubtless much more judiciously for what he knew by his own experience.

But besides what may be argued from Mr. Brainerd's strength of judgment, it is apparent in *fact*, that he was not a person of a warm imagination. His inward experiences, whether in his convictions or his conversion, and his religious views and impressions through the course of his life, were not excited by strong and lively images formed in his imagination; nothing at all appears of it in his *diary* from beginning to end. He told me on his death-bed, that although once, when he was very young in years and experience, he was deceived into a high opinion of such things looking on them as superior attainments in religion, beyond what he had ever arrived at was ambitious of them, and earnestly sought them; yet he never could obtain them. He moreover declared, that he never in his life had a strong impression on his imagination, of any outward form, external glory, or any thing of that nature; which kind of impressions abound among *enthusiastic* people.

As Mr. Brainerd's religious impressions, views, and affections in their *nature* were vastly different from enthusiasm; so were their *effects* in him as contrary to it as possible. Nothing like *enthusiasm* puffs men up with a high conceit of their own wisdom, holiness, eminence, and sufficiency; and makes them so bold, forward, assuming, and arrogant. But the reader will see, that Mr. Brainerd's religion constantly disposed him to a most mean thought of himself, an abasing sense of his own exceeding sinfulness, deficiency, unprofitableness, and ignorance; looking on himself as worse than others; disposing him to universal benevolence and meekness; in honour to prefer others, and to treat all with kindness and respect. And when *melancholy* prevailed, and though the effects of it were very prejudicial to him, yet it had not the effects of *enthusiasm*; but operated by dark and discouraging thoughts of *himself*, as ignorant, wicked, and wholly unfit for the work of the ministry, or even to be seen among mankind. Indeed, at the time forementioned, when he had not learned well to distinguish between enthusiasm and solid religion, he joined, and kept company with, some who were tinged with no small degree of the former. For a season he partook with them in a degree of their dispositions and behaviours; though, as was observed before, he could not obtain those things wherein their *enthusiasm* itself consisted, and so could not become like them in that respect, however he erroneously desired and sought it. But certainly it is not at all to be wondered at, that a youth, a young convert, one who had his heart so swallowed up in religion, and who so earnestly desired his flourishing state and who had so little opportunity for reading, observation, and experience should for a while be dazzled and deceived with the glaring appearances of mistaken devotion and zeal; especially considering the extraordinary circumstances of that day. He told me on his death-bed, that while he was in these circumstances he was out of his element, and did violence to himself, while complying, in his conduct, with persons of a fierce and imprudent zeal, from his great veneration of some whom he looked upon as better than himself. So that it would be very unreasonable, that



his error at that time should nevertheless be esteemed a just ground of prejudice against the whole of his religion, and his character in general; especially considering, how greatly his mind was soon changed, and how exceedingly he afterwards lamented his error, and abhorred himself for his imprudent zeal and misconduct at that time, even to the breaking of his heart, and almost to the overbearing of his natural strength; and how much of a Christian spirit he showed, in condemning himself for that misconduct, as the reader will see.

What has been now mentioned of Mr. Brainerd, is so far from being a just ground of prejudice against what is related in the following account of his life, that, if duly considered, it will render the history the more serviceable. For by his thus joining for a season with *enthusiasts*, he had a more full and intimate acquaintance with what belonged to that sort of religion; and so was under better advantages to judge of the difference between that, and what he finally approved, and strove to his utmost to promote, in opposition to it. And hereby the reader has the more to convince him that Mr. Brainerd, in his testimony against it, and the spirit and behaviour of those who are influenced by it, speaks from impartial conviction, and not from prejudice; because therein he openly condemns his own former opinion and conduct, on account of which he had greatly suffered from his opposers, and for which some continued to reproach him as long as he lived.

Another imperfection in Mr. Brainerd, which may be observed in the following account of his life, was his being *excessive in his labours*; not taking due care to proportion his fatigues to his strength. Indeed the case was very often such, by the seeming calls of Providence, as made it extremely difficult for him to avoid doing more than his strength would well admit of; yea, his circumstances and the business of his mission among the Indians were such, that great fatigues and hardships were altogether inevitable. However, he was finally convinced, that he had erred in this matter, and that he ought to have taken more thorough care, and been more resolute to withstand temptations to such degrees of labour as injured his health; and accordingly warned his brother, who succeeds him in his mission, to be careful to avoid this error.

Besides the imperfections already mentioned, it is readily allowed, that there were some imperfections which ran through his whole life, and were mixed with all his religious affections and exercises; some mixture of what was natural with that which was spiritual; as it evermore is in the best saints in this world. Doubtless, natural temper had some influence in the religious exercises and experiences of Mr. Brainerd, as there most apparently was in the exercises of devout David, and the apostles Peter, John, and Paul. There was undoubtedly very often some influence of his natural disposition to dejection, in his religious mourning; some mixture of melancholy with truly godly sorrow and real Christian humility; some mixture of the natural fire of youth with his holy zeal for God; and some influence of natural principles mixed with grace in various other respects, as it ever was and ever will be with the saints while on this side heaven. Perhaps none were more sensible of Mr. Brainerd's

imperfections than he himself; or could distinguish more accurately than he, between what was natural and what was spiritual. It is easy for the judicious reader to observe, that his graces ripened, the religious exercises of his heart became more and more pure, and he more and more distinguished in his judgment, the longer he lived: he had much to teach and purify him, and he failed not to make his advantage.

But notwithstanding all these imperfections, I am persuaded every pious and judicious reader will acknowledge, that what is here set before him is indeed a remarkable instance of true and eminent Christian piety in heart and practice tending greatly to confirm the reality of vital religion, and the power of godliness that it is most worthy of imitation, and many ways calculated to promote the spiritual benefit of the careful observer.

It is fit the reader should be aware, that what Mr. Brainerd wrote in his *diary*, out of which the following account of his life is chiefly taken, was written only for his own private use, and not to get honour and applause in the world, nor with any design that the world should ever see it, either while he lived or after his death; excepting some few things that he wrote in a dying state, after he had been persuaded, with difficulty, not entirely to suppress all his private writings. He showed himself almost invincibly averse to the publishing of any part of his *diary* after his death; and when he was thought to be dying at Boston, he gave the most strict, peremptory orders to the contrary. But being by some of his friends there prevailed upon to withdraw so strict and absolute a prohibition, he was pleased finally to yield so far as that "his papers should be left in my hands, that I might dispose of them as I thought would be most for God's glory and the interest of religion."

But a few days before his death, he ordered some part of his *diary* to be destroyed, which renders the account of his life the less complete. And there are some parts of his *diary* here left out for brevity's sake, that would, I am sensible, have been a great advantage to the history, if they had been inserted; particularly the account of his wonderful successes among the Indians; which for substance is the same in his private *diary* with that which has already been made public, in the *journal* he kept by order of the society in Scotland, for their information. That account, I am of opinion, would be more entertaining and more profitable, if it were published as it is written in his *diary*, in connexion with his secret religion and the inward exercises of his mind, and also with the preceding and following parts of the story of his life. But because that account has been published already, I have therefore omitted that part. However, this defect may in a great measure be made up to the reader, by the public *journal*. But it is time to end this preface, that the reader may be no longer detained from the history itself.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

N. B. Those parts of the following *Life and Diary* which are not in turned commas, are the words of the *publisher*, President Edwards. They contain the *substance* of Mr. Brainerd's *Diary* for the time specified. By this mode, needless repetitions were prevented.

*THE*  
LIFE AND DIARY OF DAVID BRAINERD.



## PART I.

FROM HIS BIRTH, TO THE TIME WHEN HE BEGAN TO STUDY FOR THE MINISTRY.

Mr. David Brainerd was born April 20, 1718, at *Haddam*, a town of Hartford, in Connecticut, New England. His father was the worshipful Hezekiah Brainerd, Esq. one of his Majesty's council for that colony; who was the son of Daniel Brainerd, Esq. a justice of the peace, and a deacon of the church of Christ in Haddam. His mother was Mrs. Dorothy Hobart, daughter to the Reverend Mr. Jeremiah Hobart; who preached awhile at Topsfield, then removed to Hempstead on Long-Island, and afterwards by reason of numbers turning Quakers, and many others being so irreligious, that they would do nothing towards the support of the gospel settled in the work of the ministry at Haddam; where he died in the 85th year of his age. He went to the public worship in the forenoon, and died in his chair between meetings. This reverend gentleman was a son of the Reverend Peter Hobart; who was, first, minister of the gospel at Hingham, in the county of Norfolk in England; and, by reason of the persecution of the Puritans, removed with his family to New England, and was settled in the ministry at Hingham, in Massachusetts. He had five sons, *viz.* Joshua, Jeremiah, Gershom, Japheth, and Nehemiah. His son Joshua was minister at Southold on Long-Island. Jeremiah was Mr. David Brainerd's grandfather, minister at Haddam, &c. as before observed; Gershom was minister of Groton in Connecticut; Japheth was a physician; he went in the quality of a doctor of a ship to England, (before the time of taking his second degree at college,) and designed to go from thence to the East Indies; but never was heard of more. Nehemiah was sometime fellow of Harvard college, and afterwards minister at Newton in Massachusetts. The mother of Mrs. Dorothy Hobart (who was afterwards Brainerd) was a daughter of the Reverend Samuel Whiting, minister of the gospel, first at Boston in Lincolnshire, and afterwards at Lynn in Massachusetts, New England. He had three sons who were ministers of the gospel.

David Brainerd was the *third* son of his parents. They had five sons, and four daughters. Their eldest son is Hezekiah Brainerd, Esq. a justice of the peace, and for several years past a representative of the town of Haddam, in the general assembly of Connecticut colony; the second was the Reverend Nehemiah Brainerd, a worthy minister at Eastbury in Connecticut, who died of a consumption, Nov. 10, 1742; the fourth is Mr. John Brainerd, who succeeds his brother David as missionary to the Indians, and pastor of the same church of Christian Indians in New Jersey; and the fifth was Israel, lately student at Yale college in New-Haven, who died since his brother David. Mrs. Dorothy Brainerd having lived about five years a widow, died when her son, of whose life I am about to give an account, was about fourteen

years of age: so that in his youth he was left both fatherless and motherless. What account he has given of himself, and his own life, may be seen in what follows.<sup>350</sup>

“I was from my youth somewhat sober, and inclined rather to melancholy than the contrary extreme; but do not remember any thing of conviction of sin, worthy of remark, till I was, I believe, about seven or eight years of age. Then I became concerned for my soul, and terrified at the thoughts of death, and was driven to the performance of duties: but it appeared a melancholy business, that destroyed my eagerness for play. And though, alas! this religious concern was but short-lived, I sometimes attended secret prayer; and thus lived at “ease in Zion, without God in the world,” and without much concern, as I remember, till I was above thirteen years of age. But some time in the winter 1732, I was roused out of carnal security, by I scarce know what means at first; but was much excited by the prevailing of a mortal sickness in Haddam. I was frequent, constant, and somewhat fervent in duties; and took delight in reading, especially Mr. Janeway’s *Token for Children*. I felt sometimes much melted in duties, and took great delight in the performance of them; and I sometimes hoped that I was converted, or at least in a good and hopeful way for heaven and happiness, not knowing what conversion was. The Spirit of God at this time proceeded far with me; I was remarkably dead to the world, and my thoughts were almost wholly employed about my soul’s concerns; and I may indeed say, “Almost I was persuaded to be a Christian” I was also exceedingly distressed and melancholy at the death of my mother, in March, 1732. But afterwards my religious concern began to decline, and by degrees I fell back into a considerable degree of security, though I still attended secret prayer.

“About the 15th of April, 1733, I removed from my father’s house to East Haddam, where I spent four years; but still “without God in the world,” though, for the most part, I went a round of secret duty. I was not much addicted to young company, or frolicking, as it is called, but this I know, that when I did go into such company, I never returned with so good a conscience as when I went; it always added new guilt, made me afraid to come to the throne of grace, and spoiled those good frames I was wont sometimes to please myself with. But, alas! all my good frames were but self-righteousness, not founded on a desire for the glory of God.

“About the latter end of April, 1737, being full nineteen years of age, I removed to Durham, to work on my farm, and so continued about one year; frequently longing, from a natural inclination, after a liberal education. When about twenty years of age, I applied myself to study; and was now engaged more than ever in the duties of religion. I became

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350 In Mr. Brainerd’s account of himself here, and continued in his Diary, the reader will find a growing interest and pleasure as he proceeds; in which is beautifully exemplified what the inspired penman declares, “The path of the just is as the morning light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” And indeed even his diction and style of writing assume a gradual improvement W.

very strict, and watchful over my thoughts, words, and actions; and thought I must be sober indeed, because I designed to devote myself to the ministry; and *imagined I did* dedicate myself to the Lord.

“Some time in April, 1738, I went to Mr. Fiske’s, and lived with him during his life.<sup>351</sup> I remember he advised me wholly to abandon young company, and associate myself with grave elderly people: which counsel I followed. My manner of life was now exceeding regular, and full of religion, such as it was; for I read my Bible more than twice through in less than a year, spent much time every day in prayer and other secret duties, gave great attention to the word preached, and endeavoured to my utmost to retain it. So much concerned was I about religion, that I agreed with some young persons to meet privately on sabbath evenings for religious exercises, and thought myself *sincere* in these duties; and after our meeting was ended, I used to *repeat* the discourses of the day to myself; recollecting what I could, though sometimes very late at night. I used sometimes on Monday mornings to recollect the same sermons; had considerable movings of pleasurable affection in duties, and had many thoughts of joining the church. In short, I had a very good *outside*, and rested entirely on my duties, though not sensible of it.

“After Mr. Fiske’s death, I proceeded in my learning with my brother; was still very constant in religious duties, and often wondered at the levity of professors; it was a trouble to me, that they were so careless in religious matters. Thus I proceeded a considerable length on a *self-righteous* foundation; and should have been entirely lost and undone, had not the mere mercy of God prevented.

“Some time in the beginning of winter, 1738, it pleased God, on one sabbath-day morning, as I was walking out for some secret duties, to give me on a sudden such a sense of my *danger*, and the wrath of God, that I stood amazed, and my former good frames, that I had pleased myself with, all presently vanished. From the view I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed all that day, fearing the vengeance of God would soon overtake me. I was much dejected, kept much alone, and sometimes envied the birds and beasts their happiness, because they were not exposed to eternal misery, as I evidently saw I was. And thus I lived from day to day, being frequently in great distress: sometimes there appeared mountains before me -to obstruct my hopes of mercy; and the work of conversion appeared so great, that I thought I should never be the subject of it. I used, however, to pray and cry to God, and perform other duties with great earnestness; and thus hoped by some means to make the case better.

“And though, hundreds of times, I renounced all pretences of any *worth* in my duties, as I thought, even while performing them, and often confessed to God that I deserved nothing, for the very best of them, but eternal condemnation; yet still I had a secret hope of

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351 Mr. Fiske was the pastor of the church in Haddam.

*recommending* myself to God by my religious duties. When I prayed affectionately, and my heart seemed in some measure to melt, I hoped God would be thereby moved to pity me, my prayers then looked with some appearance of *goodness* in them, and I seemed to *mourn* for sin. And then I could in some measure venture on the mercy of God in Christ, as I thought, though the *preponderating* thought, the *foundation* of my hope, was some imagination of *goodness* in my heart-meltings, flowing of affections in duty, extraordinary enlargements, &c. Though at times the gate appeared so very strait, that it looked next to impossible to enter, yet, at other times, I flattered myself that it was not so very difficult, and hoped I should by diligence and watchfulness soon gain the point. Sometimes after enlargement in duty and considerable affection, I hoped I had made a *good step* towards heaven; imagined that God was affected as I was, and that he would hear such *sincere cries*, as I called them. And so sometimes, when I withdrew for secret duties in great distress, I returned comfortable; and thus healed myself with my *duties*.

“Some time in February, 1739, I set apart a day for secret fasting and prayer, and spent the day in almost incessant cries to God for mercy, that he would open my eyes to see the evil of sin, and the way of life by Jesus Christ. And God was pleased that day to make considerable discoveries of my heart to me. But still I *trusted* in all the duties I performed; though there was no manner of *goodness* in them, there being in them no respect to the glory of God, nor any such principle in my heart. Yet, God was pleased to make my endeavours that day a means to show me my *helplessness* in some measure.

“Sometimes I was greatly *encouraged*, and imagined that God loved me, and was pleased with me; and thought I should soon be fully reconciled to God. But the whole was founded on mere *presumption*, arising from enlargement in duty, or flowing of affections, or some good resolutions, and the like. And when, at times, great distress began to arise, on a sight of my vileness, nakedness, and inability to deliver myself from a sovereign God, I used to put off the discovery, as what I could not bear. Once, I remember, a terrible pang of distress seized me, and the thoughts of renouncing myself, and standing naked before God, stripped of all goodness, were so dreadful to me, that I was ready to say to them as Felix to Paul, ‘Go thy way for this time.’ Thus, though I daily longed for greater conviction of sin, supposing that I must see more of my dreadful state in order to a remedy; yet when the discoveries of my vile, hellish heart, were made to me, the sight was so dreadful, and showed me so plainly my exposedness to damnation, that I could not endure it. I constantly strove after whatever *qualifications* I imagined others obtained before the reception of Christ, in order to *recommend* me to his favour. Sometimes I felt the power of a *hard heart*, and supposed it must be *softened* before Christ would accept of me; and when I felt any meltings of heart, I hoped now the work was almost done. Hence, when my distress still remained, I was wont to murmur at God’s dealings with me; and thought, when others felt their hearts softened, God showed them mercy; but my distress remained still.

“Sometimes I grew *remiss* and *sluggish*, without any great convictions of sin, for a considerable time together; but after such a season, convictions seized me more violently. One night I remember in particular, when I was walking solitarily abroad, I had opened to me such a view of my sin, that I feared the ground would cleave asunder under my feet, and become my grave; and would send my soul quick into hell, before I could get home. And though I was forced to go to bed, lest my distress should be discovered by others, which I much feared; yet I scarcely durst sleep at all, for I thought it would be a great wonder if I should be out of hell in the morning. And though my distress was sometimes thus great, yet I greatly dreaded the loss of *convictions*, and returning back to a state of carnal security, and to my former insensibility of impending wrath; which made me exceeding exact in my behaviour, lest I should stifle the motions of God’s Holy Spirit. When at any time I took a view of my convictions, and thought the degree of them to be considerable, I was wont to trust in them; but this confidence, and the hopes of soon making some notable advances towards deliverance, would ease my mind, and I soon became more senseless and remiss: but then again, when I discerned my convictions to grow languid, and I thought them about to leave me, this immediately alarmed and distressed me. Sometimes I expected to take a large step, and get very far towards conversion, by some particular opportunity or means I had in view.

“The many disappointments, great distresses, and perplexity I met with, put me into a most *horrible frame* of *contesting* with the Almighty; with an inward vehemence and virulence finding fault with his ways of dealing with mankind. I found great fault with the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity; and my wicked heart often wished for some other way of salvation, than by Jesus Christ. Being like the troubled sea, my thoughts confused, I used to contrive to *escape* the wrath of God by some *other* means. I had strange projects, full of atheism, contriving to *disappoint* God’s designs and decrees concerning me, or to escape his *notice*, and hide myself from him. But when, upon reflection, I saw these projects were vain, and would not serve me, and that I could contrive nothing for my own relief; this would throw my mind into the most horrid frame, to wish there was no God, or to wish there were some *other* God that could control him, &c. These thoughts and desires were the secret inclinations of my heart, frequently acting before I was aware; but, alas! they were *mine*, although I was affrighted when I came to reflect on them. When I considered, it distressed me to think, that my heart was so full of enmity against God; and it made me tremble, lest his vengeance should suddenly fall upon me. I used before to imagine, that my heart was not so bad as the Scriptures and some other books represented it. Sometimes I used to take much pains to work it up into a good frame, an humble submissive disposition; and hoped there was *then* some goodness in me. But, on a sudden, the thoughts of the strictness of the law, or the sovereignty of God, would so irritate the corruption of my heart, that I



had so watched over, and hoped I had brought to a good frame, that it would break over all bounds, and burst forth on all sides, like floods of water when they break down their dam.

“Being sensible of the necessity of a deep humiliation in order to a saving close with Christ, I used to set myself to work in my own heart those *convictions* that were requisite in such an humiliation; as, a conviction that God would be just, if he cast me off for ever; that if ever God should bestow mercy on me, it would be mere grace, though I should be in distress many years first, and be never so much engaged in duty; that God was not in the least obliged to pity me the more for all past duties, cries, and tears, &c. I strove to my utmost to bring myself to a firm belief of these things and a hearty assent to them; and hoped that now I was brought off from *myself*, truly humbled, and that I bowed to the divine sovereignty. I was wont to tell God in my prayers, that now I had those very dispositions of soul that he required, and on which he showed mercy to others, and thereupon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief, and was still oppressed with guilt, and fears of wrath, my soul was in a tumult, and my heart rose against God, as dealing hardly with me. Yet *then* my conscience flew in my face, putting me in mind of my late confession to God of his *justice* in my condemnation, &c. And this giving me a sight of the badness of my heart, threw me again into distress, and I wished I had watched my heart more narrowly, to keep it from breaking out against God’s dealings with me; and I even wished I had not pleaded for mercy on account of my humiliation, because thereby I had lost all my seeming goodness. Thus, scores of times, I vainly imagined myself humbled and prepared for saving mercy. And while I was in this distressed, bewildered, and tumultuous state of mind, the *corruption* of my heart was especially *irritated* with the following things.

“1. The *strictness* of the divine *law*. For I found it was impossible for me, after my utmost pains, to answer its demands. I often made new resolutions, and as often broke them. I imputed the whole to carelessness and the want of being more watchful, and used to call myself a fool for my negligence. But when, upon a stronger resolution, and greater endeavours, and close application to fasting and prayer, I found all attempts fail; then I quarrelled with the law of God, as unreasonably rigid. I thought, if it extended only to my *outward* actions and behaviours I could *bear* with it; but I found it condemned me for my evil thoughts, and sins of my *heart*, which I could not possibly prevent. I was extremely loth to own my utter helplessness in this matter: but after repeated disappointments, thought that, rather than perish, I could do a *little* more still; especially if such and such circumstances might but attend my endeavours and strivings. I *hoped*, that I should strive more earnestly than ever, if the matter came to extremity though I never could find the time to do my utmost, in the manner I intended and this hope of future more favourable circumstances, and of doing something great hereafter, kept me from utter despair in myself, and from seeing myself fallen into the hands of a sovereign God, and dependent on nothing but free and boundless grace.

“2. Another thing was, that *faith alone*, was the *condition of salvation*; that God would not come down to lower terms, and that he would not promise life and salvation upon my sincere and hearty prayers and endeavours. That word, [Mark xvi. 16](#). “He that believeth not, shall be damned,” cut off all hope there: and I found, faith was the sovereign gift of God; that I could not get it as of myself, and could not oblige God to bestow it upon me, by any of my performances, ([Eph. ii. 1, 8.](#)) *This*, I was ready to say, is a *hard saying*, who can bear it? I could not bear, that all I had done should stand for mere nothing, who had been very conscientious in duty, had been exceeding religious a great while, and had, as I thought, done much more than many others who had obtained mercy. I *confessed* indeed the vileness of my duties; but then, what made them at that time seem vile, was my *wandering* thoughts in them; not because I was all over defiled like a devil, and the *principle* corrupt from whence they flowed, so that I could not possibly do any thing that was good. And therefore I called what I did, by the name of honest faithful endeavours; and could not bear it, that God had made no promises of salvation to them.

“3. Another thing was, that I could not find out *what* faith was; or *what* it was to believe, and come to Christ. I read the *calls* of Christ to the *weary* and *heavy laden*; but could find no *way* that he directed them to come in. I thought I would gladly come, if I knew *how*, though the path of duty were never so difficult. I read Mr. Stoddard’s *Guide to Christ*, (which I trust was, in the hand of God, the happy means of my conversion,) and my heart rose against the author; for though he told me my very heart all along under convictions, and seemed to be very beneficial to me in his directions; yet here he failed, he did not tell me any thing I could *do* that would bring me to Christ, but left me as it were with a great gulf between, without any direction to get through. For I was not yet effectually and experimentally taught, that there *could* be no way prescribed, whereby a *natural* man could, of his own strength, obtain that which *is supernatural*, and which the highest angel cannot give.

“4. Another thing to which I found a great inward opposition, was the *sovereignty* of God. I could not bear that it should be wholly at God’s pleasure to save or damn me, just as he would. That passage, [Rom. ix. 11-23](#). was a constant vexation to me, especially [ver. 21](#). Reading or meditating on this, always destroyed my seeming good frames: for when I thought I was almost humbled, and almost resigned, this passage would make my enmity against the sovereignty of God appear. When I came to reflect on my inward enmity and blasphemy, which arose on this occasion, I was the more afraid of God, and driven further from any hopes of reconciliation with him. It gave me such a dreadful view of myself, that I dreaded more than ever to see myself in God’s hands, at his sovereign disposal, and it made me more opposite than ever to submit to his sovereignty; for I thought God designed my damnation.

“All this time the Spirit of God was powerfully at work with me; and I was inwardly pressed to relinquish all *self-confidence*, all hopes of ever helping myself by any means whatsoever: and the conviction of my *lost* estate was sometimes so clear and manifest before

my eyes, that it was as if it had been declared to me in so many words, 'It is done, it is done, for ever impossible to deliver yourself.' For about three or four days my soul was thus greatly distressed. At some turns, for a few moments, I seemed to myself *lost* and *undone*; but then would shrink back immediately from the sight, because I dared not venture myself into the hands of God, as wholly helpless, and at the disposal of his sovereign pleasure. I dared not see that important truth concerning myself, that I was *dead in trespasses and sins*. But when I had as it were thrust away these views of myself at any time, I felt distressed to have the same discoveries of myself again; for I greatly feared being given over of God to final stupidity. When I thought of putting it off to a *more convenient season*, the conviction was so close and powerful, with regard to the *present* time, that it was the best, and probably the *only* time, that I dared not put it off.

"It was the sight of *truth* concerning myself, *truth* respecting my state, as a creature fallen and alienated from God, and that consequently could make no demands on God for mercy, but must subscribe to the absolute sovereignty of the Divine Being; the sight of the *truth*, I say, my soul shrank away from, and trembled to think of beholding. Thus, *he that doth evil*, as all unregenerate men continually do, *hates the light of truth*, neither cares to *come to it*, because it will *reprove his deeds*, and show him his just deserts, [John iii. 20](#). And though, some time before, I had taken much pains, as I thought, to submit to the sovereignty of God, yet I mistook the thing; and did not once imagine, that seeing and being made experimentally sensible of this truth, which my soul now so much dreaded and trembled at, was the frame of soul that I had been so earnest in pursuit of heretofore. For I had ever hoped, that when I had attained to that *humiliation*, which I supposed necessary to go before faith, then it would not be fair for God to *cast me off*; but now I saw it was so far from any goodness in me, to own myself spiritually dead, and destitute of all goodness, that, on the contrary, *my mouth* would be for ever *stopped* by it; and it looked as *dreadful* to me, to see myself, and the relation I stood in to God I a sinner and criminal, and he a great Judge and Sovereign as it would be to a poor trembling creature, to venture off some high precipice. And hence I put it off for a minute or two, and tried for better circumstances to do it in; either I must read a passage or two, or pray first, or something of the like nature; or else put off my submission to God's sovereignty, with an objection, that I did not know how to submit. But the truth was, I could see no safety in owning myself in the hands of a sovereign God, and that I could lay no claim to any thing better than damnation.

"But after a considerable time spent in such like exercises and distresses, one morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, I at once saw that all my contrivances and projects to effect or procure deliverance and salvation for myself, were utterly *in vain*; I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself totally *lost*. I had thought many times before, that the difficulties in my way were very great; but now I saw, in another and very different light, that it was for ever impossible for me to do any thing towards helping or delivering

myself. I then thought of blaming myself, that I had not done more, and been more engaged, while I had opportunity for it seemed now as if the season of doing was for ever over and gone but I instantly saw, that let me have done what I would, it would no more have tended to my helping myself, than what I had done; that I had made all the pleas I ever could have made to all eternity; and that all my pleas were vain. The *tumult* that had been before in my mind, was now *quieted*; and I was something eased of that distress, which I felt, while struggling against a sight of myself, and of the divine sovereignty. I had the greatest certainty that my state was for ever miserable, for all that I *could* do; and wondered that I had never been sensible of it before.

“While I remained in this state, my *notions* respecting my *duties* were quite different from what I had ever entertained in times past. Before this, the more I did in duty, the more hard I thought it would be for God to cast me off; though at the same time I confessed, and thought I saw, that there was no goodness or *merit* in my duties; but now the more I did in prayer or any other duty, the more I saw I was indebted to God for *allowing* me to ask for mercy; for I saw it was self-interest had led me to pray, and that I had never once prayed from any respect to the glory of God. Now I saw there was no necessary connexion between my prayers and the bestowment of divine mercy; that they laid not the least *obligation* upon God to bestow his grace upon me; and that there was no more virtue or goodness in them, than there would be in my *paddling with my hand in the water*, (which was the comparison I had then in my mind,) and this because they were not performed from any love or regard to God. I saw that I had been heaping up my devotions before God, fasting, praying, &c. pretending, and indeed really thinking sometimes, that I was aiming at the glory of God; whereas I never once *truly* intended it, but only my own happiness. I saw, that as I had never done any thing *for* God, I had no claim on any thing *from* him, but perdition, on account of my hypocrisy and mockery. Oh how different did my duties now appear from what they used to do! I used to charge them with sin and imperfection; but this was only on account of the wanderings and vain thoughts attending them, and not because I had no regard to God in them; for this I thought I had. But when I saw evidently that I had regard to nothing but self-interest, then they appeared a vile mockery of God, self-worship, and a continual course of lies; so that I now saw that something worse had attended my duties, than barely a few wanderings, &c.; for the whole was nothing but *self-worship*, and a horrid abuse of God.

“I continued, as I remember, in this state of mind, from Friday morning till the sabbath evening following, (July 12, 1739,) when I was walking again in the same solitary place, where I was brought to see myself lost and helpless, as before mentioned. Here, in a mournful melancholy state, I was attempting to pray; but found no heart to engage in that or any other duty; my former concern, exercise, and religious affections were now gone. I thought the Spirit of God had *quite* left me; but still was not distressed: yet disconsolate, as

if there was nothing in heaven or earth could make me happy. Having been thus endeavouring to pray though, as I thought, very stupid and senseless for near half an hour, then, as I was walking in a dark thick grove, *unspeakable glory* seemed to open to the view and apprehension of my soul. I do not mean any *external* brightness, for I saw no such thing; nor do I intend any imagination of a body of light, somewhere in the third heavens, or any thing of that nature; but it was a new inward apprehension or view that I had of *God*, such as I never had before, nor any thing which had the least resemblance of it. I stood still, wondered, and admired! I knew that I never had seen before any thing comparable to it for excellency and beauty; it was widely different from all the conceptions that ever I had of God, or things divine. I had no particular apprehension of any one person in the Trinity, either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but it appeared to be *divine glory*. My soul *rejoiced with joy unspeakable*, to see such a God, such a glorious Divine Being; and I was inwardly pleased and satisfied that he should be *God over all* for ever and ever. My soul was so captivated and delighted with the excellency, loveliness, greatness, and other perfections of God, that I was even swallowed up in him; at least to that degree, that I had no thought (as I remember) at *first* about my own salvation, and scarce reflected there was such a creature as myself.

“Thus God, I trust, brought me to a hearty disposition to *exalt him*, and set him on the throne, and principally and ultimately to aim at his honour and glory, as King of the universe. I continued in this state of inward joy, peace, and astonishment, till near dark, without any sensible abatement; and then began to think and examine what I had seen; and felt sweetly *composed* in my mind all the evening following. I felt myself in a new world, and every thing about me appeared with a different aspect from what it was wont to do. At this time, the *way of salvation* opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of *any other* way of salvation; was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances, and complied with this lovely, blessed, and excellent way before. If I could have been saved by my own duties, or any other way that I had formerly contrived, my whole soul would now have refused it. I wondered that all the world did not see and comply with this way of salvation, entirely by the *righteousness of Christ*.

“The sweet relish of what I then felt, continued with me for several days, almost constantly, in a greater or less degree; I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up. The next Lord’s day I felt something of the same kind, though not so powerful as before. But not long after I was again involved in *thick darkness*, and under great distress; yet not of the same kind with my distress under convictions. I was guilty, afraid, and ashamed to come before God; was exceedingly pressed with a sense of guilt: but it was not long before I felt, I trust, true repentance and joy in God. About the latter end of August, I again fell under great darkness; it seemed as if the presence of God was *clean gone for ever*; though I was not so much distressed about my spiritual *state*, as I was at my being shut out from

God's *presence*, as I then sensibly was. But it pleased the Lord to return graciously to me, not long after.

"In the beginning of September I went to college,<sup>352</sup> and entered there; but with some degree of reluctancy, fearing lest I should not be able to lead a life of strict religion, in the midst of so many temptations. After this, in the vacancy, before I went to tarry at college, it pleased God to visit my soul with clearer manifestations of himself and his grace. I was spending some time in prayer, and self-examination, when the Lord by his grace so shined into my heart, that I enjoyed full assurance of his favour, for that time; and my soul was unspeakably refreshed with divine and heavenly enjoyments. At this time especially, as well as some others, sundry passages of God's word opened to my soul with divine clearness, power, and sweetness, so as to appear exceeding precious, and with clear and certain evidence of its being *the word of God*. I enjoyed considerable sweetness in religion all the winter following.

"In Jan. 1740, the measles spread much in college; and I having taken the distemper, went home to Haddam. But some days before I was taken sick, I seemed to be greatly deserted, and my soul mourned the absence of the Comforter exceedingly. It seemed to me all comfort was for ever gone; I prayed and cried to God for help, yet found no present comfort or relief. But through divine goodness, a night or two before I was taken ill, while I was walking alone in a very retired place, and engaged in meditation and prayer, I enjoyed a sweet refreshing visit, as I trust, from above; so that my soul was raised far above the fears of death. Indeed I rather longed for death, than feared it. O how much more refreshing this one season was, than all the pleasures and delights that earth can afford! After a day or two I was taken with the measles, and was very ill indeed, so that I almost despaired of life; but had no distressing fears of death at all. However, through divine goodness I soon recovered; yet, by reason of hard and close studies, and being much exposed on account of my *freshmanship*, I had but little time for spiritual duties: my soul often mourned for want of more time and opportunity to be alone with God. In the spring and summer following, I had better advantages for retirement, and enjoyed more comfort in religion. Though indeed my ambition in my studies greatly wronged the activity and vigour of my spiritual life; yet this was usually the case with me, that "in the multitude of my thoughts within me, God's comforts *principally* delighted my soul;" these were my greatest consolations day by day.

"One day I remember, in particular, (I think it was in June, 1740,) I walked to a considerable distance from the college, in the fields alone at noon, and in prayer found such unspeakable sweetness and delight in God, that I thought, if I must continue still in this evil world, I wanted always to be there, to behold God's glory. My soul dearly loved all mankind, and longed exceedingly that they should enjoy what I enjoyed. It seemed to be a little resemb-

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lance of heaven. On Lord's day, July 6, being sacrament-day, I found some divine life and spiritual refreshment in that holy ordinance. When I came from the Lord's table, I wondered how my fellow-students could live as I was sensible most did. Next Lord's day, July 13, I had some special sweetness in religion. Again, Lord's day, July 20, my soul was in a sweet and precious frame.

"Some time in August following, I became so weakly and disordered, by too close application to my studies, that I was advised by my tutor to go home, and disengage my mind from study, as much as I could; for I was grown so weak, that I began to spit blood. I took his advice, and endeavoured to lay aside my studies. But being brought very low, I looked death in the face more stedfastly; and the Lord was pleased to give me renewedly a sweet sense and relish of divine things; and particularly, October 13, I found divine help and consolation in the precious duties of secret prayer and self-examination, and my soul took delight in the blessed God: so likewise on the 17th of October.

"*Saturday, Oct. 18.* In my morning devotions, my soul was exceedingly melted, and bitterly mourned over my exceeding *sinfulness* and *vileness*. I never before had felt so pungent and deep a sense of the odious nature of sin, as at this time. My soul was then unusually carried forth in love to God, and had a lively sense of God's love to me. And this love and hope, at that time, cast out fear. Both morning and evening I spent some time in self-examination, to find the truth of grace, as also my fitness to approach to God at his table the next day; and through infinite grace, found the Holy Spirit influencing my soul with love to God, as a witness within myself.

"*Lord's day, Oct. 19.* In the morning I felt my soul *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. In the forenoon, while I was looking on the sacramental elements, and thinking that Jesus Christ would soon be "set forth crucified before me," my soul was filled with light and love, so that I was almost in an ecstasy; my body was so weak, I could scarcely stand. I felt at the same time an exceeding tenderness and most fervent love towards all mankind; so that my soul and all the powers of it seemed, as it were, to melt into softness and sweetness. But during the communion, there was some abatement of this life and fervour. This love and joy cast out fear; and my soul longed for perfect grace and glory. This frame continued till the evening, when my soul was sweetly spiritual in secret duties.

"*Monday, Oct. 20.* I again found the assistance of the Holy Spirit in secret duties, both morning and evening, and life and comfort in religion through the whole day. *Tuesday, Oct. 21.* I had likewise experience of the goodness of God in "shedding abroad his love in my heart," and giving me delight and consolation in religious duties; and all the remaining part of the week, my soul seemed to be taken up with divine things. I now so longed after God, and to be freed from sin, that when I felt myself recovering, and thought I must return to college again, which had proved so hurtful to my spiritual interest the year past, I could not but be grieved, and I thought I had much rather have died; for it distressed me to think of

getting away from God. But before I went, I enjoyed several other sweet and precious seasons of communion with God, (particularly Oct. 30, and Nov. 4,) wherein my soul enjoyed unspeakable comfort.

“I returned to college about Nov. 6, and, through the goodness of God, felt the power of religion almost daily, for the space of six weeks. Nov. 28. In my evening devotion, I enjoyed precious discoveries of God, and was unspeakably refreshed with that passage, [Heb. xii. 22-24](#). My soul longed to wing away for the paradise of God; I longed to be conformed to God in all things. A day or two after, I enjoyed much of the light of God’s countenance, most of the day; and my soul rested in God.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 9*. I was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day; but especially in evening devotions, when God was pleased wonderfully to assist and strengthen me; so that I thought nothing should ever move me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. O! *one hour with* God infinitely exceeds all the pleasures and delights of this lower world.

“Some time towards the latter end of January, 1741, I grew more *cold* and *dull* in religion, by means of my old temptation, *viz.* ambition in my studies. But through divine goodness, a great and general *awakening* spread itself over the college, about the latter end of February, in which I was much quickened, and more abundantly engaged in religion.”

This awakening was at the *beginning* of that extraordinary religious commotion through the land, which is fresh in every one’s memory. It was for a time very great and general at New-Haven; and the college had no small share in it. That society was greatly reformed, the students *in general* became serious, *many* of them *remarkably* so, and much engaged in the concerns of their eternal salvation. And however undesirable the issue of the awakenings of that day have appeared in many *others*, there have been manifestly happy and abiding effects of the impressions then made on the minds of many of the members of that college. And by all that I can learn concerning Mr. Brainerd, there can be no reason to doubt but that he had much of God’s gracious presence, and of the lively actings of true grace, at that time: but yet he was afterwards abundantly sensible, that his religious experiences and affections at that time were not free from a corrupt mixture, nor his conduct to be acquitted from many things that were imprudent and blamable; which he greatly lamented himself, and was desirous that others should not make an ill use of such an example. And therefore, although at the time he kept a constant diary, containing a very particular account of what passed from day to day, for the next thirteen months, from the latter end of Jan. 1741, forementioned, in two small books, which he called the *two first volumes* of his diary, next following the account before given of his convictions, conversion, and consequent comforts; yet, when he lay on his death-bed, he gave order (unknown to me till after his death) that these two volumes should be destroyed, and in the beginning of the third book of his diary, he wrote thus, (by the hand of another, he not being able to write himself,) “The two preceding volumes, immediately following the account of the author’s conversion, are lost. If any



are desirous to know how the author lived, in general, during that space of time, let them read the first thirty pages of this volume; where they will find something of a specimen of his ordinary manner of living, through that whole space of time, which was about thirteen months; excepting that here he was more refined from some *imprudencies* and *indecent heats*, than there; but the spirit of devotion running through the whole was the same.”

It could not be otherwise than that one whose heart had been so prepared and drawn to God, as Mr. Brainerd’s had been, should be mightily enlarged, animated, and engaged at the sight of such an alteration made in the college, the town, and country; and so great an appearance of men reforming their lives, and turning from their profaneness and immorality to seriousness and concern for their salvation, and of religion reviving and flourishing almost every where. But as an intemperate, imprudent zeal, and a degree of enthusiasm, soon crept in, and mingled itself with that revival of religion; and so great and general an awakening being quite a new thing in the land, at least as to all the living inhabitants of it; neither people nor ministers had learned thoroughly to *distinguish* between solid religion and its delusive counterfeits. Even many ministers of the gospel, of long standing and the best reputation, were for a time overpowered with the glaring appearances of the latter; and therefore, surely it was not to be wondered at, that young Brainerd, but a *sophomore* at college, should be so; who was not only young in years, but very young in religion and experience. He had enjoyed but little advantage for the study of divinity, and still less for observing the circumstances and events of such an extraordinary state of things. To think it strange, a man must divest himself of all reason. In these disadvantageous circumstances, Brainerd had the unhappiness to have a *tincture* of that intemperate, indiscreet zeal, which was at that time too prevalent; and was led, from his high opinion of others whom he looked upon as better than himself, into such errors as were really contrary to the habitual temper of his mind. One instance of his misconduct at that time, gave great offence to the rulers of the college, even to that degree that they expelled him the society; which it is necessary should here be particularly related, with its circumstances.

During the awakening at college, there were several religious students who associated together for mutual conversation and assistance in spiritual things. These were wont freely to open themselves one to another, as special and intimate friends: Brainerd was one of this company. And it once happened, that he and two or three more of these intimate friends were in the hall together, after Mr. Whittelsey, one of the tutors, had been to prayer there with the scholars; no other person now remaining in the hall but Brainerd and his companions. Mr. Whittelsey having been unusually pathetic in his prayer, one of Brainerd’s friends on this occasion asked him what he thought of Mr. Whittelsey; he made answer, “He has no more grace than this chair.” One of the *freshmen* happening at that time to be near the hall (though not in the room) over-heard those words. This person, though he heard no name mentioned, and knew not who was thus censured, informed a certain woman in the

town, withal telling her his own suspicion, *viz.* that he believed Brainerd said this of some one or other of the *rulers* of the college. Whereupon she went and informed the *rector*, who sent for this *freshman* and examined him. He told the rector the words he heard Brainerd utter, and informed him who were in the room with him at that time. Upon which the rector sent for them: they were very backward to inform against their friend what they looked upon as private conversation, and especially as none but they had heard or knew of whom he had uttered those words: yet the rector compelled them to declare *what* he said, and of *whom* he said it. Brainerd looked on himself very ill used in the management of this affair; and thought, that it was injuriously *extorted* from his friends, and then injuriously *required* of him as if he had been guilty of some open, notorious crime to make a *public* confession, and to humble himself before the whole college in the hall, for what he had said only in *private* conversation. He not complying with this demand, and having gone once to the separate meeting at New-Haven, when forbidden by the rector; and also having been *accused* by one person of saying concerning the rector, “that he wondered he did not expect to drop down dead for fining the scholars who followed Mr. Tennent to Milford, though there was *no proof* of it; (and Mr. Brainerd ever professed that he did not remember his saying any thing to that purpose;) for these things he was *expelled* the college.

Now, how far the circumstances and exigencies of that day might justify such great severity in the governors of the college, I will not undertake to determine; it being my aim, not to bring reproach on the authority of the college, but only to do justice to the memory of a person, who was I think eminently one of those whose *memory is blessed*. The reader will see, in the sequel of the story of Mr. Brainerd’s life,<sup>353</sup> what his own thoughts afterwards were of his behaviour in these things, and in how Christian a manner he conducted himself, with respect to this affair: though he ever, as long as he lived, supposed himself ill used in the management of it, and in what he suffered. His expulsion was in the winter, 1742, while in his third year at college.

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353 Particularly under the date, Wednesday, Sept. 11, 1743

## PART II.

FROM ABOUT THE TIME THAT HE FIRST BEGAN TO DEVOTE HIMSELF MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE STUDY OF DIVINITY, TILL HE WAS EXAMINED AND LICENSED TO PREACH, BY THE ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS BELONGING TO THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD, IN CONNECTICUT.

Mr. Brainerd, the *Spring* after his expulsion, went to live with the Reverend Mr. Mills, of Ripton, to pursue his studies with him, in order to his being fitted for the work of the ministry; where he spent the greater part of the time, till the Association licensed him to preach; but frequently rode to visit the neighbouring ministers, particularly Mr. Cooke of Stratford, Mr. Graham of Southbury, and Mr. Bellamy of Bethlehem. While with Mr. Mills, he began the *third book* of his diary, in which the account he wrote of himself, is as follows.

“*Thursday, April 1, 1742.* I seem to be declining, with respect to my life and warmth in divine things; had not so free access to God in prayer as usual of late. O that God would humble me deeply in the dust before him! I deserve hell every day, for not loving my Lord more, who has, I trust, *loved me, and given himself for me*; and every time I am enabled to exercise any grace renewedly, I am renewedly indebted to the God of all grace for special assistance. *Where then is boasting?* Surely *it is excluded*, when we think how we are dependent on God for the being and every act of grace. Oh, if ever I get to heaven, it will be because God will, and nothing else; for I never did any thing of myself, but get away from God! My soul will be astonished at the unsearchable riches of divine grace, when I arrive at the mansions, which the blessed Saviour is gone before to prepare.

“*Friday, April 2.* In the afternoon I felt, in secret prayer, much resigned, calm, and serene. What are all the storms of this lower world, if *Jesus by his Spirit* does but come *walking on the seas!* Some time past, I had much pleasure in the prospect of the heathen being brought home to Christ, and desired that the Lord would employ *me* in that work: but now, my soul more frequently desires to die, to *be with Christ*. O that my soul were wrapt up in divine love, and my longing desires after God increased! In the evening, was refreshed in prayer, with the hopes of the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world.

“*Saturday, April 3.* Was very much amiss this morning, and had a bad night. I thought, if God would take me to himself *now*, my soul would exceedingly rejoice. O that I may be always humble and resigned to God, and that he would cause my soul to be more fixed on himself, that I may be more fitted both for *doing* and *suffering!*

“*Lord’s day, April 4.* My heart was wandering and lifeless. In the evening God gave me faith in prayer, made my soul melt in some measure, and gave me to taste a divine sweetness. O my blessed God! Let me climb up near to him, and love, and long, and plead, and wrestle, and stretch after him, and for deliverance from the body of sin and death. Alas! my soul mourned to think I should ever lose sight of its beloved again. ‘O come, Lord Jesus, Amen.’”

On the *evening of the next day*, he complains, that he seemed to be void of all relish of divine things, felt much of the prevalence of corruption, and saw in himself a disposition to all manner of sin; which brought a very great gloom on his mind, and cast him down into the depths of melancholy; so that he speaks of himself as amazed, having no comfort, but filled with horror, seeing no comfort in heaven or earth.

“*Tuesday, April 6.* I walked out this morning to the same place where I was last night, and felt as I did then; but was somewhat relieved by reading some passages in my diary, and seemed to feel as if I might pray to the great God again with freedom; but was suddenly struck with a damp, from the sense I had of my own vileness. Then I cried to God to cleanse me from my exceeding filthiness, to give me repentance and pardon. I then began to find it sweet to pray; and could think of undergoing the greatest sufferings, in the cause of Christ, with pleasure; and found myself willing, if God should so order it, to suffer banishment from my native land, among the heathen, that I might do something for their salvation, in distresses and deaths of any kind. Then God gave me to wrestle earnestly for others, for the kingdom of Christ in the world, and for dear Christian friends. I felt weaned from the world, and from my own *reputation* amongst men, willing to be *despised*, and to be a gazing-stock for the world to behold. It is impossible for me to express how I then felt: I had not much joy, but some sense of the *majesty* of God, which made me as it were tremble. I saw myself mean and vile, which made me more willing that God should do what he would with me; it was all infinitely reasonable.

“*Wednesday, April 7.* I had not so much fervency, but felt something as I did yesterday morning, in prayer. At noon I spent some time in secret, with some fervency, but scarce any sweetness; and felt very dull in the evening.

“*Thursday, April 8.* Had raised hopes to-day respecting the heathen. O that God would bring in great numbers of them to Jesus Christ! I cannot but hope I shall see that glorious day. Every thing in this world seems exceeding vile and little to me: I look so on myself. I had some little dawn of comfort to-day in prayer; but especially to-night, I think I had some faith and *power* of intercession with God. I was enabled to plead with God for the growth of grace in myself; and many of the dear children of God then lay with weight upon my soul. Blessed be the Lord! It is good to wrestle for divine blessings.

“*Friday, April 9.* Most of my time in morning devotion was spent without sensible sweetness; yet I had one delightful prospect of arriving at the heavenly world. I am more amazed than ever at such thoughts; for I see myself infinitely vile and unworthy. I feel very heartless and dull; and though I long for the presence of God, and seem constantly to reach towards God in desires; yet I cannot feel that divine and heavenly sweetness that I used to enjoy. No poor creature stands in need of divine grace more than I, and none abuse it more than I have done, and still do.

“*Saturday, April 10.* Spent much time in secret prayer this morning, and not without some comfort in divine things; and, I hope, had some faith in exercise: but am so low, and feel so little of the *sensible* presence of God, that I hardly know what to call faith, and am made to *possess the sins of my youth*, and the dreadful sin of my nature. I am all sin; I cannot think, nor act, but every motion is sin. I feel some faint hopes, that God will, of his infinite mercy, return again with showers of converting grace to poor gospel-abusing sinners; and my *hopes* of being employed in the cause of God, which of late have been almost extinct, seem now a little revived. O that all my late distresses and awful apprehensions might prove but Christ’s school, to make me fit for greater service, by teaching me the great lesson of humility!

“*Lord’s day, April 11.* In the morning I felt but little life, excepting that my heart was somewhat drawn out in thankfulness to God for his amazing grace and condescension to me, in past influences and assistances of his Spirit. Afterwards, I had some sweetness in the thoughts of arriving at the *heavenly world*. O for the happy day! After public worship God gave me special assistance in prayer; I wrestled with my dear Lord, with much sweetness; and intercession was made a delightful employment to me. In the evening, as I was viewing the light in the north, I was delighted in contemplation on the glorious morning of the resurrection.

“*Monday, April 12.* This morning the Lord was pleased to lift up the light of his countenance upon me in secret prayer, and made the season very precious to my soul. And though I have been so depressed of late, respecting my hopes of future serviceableness in the cause of God; yet now I had much encouragement respecting that matter. I was especially assisted to intercede and plead for poor souls, and for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and for *special grace* for myself, to fit me for *special services*. I felt exceedingly calm, and quite resigned to God, respecting my future employment, *when* and *where* he pleased. My faith lifted me above the world, and removed all those mountains, that I could not look over of late. I wanted not the favour of man to lean upon; for I knew Christ’s favour was infinitely better, and that it was no matter *when*, nor *where*, nor *how* Christ should send me, nor what trials he should still exercise me with, if I might be prepared for his work and will. I now found *revived*, in my mind, the wonderful discovery of infinite *wisdom* in all the dispensations of God towards me, which I had a little before I met with my great trial at college; every thing appeared full of divine wisdom.

“*Tuesday, April 13.* I saw myself to be very mean and vile; and wondered at those that showed me respect. Afterwards I was somewhat comforted in secret retirement, and assisted to wrestle with God, with some power, spirituality, and sweetness. Blessed be the Lord, he is never unmindful of me, but always sends me needed supplies; and, from time to time, when I am like one dead, he raises me to life. O that I may never distrust infinite goodness!

“*Wednesday, April 14.* My soul longed for communion with Christ, and for the mortification of indwelling corruption, especially spiritual pride. O there is a sweet day coming, wherein *the weary will be at rest!* My soul has enjoyed much sweetness this day in the hopes of its speedy arrival.

“*Thursday, April 15.* My desires apparently centred in God, and I found a sensible attraction of soul after him sundry times to-day. I know *I long for God*, and a conformity to his will, in inward purity and holiness, ten thousand times more than for any thing here below.

“*Friday and Saturday, April 16, 17.* I seldom prayed without some sensible joy in the Lord. Sometimes I longed much *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* O that God would enable me to grow in grace every day! Alas! my barrenness is such, that God might well say, *Cut it dawn.* I am afraid of a dead heart on the sabbath now begun: <sup>354</sup> O that God would quicken me by his grace!

“*Lord’s day, April 18.* I retired early this morning into the woods for prayer; had the assistance of God’s Spirit, and faith in exercise; and was enabled to plead with fervency for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and to intercede for dear absent friends. At noon, God enabled me to wrestle with him, and to feel, as I trust, the power of divine love in prayer. At night I saw myself infinitely indebted to God, and had a view of my shortcomings: it seemed to me, that I had done as it were nothing for God, and that I never had *lived to him* but a few hours of my life.

“*Monday, April 19.* I set apart this day for fasting, and prayer to God for his grace; especially to prepare me for the work of the *ministry*, to give me divine aid and direction in my preparations for that great work, and in his own time to *send me into his harvest.* Accordingly, in the morning, I endeavoured to plead for the divine presence for the day, and not without some life. In the forenoon, I felt the power of intercession for precious, immortal souls; for the advancement of the kingdom of my dear Lord and Saviour in the word; and withal, a most sweet resignation, and even consolation and joy in the thoughts of suffering hardships, distresses, and even death itself, in the promotion of it; and had special enlargement in pleading for the enlightening and conversion of the poor heathen. In the afternoon, *God was with me of a truth.* O it was blessed company indeed! God enabled me so to agonize in prayer, that I was quite wet with perspiration, though in the shade, and the cool wind. My soul was drawn out very much for the world; for *multitudes* of souls. I think I had more enlargement for sinners, than for the children of God; though I felt as if I could spend my life in cries for both. I enjoyed great sweetness in communion with my dear Saviour. I think I never in my life felt such an entire weanedness from this world, and so much resigned to God in every thing. O that I may always live *to* and *upon* my blessed God! Amen, Amen.

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354 In America, they begin to keep the Lord’s day from six o’clock on Saturday evening.

“*Tuesday, April 20.* This day I am twenty-four years of age. O how much mercy have I received the year past! How often has God *caused his goodness to pass before me!* And how poorly have I answered the vows I made this time twelvemonth, to be *wholly* the Lord’s, to be *for ever* devoted to his service! The Lord help me to live more to his glory for the time to come. This has been a sweet, a happy day to me: blessed be God. I think my soul was never so drawn out in intercession for *others*, as it has been this night. Had a most fervent wrestle with the Lord tonight for my *enemies*; and I hardly ever so longed to *live to God*, and to be altogether devoted to him; I wanted to wear out my life in his service, and for his glory.

“*Wednesday, April 21.* Felt much calmness and resignation, and God again enabled me to wrestle for numbers of souls, and had much fervency in the sweet duty of intercession. I enjoyed of late more sweetness in intercession for others, than in any other part of prayer. My blessed Lord really let me *come near to him, and plead with him.*”

The frame of mind, and exercises of soul, that he expresses the *three days next following, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday*, are much of the same kind with those expressed the two days past.

“*Lord’s day, April 25.* This morning I spent about two hours in secret duties, and was enabled more than ordinarily to agonize for immortal souls; though it was early in the morning, and the sun scarcely shined at all, yet my body was quite wet with sweat. I felt much pressed now, as frequently of late, to plead for the meekness and calmness of the Lamb of God in my soul; and through divine goodness felt much of it this morning. O it is a sweet disposition, heartily to forgive all injuries done us; to wish our greatest enemies as well as we do our own souls! Blessed Jesus, may I daily be more and more conformed to thee. At night I was exceedingly melted with divine love, and had some feeling sense of the blessedness of the upper world. Those words hung upon me, with much divine sweetness, [Psal lxxxiv. 7.](#) ‘They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.’ O the *near access* that God sometimes gives us in our addresses to him! This may well be termed *appearing before God*: it is so indeed, in the true spiritual sense, and in the sweetest sense. I think I have not had such power of intercession these many months, both for God’s children, and for dead sinners, as have had this evening. I wished and longed for the coming of my dear Lord: I longed to join the angelic hosts in praises, wholly free from imperfection. O the blessed moment hastens! All I want is to be more holy, more like my dear Lord. O for sanctification! My very soul pants for the complete restoration of the blessed image of my Saviour; that I may be fit for the blessed enjoyments and employments of the heavenly world.

’Farewell, vain world; my soul can bid adieu; My Saviour’s taught me to abandon you. Your charms may gratify a sensual mind; Not please a soul wholly for God design’d. Forbear to entice, cease then my soul to call; ‘Tis fix’d through grace; my God shall be my all. While he thus lets me heavenly glories view, Your beauties fade, my heart’s no room for you.’

“The Lord refreshed my soul with many sweet passages of his word. O the new Jerusalem! my soul longed for it. O the song of Moses and the Lamb! And that blessed song, that no man can learn, but they who are *redeemed from the earth!* and the glorious *white robes*, that were given to *the souls under the altar!*

’Lord, I’m a stranger here alone; Earth no true comforts can afford; Yet, absent from my dearest one, My soul delights to cry, My Lord. Jesus, my Lord, my only love, Possess my soul, nor thence depart; Grant me kind visits, heavenly Dove; My God shall then have all my heart.’

“*Monday, April 26.* Continued in a sweet frame of mind; but in the afternoon felt something of spiritual pride stirring. God was pleased to make it an humbling season at first; though afterwards he gave me sweetness. O my soul exceedingly longs for that blessed state of perfect deliverance from all sin! At night, God enabled me to give my soul up to him, to cast myself upon him, to be ordered and disposed of according to his sovereign pleasure; and I enjoyed great peace and consolation in so doing. My soul took sweet delight in God; my thoughts freely and sweetly centred in him. O that I could spend every moment of my life to his glory!

“*Tuesday, April 27.* I retired pretty early for secret devotions; and in prayer God was pleased to pour such ineffable comforts into my soul, that I could do nothing for some time but say over and over, ’O my sweet Saviour! ’O my sweet Saviour! whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.’ If I had had a thousand lives, my soul would gladly have laid them all down at once to have been with Christ. My soul never enjoyed so much of heaven before; it was the most refined and the most spiritual season of communion with God I ever yet felt. I never felt so great a degree of *resignation* in my life. In the afternoon I withdrew to meet with my God, but found myself much declined, and God made it an humbling season to my soul. I mourned over *the body of death* that is in me. It grieved me exceedingly, that I could not pray to and praise God with my heart full of divine heavenly love. O that my soul might never offer any dead, cold services to my God! In the evening had not so much divine *love*, as in the morning; but had a sweet season of fervent *intercession*.

“*Wednesday, April 28.* I withdrew to my usual place of retirement in great peace and tranquillity, spent about two hours in secret duties, and felt much as I did yesterday morning, only weaker and more overcome. I seemed to depend wholly on my dear Lord; wholly weaned from all other dependences. I knew not what to say to my God, but only *lean on his bosom*, as it were, and breathe out my desires after a perfect conformity to him in all things. Thirsting desires, and insatiable longings, possessed my soul after *perfect holiness*. God was so precious to my soul, that the world with all its enjoyments was infinitely vile. I had no more value for the favour of men, than for pebbles. The Lord was my All; and that *he* overruled all, greatly delighted me. I think, my faith and dependence on God scarce ever rose



so high. I saw him such a fountain of goodness, that it seemed impossible I should distrust him again, or be any way anxious about any thing that should happen to me. I now enjoyed great sweetness in praying for absent friends, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in the world. Much of the power of these divine enjoyments remained with me through the day. In the evening my heart seemed to melt, and, I trust, was really humbled for indwelling corruption, and I *mourned like a dove*. I felt, that all my unhappiness arose from my being a *sinner*. With resignation I could bid welcome to all *other* trials; but *sin* hung heavy upon me; for God discovered to me the corruption of my heart. I went to bed with a heavy heart, *because I was a sinner*; though I did not in the least doubt of God's love. O that God would *purge away my dross, and take away my tin*, and make me seven times refined!

"*Thursday, April 29*. I was kept off at a distance from God; but had some enlargement in intercession for precious souls.

"*Friday, April 30*. I was somewhat dejected in spirit: nothing grieves me so much, as that I cannot live constantly to God's glory. I could bear any desertion or spiritual conflicts, if I could but have *my heart* all the while *burning within me* with love to God and desires of his glory. But this is impossible; for when I *feel* these, I cannot be dejected in my soul, but only *rejoice in my Saviour*, who has delivered me from the reigning power, and will shortly deliver me from the indwelling of sin.

"*Saturday, May 1*. I was enabled to cry to God with fervency for ministerial qualifications, that he would appear for the advancement of his own kingdom, and that he would bring in the heathen, &c. Had much assistance in my studies. This has been a profitable week to me; I have enjoyed many communications of the blessed Spirit in my soul.

"*Lord's day, May 2*. God was pleased this morning to give me such a sight of myself, as made me appear very vile in my own eyes. I felt corruption stirring in my heart, which I could by no means suppress; felt more and more deserted; was exceeding weak, and almost sick with my inward trials.

"*Monday, May 3*. Had a sense of vile ingratitude. In the morning I withdrew to my usual place of retirement, and mourned for my abuse of my dear Lord: spent the day in fasting and prayer. God gave me much power of wrestling for his cause and kingdom; and it was a happy day to my soul. God was with me all the day, and I was more above the world than ever in my life."

Through the *remaining part of this week* he complains almost every day of desertion, inward trials and conflicts, attended with dejection of spirit; but yet speaks of times of relief and sweetness, and daily refreshing visits of the divine Spirit, affording special assistance and comfort, and enabling, at some times, to much fervency and enlargement in religious duties.

"*Lord's day, May, 9*. I think I never felt so much of the cursed *pride* of my heart, as well as the *stubbornness* of my will, before. Oh dreadful! what a vile wretch I am! I could submit

to be nothing, and to lie down in the dust. O that God would humble me in the dust! I felt myself such a sinner, all day, that I had scarce any comfort. O when shall I be *delivered from the body of this death!* I greatly feared, lest through stupidity and carelessness I should lose the benefit of these trials. O that they might be sanctified to my soul! Nothing seemed to touch me but only this, that I was a *sinner*. Had a fervency and refreshment in social prayer in the evening.

“*Monday, May 10.* I rode to New-Haven; saw some Christian friends there; and had comfort in joining in prayer with them, and hearing of the goodness of God to them, since I last saw them.

“*Tuesday, May 11.* I rode from New-Haven to Weathersfeld; was very dull most of the day; had little spirituality in this journey, though I often longed to be alone with God; was much perplexed with vile thoughts; was sometimes afraid of every thing: but God was *my helper*. Caught a little time for retirement in the evening, to my comfort and rejoicing. Alas! I cannot live in the midst of a tumult. I long to enjoy God alone.

“*Wednesday, May 12.* I had a distressing view of the pride, enmity, and vileness of my heart. Afterwards had sweet refreshment in conversing, and worshipping God, with Christian friends.

“*Thursday, May 13.* Saw so much of the wickedness of my heart, that I longed to get away from myself. I never before thought there was so much spiritual *pride* in my soul. I felt almost pressed to death with my own vileness. Oh what a *body of death* is there in me! *Lord, deliver my soul.* I could not find any convenient place for retirement, and was greatly exercised. Rode to Hartford in the afternoon: had some refreshment and comfort in religious exercises with Christian friends; but longed for more retirement. O the closest walk with God is the sweetest heaven that can be enjoyed on earth!

“*Friday, May 14.* I waited on a council of ministers convened at Hartford, and spread before them the treatment I had met with from the rector and tutors of Yale college; who thought it adviseable to intercede for me with the rector and trustees, and to entreat them to restore me to my former privileges in college.<sup>355</sup> After this, spent some time in religious exercises with Christian friends.

“*Saturday, May 15.* I rode from Hartford to Hebron; was somewhat dejected on the road; appeared exceeding vile in my own eyes, saw much pride and stubbornness in my heart. Indeed I never saw such a week as this before; for I have been almost ready to die with the view of the wickedness of my heart. I could not have thought I had such a *body of death* in me. Oh that God would *deliver my soul!*”

The *three next days* (which he spent at Hebron, Lebanon, and Norwich) he complains still of dulness and desertion, and expresses a sense of his vileness, and longing to hide

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355 The application which was then made on his behalf, had not the desired success.

himself in some cave or den of the earth: but yet speaks of some intervals of comfort and soul-refreshment each day.

“*Wednesday, May 19.* (At Millington) I was so amazingly deserted this morning, that I seemed to feel a sort of horror in my soul. Alas! when God withdraws, what is there that can afford any comfort to the soul!”

Through the *eight days next following* he expresses more calmness and comfort, and considerable life, fervency, and sweetness in religion.

“*Friday, May 28.* (At New-Haven) I think I scarce ever felt so *calm* in my life; I rejoiced in *resignation*, and giving myself up to God, to be wholly and entirely devoted to him for ever.”

On the *three following days* there was, by the account he gives, a continuance of the same excellent frame of mind, last expressed: but it seems not to be altogether to so great a degree.

“*Tuesday, June 1.* Had much of the presence of God in family prayer, and had some comfort in secret. I was greatly refreshed from the word of God this morning, which appeared exceeding sweet to me: some things that appeared mysterious, were opened to me. O that the kingdom of the dear Saviour might come with power, and the healing waters of the sanctuary spread far and wide for the healing of the nations! Came to Ripton; but was very weak. However, being visited by a number of young people in the evening, I prayed with them.”

The *remaining part of this week* he speaks of being much diverted and hindered in the business of religion, by great weakness of body, and necessary affairs he had to attend; and complains of having but little power in religion; but signifies, that God hereby showed him he was like a helpless infant cast out in the open field.

“*Lord’s day, June 6.* I feel much deserted: but all this teaches me my *nothingness* and *vileness* more than ever.

“*Monday, June 7.* Felt still powerless in secret prayer. Afterwards I prayed and conversed with some little life. God feeds me with crumbs: blessed be his name for any thing. I felt a great desire, that all God’s people might know how mean and little and vile I am; that they might see I am nothing, that so they might pray for me aright, and not have the least dependence upon me.

“*Tuesday, June 8.* I enjoyed one sweet and precious season this day: I never felt it so sweet to be *nothing*, and *less* than nothing, and to be *accounted* nothing.”

The *three next days* he complains of desertion, and want of fervency in religion; but yet his diary shows that every day his *heart* was engaged in religion, as his *great*, and, as it were, *only* business.

“*Saturday, June 12.* Spent much time in prayer this morning, and enjoyed much sweetness: felt insatiable longings after God much of the day. I wondered how poor souls

do to live that have *no God*. The world, with all its enjoyments, quite vanished. I see myself very helpless: but I have a blessed God to go to. I longed exceedingly *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, to behold his glory*. Oh, my weak, weary soul longs to arrive at *my Father's house!*

“*Lord's day, June 13*. Felt something calm and resigned in the public worship: at the sacrament saw myself very vile and worthless. O that I may always lie low in the dust. My soul seemed steadily to go forth after God, in longing desires to live upon him.

“*Monday, June 14*. Felt something of the sweetness of communion with God, and the *constraining* force of *his love*: how admirably it captivates the soul, and makes all the desires and affections to centre in God! I set apart this day for secret fasting and prayer, to entreat God to direct and bless me with regard to the great work I have in view, of *preaching the gospel*; and that the Lord would return to me, and *show me the light of his countenance*. Had little life and power in the forenoon: near the middle of the afternoon, God enabled me to wrestle ardently in intercession for absent friends: but just at night, the Lord visited me marvellously in prayer: I think my soul never was in such an agony before. I felt no restraint; for the treasures of divine grace were opened to me. I wrestled for absent friends, for the ingathering of souls, for *multitudes* of poor souls, and for many that I thought were the children of God, *personally*, in many distant places. I was in such an agony, from sun half an hour high, till near dark, that I was all over wet with sweat; but yet it seemed to me that I had wasted away the day, and had done nothing. Oh, my dear Jesus did *sweat blood* for poor souls! I longed for more compassion towards them. Felt still in a sweet frame, under a sense of divine love and grace; and went to bed in such a frame, with my heart set on God.

“*Tuesday, June 15*. Had the most ardent longings after God that ever I felt in my life: at noon, in my secret retirement, I could do nothing but tell my dear Lord, in a sweet calm, that he knew I longed for nothing but *himself*, nothing but *holiness*; that *he* had given me these desires, and he *only* could give me the thing desired. I never seemed to be so unhinged from *myself*, and to be so wholly devoted to God. My heart was swallowed up in God most of the day. In the evening I had such a view of the soul being as it were enlarged, to contain more holiness, that it seemed ready to separate from my body. I then wrestled in an agony for divine blessings; had my heart drawn out in prayer for some Christian friends, beyond what I ever had before. I feel differently now from whatever I did under any enjoyments before; more engaged to *live to God* for ever. and less pleased with my own frames. I am not satisfied with my frames, nor feel at all more easy after such strugglings than before; for it seems far too little, if I could *always* be so. Oh how short do I fall of my duty in my sweetest moments!”

In his diary for the *two next days* he expresses something of the same frame, but in a far less degree.<sup>356</sup>

“*Friday, June 18.* Considering my great unfitness for the work of the *ministry*, my present deadness, and total inability to do any thing for the glory of God that way, feeling myself very helpless, and at a great loss *what the Lord would have me to do*; I set apart this day for prayer to God, and spent most of the day in that duty, but amazingly deserted most of the day. Yet I found God graciously near, once in particular; while I was pleading for more compassion for immortal souls, my *heart* seemed to be *opened* at once, and I was enabled to cry with great ardency, for a few minutes. Oh, I was distressed to think, that I should offer such dead, cold services to the *living God*! My soul seemed to breathe after holiness, a life of constant devotedness to God. But I am almost lost sometimes in the pursuit of this blessedness, and ready to sink, because I continually fall short and miss of my desire. O that the Lord would help me to hold out, yet a little while, till the happy hour of deliverance comes!

“*Saturday, June 19.* Felt much disordered; my spirits were very low: but yet enjoyed some freedom and sweetness in the duties of religion. *Blessed be God.*

“*Lord’s day, June 20.* Spent much time alone. My soul longed to be holy, and reached after God; but seemed not to obtain my desire. I *hungered* and *thirsted*; but was not refreshed and satisfied. My soul hung on God, as my only portion. O that I could grow in grace more abundantly every day!”

The *next day* he speaks of his having assistance in his studies, and power, fervency, and comfort in prayer.

“*Tuesday, June 22.* In the morning spent about two hours in prayer and meditation, with considerable delight. Towards night, felt my soul go out in longing desires after God, in secret retirement. In the evening, was sweetly composed and resigned to God’s will; was enabled to leave myself and all my concerns with him, and to have my whole dependence upon him. My secret retirement was very refreshing to my soul; it appeared such a happiness to have God for my portion, that I had rather be any other creature in this lower creation, than not come to the enjoyment of God. I had rather be a beast, than a man without God, if I were to live here to eternity. Lord, endear thyself more to me!”

In his diary for the *next seven days* he expresses a variety of exercises of mind. He speaks of great longings after God and holiness, and earnest desires for the conversion of others; of fervency in prayer, power to wrestle with God, composure, comfort, and sweetness, from time to time; but expresses a sense of the vile abomination of his heart, and bitterly complains

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356 Here end the 30 first pages of the third volume of his diary, which he speaks of in the beginning of this volume, (as observed before,) as containing a specimen of his ordinary manner of living, through the whole space of time, from the beginning of those two volumes that were destroyed.

of his barrenness, and the pressing body of death; and says, he “saw clearly that whatever he enjoyed, better than hell, was of free grace.” He complains of being exceeding low, much below the character of a child of God; and is sometimes very disconsolate and dejected.

“*Wednesday, June 30.* Spent this day alone in the woods, in fasting and prayer; underwent the most dreadful conflicts in my soul that ever I felt, in some respects. I saw myself so vile, that I was ready to say, “I shall now perish by the hand of Saul.” I thought, and almost concluded, I had no power to stand for the cause of God, but was almost “afraid of the shaking of a leaf.” Spent almost the whole day in prayer, incessantly. I could not bear to think of Christians showing me any respect. I almost despaired of doing any service in the world: I could not feel any hope or comfort respecting the heathen, which used to afford me some refreshment in the darkest hours of this nature. I spent the day *in the bitterness of my soul*. Near night, I felt a little better; and afterwards enjoyed some sweetness in secret prayer.

“*Thursday, July 1.* Had some sweetness in prayer this morning. Felt exceeding sweetly in secret prayer to-night, and desired nothing so ardently as that *God should do with me just as he pleased*.

“*Friday, July 2.* Felt composed in secret prayer in the morning. My desires ascended to God this day, as I was travelling: and was comfortable in the evening. *Blessed be God for all my consolations*.

“*Saturday, July 3.* My heart seemed again to sink.

The disgrace I was laid under at college, seemed to damp me; as it opens the mouths of opposers. I had no refuge but in God. Blessed be his name, that I may go to *him* at all times, and, find *him a present help*.

“*Lord’s day, July 4.* Had considerable assistance. In the evening I withdrew, and enjoyed a happy season in secret prayer. God was pleased to give me the exercise of faith, and thereby brought the invisible and eternal world near to my soul; which appeared sweetly to me. I hoped, that my weary *pilgrimage* in the world would be *short*; and that it would not be long before I was brought to my heavenly home and Father’s house. I was resigned to God’s will, to tarry his time, to do his work, and suffer his pleasure. I felt *thankfulness* to God for all my pressing *desertions* of late; for I am persuaded they have been made a means of making me more humble, and much more resigned. I felt pleased, to be *little*, to be *nothing*, and to *lie in the dust*. I enjoyed life and consolation in pleading for the dear children of God, and the kingdom of Christ in the world; and my soul earnestly breathed after holiness, and the enjoyment of God. *O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*“

By his diary for the *remaining days of this week*, it appears that he enjoyed considerable composure and tranquillity, and had sweetness and fervency of spirit in prayer, from day to day.

“*Lord’s day, July 11.* Was deserted, and exceedingly dejected, in the morning. In the afternoon, had some life and assistance, and felt resigned. I saw myself exceeding vile.”

On the *two next days* he expresses inward comfort, resignation, and strength in God.

“*Wednesday, July 14.* Felt a kind of humble resigned sweetness: spent a considerable time in secret, giving myself up wholly to the Lord. Heard Mr. Bellamy preach towards night: felt very sweetly part of the time: longed for nearer *access to God.*”

The *four next days* he expresses considerable comfort and fervency of spirit, in Christian conversation and religious exercises.

“*Monday, July 19.* My desires seem especially to be carried out after weanedness from the *world*, perfect deadness to it, and to be even *crucified* to all its allurements. My soul longs to feel itself more of a *pilgrim* and *stranger* here below; that nothing may divert me from pressing through the lonely desert, till I arrive at my Father’s house.

“*Tuesday, July 20.* It was sweet to give away myself to God, to be disposed of at his pleasure; and had some feeling sense of the sweetness of being a *pilgrim on earth.*”

The *next day* he expresses himself as determined to be wholly devoted to God; and it appears by his diary, that he spent the whole day in a most diligent exercise of religion, and exceeding comfortably.

“*Thursday, July 22.* Journeying from Southbury to Ripton, I called at a house by the way; where being very kindly entertained and refreshed, I was filled with amazement and shame, that God should stir up the hearts of any to show so much kindness to such a *dead dog* as I; was made sensible, in some measure, how exceedingly vile it is, not to be wholly devoted to God. I wondered that God would suffer any of his creatures to feed and sustain me from time to time.”

In his diary for the *six next days* are expressed various exercises and experiences; such as, sweet composure and fervency of spirit in meditation and prayer, weanedness from the world, being sensibly a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, engagedness of mind to spend every inch of time for God, &c.

“*Thursday, July 29.* I was examined by the Association met at Danbury, as to my *learning*, and also my *experiences* in religion, and received a licence from them to preach the gospel of Christ. Afterwards felt much devoted to God; joined in prayer with one of the ministers, my peculiar friend, in a convenient place; went to bed resolving to live devoted to God all my days.

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### PART III.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS BEING LICENSED TO PREACH BY THE ASSOCIATION, TILL HE WAS EXAMINED IN NEW YORK, BY THE CORRESPONDENTS, OR COMMISSIONERS OF THE SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND FOR PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND APPROVED AND APPOINTED AS THEIR MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS.

“*Friday, July 30, 1742.* Rode from Danbury to Southbury; preached there from [1 Pet. iv. 8](#). ‘And above all things have fervent charity,’ &c. Had much of the comfortable presence of God in the exercise. I seemed to have power with God in prayer, and power to get hold of the hearts of the people in preaching.

“*Saturday, July 31.* Exceeding calm and composed, and was greatly refreshed and encouraged.”

It appears by his diary, that he continued in this sweetness and tranquillity almost through the whole of the next week.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 8.* In the morning I felt comfortably in secret prayer; my soul was refreshed with the hopes of the heathen coming home to Christ; was much resigned to God, and thought it was no matter what became of *me*. Preached both parts of the day at Bethlehem, from [Job xiv. 14](#). “If a man die, shall he live again,” &c. It was sweet to me to meditate on *death*. In the evening felt very comfortably, and cried to God fervently in secret prayer.”

It appears by his diary, that he continued through the *three next days* engaged with all his might in the business of religion, and in almost a constant enjoyment of the comforts of it.

“*Thursday, Aug. 12.* This morning and last night I was exercised with sore inward trials: I had no power to pray; but seemed shut out from God. I had in a great measure lost my hopes of God sending me among the heathen afar off, and of seeing them flock home to Christ. I saw so much of my hellish vileness, that I appeared worse to myself than any devil: I wondered that God would let me live, and wondered that people did not stone me, much more that they would ever hear me preach! It seemed as though I never could nor should preach any more; yet about nine or ten o’clock, the people came over, and I was forced to preach. And blessed be God, he gave me his presence and Spirit in prayer and preaching: so that I was much assisted, and spake with power from [Job xiv. 14](#). Some Indians cried out in great distress,<sup>357</sup> and all appeared greatly concerned. After we had prayed and exhorted them to seek the Lord with constancy, and hired an Englishwoman to keep a kind of *school* among them, we came away about one o’clock, and came to Judea, about fifteen or sixteen miles. There God was pleased to visit my soul with much comfort. Blessed be the Lord for all things I meet with.”

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357 It was in a place near Kent, in the western borders of Connecticut, where there is a number of Indians.



It appears that the two next days he had much comfort, and had his heart much engaged in religion.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 15.* Felt much comfort and devotedness to God this day. At night it was refreshing to get alone with God, and *pour out my soul*. O who can conceive of the sweetness of communion with the blessed God, but those who have experience of it! Glory to God for ever, that I may taste heaven below.

“*Monday, Aug. 16.* Had some comfort in secret prayer, in the morning Felt sweetly sundry times in prayer this day: but was much perplexed in the evening with vain conversation.

“*Tuesday, Aug. 17.* Exceedingly depressed in spirit, it cuts and wounds my heart, to think how much *self-exaltation, spiritual pride, and warmth of temper*, I have *formerly* had intermingled with my endeavours to promote God’s work: and sometimes I long to lie down at the feet of opposers, and confess what a poor imperfect creature I have been, and still am. Oh, the Lord forgive me, and make me for the future “wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove!” Afterwards enjoyed considerable comfort and delight of soul.

”*Wednesday, Aug. 18.* Spent most of this day in prayer and reading. I see so much of my own extreme vileness, that I feel ashamed and guilty before God and man; I look to myself like the vilest fellow in the land: I wonder that God stirs up his people to be so kind to me.

“*Thursday, Aug. 19.* This day, being about to go from Mr. Bellamy’s at Bethlehem, where I had resided some time, I prayed with him, and two or three other Christian friends. We gave ourselves to God with all our hearts, to be his for ever: eternity looked very near to me, while I was praying. If I never should see these Christians again in this world, it seemed but a few moments before I should meet them in another world.

“*Friday, Aug. 20.* I appeared so vile to myself, that I hardly dared to think of being seen especially on account of spiritual pride. However, to-night I enjoyed a sweet hour alone with God (at Ripton): I was lifted above the frowns and flatteries of this lower world, had a sweet relish of heavenly joys, and my soul did as it were get into the eternal world, and really taste of heaven. I had a sweet season of intercession for dear friends in Christ; and God helped me to cry fervently for Zion. *Blessed be God for this season.*

“*Saturday, Aug. 21.* Was much perplexed in the morning. Towards noon enjoyed more of God in secret, was enabled to see that it was best to throw myself into the hands of God, to be disposed of according to his pleasure, and rejoiced in such thoughts. In the afternoon rode to New-Haven; was much confused all the way. Just at night underwent such a dreadful conflict as I have scarce ever felt. I saw myself exceedingly vile and unworthy; so that I was guilty, and ashamed that any body should bestow any favour on me, or show me any respect.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 22.* In the morning, continued still in perplexity. In the evening, enjoyed that comfort that seemed to me sufficient to overbalance all my late distresses. I saw that

God is the only soul-satisfying portion, and I really found satisfaction in him. My soul was much enlarged in sweet intercession for my fellowmen every where, and for many Christian friends in particular, in distant places.

“*Monday, Aug. 23.* Had a sweet season in secret prayer: the Lord drew near to my soul, and filled me with peace and divine consolation. O my soul tasted the sweetness of the upper world; and was drawn out in prayer for the world, that it might come home to Christ! Had much comfort in the thoughts and hopes of the ingathering of the heathen; was greatly assisted in intercession for Christian friends.”

He continued still in the same frame of mind *the next day*, but in a lesser degree.

“*Wednesday, Aug. 25.* In family prayer, God helped me to climb up near him, so that I scarce ever got nearer.”

*The four next days*, he appears to have been the subject of desertion, and of comfort, and fervency in religion, interchangeably, together with a sense of vileness and unprofitableness.

“*Monday, Aug. 30.* Felt something comfortably in the morning; conversed sweetly with some friends; was in a serious composed frame; and prayed at a certain house with some degree of sweetness. Afterwards, at another house, prayed privately with a dear Christian friend or two; and I think I scarce ever launched so far into the eternal world as then; I got so far out on the broad ocean that my soul with joy triumphed over all the evils on the shores of mortality. I think time, and all its gay amusements and cruel disappointments, never appeared so inconsiderable to me before. I was in a sweet frame; I saw myself nothing, and my soul reached after God with intense desire. O! I saw what I owed to God, in such a manner, as I scarce ever did: I knew I had never lived a moment to him as I should do; indeed it appeared to me I had never done any thing in Christianity: my soul longed with a vehement desire to *live to God*. In the evening, sung and prayed with a number of Christians: felt *the powers of the world to come* in my soul, in prayer. Afterwards prayed again privately, with a dear Christian or two, and found the presence of God; was something humbled in my secret retirement: felt my ingratitude, because I was not wholly swallowed up in God.”

He was in a sweet frame great part of the *next day*.

“*Wednesday, Sept. 1.* Went to Judea, to the ordination of Mr. Judd. Dear Mr. Bellamy preached from [Matt. xxiv. 46](#). ‘Blessed is that servant,’ &c. I felt very solemn most of the time; had my thoughts much on that time when *our Lord will come*; that time refreshed my soul much; only I was afraid I should not be found *faithful*, because I had so vile a heart. My thoughts were much in eternity, where I love to dwell. Blessed be God for this solemn season. Rode home to-night with Mr. Bellamy, conversed with some friends till it was very late, and then retired to rest in a comfortable frame.

“*Thursday, Sept. 2.* About two in the afternoon I preached from [John vi. 67](#). ‘Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?’ and God assisted me in some comfortable degree;

but more especially in my first prayer: my soul seemed then to launch quite into the eternal world, and to be as it were separated from this lower world. Afterwards preached again from [Isa. v. 4](#). 'What could have been done more,' &c. God gave me some assistance; but I saw myself a poor worm.'

On *Friday, Sept. 3*. He complains of having but little life in the things of God, the former part of the day, but afterwards speaks of sweetness and enlargement.

"*Saturday, Sept. 4*. Much out of health, exceedingly depressed in my soul, and at an awful distance from God. Towards night spent some time in profitable thoughts on [Rom. viii. 2](#). 'For the law of the spirit of life,' &c. Near night had a very sweet season in prayer; God enabled me to wrestle ardently for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom; pleaded earnestly for my own dear brother John, that God would make him more of a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, and fit him for singular serviceableness in the world; and my heart sweetly exulted in the Lord, in the thoughts of any distresses that might alight on him or me, in the advancement of Christ's kingdom. It was a sweet and comfortable hour unto my soul, while I was indulged with freedom to plead, not only for myself, but also for many other souls.

"*Lord's day, Sept. 5*. Preached all day: was somewhat strengthened and assisted in the afternoon; more especially in the evening: had a sense of my unspeakable short-comings in all my duties. I found, alas! that I had never lived to God in my life.

"*Monday, Sept. 6*. Was informed, that they only waited for an opportunity to apprehend me for preaching at New-Haven lately, that so they might imprison me. This made me more solemn and serious, and to quit all hopes of the world's friendship: it brought me to a further sense of my vileness, and just desert of this, and much more, from the hand of God, though not from the hand of man. Retired into a convenient place in the woods, and spread the matter before God.

"*Tuesday, Sept. 7*. Had some relish of divine things in the morning. Afterwards felt more barren and melancholy. Rode to New-Haven, to a friend's house at a distance from the town; that I might remain undiscovered, and yet have opportunity to do business privately with friends which come to commencement.

"*Wednesday, Sept. 8*. Felt very sweetly when I first rose in the morning. In family prayer had some enlargement, but not much spirituality, till *eternity* came up before me, and looked near: I found some sweetness in the thoughts of bidding a dying farewell to this tiresome world. Though some time ago I reckoned upon seeing my dear friends at commencement; yet being now denied the opportunity, for fear of imprisonment, I felt totally resigned, and as contented to spend this day alone in the woods, as I could have done, if I had been allowed to go to town. Felt exceedingly weaned from the world to-day. In the afternoon I discoursed on divine things with a dear Christian friend, whereby we were both refreshed. Then I prayed, with a sweet sense of the blessedness of communion with God: I think I scarce ever

enjoyed more of God in any one prayer. O it was a blessed season indeed to my soul; I know not that ever I saw so much of my own nothingness in my life; never wondered so, that God allowed me to preach his word. This has been a sweet and comfortable day to my soul. *Blessed be God.* Prayed again with my dear friend, with something of the divine presence. I long to be wholly conformed to God, and transformed into his image.

“*Thursday, Sept. 9.* Spent much of the day alone: enjoyed the presence of God in some comfortable degree: was visited by some dear friends, and prayed with them: wrote sundry letters to friends; felt religion in my soul while writing: enjoyed sweet meditations on some scriptures. In the evening, went very privately into town, from the place of my residence at the farms, and conversed with some dear friends; felt sweetly in singing hymns with them: and made my escape to the farms again, without being discovered by any enemies, as I knew of. Thus the Lord preserves me continually.

“*Friday, Sept. 10.* Longed with intense desire after God; my whole soul seemed impatient to be conformed to him, and to become ‘holy, as he is holy.’ In the afternoon, prayed with a dear friend privately, and had the presence of God with us; our souls united together to reach after a blessed immortality, to be unclothed of the body of sin and death, and to enter the blessed world, where no unclean thing enters. O, with what intense desire did our souls long for that blessed day, that we might be freed from sin, and for ever live *to* and *in* our God! In the evening, took leave of that house; but first kneeled down and prayed; the Lord was of a truth in the midst of us; it was a sweet parting season; felt in myself much sweetness and affection in the things of God. Blessed be God for every such divine gale of his Spirit, to speed me on in my way to the new Jerusalem! Felt some sweetness afterwards, and spent the evening in conversation with friends, and prayed with some life, and retired to rest very late.”

The *five next days* he appears to have been in an exceeding comfortable frame of mind, for the most part, and to have been the subject of the like heavenly exercises as are often expressed in preceding passages of his diary; such as, having his heart much engaged for God, wrestling with him in prayer with power and ardency; enjoying at times sweet calmness and composure of mind, giving himself up to God to be his for ever, with great complacency of mind; being wholly resigned to the will of God, that he might do with him what he pleased; longing to improve time, having the eternal world as it were brought nigh; longing after God and holiness, earnestly desiring a complete conformity to him, and wondering how poor souls do to exist without God.

“*Thursday, Sept. 16.* At night enjoyed much of God in secret prayer: felt an uncommon resignation, to *be* and *do* what God pleased. Some days past I felt *great perplexity* on account of my past conduct: *my bitterness*, and want of Christian kindness and love, has been *very distressing* to my soul: the Lord forgive me my *unchristian warmth*, and want of a spirit of meekness!”

The *next day* he speaks of much resignation, calmness, and peace of mind, and near views of the eternal world.

“*Saturday, Sept. 18.* Felt some compassion for souls, and mourned I had no more. I feel much more kindness, meekness, gentleness, and love towards all mankind, than ever. I long to be at the feet of my enemies and persecutors: enjoyed some sweetness, in feeling my soul conformed to Christ Jesus, and given away to him for ever.”

The *next day* he speaks of much dejection and discouragement, from an apprehension of his own unfitness ever to do any good in preaching; but blesses God for all dispensations of providence and grace; finding that by all God weaned him more from the world, and made him more resigned.

The *next ten days* he appears to have been for the most part under great degrees of melancholy, exceedingly dejected and discouraged: speaks of his being ready to give up all for gone respecting the cause of Christ, and exceedingly longing to die: yet had some sweet seasons and intervals of comfort, and special assistance and enlargement in the duties of religion, and in performing public services, and considerable success in them.

“*Thursday, Sept. 30.* Still very low in spirits; I did not know how to engage in any work or business, especially to *correct some disorders among Christians*; felt as though I had no power to be faithful in that regard. However, towards noon I preached from [Deut. viii. 2](#). [Deut. viii. 2](#) ‘And thou shalt remember,’ &c. and was enabled with freedom to reprove some things in Christians’ conduct, that I thought very unsuitable and irregular; insisted near two hours on this subject.”

Through *this* and the *two following weeks* he passed through a variety of exercises: he was frequently dejected, and felt inward distresses; and sometimes sunk into the depths of melancholy: at which turns he was not exercised about the state of his soul, with regard to the *favour* of God, and his *interest* in Christ, but about his own sinful infirmities, and unfitness for God’s service. His mind appears sometimes extremely depressed and sunk with a sense of inexpressible vileness. But in the mean time he speaks of many seasons of comfort and spiritual refreshment, wherein his heart was encouraged and strengthened in God, and sweetly resigned to his will; of some seasons of very high degrees of spiritual consolation, and of his great longings after holiness and conformity to God; of his great fear of offending God, and of his heart being sweetly melted in religious duties; of his longing for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, of his having at times much assistance in preaching, and of remarkable effects on the auditory.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 17.* Had a considerable sense of my helplessness and inability; saw that I must be dependent on God for all I want; and especially when I went to the place of public worship. I found I could not speak a word for God without his special help and assistance. I went into the assembly trembling, as I frequently do, under a sense of my insufficiency to do any thing in the cause of God, as I ought to do. But it pleased God to afford me much

assistance, and there seemed to be a considerable effect on the hearers. In the evening I felt a disposition to praise God, for his goodness to me, that he had enabled me in some measure to be faithful; and my soul rejoiced to think, that I had thus performed the work of one day more, and was one day nearer my *eternal*, and I trust my *heavenly*, home. O that I might be “faithful to the death, fulfilling as an hireling my day,” till the shades of the evening of life shall free my soul from the toils of the day! This evening, in secret prayer, I felt exceeding solemn, and such longing desires after deliverance from sin, and after conformity to God, as melted my heart. Oh, I longed to be “delivered from this body of death!” I felt inward pleasing pain, that I could not be conformed to God entirely, fully, and for ever. I scarce ever preach without being first visited with inward conflicts and sore trials. Blessed be the Lord for these trials and distresses as they are blessed for my humbling.

“*Monday, Oct. 18.* In the morning I felt some sweetness, but still pressed through trials of soul. My life is a constant mixture of consolations and conflicts, and will be so till I arrive at the world of spirits.

“*Tuesday, Oct. 19.* This morning and last night I felt a sweet longing in my soul after holiness. My soul seemed so to reach and stretch towards the mark of perfect sanctity, that it was ready to break with longings.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 20.* Exceeding infirm in body, exercised with much pain, and very lifeless in divine things. Felt a little sweetness in the evening.

“*Thursday, Oct. 21.* Had a very deep sense of the vanity of the world most of the day; had little more regard to it than if I had been to go into eternity the next hour. Through divine goodness, I felt very serious and solemn. O, *I love to live on the brink of eternity*, in my views and meditations! This gives me a sweet, awful, and reverential sense and apprehension of God and divine things, when I see myself as it were *standing before the judgment-seat of Christ*.

“*Friday, Oct. 22.* Uncommonly weaned from the world to-day: my soul delighted to be a *stranger and pilgrim on the earth*; I felt a disposition in me never to have any thing to do with this world. The character given of some of the ancient people of God, in [Heb. xi. 13](#), was very pleasing to me, ‘They confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth,’ by their daily practice; and O that I could always do so! Spent some considerable time in a pleasant grove, in prayer and meditation. O it is sweet to be thus weaned from friends, and from myself, and dead to the present world, that so I may live wholly *to* and *upon* the blessed God! Saw myself little, low, and vile in myself. In the afternoon preached at Bethlehem, from [Deut. viii. 2](#). God helped me to speak to the hearts of dear Christians. Blessed be the Lord for this season: I trust they and I shall rejoice on this account to all eternity. Dear Mr. Bellamy came in, while I was making the first prayer; (being returned home from a journey;) and after meeting we walked away together, and spent the evening in sweetly conversing on divine

things, and praying together, with sweet and tender love to each other, and returned to rest with our hearts in a serious spiritual frame.

“*Saturday, Oct. 23.* Somewhat perplexed and confused. Rode this day from Bethlehem to Simsbury.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 24.* Felt so vile and unworthy, that I scarce knew how to converse with human creatures.

“*Monday, Oct. 25.* [At Turkey-Hills] In the evening I enjoyed the divine presence in secret prayer. It was a sweet and comfortable season to me; my soul *longed for God, for the living God:* enjoyed a sweet solemnity of spirit, and longing desire after the recovery of the divine image in my soul. ‘Then shall I be satisfied, when I shall awake in God’s likeness,’ and never before.

“*Tuesday, Oct. 26.* [At West-Suffield] Underwent the most dreadful distresses, under a sense of my own unworthiness. It seemed to me, I deserved rather to be driven out of the place, than to have any body treat me with any kindness, or come to hear me preach. And verily my spirits were so depressed at this time, (as at many others,) that it was impossible I should treat immortal souls with faithfulness. I could not deal closely and faithfully with them, I felt so infinitely vile in myself. Oh, what *dust and ashes* I am, to think of preaching the gospel to others! Indeed I never can be faithful for one moment, but shall certainly ‘daub with untempered mortar,’ if God do not grant me special help. In the evening I went to the meeting-house, and it looked to me near as easy for one to rise out of the grave and preach, as for me. However, God afforded me some life and power, both in prayer and sermon; and was pleased to lift me up, and show me that he could enable me to preach. O the wonderful goodness of God to so vile a sinner! Returned to my quarters; and enjoyed some sweetness in prayer alone, and mourned that I could not live more to God.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 27.* I spent the forenoon in prayer and meditation; was not a little concerned about preaching in the afternoon: felt exceedingly *without strength*, and very helpless indeed; and went into the meeting-house, ashamed to see any come to hear such an unspeakably worthless wretch. However, God enabled me to speak with clearness, power, and pungency. But there was some noise and tumult in the assembly, that I did not well like; and endeavoured to bear public testimony against it with moderation and mildness, through the current of my discourse. In the evening, was enabled to be in some measure thankful and devoted to God.”

The frames and exercises of his mind during the *four next days* were mostly very similar to those of the two days past; excepting intervals of considerable degrees of divine peace and consolation.

The things expressed within the space of the *three following days* are such as these; some seasons of dejection, mourning for being so destitute of the exercises of grace, longing to be delivered from sin, pressing after more of God, seasons of sweet consolation, precious

and intimate converse with God in secret prayer, sweetness of Christian conversation, &c. Within this time he rode from Sufield to Eastbury, Hebron, and Lebanon.

“*Thursday, Nov. 4.* [At Lebanon] Saw much of my nothingness most of this day: but felt concerned that I had no more sense of my insufficiency and unworthiness. O it is sweet *lying in the dust!* But it is distressing to feel in my soul that hell of corruption, which still remains in me. In the afternoon, had a sense of the sweetness of a strict, close, and constant devotedness to God, and my soul was comforted with his consolations. My soul felt a pleasing, yet painful concern, lest I should spend some moments *without God*. O may I always *live to God!* In the evening, I was visited by some friends, and spent the time in prayer and such conversation as tended to our edification. It was a comfortable season to my soul: I felt an intense desire to spend every moment for God. God is unspeakably gracious to me continually. In times past, he has given me inexpressible sweetness in the performance of duty. Frequently my soul has enjoyed much of God; but has been ready to say, ‘Lord, it is good to be here;’ and so to indulge sloth, while I have lived on the sweetness of my feelings. But of late, God has been pleased to keep my soul *hungry*, almost continually; so that I have been filled with a kind of pleasing pain. When I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of him the more insatiable, and my thirstings after holiness the more unquenchable; and the Lord will not allow me to feel as though I were fully supplied and satisfied, but keeps me still reaching forward. I feel barren and empty, as though I could not live without more of God; I feel ashamed and guilty *before him*. Oh! I see that ‘the law is spiritual, but I am carnal.’ I do not, I cannot live to God. Oh for holiness! Oh for more of God in my soul! Oh this pleasing pain! It makes my soul press after God; the language of it is, ‘Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in God’s likeness,’ (Ps. xvii. 15. *ult.*) but never, never before: and consequently I am engaged to ‘press towards the mark’ day by day. O that I may feel this continual hunger, and not be retarded, but rather animated by every cluster from Canaan, to reach forward in the narrow way, for the full enjoyment and possession of the heavenly inheritance! O that I may never loiter in my heavenly journey!”

These insatiable desires after God and holiness continued the *two next days*, with a great sense of his own exceeding unworthiness, and the nothingness of the things of this world.

“*Lord’s day, Nov. 7.* [At Millington] It seemed as if such an unholy wretch as I never could arrive at that blessedness, to be ‘holy, as God is holy.’ At noon I longed for sanctification, and conformity to God. Oh, that is the all, the all! The Lord help me to *press after God* for ever.

“*Monday, Nov. 8.* Towards night enjoyed much sweetness in secret prayer, so that my soul longed for an arrival in the *heavenly country*, the blessed paradise of God. Through divine goodness, I have scarce seen the day, for two months, but *death* has looked so pleasant to me at one time or other of the day, that I could have rejoiced the *present* should be my *last*, notwithstanding my pressing inward trials and conflicts. I trust the Lord will finally



make me a *conqueror*, and *more than a conqueror*; and that I shall be able to use that triumphant language, 'O death, where is thy sting!' And, 'O grave, where is thy victory!'"

Within the *next ten days* the following things are expressed: longing and wrestling to be holy, and to live to God; a desire that every single thought might be for God; feeling guilty, that his thoughts were no more swallowed up in God; sweet solemnity and calmness of mind; submission and resignation to God; great weanedness from the world; abasement in the dust; grief at some vain conversation that was observed; sweetness from time to time in secret prayer, and in conversing and praying with Christian friends. And every day he appears to have been greatly engaged in the great business of religion and living to God, without interruption.

"*Friday, Nov. 19.* [At New-Haven] Received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Pemberton of New York, desiring me speedily to go down thither, and consult about the Indian affairs in those parts; and to meet certain gentlemen there who were intrusted with those affairs. My mind was instantly seized with concern; so I retired with two or three Christian friends, and prayed; and indeed it was a sweet time with me. I was enabled to leave myself and all my concerns with God; and taking leave of friends, I rode to Ripton, and was comforted in an opportunity to see and converse with dear Mr. Mills."

In the *four next following days* he was sometimes oppressed with the weight of that great affair, about which Mr. Pemberton had written to him; but was enabled from time to time to "cast his burden on the Lord," and to commit himself and all his concerns to him. He continued still in a sense of the excellency of holiness, longings after it, and earnest desires of the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and had from time to time sweet comfort in meditation and prayer.

"*Wednesday, Nov. 24.* Came to New York: felt still much concerned about the importance of my business; put up many earnest requests to God for his help and direction; was confused with the noise and tumult of the city; enjoyed but little time alone with God: but my soul longed after him.

"*Thursday, Nov. 25.* Spent much time in prayer and supplication: was examined by some gentlemen, of my Christian experiences, and my acquaintance with divinity, and some other studies, in order to my improvement in that important affair of gospellizing the heathen;<sup>358</sup> and was made sensible of my great ignorance and unfitness for public service. I had the most abasing thoughts of myself, I think, that ever I had; I thought myself the worst wretch that ever lived: it hurt me, and pained my very heart, that any body should show me any respect. Alas! methought, how sadly they are deceived in me! how miserably would they

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358 These gentlemen who examined Mr. Brainerd, were the correspondents in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, of the honourable Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge; to whom was committed the management of their affairs in those parts, and who were now met at New York.

be disappointed, if they knew my inside! Oh my heart! And in this depressed condition I was forced to go and preach to a considerable assembly, before some grave and learned ministers; but felt such a pressure from a sense of my vileness, ignorance, and unfitness to appear in public, that I was almost overcome with it; my soul was grieved for the congregation; that they should sit there to hear such a *dead dog* as I preach. I thought myself infinitely indebted to the people, and longed that God would reward them with the rewards of his grace. I spent much of the evening alone.”

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#### PART IV.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS EXAMINATION BY THE CORRESPONDENTS OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND BEING APPOINTED THEIR MISSIONARY, TO HIS FIRST ENTRANCE ON THE BUSINESS OF HIS MISSION AMONG THE INDIANS AT KAUNAUMEEK.

“*Friday, Nov. 26.* Had still a sense of my great vileness, and endeavoured as much as I could to keep alone. Oh, what a nothing, what dust and ashes am I! Enjoyed some peace and comfort in spreading my complaints before the God of all grace.

”*Saturday, Nov. 27.* Committed my soul to God with some degree of comfort; left New York about nine in the morning; came away with a distressing sense still of my unspeakable unworthiness. Surely I may well love all my brethren; for none of them all is so vile as I; whatever they do outwardly, yet it seems to me none is conscious of so much guilt before God. Oh my leanness, my barrenness, my carnality, and past bitterness, and want of a gospel-temper! These things oppress my soul. Rode from New York, thirty miles, to White Plains, and most of the way continued lifting up my heart to God for mercy and purifying grace: and spent the evening much dejected in spirit.”

The *three next days* he continued in this frame, in a great sense of his own vileness, with an evident mixture of melancholy, in no small degree; but had some intervals of comfort, and God’s sensible presence with him.

“*Wednesday, Dec. 1.* My soul breathed after God, in sweet spiritual and longing desires of conformity to him; my soul was brought to rest itself and all on his rich grace, and felt strength and encouragement to do or suffer any thing that Divine Providence should allot me. Rode about twenty miles from Stratfield to Newton.”

Within the space of the *next nine days* he went a journey from Newton to Haddam, his native town; and after staying there some days, returned again into the western part of Connecticut, and came to Southbury. In his account of the frames and exercises of his mind, during this space of time, are such things as these: frequent turns of dejection; a sense of his vileness, emptiness, and an unfathomable abyss of desperate wickedness in his heart, attended with a conviction that he had never seen but little of it; bitterly mourning over his barrenness, being greatly grieved that he could not live to God, to whom he owed his all *ten thousand times*, crying out, “My leanness, my leanness!” a sense of the meetness and suitableness of his lying in the dust beneath the feet of infinite majesty; fervency and ardour in prayer; longing to live to God; being afflicted with some impertinent trifling conversation that he heard; but enjoying sweetness in Christian conversation.

“*Saturday, Dec. 11.* Conversed with a dear friend, to whom I had thought of giving a liberal education, and being at the whole charge of it, that he might be fitted for the gospel-

ministry.<sup>359</sup> I acquainted him with my thoughts in that matter, and so left him to consider of it, till I should see him again. Then I rode to Bethlehem, came to Mr. Bellamy's lodgings, and spent the evening with him in sweet conversation and prayer. We recommended the concern of sending my friend to college to the God of all grace. Blessed be the Lord for this evening's opportunity together.

"*Lord's day, Dec. 12.* I felt, in the morning as if I had little or no power either to pray or preach; and felt a distressing need of divine help. I went to meeting trembling; but it pleased God to assist me in prayer and sermon. I think my soul scarce ever penetrated so far into the immaterial world, in any one prayer that ever I made, nor were my devotions ever so free from gross conceptions and imaginations framed from beholding material objects. I preached with some sweetness, from [Matt. vi. 33](#). 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God,' &c.; and in the afternoon from [Rom. xv. 30](#). 'And now I beseech you, brethren,' &c. There was much affection in the assembly. This has been a sweet sabbath to me; and blessed be God, I have reason to think, that my religion is become more spiritual, by means of my late inward conflicts. Amen. May I always be willing that God should use his own methods with me!

"*Monday, Dec. 13.* Joined in prayer with Mr. Bellamy; and found sweetness and composure in parting with him, as he went a journey. Enjoyed some sweetness through the day; and just at night rode down to Woodbury.

"*Tuesday, Dec. 14.* Some perplexity hung on my mind; I was distressed last night and this morning, for the interest of Zion, especially on account of the *false appearances of religion*, that do but rather breed confusion, especially in some places. I cried to God for help, to enable me to bear testimony against those things, which instead of promoting, do but hinder the progress of vital piety. In the afternoon rode down to Southbury; and conversed again with my friend about the important affair of his pursuing the work of the ministry; and he appeared much inclined to devote himself to that work, if God should succeed his attempts to qualify himself for so great a work. In the evening I preached from [1 Thess. iv. 8](#). 'He therefore that despiseth,' &c. and endeavoured, though with tenderness, to undermine false

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359 Mr. Brainerd, having now undertaken the business of a missionary to the Indians, and expecting in a little time to leave his native country, to go among the savages into the wilderness, far distant, and spend the remainder of his life among them and having some estate left him by his father, and thinking he should have no occasion for it among them, (though afterwards, as he told me, he found himself mistaken) set himself to think which way he might spend it most to the glory of God; and no way presenting to his thoughts wherein he could do more good with it, than by being at the charge of educating some young person for the ministry, who appeared to be of good abilities, and well disposed, he fixed upon the person here spoken of to this end. Accordingly he was soon put to learning; and Mr. Brainerd continued to be at the charge of his education from year to year, so long as he lived, which was till this young man was carried through his third year in college.

religion. The Lord gave me some assistance; but, however, I seemed so vile, I was ashamed to be seen when I came out of the meeting-house.

“*Wednesday, Dec. 15.* Enjoyed something of God to-day, both in secret and social prayer; but was sensible of much barrenness, and defect in duty, as well as my inability to help myself for the time to come, or to perform the work and business I have to do. Afterwards, felt much of the sweetness of religion, and the tenderness of the gospel-temper. I found a dear love to all mankind, and was much afraid lest some motion of anger or resentment should, some time or other, creep into my heart. Had some comforting soul-refreshing discourse with dear friends, just as we took our leave of each other; and supposed it might be likely we should not meet again till we came to the eternal world.<sup>360</sup> I doubt not, through grace, but that some of us shall have a happy meeting there, and bless God for this season, as well as many others. Amen.

“*Thursday, Dec. 16.* Rode down to Derby; and had some sweet thoughts on the road: especially on the essence of our salvation by Christ, from those words, *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, &c.*

“*Friday, Dec. 17.* Spent much time in sweet conversation on spiritual things with dear Mr. Humphreys. Rode to Ripton; spent some time in prayer with dear Christian friends.

“*Saturday, Dec. 18.* Spent much time in prayer in the woods; and seemed raised above the things of the world: my soul was strong in the Lord of hosts; but was sensible of great barrenness.

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 19.* At the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, I seemed strong in the Lord; and the world, with all its frowns and flatteries, in a great measure disappeared, so that my soul had nothing to do with them: and I felt a disposition to be wholly and for ever the Lord’s. In the evening, enjoyed something of the divine presence; had a humbling sense of my vileness, barrenness, and sinfulness. Oh, it wounded me, to think of the misimprovement of time! *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

“*Monday, Dec. 20.* Spent this day in prayer, reading, and writing; and enjoyed some assistance, especially in correcting some thoughts on a certain subject; but had a mournful sense of my barrenness.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 21.* Had a sense of my insufficiency for any public work and business, as well as to live to God. I rode over to Derby, and preached there. It pleased God to give me very sweet assistance and enlargement, and to enable me to speak with a soft, tender power and energy. We had afterwards a comfortable evening in singing and prayer. God

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360 It had been determined by the commissioners, who employed Mr. Brainerd as a missionary, that he should go as soon as might be conveniently to the Indians living near the Forks of Delaware river in Pennsylvania, and the Indians on Susquehannah river; which being far off, where also he would be exposed to many hardships and dangers, was the occasion of his taking leave of his friends in this manner.

enabled me to pray with as much spirituality and sweetness as I have done for some time: my mind seemed to be unclothed of sense and imagination, and was in a measure let into the immaterial world of spirits. This day was, I trust, through infinite goodness, made very profitable to a number of us, to advance our souls in holiness and conformity to God: the glory be to him for ever. Amen. *How blessed it is to grow more and more like God.*

“*Wednesday, Dec. 22.* Enjoyed some assistance in preaching at Ripton; but my soul mourned within me for my barrenness.

“*Thursday, Dec. 23.* Enjoyed, I trust, something of God this morning in secret. Oh how divinely sweet is it to come into the secret of his presence, and abide in his pavilion! Took an affectionate leave of friends, not expecting to see them again for a very considerable time, if ever in this world. Rode with Mr. Humphreys to his house at Derby; spent the time in sweet conversation; my soul was refreshed and sweetly melted with divine things. Oh that I was always consecrated to God! Near night, I rode to New-Haven, and there enjoyed some sweetness in prayer and conversation, with some dear Christian friends. My mind was sweetly serious and composed; but alas! I too much lost the sense of divine things.”

He continued much in the same frame of mind, and in like exercises, the *two following days*.

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 26.* Felt much sweetness and tenderness in prayer, especially my whole soul seemed to love my worst enemies, and was enabled to pray for those that are strangers and enemies to God with a great degree of softness and pathetic fervour. In the evening, rode from New-Haven to Branford, after I had kneeled down and prayed with a number of dear Christian friends in a very retired place in the woods, and so parted.

“*Monday, Dec. 27.* Enjoyed a precious season indeed; had a sweet melting sense of divine things, of the pure spirituality of the religion of Christ Jesus. In the evening, I preached from [Matt. vi. 33](#). ‘But seek ye first,’ &c. with much freedom, and sweet power and pungency: the presence of God attended our meeting. O the sweetness, the tenderness I felt in my soul! if ever I felt the temper of Christ, I had some sense of it now. Blessed be my God, I have seldom enjoyed a more comfortable and profitable day than this. O that I could spend all my time for God!

“*Tuesday, Dec. 28.* Rode from Branford to Haddam. In the morning, my clearness and sweetness in divine things continued; but afterwards my spiritual life sensibly declined.”

The *next twelve days* he was for the most part extremely dejected, discouraged, and distressed; and was evidently very much under the power of melancholy. There are from day to day most bitter complaints of exceeding vileness, ignorance, and corruption; an amazing load of guilt, unworthiness even to creep on God’s earth, everlasting uselessness, fitness for nothing, &c. and sometimes expressions even of horror at the thoughts of ever preaching again. But yet in this time of great dejection, he speaks of several intervals of divine help and comfort.

The *three next days*, which were spent at Hebron and the Crank, (a parish in Lebanon,) he had relief, and enjoyed considerable comfort.

“*Friday, Jan. 14, 1743.* My spiritual conflicts to-day were unspeakably dreadful, heavier than the mountains and overflowing floods. I seemed enclosed, as it were, in hell itself: I was deprived of all sense of God, even of the being of a God; and that was my misery. I had no awful apprehensions of God as angry. This was distress the nearest akin to the damned’s torments, that I ever endured: their torment, I am sure, will consist much in a *privation of God*, and consequently of *all good*. This taught me the *absolute dependence* of a creature upon God the Creator, for every crumb of happiness it enjoys. Oh! I feel that if there is no God, though I might live for ever here, and enjoy not only this, but all other worlds, I should be ten thousand times more miserable than a toad. My soul was in such anguish I could not eat; but felt as I suppose a poor wretch would that is just going to the place of execution. I was almost swallowed up with anguish, when I saw people gathering together, to hear me preach. However, I went in that distress to the house of God, and found not much relief in the first prayer: it seemed as if God would let loose the people upon me to destroy me; nor were the thoughts of death distressing to me, like my own vileness. But afterwards, in my discourse from [Deut. viii. 2](#). God was pleased to give me some freedom and enlargement, some power and spirituality; and I spent the evening somewhat comfortably.”

The *two next days* his comfort continues, and he seems to enjoy an almost continual sweetness of soul in the duties and exercises of religion and Christian conversation. On *Monday* was a return of the gloom he had been under the Friday before. He rode to Coventry this day, and the latter part of the day had more freedom. On *Tuesday* he rode to Canterbury, and continued more comfortable.

“*Wednesday, Jan. 19.* [At Canterbury] In the afternoon preached the lecture at the meeting-house; felt some tenderness, and something of the gospel-temper: exhorted the people to love one another, and not to set up their own frames as a standard to try all their brethren by. But was much pressed, most of the day, with a sense of my own badness, inward impurity, and unspeakable corruption. Spent the evening in loving, Christian conversation.

“*Thursday, Jan. 20.* Rode to my brother’s house between Norwich and Lebanon; and preached in the evening to a number of people: enjoyed neither freedom nor spirituality, but saw myself exceeding unworthy.

“*Friday, Jan. 21.* Had great inward conflicts; enjoyed but little comfort. Went to see Mr. Williams of Lebanon, and spent several hours with him; and was greatly delighted with his serious, deliberate, and impartial way of discourse about religion.”

The *next day* he was much dejected.

“*Lord’s day, Jan. 23.* I scarce ever felt myself so unfit to exist, as now: saw I was not worthy of a place among the Indians, where I am going, if God permit: thought I should be ashamed to look them in the face, and much more to have any respect shown me there. In-

deed I felt myself banished from the earth, as if all places were too good for such a wretch. I thought I should be ashamed to go among the very savages of Africa; I appeared to myself a creature fit for nothing, neither heaven nor earth. None know, but those who feel it, what the soul endures that is sensibly shut out from the presence of God: alas! it is more bitter than death.”

On *Monday* he rode to Stoningtown, Mr. Fish’s parish. On *Tuesday* he expresses considerable degrees of spiritual comfort and refreshment.

“*Wednesday, Jan. 26.* Preached to a pretty large assembly at Mr. Fish’s meeting-house; insisted on humility, and stedfastness in keeping God’s commands; and that through humility we should prefer one another in love, and not make our own frames the rule by which we judge others. I felt sweetly calm, and full of brotherly love; and never more free from party spirit. I hope some good will follow; that Christians will be freed from false joy, and party zeal, and censuring one another.”

On *Thursday*, after considerable time spent in prayer and Christian conversation, he rode to New London.

“*Friday, Jan. 28.* Here I found some fallen into extravagances; too much carried away with a false zeal and bitterness. Oh, the want of a gospel-temper is greatly to be lamented. Spent the evening in conversing about some points of conduct in both ministers and private Christians; but did not agree with them. God had not *taught them with briars and thorns* to be of a kind disposition towards mankind.”

On *Saturday* he rode to East Haddam, and spent the *three following days* there. In that space of time he speaks of his feeling weanedness from the world, a sense of the nearness of eternity, special assistance in praying for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom, times of spiritual comfort, &c.

“*Wednesday, Feb. 2.* Preached my farewell sermon, last night, at the house of an aged man, who had been unable to attend on the public worship for some time. This morning spent the time in prayer, almost wherever I went; and having taken leave of friends, I set out on my journey towards the Indians; though I was to spend some time at East Hampton on Long island, by leave of the commissioners who employed me in the Indian affair;<sup>361</sup> and being accompanied by a messenger from East-Hampton, we travelled to Lyme. On the road I felt an uncommon pressure of mind: I seemed to struggle hard for some pleasure in some here below, and seemed loth to give up all for gone; saw I was evidently throwing myself into all hardships and distresses in my present undertaking. I thought it would be

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361 The reason why the commissioners or correspondents did not order Mr. Brainerd to go immediately to the Indians, and enter on his business as a missionary, was, that the winter was not judged to be a convenient season for him first to go out into the wilderness, and enter on the difficulties and hardships he must there be exposed to.



less difficult to lie down in the grave; but yet I chose to go, rather than stay. Came to Lyme that night.”

He waited the *two next days* for a passage over the Sound, and spent much of the time in inward conflicts and dejection, but had some comfort.

On *Saturday* he crossed the Sound, and landed at Oyster-Ponds on Long Island, and travelled from thence to East Hampton. And the *seven following days* he spent there, for the most part, under extreme dejection and gloominess of mind, with great complaints of darkness, ignorance, &c. Yet his heart appears to have been constantly engaged in the great business of religion, much concerned for the interest of religion in East Hampton, and praying and labouring much for it.

“*Saturday, Feb. 12.* Enjoyed a little more comfort; was enabled to meditate with some composure of mind; and especially in the evening, found my soul more refreshed in prayer, than at any time of late; my soul seemed to ‘take hold of God’s strength,’ and was comforted with his consolations. O how sweet are some glimpses of divine glory! how strengthening and quickening!

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 13.* At noon under a great degree of discouragement; knew not how it was possible for me to preach in the afternoon. I was ready to give up all for gone; but God was pleased to assist me in some measure. In the evening, my heart was sweetly drawn out after God, and devoted to him.”

The *next day* he had comfort and dejection intermingled.

“*Tuesday, Feb. 15.* Early in the day I felt some comfort; afterwards I walked into a neighbouring grove, and felt more as a stranger on earth, I think, than ever before; dead to any of the enjoyments of the world, as if I had been dead in a natural sense. In the evening, had divine sweetness in secret duty: God was then my portion, and my soul rose above those *deep waters*, into which I have sunk so low of late. My soul then cried for Zion, and had sweetness in so doing.”

This sweet frame continued the next morning; but afterwards his inward distress returned.

“*Thursday, Feb. 17.* In the morning found myself comfortable, and rested on God in some measure. Preached this day at a little village belonging to East Hampton; and God was pleased to give me his gracious presence and assistance, so that I spake with freedom, boldness, and some power. In the evening, spent some time with a dear Christian friend; and felt serious, as on the brink of eternity. My soul enjoyed sweetness in lively apprehensions of standing before the glorious God: prayed with my dear friend with sweetness, and discoursed with the utmost solemnity. And truly it was a little emblem of heaven itself. I find my soul is more refined and weaned from a dependence on my frames and spiritual feelings.

“*Friday, Feb. 18.* Felt something sweetly most of the day, and found access to the throne of grace. Blessed be the Lord for any intervals of heavenly delight and composure, while I

am engaged in the field of battle. O that I might be serious, solemn, and always vigilant, while in an evil world! Had some opportunity alone to-day, and found some freedom in study. O, I long to *live to God!*

“*Saturday, Feb. 19.* Was exceeding infirm to-day, greatly troubled with pain in my head and dizziness, scarce able to sit up. However, enjoyed something of God in prayer, and performed some necessary studies. I exceedingly long to die; and yet, through divine goodness, have felt very willing to live, for two or three days past.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 20.* I was perplexed on account of my carelessness; thought I could not be suitably concerned about the important work of the day, and so was restless with my easiness. Was exceeding infirm again to-day; but the Lord strengthened me, both in the outward and inward man, so that I preached with some life and spirituality, especially in the afternoon, wherein I was enabled to speak closely against selfish religion, that loves Christ for his benefits, but not for himself.”

During the *next fortnight*, it appears that, for the most part, he enjoyed much spiritual peace and comfort. In his diary for this space of time are expressed such things as these; mourning over indwelling sin and unprofitableness; deadness to the world; longing after God, and to live to his glory; heart-melting desires after his eternal home; fixed reliance on God for his help; experience of much divine assistance both in the private and public exercises of religion; inward strength and courage in the service of God; very frequent refreshment, consolation, and divine sweetness in meditation, prayer, preaching, and Christian conversation. And it appears by his account, that this space of time was filled up with great diligence and earnestness in serving God, in study, prayer, meditation, preaching, and privately instructing and counselling.

“*Monday, March 7.* This morning when I arose, I found my heart go forth after God in longing desires of conformity to him, and in secret prayer found myself sweetly quickened and drawn out in praises to God for all he had done to and for me, and for all my inward trials and distresses of late. My heart ascribed glory, glory, glory to the blessed God! and bid welcome to all inward distress again, if God saw meet to exercise me with it. Time appeared but an inch long, and eternity at hand; and I thought I could with patience and cheerfulness bear any thing for the cause of God; for I saw that a moment would bring me to a world of peace and blessedness. My soul, by the strength of the Lord, rose far above this lower world, and all the vain amusements and frightful disappointments of it. Afterwards, had some sweet meditation on [Gen. v. 24](#). ‘And Enoch walked with God,’ &c. This was a comfortable day to my soul.”

The *next day* he seems to have continued in a considerable degree of sweetness and fervency in religion.

“*Wednesday, March 9.* Endeavoured to commit myself and all my concerns to God. Rode sixteen miles to Mantauk,<sup>362</sup> and had some inward sweetness on the road; but something of flatness and deadness after I came there and had seen the Indians. I withdrew, and endeavoured to pray, but found myself awfully deserted and left, and had an afflicting sense of my vileness and meanness. However, I went and preached from [Isa. liii. 10.](#) ‘Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him,’ &c. Had some assistance; and, I trust, something of the divine presence was among us. In the evening, I again prayed and exhorted among them, after having had a season alone, wherein I was so pressed with the blackness of my nature, that I thought it was not fit for me to speak so much as to Indians.”

The *next day* he returned to East Hampton; was exceeding infirm in body through the *remaining part of this week*; but speaks of assistance and enlargement in study and religious exercises, and of inward sweetness and breathing after God.

“*Lords day, March 13.* At noon I thought it impossible for me to preach, by reason of bodily weakness and inward deadness. In the first prayer I was so weak that I could hardly stand; but in the sermon God strengthened me, so that I spake near an hour and a half with sweet freedom, clearness, and some tender power, from [Gen. v. 24.](#) ‘And Enoch walked with God.’ I was sweetly assisted to insist on a close *walk with God*, and to leave this as my parting advice to God’s people here, that *they should walk with God*. May the God of all grace succeed my poor labours in this place!

“*Monday, March 14.* In the morning was very busy in preparation for my journey, and was almost continually engaged in ejaculatory prayer. About ten, took leave of the dear people of East Hampton; my heart grieved and mourned, and rejoiced at the same time; rode near fifty miles to a part of Brook-Haven, and lodged there, and had refreshing conversation with a Christian friend.”

In *two days* more he reached New York; but complains of much desertion and deadness on the road. He stayed *one day* in New York, and on *Friday* went to Mr. Dickinson’s at Elizabeth-Town. His complaints are the same as on the two preceding days.

“*Saturday, March 19.* Was bitterly distressed under a sense of my ignorance, darkness, and unworthiness; got alone, and poured out my complaint to God in the bitterness of my soul. In the afternoon, rode to Newark, and had some sweetness in conversation with Mr. Burr, and in praying together. O blessed be God for ever and ever, for any enlivening and quickening seasons.

“*Lord’s day, March 20.* Preached in the forenoon: God gave me some assistance and sweetness, and enabled me to speak with real tenderness, love, and impartiality. In the evening, preached again; and, of a truth, God was pleased to assist a poor worm. Blessed be God, I was enabled to speak with life, power, and desire of the edification of God’s people;

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362 Mantauk is the eastern cape or end of Long Island, inhabited chiefly by Indians.

and with some power to sinners. In the evening, I felt spiritual and watchful, lest my heart should by any means be drawn away from God.

Oh, when I shall come to that blessed world, where every power of my soul will be incessantly and eternally wound up in heavenly employments and enjoyments, to the highest degree!”

On *Monday* he went to Woodbridge, where he speaks of his being with a number of ministers;<sup>363</sup> and, the *day following*, of his travelling part of the way towards New York. On *Wednesday* he came to New York. On *Thursday* he rode near fifty miles, from New York to North-Castle. On *Friday* went to Danbury. *Saturday*, to New Milford. On the *sabbath* he rode five or six miles to the place near Kent in Connecticut, called Scaticoke, where dwell a number of Indians,<sup>364</sup> and preached to them. On *Monday*, being detained by the rain, he tarried at Kent. On *Tuesday* he rode from Kent to Salisbury. *Wednesday* he went to Sheffield. *Thursday*, March 31, he went to Mr. Sergeant’s at Stockbridge. He was dejected and very disconsolate, through the main of this journey from New Jersey to Stockbridge; and especially on the last day his mind was overwhelmed with exceeding gloominess and melancholy.

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363 These ministers were the correspondents who now met at Woodbridge, and gave Mr. Brainerd new directions. Instead of sending him to the Indians at the Forks of Delaware, as before intended, they ordered him to go to a number of Indians, at Kaunaumek: a place in the province of New York, in the woods between Stockbridge and Albany. This alteration was occasioned by two things, viz. 1. Information that the correspondents had received of some contention now subsisting between the white people and the Indians at Delaware, concerning their lands, which they supposed would be a hinderance at present to their entertainment of a missionary, and to his success among them. And, 2. Some intimations they had received from Mr. Sergeant, missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, concerning the Indians at Kaunaumek, and the hopeful prospect of success that a missionary might have among them.

364 These were the same Indians that Mr. Brainerd mentions in his diary, on August 12, the preceding year.

“*Friday, April 1, 1743.* I rode to Kaunaumeek, near twenty miles from Stockbridge, where the Indians live with whom I am concerned, and there lodged on a little heap of straw. I was greatly exercised with inward trials and distresses all day; and in the evening, my heart was sunk, and I seemed to have no God to go to. O that God would help me!”

The *next five* days he was for the most part in a dejected, depressed state of mind, and sometimes extremely so. He speaks of God’s “waves and billows rolling over his soul;” and of his being ready sometimes to say, “Surely his mercy is clean gone for ever, and he will be favourable no more;” and says, the anguish he endured was nameless and inconceivable; but at the same time speaks thus concerning his distresses, “What God designs by all my distresses I know not; but this I know, I deserve them all and thousands more.” He gives an account of the Indians kindly receiving him, and being seriously attentive to his instructions.

“*Thursday, April 7.* Appeared to myself exceeding ignorant, weak, helpless, unworthy, and altogether unequal to my work. It seemed to me I should never do any service or have any success among the Indians. My soul was weary of my life; I longed for deaths beyond measure. When I thought of any godly soul departed, my soul was ready to envy him his privilege, thinking, ‘Oh, when will my turn come! must it be years first!’ But I know, these ardent desires, at this and other times, rose partly for want of resignation to God under all miseries; and so were but impatience. Towards night, I had the exercise of faith in prayer, and some assistance in writing. O that God would keep me near him!

“*Friday, April 8.* Was exceedingly pressed under a sense of my *pride, selfishness, bitterness,* and *party spirit,* in times past, while attempted to promote the cause of God. Its vile nature and dreadful consequences appeared in such odious colours to me, that my very heart was pained. I saw how poor souls stumbled over it into everlasting destruction, that I was constrained to make that prayer in the bitterness of my soul, ‘O lord, deliver me from blood-guiltiness.’ I saw my desert of hell on this account. My soul was full of inward anguish and shame before God, that I had spent so much time in conversation tending only to promote a *party spirit.* Oh, I saw I had not suitably prized mortification, self-denial, resignation under all adversities, meekness, love, candour, and holiness of heart and life: and this day was almost wholly spent in such bitter and soul-afflicting reflections on my past frames and conduct. Of late I have thought much of having the kingdom of Christ advanced in the world; but now I had enough to do within myself. *The Lord be merciful to me a sinner, and wash my soul!*

“*Saturday, April 9.* Remained much in the same state as yesterday; excepting that the sense of my vileness was not so quick and acute.

“*Lord’s day, April 10.* Rose early in the morning, and walked out, and spent a considerable time in the woods, in prayer and meditation. Preached to the Indians, both forenoon and afternoon. They behaved soberly in general: two or three in particular appeared under some

religious concern; with whom I discoursed privately; and one told me, ‘her heart had cried, ever since she heard me preach first.’”

The *next day*, he complains of much desertion.

“*Tuesday, April 12.* Was greatly oppressed with grief and shame, reflecting on my past conduct, my *bitterness* and *party zeal*. I was ashamed to think that such a wretch as I had ever preached. Longed to be excused from that work. And when my soul was not in anguish and keen distress, I felt senseless ‘as a beast before God,’ and felt a kind of guilty amusement with the least trifles; which still maintained a kind of stifled horror of conscience, so that I could not rest any more than a condemned malefactor.

“*Wednesday, April 13.* My heart was overwhelmed within me: I verily thought I was the meanest, vilest, most helpless, guilty, ignorant, benighted creature living. And yet I knew what God had done for my soul, at the same time: though sometimes I was assaulted with damping doubts and fears, whether it was possible for such a wretch as I to be in a state of grace.

“*Thursday, April 14.* Remained much in the same state as yesterday.

“*Friday, April 15.* In the forenoon, very disconsolate. In the afternoon, preached to my people, and was a little encouraged in some hopes that God might bestow mercy on their souls. Felt somewhat resigned to God under all dispensations of his providence.

“*Saturday, April 16.* Still in the depths of distress. In the afternoon, preached to my people; but was more discouraged with them than before; feared that nothing would ever be done for them to any happy effect. I retired and poured out my soul to God for mercy; but without any sensible relief. Soon after came an Irishman and a Dutchman, with a design, as they said, to hear me preach the next day; but none can tell how I felt, to hear their *profane* talk. Oh, I longed that some dear Christian knew my distress. I got into a kind of hovel, and there groaned out my complaint to God; and withal felt more sensible gratitude and thankfulness to God, that he had made me to differ from these men, as I knew through grace he had.

“*Lord’s day, April 17.* In the morning was again distressed as soon as I waked, hearing much talk about the world and the things of it. I perceived the men were in some measure afraid of me; and I discoursed something about sanctifying the sabbath, if possible to solemnize their minds: but when they were at a little distance, they again talked freely about secular affairs. Oh, I thought what a *hell* it would be, to live with such men to eternity! The Lord gave me some assistance in preaching, all day, and some resignation, and a small degree of comfort in prayer at night.”

He continued in this disconsolate frame the *next day*.

“*Tuesday, April 19.* In the morning I enjoyed some sweet repose and rest in God; felt some strength and confidence in him; and my soul was in some measure refreshed and comforted. Spent most of the day in writing, and had some exercise of grace, sensible and

comfortable. My soul seemed lifted above the *deep waters*, wherein it has been so long almost drowned; felt some spiritual longings and breathings of soul after God; and found myself engaged for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in my own soul.

"*Wednesday, April 20.* Set apart this day for fasting and prayer, to bow my soul before God for the bestowment of divine grace; especially that all my spiritual afflictions and inward distresses might be sanctified to my soul. And endeavoured also to remember the goodness of God to me the year past, this day being my birth-day. Having obtained help of God, I have hitherto lived, and am now arrived at the age of twenty-five years. My soul was pained to think of my barrenness and deadness; that I have lived so little to the glory of the eternal God. I spent the day in the woods alone, and there poured out my complaint to God; O that God would enable me to live to his glory for the future!

"*Thursday, April 21.* Spent the forenoon in reading and prayer, and found myself engaged; but still much depressed in spirit under a sense of my vileness and unfitness for any public service. In the afternoon, I visited my people, and prayed and conversed with some about their souls' concerns; and afterwards found some ardour of soul in secret prayer. *O that I might grow up into the likeness of God!*

"*Friday, April 22.* Spent the day in study, reading, and prayer; and felt a little relieved of my burden, that has been so heavy of late. But still was in some measure oppressed; and had a sense of barrenness. Oh, my leanness testifies against me! my very soul abhors itself for its unlikeness to God, its inactivity and sluggishness. When I have done all, alas, what an unprofitable servant am I! My soul groans, to see the hours of the day roll away, because I do not fill them in spirituality and heavenly mindedness. And yet I long they should speed their pace, to hasten me to my eternal home, where I may fill up all my moments, through eternity, for God and his glory."

On *Saturday* and *Lords day*, his melancholy again prevailed; he complained of his ignorance, stupidity, and senselessness; while yet he seems to have spent the time with the utmost diligence, in study, in prayer, in instructing and counselling the Indians. On *Monday* he sunk into the deepest melancholy; so that he supposed he never spent a day in such distress in his life; not in fears of hell, (which, he says, he had no pressing fear of,) but a distressing sense of his own vileness, &c. On *Tuesday*, he expresses some relief. *Wednesday* he kept as a day of fasting and prayer, but in great distress. *The three days next following* his melancholy continued, but in a less degree, and with intervals of comfort.<sup>365</sup>

"*Lord's day, May 1.* Was at Stockbridge to-day. In the forenoon had some relief and assistance; though not so much as usual. In the afternoon felt poorly in body and soul; while I was preaching, seemed to be rehearsing idle tales, without the least life, fervour, sense, or comfort; and especially afterwards, at the sacrament, my soul was filled with confusion, and

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365 On the last of these days he wrote the first letter in the collection of his letters, among his Remains.

the utmost anguish that ever I endured, under the feeling of my inexpressible vileness and meanness. It was a most bitter and distressing season to me, by reason of the view I had of my own heart, and the secret abominations that lurk there: I thought the eyes of all in the house were upon me, and I dared not look any one in the face; for it verily seemed as if they saw the vileness of my heart, and all the sins I had ever been guilty of. And if I had been banished from the presence of all mankind, never to be seen any more, or so much as thought of, still I should have been distressed with shame; and I should have been ashamed to see the most barbarous people on earth, because I was viler, and seemingly more brutishly ignorant, than they. 'I am made to possess the sins of my youth.'"

The *remaining days of this week* were spent, for the most part, in inward distress and gloominess. The next *sabbath*, he had encouragement, assistance, and comfort; but on *Monday* sunk again.

"*Tuesday, May 10.* Was in the same state, as to my mind, that I have been in for some time; extremely pressed with a sense of guilt, pollution, and blindness: 'The iniquity of my heels have compassed me about; the sins of my youth have been set in order before me; they have gone over my head, as a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear.' Almost all the actions of my life past seem to be covered over with sin and guilt; and those of them that I performed in the most conscientious manner, now fill me with shame and confusion, that I cannot hold up my face. Oh! the *pride, selfishness, hypocrisy, ignorance, bitterness, party-zeal, and the want of love, candour, meekness, and gentleness*, that have attended my attempts to promote religion and virtue; and this when I have reason to hope I had real assistance from above, and some sweet intercourse with heaven! But, alas, what corrupt mixtures attended my best duties!"

The *next seven days* his gloom and distress continued for the most part, but he had some turns of relief and spiritual comfort. He gives an account of his spending part of this time in hard labour, to build himself a little *cottage* to live in amongst the Indians, in which he might be by himself; having, it seems, hitherto lived with a poor Scotchman, as he observes in the letter just now referred to; and afterwards, before his own house was habitable, lived in a wigwam among the Indians.

"*Wednesday, May 18.* My circumstances are such, that I have no comfort, of any kind, but what I have in God. I live in the most lonesome wilderness; have but one single person to converse with, that can speak English.<sup>366</sup> Most of the talk I hear, is either Highland Scotch or Indian. I have no fellow-Christian to whom I might unbosom myself, or lay open my

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366 This person was Mr. Brainerd's interpreter; who was an ingenious young Indian belonging to Stockbridge, whose name was John Wauwaumpequunnaunt. He had been instructed in the Christian religion by Mr. Sergeant; had lived with the Reverend Mr. Williams of Long Meadow; had been further instructed by him, at the charge of Mr. Hollis of London; and understood both English and Indian very well, and wrote a good hand.



spiritual sorrows; with whom I might take sweet counsel in conversation about heavenly things, and join in social prayer. I live poorly with regard to the comforts of life: most of my diet consists of boiled corn, hasty-pudding, &c. I lodge on a bundle of straw, my labour is hard and extremely difficult, and I have little appearance of success to comfort me. The Indians have no land to live on but what the Dutch people lay claim to; and these threaten to drive them off. They have no regard to the *souls* of the poor Indians; and, by what I can learn, they hate me, because I come to preach to them. But that which makes all my difficulties grievous to be borne, is, that God *hides his face from me*.

“*Thursday, May 19.* Spent most of this day in close studies; but was sometimes so distressed that I could think of nothing but my spiritual blindness, ignorance, pride, and misery. Oh, I have reason to make that prayer, ‘Lord, forgive my sins of youth, and former trespasses.’

“*Friday, May 20.* Was much perplexed some part of the day; but towards night, had some comfortable meditations on [Isa. xl. 1.](#) ‘Comfort ye, comfort ye,’ &c. and enjoyed some sweetness in prayer. Afterwards my soul rose so far above the *deep waters*, that I dared to *rejoice in God*. I saw there was sufficient matter of consolation in the blessed God.”

The *next nine days* his burdens were for the most part alleviated, but with variety; at some times having considerable consolation; and at others, more depressed. The next day, *Monday, May 30*, he set out on a journey to New Jersey, to consult the commissioners who employed him about the affairs of his mission.<sup>367</sup> He performed his journey thither in *four days*; and arrived at Mr. Burr’s in Newark on *Thursday*. In great part of his journey, he was in the depths of melancholy, under distresses like those already mentioned. On *Friday* he rode to Elizabeth-town: and on *Saturday* to New York; and from thence on his way homewards as far as White Plains. There he spent the *sabbath*, and had considerable degrees of divine consolation and assistance in public services. On *Monday* he rode about sixty miles to New-Haven. There he attempted a *reconciliation* with the authority of the *college*; and spent *this week* in visiting his friends in those parts, and in his journey homewards, till *Saturday*, in a pretty comfortable frame of mind. On *Saturday*, in his way from Stockbridge to Kaunaumeeck, he was lost in the woods, and lay all night in the open air; but happily found his way in the morning, and came to his Indians on Lord’s day, June 12, and had greater assistance in preaching among them than ever before, since his first coming among them.

From this time forward he was the subject of various frames and exercises of mind: in the general, much after the same manner as hitherto, from his first coming to Kaunaumeeck till he got into his own house, (a little hut, which he made chiefly with his own hands, by

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367 His trial was the greater, in that, had it not been for the displeasure of the governors of the college, he would not only on that day have shared with his classmates in the public honours which they then received, but would on that occasion have appeared at the head of that class; which, if he had been with them, would have been the most numerous of any that ever had been graduated at that college.

long and hard labour,) which was *near seven weeks* from this time. Great part of this space of time, he was dejected, and depressed with melancholy, sometimes extremely; his melancholy operating in like manner as related in times past. How it was with him in those dark seasons, he himself further describes in his diary for July 2, in the following manner. "My soul is, and has for a long time been, in a piteous condition, wading through a series of sorrows, of various kinds. I have been so crushed down sometimes with a sense of my meanness and infinite unworthiness, that I have been ashamed that any, even the meanest of my fellow-creatures, should so much as spend a thought about me; and have wished sometimes, while travelling among the thick brakes, to drop, as one of them, into everlasting oblivion. In this case, sometimes, I have almost resolved never again to see any of my acquaintance; and really thought I could not do it and hold up my face; and have longed for the remotest region, for a retreat from all my friends, that I might not be seen or heard of any more. Sometimes the consideration of my *ignorance* has been a means of my great distress and anxiety. And especially my soul has been in anguish with fear, shame, and guilt, that ever I had preached, or had any thought that way. Sometimes my soul has been in distress on feeling some particular corruptions rise and swell like a mighty torrent, with present violence; having, at the same time, ten thousand former sins and follies presented to view, in all their blackness and aggravations. And these, while destitute of most of the conveniencies of life, and I may say, of all the pleasures of it; without a friend to communicate any of my sorrows to, and sometimes without any place of retirement, where I may unburden my soul before God, which has greatly contributed to my distress. Of late, more especially, my great difficulty has been a sort of carelessness, a kind of regardless temper of mind, whence I have been disposed to indolence and trifling; and this temper of mind has constantly been attended with guilt and shame; so that sometimes I have been in a kind of horror, to find myself so unlike the blessed God. I have thought I grew worse under all my trials; and nothing has cut and wounded my soul more than this. Oh, if I am one of God's chosen, as I trust through infinite grace I am, I find of a truth, that *the righteous are scarcely saved.*"

It is apparent, that one main occasion of that distressing gloominess of mind which he was so much exercised with at Kaunaumeek, was reflection on his past errors and misguided zeal at *college*, in the beginning of the late religious commotions. And therefore he repeated his endeavours this year for reconciliation with the governors of the college, whom he had at that time offended. Although he had been at New haven, in June, this year, and attempted a reconciliation, as mentioned already; yet, in the beginning of July, he made another journey thither, and renewed his attempt, but still in vain.

Although he was much dejected great part of that space of time which I am now speaking of; yet he had many intermissions of his melancholy, and some seasons of comfort, sweet tranquillity, and resignation of mind, and frequent special assistance in public services, as appear in his diary. The manner of his relief from his sorrow, once in particular, is worthy

to be mentioned in his own words, (diary for July 25.) “Had little or no resolution for a life of holiness; was ready almost to renounce my hopes of living to God. And oh how dark it looked, to think of being unholy for ever! This I could not endure. The cry of my soul was, [Psal. lxxv. 3.](#) ‘Iniquities prevail against me.’ But was in some measure relieved by a comfortable meditation on God’s eternity, that he never had a beginning, &c. Whence I was led to admire his greatness and power, &c. in such a manner, that I stood still, and praised the Lord for his own glories and perfections; though I was (and if I should for ever be) an unholy creature, my soul was comforted to apprehend an eternal, infinite, powerful, holy God.

“*Saturday, July 30.* Just at night, moved into *my own house*, and lodged there that night; found it much better spending the time alone, than in the *wigwam* where I was before.

“*Lord’s day, July 31.* Felt more comfortably than some days past. Blessed be the Lord, who has now given me a place of retirement. O that I might *find God* in it, and that he would dwell with me for ever!

“*Monday, Aug. 1.* Was still busy in further labours on my house. Felt a little of the sweetness of religion, and thought it was worth the while to *follow after God* through a thousand snares, deserts, and death itself. O that I might always *follow after holiness*, that I may be fully conformed to God! Had some degree of sweetness, in secret prayer, though I had much sorrow.

“*Tuesday, Aug. 2.* Was still labouring to make myself more comfortable, with regard to my house and lodging. Laboured under spiritual anxiety; it seemed to me, I deserved to be *kicked out of the world*; yet found some comfort in committing my cause to God. It is good for me to be *afflicted*, that I may die wholly to this world, and all that is in it.

“*Wednesday, Aug. 3.* Spent most of the day in writing. Enjoyed some sense of religion. Through divine goodness I am now uninterruptedly alone; and find my retirement comfortable. I have enjoyed more sense of divine things within a few days last past, than for some time before. I longed after holiness, humility, and meekness: O that God would enable me to ‘pass the time of my sojourning here in his fear,’ and always *live to him!*

“*Thursday, Aug. 4.* Was enabled to pray much, through the whole day; and through divine goodness found some intenseness of soul in the duty, as I used to do, and some ability to persevere in my supplications. I had some apprehensions of divine things, that were engaging, and which afforded me some courage and resolution. It is good, I find, to *persevere in attempts* to pray, if *I cannot pray with perseverance, i. e. continue long* in my addresses to the Divine Being. I have generally found, that *the more I do* in secret prayer, the more I have *delighted to do*, and have enjoyed more of a spirit of prayer: and frequently have found the contrary, when with journeying or otherwise I have been much deprived of retirement. A seasonable, steady performance of secret duties in their proper hours, and a careful improvement of all time, filling up every hour with some profitable labour, either of heart, head, or hands, are *excellent means* of spiritual peace and boldness before God. *Christ, indeed, is our peace, and*

by him we have boldness of access to God; but a good conscience void of offence, is an excellent preparation for an approach into the divine presence. There is difference between *self-confidence* or a *self-righteous pleasing of ourselves* as with our own duties, attainments, and spiritual enjoyments which godly souls sometimes are guilty of, and that *holy confidence* arising from the testimony of a good conscience, which good Hezekiah had, when he says, “Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.’<sup>368</sup> ‘Then (says the holy psalmist) shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.’ Filling up our time *with* and *for* God, is the way to rise up and lie down in peace.”

The *next eight days* he continued for the most part in a very comfortable frame, having his mind fixed and sweetly engaged in religion; and more than once blesses God, that he had given him a little *cottage*, where he might live alone, and enjoy a happy retirement, free from noise and disturbance, and could at any hour of the day lay aside all studies, and spend time in lifting up his soul to God for spiritual blessings.

“*Saturday, Aug. 13.* Was enabled in secret prayer to raise my soul to God, with desire and delight. It was indeed a blessed season to my soul: I found the comfort of being a Christian; and *counted the sufferings of the present life not worthy to be compared with the glory* of divine enjoyments even in this world. All my past sorrows seemed kindly to disappear, and I ‘remembered no more the sorrow, for joy.’ O, how kindly, and with a filial tenderness, the soul confides in *the Rock of ages*, at such a season, that he will ‘never leave it, nor forsake it,’ that he will cause ‘all things to work together for its good!’ &c. I longed that others should know how good a God the Lord is. My soul was full of tenderness and love, even to the most inveterate of my enemies. I longed they should share in the same mercy; and loved that God should do just as he pleased with me and every thing else. I felt exceeding serious, calm, and peaceful, and encouraged to press after holiness as long as I live, whatever difficulties and trials may be in my way. May the Lord always help me so to do! Amen, and Amen.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 14.* I had much more freedom in public than in private. God enabled me to speak with some feeling sense of divine things; but perceived no considerable effect.

“*Monday, Aug. 15.* Spent most of the day in labour, to procure something to keep my horse on in the winter. Enjoyed not much sweetness in the morning: was very weak in body through the day, and thought this flail body would soon drop into the dust: had some very realizing apprehensions of a speedy entrance into another world. And in this weak state of body, I was not a little distressed for want of suitable food. I had no bread, nor could I get any. I am forced to go or send ten or fifteen miles for all the bread I eat; and sometimes it is mouldy and sour before I eat it, if I get any considerable quantity. Aced then again I have

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368 2 Kings xx. 3.

none for sortie days together, for want of an opportunity to send for it, and cannot find my horse in the woods to go myself; and this was my case now: but through divine goodness I had some Indian *meal*, of which I made little cakes, and fried them. Yet felt contented with my circumstances, and sweetly resigned to God. In prayer I enjoyed great freedom; and blessed God as much for my present circumstances, as if I had been a king; and thought I found a disposition to be contented in *any* circumstances. *Blessed be God.*“

The *rest of this week* he was exceeding weak in body, and much exercised with pain; yet obliged from day to day to labour hard, to procure fodder for his horse. Except some part of the time, he was so very ill, that he was neither able to work nor study; but speaks of longings after holiness and perfect conformity to God. He complains of enjoying but little of God; yet he says, *that little* was better to him than *all the world* besides. In his diary for *Saturday*, he says, he was somewhat melancholy and sorrowful in mind; and adds, “I never feel comfortably, but when I find my soul going forth after God: if I cannot be holy, I must necessarily be miserable for ever.”

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 21.* Was much straitened in the forenoon-exercise; my thoughts seemed to be all scattered to the ends of the earth. At noon, I fell down before the Lord, groaned under my vileness, barrenness, aced deadness; and felt as if I was guilty of soul-murder, in speaking to immortal souls in such a manner as I had then done. In the afternoon, God was pleased to give me some assistance, and I was enabled to set before my hearers the nature and necessity of true repentance, &c. Afterwards, had some small degree of thankfulness. Was very ill and full of pain in the evening; and my soul mourned that I had spent so much time to so little profit.

“*Monday, Aug. 22.* Spent most of the day in study; and found my bodily strength in a measure restored. Had some intense and passionate breathings of soul after holiness, and very clear manifestations of my utter inability to procure, or work it in myself; it is wholly owing to the power of God. O, with what tenderness the love and desire of holiness fills the soul! I wanted to wing out of myself to God, or rather to get a conformity to him: but, alas! I cannot add to my stature in grace one cubit. However, my soul can never leave striving for it; or at least groaning that it cannot strive for it, and obtain more purity of heart. At night I spent some time in instructing my poor people. Oh that God would pity their souls!

“*Tuesday, Aug. 23.* Studied in the forenoon, and enjoyed some freedom. In the afternoon, laboured abroad: endeavoured to pray; but found not much sweetness or intenseness of mind. Towards night, was very weary, and tired of this world of sorrow: the thoughts of death and immortality appeared very desirable, and even refreshed my soul. Those lines turned in my mind with pleasure,

’Come, death, shake hands, I’ll kiss thy bands: ’Tis happiness for me to die. What! dost thou think that I will shrink? I’ll go to immortality.’

In evening prayer God was pleased to draw near my soul, though very sinful and unworthy: was enabled to wrestle with God, and to persevere in my requests for grace. I poured out my soul for all the world, friends, and enemies. My soul was concerned, not so much for souls as such, but rather for Christ's kingdom, that it might appear in the world, that God might be known to be God in the whole earth. And, oh, my soul abhorred the very thought of a *party* in religion! Let the truth of God appear, wherever it is; and God have the glory for ever. Amen. This was indeed a comfortable season. I thought I had some small taste of, and real relish for, the enjoyments and employments of the upper world. O that my soul was more attempered to it!

“*Wednesday, Aug. 24.* Spent some time in the morning in study and prayer. Afterwards was engaged in some necessary business abroad. Towards night, found a little time for some particular studies. I thought if God should say, ‘Cease making any provision for this life, for you shall in a few days go out of time into eternity,’ my soul would leap for joy. O that I may both ‘desire to be dissolved, to be with Christ,’ and likewise ‘wait patiently all the days of my appointed time till my change come!’ But, alas! I am very unfit for the business and blessedness of heaven. O for *more holiness!*”

“*Thursday, Aug. 25.* Part of the day, was engaged in studies; and part in labour abroad. I find it is impossible to enjoy peace and tranquillity of mind without a careful improvement of time. This is really an imitation of God and Christ Jesus: ‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,’<sup>369</sup> says our Lord. But still, if we would be like God we must see that we fill up our time for him. I daily long to dwell in perfect light and love. In the mean time, my soul mourns that I make so little progress in grace, and preparation for the world of blessedness: I see and know that I am a very barren tree in God's vineyard, and that he might justly say, ‘Cut it down,’ &c. O that God would make me more lively and vigorous in grace, for his own glory! Amen.”

The *two next days* he was much engaged in some necessary labours, in which he extremely spent himself. He seems these days to have had a great sense of the vanity of the world, continued longings after holiness, and more fervency of spirit in the service of God.

“*Lord's day, Aug. 28.* Was much perplexed with some irreligious Dutchmen. All their discourse turned upon the things of the world; which was no small exercise to my mind. Oh, what a *hell* it would be to spend an eternity with such men! Well might David say, ‘I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved.’<sup>370</sup> But adored be God, *heaven* is a place into which no unclean thing enters.’ Oh, I long for the holiness of that world! *Lord, prepare me for it.*”

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369 [John v. 17.](#)

370 [Psalms cxix. 158.](#)

The *next day* he set out on a journey to New York. Was somewhat dejected the *two first days* of his journey; but yet seems to have enjoyed some degrees of the sensible presence of God.

“*Wednesday, Aug. 31.* Rode down to Bethlehem: was in a sweet, serious, and, I hope, Christian frame, when I came there. Eternal things engrossed all my thoughts; and I longed to be in the world of spirits. O how happy is it to have all our thoughts swallowed up in that world; to feel one’s self a serious considerate stranger in this world, diligently seeking a road through it, the best, the sure road to the heavenly Jerusalem!

“*Thursday, Sept. 1.* Rode to Danbury. Was more dull and dejected in spirit than yesterday. Indeed, I always feel comfortably when God realizes death, and the things of this world, to my mind: whenever my mind is taken off from the things of this world, and set on God, my soul is then at *rest*.”

He went forward on his journey, and came to New York on the next *Monday*. And after tarrying there *two or three days*, he set out from the city towards New-Haven, intending to be there at the commencement; and on *Friday* came to Horse-Neck. In the mean time, he complains much of dulness, and want of fervour in religion: but yet, from time to time, speaks of his enjoying spiritual warmth and sweetness in conversation with Christian friends, assistance in public services, &c.

“*Saturday, Sept. 10.* Rode six miles to Stanwich, and preached to a considerable assembly of people. Had some assistance and freedom, especially towards the close. Endeavoured much afterwards, in private conversation, to establish holiness, humility, meekness, &c. as the essence of true religion; and to moderate some noisy sort of persons, that appeared to me to be acted by unseen spiritual pride. Alas, what extremes men incline to run into! Returned to Horse-Neck, and felt some seriousness and sweet solemnity in the evening.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 11.* In the afternoon I preached from [Tit. iii. 8](#). ‘This is a faithful saying, and these things,’ &c. I think God never helped me more in painting true religion, and in detecting clearly, and tenderly discountenancing, false appearances of religion, wild-fire party zeal, spiritual pride, &c. as well as a confident dogmatical spirit, and its spring, *viz. ignorance of the heart*. In the evening took much pains in private conversation to suppress some confusions, that I perceived were amongst that people.

“*Monday, Sept. 12.* Rode to Mr. Mills’s at Ripton. Had some perplexing hours; but was some part of the day very comfortable. It is ‘through great trials,’ I see, ‘that we must enter the gates of paradise.’ If my soul could but be holy, that God might not be dishonoured, methinks I could bear sorrows.

“*Tuesday, Sept. 13.* Rode to New-Haven. Was sometimes dejected; not in the sweetest frame. Lodged at \*\*\*\*. Had some profitable Christian conversation, &c. I find, though my inward trials were great, and a life of solitude gives them greater advantage to settle, and penetrate to the very inmost recesses of the soul; yet it is better to be alone, than encumbered

with noise and tumult. I find it very difficult maintaining any sense of divine things while removing from place to place, diverted with new objects, and filled with care and business. A settled steady business is best adapted to a life of strict religion.

*Wednesday, Sept. 14.* This day I ought to have taken my *degree*; <sup>371</sup> but God sees fit to deny it me. And though I was greatly afraid of being overwhelmed with perplexity and confusion, when I should see my *class-mates* take theirs; yet, at the very time, God enabled me with calmness and resignation to say, ‘The will of the Lord be done.’ Indeed, through divine goodness, I have scarcely felt my mind so calm, sedate, and comfortable for some time. I have long feared this season, and expected my humility, meekness, patience, and resignation would be much tried: <sup>372</sup> but found much more pleasure and divine comfort than I expected. Felt spiritually, serious, tender, and affectionate in private prayer with a dear Christian friend to-day.

*Thursday, Sept. 15.* Had some satisfaction in hearing the ministers discourse, &c. It is always a comfort to me, to hear religious and spiritual discourse. O that ministers and people were more spiritual and devoted to God! Towards night, with the advice of Christian friends, I offered the following reflections in writing, to the rector and trustees of the college which are for substance the same that I had freely offered to the rector before, and entreated him to accept that if possible I might cut off all occasion of offence, from those who seek occasion. What I offered, is as follows:

“Whereas I have said before several persons, concerning Mr. Whittelsey, one of the tutors of Yale college, that I did not believe he had any more grace than the chair I then leaned upon: I humbly confess, that herein I have sinned against God, and acted contrary to the rules of his word, and have injured Mr. Whittelsey. I had no right to make thus free with his character; and had no just reason to say as I did concerning him. My fault herein was the more aggravated, in that I said this concerning one that was so much my superior, and one that I was obliged to treat with special respect and honour, by reason of the relation I stood in to him in the college. Such a manner of behaviour, I confess, did not become a Christian; it was taking too much upon me, and did not savour of that humble respect that I ought to have expressed towards Mr. Whittelsey. I have long since been convinced of the falseness of those apprehensions, by which I then justified such a conduct. I have often reflected on this act with grief; I hope, on account of the sin of it: and am willing to lie low, and be abased before God and man for it. And humbly ask the forgiveness of the governors

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371 This being commencement-day.

372 His trial was the greater, in that, had it not been for the displeasure of the governors of the college, he would not only on that day have shared with his classmates in the public honours which they then received, but would on that occasion have appeared at the head of that class; which, if he had been with them, would have been the most numerous of any that ever had been graduated at that college.



of the college, and of the whole society; but of Mr. Whittelsey in particular. And whereas I have been accused by one person of saying concerning the reverend rector of Yale college, that I wondered he did not expect to drop down dead for fining the scholars that followed Mr. Tennent to Milford; I seriously profess, that I do not remember my saying any thing to this purpose. But if I did, which I am not certain I did not, I utterly condemn it, and detest all such kind of behaviour; and especially in an undergraduate towards the rector. And I now appear, to judge and condemn myself for going once to the separate meeting in New-Haven, a little before I was expelled, though the rector had refused to give me leave. For this I humbly ask the rector's forgiveness. And whether the governors of the college shall ever see cause to remove the academical censure I lie under, or no, or to admit me to the privileges I desire; yet I am willing to appear, if they think fit, openly to own, and to humble myself for, those things I have herein confessed."

"God has made me willing to do any thing that I can do, consistent with truth, for the sake of peace, and that I might not be a stumbling-block to others. For this reason I can cheerfully forego, and give up, what I verily believe, after the most mature and impartial search, is my right, in some instances. God has given me that disposition, that, if this were the case, that a man has done me a hundred injuries, and I (though ever so much provoked to it) have done him one, I feel disposed, and heartily willing, humbly to confess my fault to him, and on my knees to ask forgiveness of him; though at the same time he should justify himself in all the injuries he has done me, and should only make use of my humble confession to blacken my character the more, and represent me as the only person guilty, &c. yea, though he should as it were insult me, and say, 'he knew all this before, and that I was making work for repentance,' &c. Though what I said concerning Mr. Whittelsey was only spoken in private, to a friend or two; and being partly overheard, was related to the rector, and by him extorted from my friends; yet, seeing it was divulged acid made public, I was willing to confess my fault therein publicly. But I trust God will plead my cause."<sup>373</sup>

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373 I was witness to the very Christian spirit Mr. Brainerd showed at that time, being then at New-Haven, and one that he thought fit to consult on that occasion. This was the first time that ever I had an opportunity of personal acquaintance with him. There truly appeared in him a great degree of calmness and humility; without the least appearance of rising of spirit for any ill treatment he supposed he had suffered, or the least backwardness to abase himself before them, who, as he thought, had wronged him. What he did was without any objection or appearance of reluctance, even in private to his friends, to whom he freely opened himself. Earnest application was made on his behalf to the authority of the college, that he might have his degree then given him; and particularly by the Rev. Mr. Burr of Newark, one of the correspondents of the honourable society in Scotland; he being sent from New Jersey to New-Haven, by the rest of the commissioners for that end; and many arguments were used, but without success. Indeed the governors of the college were so far satisfied with the reflections Mr. Brainerd had made on himself, that they appeared willing to admit him again into college; but not to give him his degree. till he should have remained there at least twelve months, which being contrary to what the corres-

The next day he went to Derby; then to Southbury, where he spent the sabbath: and speaks of some spiritual comfort; but complains much of unfixedness, and wanderings of mind in religion.

“*Monday, Sept. 19.* In the afternoon rode to Bethlehem, and there preached. Had some measure of assistance, both in prayer and preaching. I felt serious, kind, and tender towards all mankind, and longed that holiness might flourish more on earth.

“*Tuesday, Sept. 20.* Had thoughts of going forward on my journey to my Indians; but towards night was taken with a hard pain in my teeth, and shivering cold; and could not possibly recover a comfortable degree of warmth the whole night following. I continued very full of pain all night; and in the morning had a very hard fever, and pains almost over my whole body. I had a sense of the divine goodness in appointing this to be the place of my sickness, viz. among my friends, who were very kind to me. I should probably have perished, if I had first got home to my own house in the wilderness, where I have none to converse with but the poor, rude, ignorant Indians. Here I saw was mercy in the midst of affliction. I continued thus, mostly confined to my bed, till Friday night; very full of pain most of the time; but through divine goodness not afraid of death. Then the extreme folly of those appeared to me, who put off their turning to God till a sick-bed. Surely this is not a time proper to prepare for eternity. On Friday evening my pains went off somewhat suddenly, I was exceeding weak, and almost fainted; but was very comfortable the night following. These words, [Psal. cxviii. 17.](#) ‘I shall not die, but live,’ &c. I frequently revolved in my mind; and thought we were to prize the continuation of life only on this account, that we may ‘show forth God’s goodness and works of grace.’”

From this time he gradually recovered; and on the next Tuesday was so well as to be able to go forward on his journey homewards; but it was not till the Tuesday following that he reached Kaunaumek. And seems, great part of this time, to have had a very deep and lively sense of the vanity and emptiness of all things here below, and of the reality, nearness, and vast importance of eternal things.

“*Tuesday, Oct. 4.* This day rode home to my own house and people. The poor Indians appeared very glad of my return. Found my house and all things in safety. I presently fell on my knees, and blessed God for my safe return, after a long and tedious journey, and a season of sickness in several places where I had been, and after I had been ill myself. God has renewed his kindness to me, in preserving me one journey more. I have taken many considerable journeys since this time last year, and yet God has never suffered one of my bones to be broken, or any distressing calamity to befall me, excepting the ill turn I had in

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pondents, to whom he was now engaged, had declared to be their mind, he did not consent to it. He desired his degree, as he thought it would tend to his being more extensively useful; but still when he was denied it, he manifested no disappointment or resentment.

my last journey. I have been often exposed to cold and hunger in the wilderness, where the comforts of life were not to be had; have frequently been lost in the woods; and sometimes obliged to ride much of the night; and once lay out in the woods all night; yet, blessed be God, he has preserved me!”

In his diary for the *next eleven days*, are great complaints of distance from God, spiritual pride, corruption, and exceeding vileness. He once says, his heart was so pressed with a sense of his pollution, that he could scarcely have the face and impudence (as it then appeared to him) to desire that God should not damn him for ever. And at another time, he says, he had so little sense of God, or apprehension and relish of his glory and excellency, that it made him more disposed to kindness and tenderness towards those who are blind and ignorant of God and things divine and heavenly.

“*Lords day, Oct. 16.* In the evening, God was pleased to give me a feeling sense of my own unworthiness; but through divine goodness such as tended to draw me to, rather than drive me from, God: it filled me with solemnity. I retired alone, (having at this time a friend with me,) and poured out my soul to God with much freedom; and yet in anguish, to find myself so unspeakably sinful and unworthy before a holy God. Was now much resigned under God’s dispensations towards me, though my trials had been very great. But thought whether I could be resigned, if God should let the French Indians come upon me, and deprive me of life, or carry me away captive, (though I knew of no special reason then to propose this trial to myself, more than any other,) and my soul seemed so far to rest and acquiesce in God, that the sting and terror of these things seemed in a great measure gone. Presently after I came to the Indians, whom I was teaching to sing psalm-tunes that evening, I received the following letter from Stockbridge, by a messenger sent on the sabbath on purpose, which made it appear of greater importance.

’Sir, Just now we received advices from Col. Stoddard, that there is the utmost danger of a rupture with France. He has received the same from his excellency our governor, ordering him to give notice to all the exposed places, that they may secure themselves the best they can against any sudden invasion. We thought best to send directly to Kaunaumeeck, that you may take the prudentest measures for your safety that dwell there. I am, Sir, &c.’

“I thought, upon reading the contents, it came in a good season; for my heart seemed fixed on God, and therefore I was not much surprised. This news only made me more serious, and taught me that I must not please myself with any of the comforts of life which I had been preparing. Blessed be God, who gave me any intenseness and fervency this evening!

“*Monday, Oct. 17.* Had some rising hopes, that ‘God would arise and have mercy on Zion speedily.’ My heart is indeed refreshed, when I have any prevailing hopes of Zion’s prosperity. O that I may see the glorious day, when Zion shall become the joy of the whole earth! Truly there is nothing that I greatly value in this lower world.”

On *Tuesday* he rode to Stockbridge; complains of being much diverted, and having but little life. On *Wednesday* he expresses some solemn sense of divine things, and longing to be always doing for God with a godly frame of spirit.

“*Thursday, Oct. 20.* Had but little sense of divine things this day. Alas, that so much of my precious time is spent with so little of God! Those are tedious days, wherein I have no spirituality.

“*Friday, Oct. 21.* Returned home to Kaunaumeeek: was glad to get alone in my little cottage, and to cry to that God who seeth in secret, and is present in a wilderness.

“*Saturday, Oct. 22.* Had but little sensible communion with God. This world is a dark, cloudy mansion. Oh, when will the Sun of righteousness shine on my soul without intermission!

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 23.* In the morning I had a little dawn of comfort arising from hopes of seeing glorious days in the church of God: was enabled to pray for such a glorious day with some courage and strength of hope. In the forenoon treated on the glories of heaven, &c. In the afternoon, on the miseries of hell, and the danger of going there. Had some freedom and warmth, both parts of the day. And my people were very attentive. In the evening two or three came to me under concern for their souls; to whom I was enabled to discourse closely, and with some earnestness and desire. *O that God would be merciful to their poor souls!*”

He seems, through the *whole of this week*, to have been greatly engaged to fill up every inch of time in the service of God, and to have been most diligently employed in study, prayer, and instructing the Indians; and from time to time expresses longings of soul after God, and the advancement of his kingdom, and spiritual comfort and refreshment.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 30.* In the morning I enjoyed some fixedness of soul in prayer, which was indeed sweet and desirable; was enabled to leave myself with God, and to acquiesce in him. At noon my soul was refreshed with reading [Rev. iii.](#) more especially the [Rev. iii. 11, 12.](#) 11th and 12th verses. Oh, my soul longed for that blessed day, when I should ‘dwell in the temple of God,’ and ‘go no more out’ of his immediate presence!

“*Monday, Oct. 31.* Rode to Kinderhook, about fifteen miles from my place. While riding I felt some divine sweetness in the thoughts of being<sup>374</sup> a pillar in the temple of God’ in the upper world, and being no more deprived of his blessed presence, and the sense of *his favour*, which is *better than life*. My soul was so lifted up to God, that I could pour out my desires to him, for more grace and further degrees of sanctification, with abundant freedom. Oh, I longed to be more abundantly prepared for that blessedness, with which I was then in some measure refreshed! Returned home in the evening; but took an extremely bad cold by riding in the night.

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374 [Rev. iii. 12.](#)’

“*Tuesday, Nov. 1.* Was very much disordered in body, and sometimes full of pain in my face and teeth; was not able to study much, and had not much spiritual comfort. Alas! when God is withdrawn, all is gone. Had some sweet thoughts, which I could not but write down, on the *design, nature, and end of Christianity.*

“*Wednesday, Nov. 2.* Was still more indisposed in body, and in much pain most of the day. I had not much comfort; was scarcely able to study at all; and still entirely alone in the wilderness. But blessed be the Lord, I am not exposed in the open air; I have a house, and many of the comforts of life to support me. I have learned in a measure, that all good things relating both to time and eternity come from God. In the evening I had some degree of quickening in prayer: I think God gave me some sense of his presence.

“*Thursday, Nov. 3.* Spent this day in secret fasting and prayer, from morning till night. Early in the morning I had some small degree of assistance in prayer. Afterwards read the story of Elijah the prophet, [1 Kings xvii. xviii.](#) chapters, and also [2 Kings ii.](#) and [iv.](#) chapters. My soul was much moved, observing the faith, zeal, and power of that holy man; how he wrestled with God in prayer, &c. My soul then cried with Elisha,<sup>375</sup> ‘Where is the Lord God of Elijah!’ Oh, I longed for more faith! My soul breathed after God, and pleaded with him, that a ‘double portion of that spirit,’ which was given to Elijah, might ‘rest on me.’ And that which was divinely refreshing and strengthening to my soul was, I saw that God is the *same* that he was in the days of Elijah. Was enabled to wrestle with God by prayer, in a more affectionate, fervent, humble, intense, and importunate manner, than I have for many months past. Nothing seemed too hard for God to perform; nothing too great for me to hope for from him. I had for many months entirely lost all hopes of being made instrumental of doing any special service for God in the world; it has appeared entirely impossible, that one so black and vile should be thus employed for God. But at this time God was pleased to revive this hope. Afterwards read the [3rd chapter](#) of Exodus and on to the [20th](#), and saw more of the *glory and majesty of God* discovered in those chapters, than ever I had seen before; frequently in the mean time falling on my knees, and crying to God for the faith of Moses, and for a manifestation of the *divine glory*. Especially the [3rd](#) and [4th](#), and part of the [14th](#) and [15th](#) chapters, were unspeakably sweet to my soul: my soul blessed God, that he had shown himself so *gracious* to his servants of old. The [15th chapter](#) seemed to be the very language which my soul uttered to God in the season of my first spiritual comfort, when I had just got through the *Red sea*, by a way that I had no expectation of. O how my soul then *rejoiced in God!* And now those things came fresh and lively to my mind; now my soul blessed God afresh, that he had opened that unthought-of *way* to deliver me from the fear of the Egyptians, when I almost despaired of life. Afterwards read the story of Abraham’s pilgrimage in the land of Canaan: my soul was melted, in observing his *faith*, how he leaned on God; how he

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375 [2 Kings ii. 14](#)

communed with God, and what a *stranger* he was here in the world. After that, read the story of Joseph's sufferings, and God's goodness to him: blessed God for these examples of faith and patience. My soul was ardent in prayer, was enabled to wrestle ardently for myself, for Christian friends, and for the church of God. And felt more desire to see the power of God in the conversion of souls, than I have done for a long season. Blessed be God for this season of fasting and prayer! May his goodness always abide with me, and draw my soul to him!

"*Thursday, Nov. 4.* Rode to Kinderhook: went quite to Hudson's river, about twenty miles from my house; performed some business, and returned home in the evening to my own house. I had rather ride hard and fatigue myself, to get home, than to spend the evening and night amongst those who have no regard for God."

The *two next days* he was very ill, and full of pain, probably through his riding in the night after a fatiguing day's journey on *Thursday*; but yet seems to have been diligent in business.

"*Monday, Nov. 7.* This morning the Lord afforded me some special assistance in prayer; my mind was solemn, fixed, affectionate, and ardent in desires after holiness; felt full of tenderness and love; and my affections seemed to be dissolved into kindness. In the evening I enjoyed the same comfortable assistance in prayer as in the morning; my soul longed after God, and cried to him with a filial freedom, reverence, and boldness. O that I might be entirely consecrated and devoted to God."

The *two next days* he complains of bodily illness and pain; but much more of spiritual barrenness and unprofitableness.

"*Thursday, Nov. 10.* Spent this day in fasting and prayer alone. In the morning was very dull and lifeless, melancholy and discouraged. But after some time, while reading [2 Kings xix.](#) my soul was moved and affected; especially reading [verse 14, and onward.](#) I saw there was no other way for the afflicted children of God to take, but to go to God with all their sorrows. Hezekiah, in his great distress, went and spread his complaint before the Lord. I was then enabled to see the mighty power of God, and my extreme need of that power; was enabled to cry to him affectionately and ardently for his power and grace to be exercised towards me. Afterwards read the story of David's trials, and observed the course he took under them, how he strengthened his hands in God; whereby my soul was carried out after God, enabled to cry to him, and rely upon him, and felt *strong in the Lord.* Was afterwards refreshed, observing the blessed temper that was wrought in David by his trials: all bitterness and desire of revenge seemed wholly taken away; so that he mourned for the death of his enemies; [2 Sam. i. 17.](#) and [iv. 9, ad fin.](#) Was enabled to bless God, that he had given me something of this divine temper, that my soul freely, *forgives and heartily loves my enemies.*"

It appears by his diary for the *remaining part of this week*, and for the *two following weeks*, that great part of the time he was very ill, and full of pain; and yet obliged, through his circumstances, in this ill state of body, to be at great fatigues, in labour, and travelling

day and night, and to expose himself in stormy and severe seasons. He from time to time, within this space, speaks of outgoings of soul after God; his heart strengthened in God; seasons of divine sweetness and comfort; his heart affected with gratitude for mercies, &c. And yet there are many complaints of lifelessness, weakness of grace, distance from God, and great unprofitableness. But still there appear a constant care from day to day, not to lose time, but to improve it all for God.

“*Lord’s day, Nov. 27.* In the evening I was greatly affected in reading an account of the very joyful death of a pious gentleman; which seemed to invigorate my soul in God’s ways. I felt courageously engaged to pursue a life of holiness and self-denial as long as I live; and poured out my soul to God for his help and assistance in order thereto. Eternity then seemed near, and my soul rejoiced, and longed to meet it. I trust that will be a blessed day that finishes my toil here.

“*Monday, Nov. 28.* In the evening I was obliged to spend time in company and conversation that was unprofitable. Nothing lies heavier upon me, than the misimprovement of time.

“*Tuesday, Nov. 29.* Began to study the Indian tongue with Mr. Sergeant at Stockbridge.  
<sup>376</sup> Was perplexed for want of more retirement. I love to live alone in my own little *cottage*, where I can spend much time in prayer, &c.

“*Wednesday, Nov. 30.* Pursued my study of Indian: but was very weak and disordered in body, and was troubled in mind at the barrenness of the day, that I had done so little for God. I had some enlargement in prayer at night. Oh, a barn, or stable, hedge, or any other place, is truly desirable, if God is there! Sometimes, of late, my hopes of Zion’s prosperity are more raised than they were in the summer. My soul seems to confide in God, that he will yet ‘show forth his salvation’ to his people, and make Zion ‘the joy of the whole earth. O how excellent is the loving-kindness of the Lord!’ My soul sometimes inwardly exults at the lively thoughts of what God has already done for his church, and what [Luke ii. 30](#). “mine eyes have seen of the salvation of God.” It is sweet, to hear nothing but spiritual discourse from God’s children; and sinners ‘inquiring the way to Zion,’ saying, ‘What shall we do?’ &c. O that I may see more of this blessed work!

“*Thursday, Dec. 1.* Both morning and evening I enjoyed some intensesness of soul in prayer, and longed for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom in the world. My soul seems, of late, to *wait on God* for his blessing on Zion. O that religion might powerfully revive!

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<sup>376</sup> The commissioners who employed him, had directed him to spend much time this winter with Mr. Sergeant, to learn the language of the Indians; which necessitated him very often to ride, backwards and forwards, twenty miles through uninhabited woods between Stockbridge and Kaunaumeeck; which many times exposed him to extreme hardship in the severe seasons of the winter.

“*Friday, Dec. 2.* Enjoyed not so much health of body, or fervour of mind, as yesterday. If the chariot-wheels move with ease and speed at any time, for a short space, yet by and by they drive heavily again. ‘O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away’ from sin and corruption, and be *at rest in God!*”

“*Saturday, Dec. 3.* Rode home to my house and people. Suffered much with the extreme cold. I trust I shall ere long arrive safe at my journey’s end, where my toils shall cease.

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 4.* Had but little sense of divine and heavenly things. My soul mourns over my barrenness. Oh how sad is spiritual deadness!

“*Monday, Dec. 5.* Rode to Stockbridge. Was almost outdone with the extreme cold. Had some refreshing meditations by the way; but was barren, wandering, and lifeless, much of the day. Thus my days roll away, with but little done for God; and this is my burden.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 6.* Was perplexed to see the vanity and levity of professed Christians. Spent the evening with a Christian friend, who was able in some measure to sympathize with me in my spiritual conflicts. Was a little refreshed to find one with whom I could converse of *inward trials, &c.*”

“*Wednesday, Dec. 7.* Spent the evening in perplexity, with a kind of guilty indolence. When I have no heart or resolution for God, and the duties incumbent on me, I feel guilty of negligence and misimprovement of time. Certainly I ought to be engaged in my work and business, to the utmost extent of my strength and ability.

“*Thursday, Dec. 8.* My mind was much distracted with different affections. I seemed to be at an amazing distance from God; and looking round in the world, to see if there was not some happiness to be derived from it. God, and certain objects in the world, seemed each to invite my heart and affections; and my soul seemed to be distracted between them. I have not been so much beset with the world for a long time; and that with relation to some particular objects which I thought myself most dead to. But even while I was desiring to please myself with any thing below, guilt, sorrow, and perplexity attended the first motions of desire. Indeed I cannot see the appearance of pleasure and happiness in the world, as I used to do: and blessed be God for any habitual deadness to the world. I found no peace, or deliverance from this distraction and perplexity of mind, till I found access to the throne of grace: and as soon as I had any sense of God, and things divine, the allurements of the world vanished, and my heart was determined for God. But my soul mourned over my folly, that I should desire any pleasure, but only in God. *God forgive my spiritual idolatry!*”

The *next thirteen days* he appears to have been continually in deep concern about the improvement of precious time; and there are many expressions of grief, that he improved time no better; such as, “Oh, what misery do I feel, when “my thoughts rove after vanity! I should be happy if always engaged for God! O wretched man that I am!” &c. Speaks of his being pained with a sense of his barrenness, perplexed with his wanderings, longing for deliverance from the being of sin, mourning that time passed away, and so little was done



for God, &c. On *Tuesday, December 20*, he speaks of his being visited at Kaunaumeeek by some under spiritual concern.

“*Thursday, Dec. 22*. Spent this day alone in fasting and prayer, and reading in God’s word the exercises and deliverances of his children. Had, I trust, some exercise of faith, and realizing apprehension of divine power, grace, and holiness; and also of the unchangeableness of God, that he is the same as when he delivered his saints of old out of great tribulation. My soul was sundry times in prayer enlarged for God’s church and people. O that Zion might become the ‘joy of the whole earth!’ It is better to wait upon God with patience, than to put confidence in any thing in this lower world. ‘My soul, wait thou on the Lord;’ for ‘from him comes thy salvation.’

“*Friday, Dec. 23*. Felt a little more courage and resolution in religion, than at some other times.

“*Saturday, Dec. 24*. Had some assistance and longing desires after sanctification in prayer this day; especially in the evening: was sensible of my own weakness and spiritual impotency; saw plainly I should fall into sin, if God of his abundant mercy did not “uphold my soul, and withhold me from evil.’ O that God would ‘uphold me by his free Spirit, and save me from the hour of temptation.’

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 25*. Prayed much, in the morning, with a feeling sense of my own spiritual weakness and insufficiency for any duty. God gave me some assistance in preaching to the Indians; and especially in the afternoon, when I was enabled to speak with uncommon plainness, freedom, and earnestness. Blessed be God for any assistance granted to one so unworthy. Afterwards felt some thankfulness; but still sensible of barrenness. Spent some time in the evening with one or two persons under spiritual concern, and exhorting others to their duty, &c.

“*Monday, Dec. 26*. Rode down to Stockbridge. Was very much fatigued with my journey, wherein I underwent great hardships: was much exposed and very wet by falling into a river. Spent the day and evening without much sense of divine and heavenly things; but felt guilty, grieved, and perplexed with wandering careless thoughts.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 27*. Had a small degree of warmth in secret prayer, in the evening; but, alas! had but little spiritual life, and consequently but little comfort. Oh, the pressure of a *body of death!*<sup>377</sup>

“*Wednesday, Dec. 28*. Rode about six miles to the ordination of Mr. Hopkins. At the solemnity I was somewhat affected with a sense of the greatness and importance of the work of a minister of Christ. Afterwards was grieved to see the vanity of the multitude. In the evening spent a little time with some Christian friends, with some degree of satisfaction; but most of the time I had rather have been alone.

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377 This day he wrote the second letter among his remains.

“*Thursday, Dec. 29.* Spent the day mainly in conversing with friends; yet enjoyed little satisfaction, because I could find but few disposed to converse of divine and heavenly things. Alas, what are the things of this world, to afford satisfaction to the soul! Near night returned to Stockbridge; in secret, I blessed God for retirement, and that I am not always exposed to the company and conversation of the world. O that I could live ‘in the secret of God’s presence!’

“*Friday, Dec. 30.* Was in a solemn devout frame in the evening. Wondered that earth, with all its charms, should ever allure me in the least degree. O that I could always realize the being and holiness of God!

“*Saturday, Dec. 31.* Rode from Stockbridge home to my house: the air was clear and calm, but as cold as ever I felt it, or near. I was in great danger of perishing by the extremity of the season. Was enabled to meditate much on the road.

“*Lord’s day, Jan. 1, 1744.* In the morning had some small degree of assistance in prayer. Saw myself so vile and unworthy, that I could not look my people in the face, when I came to preach. Oh, my meanness, folly, ignorance, and inward pollution! In the evening had a little assistance in prayer, so that the duty was delightful, rather than burdensome. Reflected on the goodness of God to me in the past year, &c. Of a truth God has been kind and gracious to me, though he has caused me to pass through many sorrows; he has provided for me bountifully, so that I have been enabled, in about fifteen months past, to bestow to charitable uses about a *hundred pounds* New England money, that I can now remember.<sup>378</sup> Blessed be the Lord, that has so far used me as *his steward*, to distribute a *portion of his goods*. May I always remember, that all I have comes from God. Blessed be the Lord, that has carried me through all the toils, fatigues, and hardships of the year past, as well as the spiritual sorrows and conflicts that have attended it. O that I could begin this year *with God*, and spend the whole of it to *his glory*, either in life or death!

“*Monday, Jan. 2.* Had some affecting sense of my own impotency and spiritual weakness. It is nothing but the power of God that keeps me from all manner of wickedness. I see *I am nothing*, and can do nothing without help from above. Oh, for divine grace! In the evening, had some ardour of soul in prayer, and longing desires to have God for my guide and safe-guard at all times.<sup>379</sup>

“*Tuesday, Jan. 3.* Was employed much of the day in writing; and spent some time in other necessary employment. But my time passes away so swiftly, that I am astonished when

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378 Which was, I suppose, to the value of about one hundred and eighty-five pounds in our bills of the old tenor, as they now pass. By this, as well as many other things, it is manifest, that his frequent melancholy did not arise from the consideration of any disadvantage he was laid under to get a living in the world, by his expulsion from the college.

379 This day he wrote the third letter among his remains.

I reflect on it, and see how little I do. My state of solitude does not make the hours hang heavy upon my hands. O what reason of thankfulness have I on account of this retirement! I find that I do not, and it seems I cannot, lead a *Christian* life when I am abroad, and cannot spend time in devotion, Christian conversation, and serious meditation, as I should do. Those weeks that I am obliged now to be from home, in order to learn the Indian tongue, are mostly spent in perplexity and barrenness, without much sweet relish of divine things; and I feel myself a stranger at the throne of grace, for want of more frequent and continued retirement. When I return home, and give myself to meditation, prayer, and fasting, a new scene opens to my mind, and my soul longs for mortification, self-denial, humility, and divorcement from all the things of the world. This evening my heart was somewhat warm and fervent in prayer and meditation, so that I was loth to indulge sleep. Continued in those duties till about midnight.

“*Wednesday, Jan. 4.* Was in a resigned and mortified temper of mind, much of the day. Time appeared a *moment*, life a *vapour*, and all its enjoyments as *empty bubbles*, and fleeting blasts of wind.

“*Thursday, Jan. 5.* Had an humbling and pressing sense of my unworthiness. My sense of the badness of my own heart filled my soul with bitterness and anguish; which was ready to sink, as under the weight of a heavy burden. Thus I spent the evening, till late. Was somewhat intense and ardent in prayer.

“*Friday, Jan. 6.* Feeling and considering my extreme weakness, and want of grace, the pollution of my soul, and danger of temptations on every side, I set apart this day for fasting and prayer, neither eating nor drinking from evening to evening, beseeching God to have mercy on me. My soul intensely longed, that the dreadful spots and stains of sin might be washed away from it. Saw something of the power and all-sufficiency of God. My soul seemed to rest on his power and grace; longed for resignation to his will, and mortification to all things here below. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things: my resolutions for a life of mortification, continual watchfulness, self-denial, seriousness, and devotion, were strong and fixed; my desires ardent and intense; my conscience tender, and afraid of every appearance of evil. My soul grieved with reflection on past levity, and want of resolution for God. I solemnly renewed my dedication of myself to God, and longed for grace to enable me always to keep covenant with him. Time appeared very short, eternity near; and great name, either in or after life, together with all earthly pleasures and profits, but an empty bubble, a deluding dream.

“*Saturday, Jan. 7.* Spent this day in seriousness, with stedfast resolutions for God and a life of mortification. Studied closely, till I felt my bodily strength fail. Felt some degree of resignation to God, with an acquiescence in his dispensations. Was grieved that I could do so little for God before my bodily strength failed. In the evening, though tired, was enabled to continue instant in prayer for some time. Spent the time in reading, meditation, and

prayer, till the evening was far spent: was grieved to think that I could not *watch unto prayer* the whole night. But blessed be God, heaven is a place of continual and incessant devotion, though the earth is dull.”

The *six days following* he continued in the same happy frame of mind; enjoyed the same composure, calmness, resignation, ardent desire, and sweet fervency of spirit, in a high degree, every day, not one excepted. *Thursday*, this week, he kept as a day of secret fasting and prayer.

“*Saturday, Jan. 14.* This morning enjoyed a most solemn season in prayer: my soul seemed enlarged, and assisted to pour out itself to God for grace, and for every blessing I wanted, for myself, my dear Christian friends, and for the church of God; and was so enabled to *see him who is invisible*, that my soul *rested upon him* for the performance of every thing I asked agreeable to his will. It was then my happiness, to ‘continue instant in prayer,’ and was enabled to continue in it for nearly an hour. My soul was then ‘strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.’ Longed exceedingly for angelic holiness and purity, and to have all my thoughts, at all times, employed in divine and heavenly things. O how blessed is a heavenly temper! O how unspeakably blessed it is, to feel a measure of that rectitude, in which we were at first created! Felt the same divine assistance in prayer sundry times in the day. My soul confided in God for myself, and for his Zion; trusted in divine power and grace, that he would do glorious things in his church on earth, for his own glory.”

The *next day* he speaks of some glimpses he had of the divine glories, and of his being enabled to maintain his resolutions in some measure; but complains, that he could not draw near to God. He seems to be filled with trembling fears lest he should return to a life of vanity, to please himself with some of the enjoyments of this lower world; and speaks of his being much troubled, and feeling guilty, that he should address immortal souls with no more ardency and desire of their salvation. On *Monday* he rode down to Stockbridge, when he was distressed with the extreme cold; but notwithstanding, his mind was in a devout and solemn frame in his journey. The *four next days* he was very ill, probably from the cold in his journey; yet he spent the time in a solemn manner. On *Friday evening* he visited Mr. Hopkins; and on *Saturday* rode eighteen miles to Solsbury, where he kept the sabbath, and enjoyed considerable degrees of God’s gracious presence, assistance in duty, and divine comfort and refreshment, longing to give himself wholly to God, to be his for ever.

“*Monday, Jan. 23.* I think I never felt more resigned to God, nor so much dead to the world, in every respect, as now; was dead to all desire of reputation and greatness, either in life, or after death; all I longed for, was to be holy, humble, crucified to the world, &c.

“*Tuesday, Jan. 24.* Near noon, rode over to Canaan. In the evening I was unexpectedly visited by a considerable number of people, with whom I was enabled to converse profitably of divine things: took pains to describe the difference between a *regular* and *irregular* SELF-LOVE; the one consisting with a *supreme love to God*, but the other *not*; the former uniting

God's glory and the soul's happiness, that they become one common interest, but the latter disjoining and separating God's glory and man's happiness, seeking the latter with a neglect of the former. Illustrated this by that genuine love that is founded between the sexes; which is diverse from that which is wrought up towards a person only by rational argument, or hope of self-interest. Love is a *pleasing* passion, it *affords pleasure* to the mind where it is; but yet, genuine love is not, nor can be placed, upon any object *with that design of pleasure itself*."

On *Wednesday* he rode to Sheffield; the *next day*, to Stockbridge; and on *Saturday*, home to Kaunaumeeek, though the season was cold and stormy: which journey was followed with illness and pain. It appears by this diary, that he spent the time, while riding, in profitable meditations, and in lifting up his heart to God; and he speaks of assistance, comfort, and refreshment; but still complains of barrenness, &c. His diary for the *five next days* is full of the most heavy, bitter complaints; and he expresses himself as full of shame and self-loathing for his lifeless temper of mind and sluggishness of spirit, and as being in perplexity and extremity, and appearing to himself unspeakably vile and guilty before God, on account of some inward workings of corruption he found in his heart, &c.

"*Thursday, Feb. 2.* Spent this day in fasting and prayer, seeking the presence and assistance of God, that he would enable me to overcome all my corruptions and spiritual enemies.

"*Friday, Feb. 3.* Enjoyed more freedom and comfort than of late; was engaged in meditation upon the different whispers of the various powers and affections of a pious mind, exercised with a great variety of dispensations: and could but write, as well as meditate, on so entertaining a subject. <sup>380</sup> I hope the Lord gave me some true sense of divine things this day: but alas, how great and pressing are the remains of indwelling corruption! I am now more sensible than ever, that God alone is 'the author and finisher of our faith,' *i. e.* that the whole, and every part of sanctification, and every good word, work, or thought, found in me, is the effect of his power and grace; that 'without him I can do nothing,' in the strictest sense, and that 'he works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure,' and from no other motive. Oh, how amazing it is that people can talk so much about men's power and goodness; when, if God did not hold us back every moment, we should be devils incarnate! This my bitter experience, for several days last past, has abundantly taught me concerning myself.

"*Saturday, Feb. 4.* Enjoyed some degree of freedom and spiritual refreshment; was enabled to pray with some fervency, and longing desires of Zion's prosperity, and my faith and hope seemed to *take hold of God*, for the performance of what I was enabled to plead for. Sanctification in myself, and the ingathering of God's elect, was all my desire; and the hope of its accomplishment, all my joy.

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380 This is inserted among his Remains.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 5.* Was enabled in some measure to rest and confide in God, and to prize his presence and some glimpses of the light of his countenance, above my necessary food. Thought myself, after the season of weakness, temptation, and desertion I endured the last week, to be somewhat like Samson, when his locks began to grow again. Was enabled to preach to my people with more life and warmth than I have for some weeks past.

“*Monday, Feb. 6.* This morning my soul again was strengthened in God, and found some sweet repose in him in prayer; longing especially for the complete mortification of sensuality and pride, and for resignation to God’s dispensations, at all times, as through grace I felt it at this time. I did not desire deliverance from any difficulty that attends my circumstances, unless God was willing. O how comfortable is this temper! Spent most of the day in reading God’s word, in writing, and prayer. Enjoyed repeated and frequent comfort and intensesness of soul in prayer through the day. In the evening spent some hours in private conversation with my people; and afterwards felt some warmth in secret prayer.

“*Tuesday, Feb. 7.* Was much engaged in some sweet meditations on the powers and affections of the godly soul in their pursuit of their beloved object: wrote something of the native language of spiritual sensation, in its soft and tender whispers; declaring, that it now feels and tastes that the Lord is gracious; that he is the supreme good, the only soul-satisfying happiness: that he is a complete, sufficient, and almighty portion: saying,

’*Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides this blessed portion. O, I feel it is heaven to please him, and to be just what he would have me to be! O that my soul were holy, as he is holy! O that it were pure, even as Christ is pure; and perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect! These, I feel, are the sweetest commands in God’s book, comprising all others. And shall I break them! must I break them! am I under a necessity of it as long as I live in the world! O my soul, woe, woe is me that I am a sinner, because I now necessarily grieve and offend this blessed God, who is infinite in goodness and grace! Oh, methinks, if he would punish me for my sins, it would not wound my heart so deep to offend him: but though I sin continually, yet he continually repeats his kindness to me! Oh, methinks I could bear any sufferings; but how can I bear to grieve and dishonour this blessed God! How shall I yield ten thousand times more honour to him? What shall I do to glorify and worship this best of beings? O that I could consecrate myself, soul and body, to his service for ever! O that I could give up myself to him, so as never more to attempt to be my own, or to have any will or affections that are not perfectly conformed to him! But, alas, alas! I find I cannot be thus entirely devoted to God; I cannot live, and not sin. O ye angels, do ye glorify him incessantly; and if possible, prostrate yourselves lower before the blessed King of heaven? I long to bear a part with you; and, if it were possible, to help you. Oh, when we have done all that we can, to all eternity, we shall not be able to offer the ten thousandth part of the homage that the glorious God deserves!*’

“Felt something spiritual, devout, resigned, and mortified to the world, much of the day; and especially towards and in the evening. Blessed be God, that he enables me to love him for himself.

“*Wednesday, Feb. 8.* Was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day; though sensible of, and restless under, spiritual barrenness. I find that both mind and body are quickly tired with intenseness and fervour in the things of God. O that I could be as incessant as *angels* in devotion and spiritual fervour!

“*Thursday, Feb. 9.* Observed this day as a day of fasting and prayer, entreating of God to bestow upon me his blessing and grace; especially to enable me to live a life of mortification to the world, as well as of resignation and patience. Enjoyed some realizing sense of divine power and goodness in prayer, several times; and was enabled to roll the burden of myself, and friends, and Zion, upon the goodness and grace of God: but, in the general, was more dry and barren than I have usually been of late upon such occasions.

“*Friday, Feb. 10.* Was exceedingly oppressed, most of the day, with shame, grief, and fear, under a sense of my past folly, as well as present barrenness and coldness. When God sets before me my past misconduct, especially any instances of *misguided zeal*, it sinks my soul into shame and confusion, makes me afraid of a shaking leaf. My fear is such as the prophet Jeremy complains of, [Jer xx. 10](#). I have no confidence to hold up my face, even before my fellow-worms; but only when my soul confides in God, and I find the sweet temper of Christ, the spirit of humility, solemnity, and mortification, and resignation, alive in my soul. But, in the evening, was unexpectedly refreshed in *pouring out my complaint to God*; my shame and fear was turned into a sweet composure and acquiescence in God.

“*Saturday, Feb. 11.* Felt much as yesterday: enjoyed but little sensible communion with God.

“*Lord's day, Feb. 12.* My soul seemed to confide in God, and to repose itself on him; and had outgoings of soul after God in prayer. Enjoyed some divine assistance, in the forenoon, in preaching; but in the afternoon, was more perplexed with shame, &c. Afterwards, found some relief in prayer; loved, as a feeble, afflicted, despised creature, to cast myself on a God of infinite grace and goodness, hoping for no happiness but from him.

“*Monday, Feb. 13.* Was calm and sedate in morning-devotions; and my soul seemed to rely on God. Rode to Stockbridge, and enjoyed some comfortable meditations by the way; had a more refreshing taste and relish of heavenly blessedness than I have enjoyed for many months past. I have many times, of late, felt as ardent desires of holiness as ever; but not so much sense of the sweetness and unspeakable pleasure of the enjoyments and employments of heaven. My soul longed to leave earth, and bear a part with angels in their celestial employments. My soul said, ‘Lord, it is good to be here;’ and it appeared to be better to die than to lose the relish of these heavenly delights.”

A sense of divine things seemed to continue with him, in a lesser degree, through the *next day*. On *Wednesday* he was, by some discourse that he heard, cast into a melancholy gloom, that operated much in the same manner as his melancholy had formerly done, when he came first to Kaunaumeeek; the effects of which seemed to continue in some degree the *six following days*.

“*Wednesday, Feb. 22.* In the morning had as clear a sense of the exceeding pollution of my nature, as ever I remember to have had in my life. I then appeared to myself inexpressibly loathsome and defiled; sins of childhood, of early youth, and such follies as I had not thought of for years together, as I remember, came now fresh to my view as if committed but yesterday, and appeared in the most odious colours; they appeared more in numbers than the hairs of my head; yea, they ‘went over my head as a heavy burden.’ In the evening, the hand of faith seemed to be strengthened in God; my soul seemed to rest and acquiesce in him; was supported under my burdens, reading the [125th Psalm](#); and found that it was sweet and comfortable to lean on God.

“*Thursday, Feb. 23.* Was frequent in prayer, and enjoyed some assistance. There is a God in heaven who overrules all things for the best; and this is the comfort of my soul: ‘I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living,’ notwithstanding present sorrows. In the evening, enjoyed some freedom in prayer, for myself, friends, and the church of God.

“*Friday Feb. 24.* Was exceeding restless and perplexed under a sense of the misimprovement of time; mourned to see time pass away; felt in the greatest hurry; seemed to have every thing to do: yet could do nothing, but only grieve and groan under my ignorance, unprofitableness, meanness, the foolishness of my actions and thoughts, the pride and bitterness of some past frames, all which at this time appeared to me in lively colours, and filled me with shame. I could not compose my mind to any profitable studies, by reason of this pressure. And the reason, I judge, why I am not allowed to study a great part of my time, is, because I am endeavouring to lay in such a stock of knowledge, as shall be a *self-sufficiency*. I know it to be my indispensable duty to study, and qualify myself in the best manner I can for public service: but this is my misery, I naturally study and prepare, that I may ‘consume it upon my lusts’ of pride and self-confidence.”

He continued in much the same frame of uneasiness at the misimprovement of time, and pressure of spirit under a sense of vileness, unprofitableness, &c. for the *six following days*; excepting some intervals of calmness and composure, in resignation to and confidence in God.

“*Friday, March 2.* Was most of the day employed in writing on a divine subject. Was frequent in prayer, and enjoyed some small degree of assistance. But in the evening, God was pleased to grant me a divine sweetness in prayer; especially in the duty of intercession. I think I never felt so much kindness and love to those who, I have reason to think, are my



enemies though at that time I found such a disposition to think the best of all, that I scarce knew how to think that any such thing as enmity and hatred lodged in any soul; it seemed as if all the world must needs be friends and never prayed with more freedom and delight, for myself, or dearest friend, than I did now for my enemies.

“*Saturday, March 3.* In the morning spent (I believe) an hour in prayer, with great intenseness and freedom, and with the most soft and tender affection towards mankind. I longed that those who, I have reason to think, owe me ill will, might be eternally happy. It seemed refreshing to think of meeting them in heaven, how much soever they had injured me on earth: had no disposition to insist upon any confession from them, in order to reconciliation, and the exercise of love and kindness to them. O it is an emblem of heaven itself, to love all the world with a love of kindness, forgiveness, and benevolence; to feel our souls sedate, mild, and meek; to be void of all evil surmisings and suspicions, and scarce able to think evil of any man upon any occasion; to find our hearts simple, open, and free, to those that look upon us with a different eye! Prayer was so sweet an exercise to me, that I knew not how to cease lest I should lose the spirit of prayer. Felt no disposition to eat or drink, for the sake of the pleasure of it, but only to support my nature, and fit me for divine service. Could not be content without a very particular mention of a great number of dear friends at the throne of grace; as also the particular circumstances of many, so far as they were known.

“*Lord’s day, March 4.* In the morning, enjoyed the same intenseness in prayer as yesterday morning, though not in so great a degree: felt the same spirit of love, universal benevolence, forgiveness, humility, resignation, mortification to the world, and composure of mind, as then. *My soul rested in God*; and I found I wanted no other refuge or friend. While my soul thus trusts in God, all things seem to be at peace with me, even the stones of the earth: but when I cannot apprehend and confide in God, all things appear with a different aspect.”

Through the *four next days* he complains of barrenness, want of holy confidence in God, stupidity, wanderings of mind, &c. and speaks of oppression of mind under a sense of exceeding meanness, past follies, as well as present workings of corruption. On *Friday* he seems to have been restored to a considerable degree of the same excellent frame that he enjoyed the Saturday before.

“*Saturday, March 10.* ‘In the morning, felt exceeding dead to the world, and all its enjoyments: I thought I was ready and willing to give up life and all its comforts, as soon as called to it; and yet then had as much comfort of life as almost ever I had. Life itself now appeared but an empty bubble; the riches, honours, and common enjoyments of life appeared extremely tasteless. I longed to be perpetually and entirely *crucified* to all things here below, by the *cross of Christ*. My soul was sweetly resigned to God’s disposal of me, in every regard; and I saw there had nothing happened but what was best for me. I confided in God, that he would *never leave me*, though I should ‘walk through the valley of the shadow of death.’ It

was then *my meat and drink to be holy, to live to the Lord, and die to the Lard*. And I thought, that I then enjoyed such a heaven, as far exceeded the most sublime conceptions of an unregenerate soul; and even unspeakably beyond what I myself could conceive of at another time. I did not wonder that Peter said, “Lord, it is good to be here,” when thus refreshed with divine glories. My soul was full of love and tenderness in the duty of intercession; especially felt a most sweet affection to some precious godly ministers of my acquaintance. Prayed earnestly for dear Christians, and for those I have reason to fear are my enemies; and could not have spoken a word of bitterness, or entertained a bitter thought, against the vilest man living. Had a sense of my own great unworthiness. My soul seemed to breathe forth love and praise to God afresh, when I thought he would let his children love and receive me as one of their brethren and fellow-citizens. When I thought of their treating me in that manner, I longed to lie at their feet; and could think of no way to express the sincerity and simplicity of my love and esteem of them, as being much better than myself. Towards night was very sorrowful; seemed to myself the worst creature living; and could not pray, nor meditate, nor think of holding up my face before the world. Was a little relieved in prayer, in the evening; but longed to get on my knees, and ask forgiveness of every body that ever had seen any thing amiss in my past conduct, especially in my *religious zeal*. Was afterwards much perplexed, so that I could not sleep quietly.

“*Lord’s day, March 11*. My soul was in some measure *strengthened in God*, in morning devotion; so that I was released from trembling fear and distress. Preached to my people from the parable of the *sower*, [Matt. xiii](#). and enjoyed some assistance, both parts of the day: had some freedom, affection, and fervency in addressing my poor people; longed that God should take hold of their hearts, and make them spiritually alive. And indeed I had so much to say to them, that I knew not how to leave off speaking.<sup>381</sup>

“*Monday, March 12*. In the morning was in a devout, tender, and loving frame of mind; and was enabled to cry to God, I hope, with a child-like spirit, with importunity, and resignation, and composure of mind. My spirit was full of quietness, and love to mankind; and longed that peace should reign on the earth: was grieved at the very thoughts of a *fiery, angry, and intemperate* zeal in religion; mourned over past follies in that regard; and my soul confided in God for strength and grace sufficient for my future work and trials. Spent the day mainly in hard labour, making preparation for my intended journey.

“*Tuesday, March 13*. Felt my soul going forth after God sometimes; but not with such ardency as I longed for. In the evening, was enabled to continue *instant in prayer*, for some

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381 This was the last Sabbath that ever he performed public service at Kaunaumeeek, these the last sermons that ever he preached there. It appears by his diary, that while he continued with these Indians, he took great pains with them, and did it with much discretion; but the particular manner how, has been omitted for brevity’s sake.

considerable time together; and especially had respect to the journey I designed to enter upon, with the leave of Divine Providence, on the morrow. Enjoyed some freedom and fervency, entreating that the divine presence might attend me in *every place* where my business might lead me; and had a particular reference to the trials and temptations that I apprehended I might be more eminently exposed to in particular places. Was strengthened and comforted; although I was before very weary. Truly the *joy of the Lord is strength and life*.

“*Wednesday, March 14.* Enjoyed some intensesness of soul in prayer, repeating my petitions for God’s presence in every place where I expected to be in my journey. Besought the Lord that I might not be too much pleased and amused with dear friends and acquaintance, in one place and another. Near ten set out on my journey; and near night came to Stockbridge.

“*Thursday, March 15.* Rode down to Sheffield. Here I met a messenger from East Hampton on Long-Island; who by the unanimous vote of that large town, was sent to invite me thither, in order to settle with that people, where I had been before frequently invited. Seemed more at a loss what was my duty than before; when I heard of the great difficulties of that place, I was much concerned and grieved, and felt some desires to comply with their request; but knew not what to do: endeavoured to commit the case to God.”

The *two next days* he went no further than Salisbury, being much hindered by the rain. When he came there, he was much indisposed. He speaks of comfortable and profitable conversation with Christian friends, on these days.

“*Lord’s day, March 18.* [At Salisbury.] Was exceeding weak and faint, so that I could scarce walk: but God was pleased to afford me much freedom, clearness, and fervency in preaching; I have not had the like assistance in preaching to sinners for many months past. Here another messenger met me, and informed me of the vote of another congregation, to give me an invitation to come among them upon probation for settlement.<sup>382</sup> Was somewhat exercised in mind with a weight and burden of care. O that God would ‘send forth faithful labourers into his harvest!’”

After this he went forward on his journey towards New York and New Jersey: in which he proceeded slowly; performing his journey under great degrees of bodily indisposition. However, he preached several times by the way, being urged by friends; in which he had considerable assistance. He speaks of comfort in conversation with Christian friends, from time to time, and of various things in the exercises and frames of his heart, that show much of a divine influence on his mind in this journey: but yet complains of *the things that he feared*, viz. a decline of his spiritual life, or vivacity in religion, by means of his constant removal from place to place, and want of retirement; and complains bitterly of his unworthi-

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382 This congregation was that at Millington, near Haddam. They were very earnestly desirous of his coming among them.

ness, deadness, &c. He came to New York on *Wednesday, March 28*, and to Elizabeth-town on the *Saturday* following, where it seems he waited till the commissioners came together.

“*Thursday, April 5*. Was again much exercised with weakness, and with pain in my head. Attended on the commissioners in their meeting.<sup>383</sup> Resolved to go on still with the Indian affair, if Divine Providence permitted; although I had before felt some inclination to go to East Hampton, where I was solicited to go.”<sup>384</sup>

After this, he continued two or three days in the Jerseys, very ill; and then returned to New York; and from thence into New England; and went to his native town of Haddam, where he arrived on *Saturday, April 14* And he continues still his bitter complaints of want of retirement. While he was in New York, he says thus, “Oh, it is not the pleasures of the *world* can comfort me! If *God* deny his presence, what are the pleasures of the *city* to me? One hour of sweet retirement where *God is*, is better than the whole world.” And he continues to complain of his ignorance, meanness, and unworthiness. However, he speaks of some seasons of special assistance, and divine sweetness. He spent some days among his friends at East Hampton and Millington.

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383 The Indians at Kaunaumek being but few in number, and Mr. Brainerd having now been labouring among them about a year, and having prevailed upon them to be willing to leave Kaunaumek, and remove to Stockbridge, to live constantly under Mr. Sergeant’s ministry; he thought he might now do more service for Christ among the Indians elsewhere; and therefore went this journey to New Jersey to lay the matter before the commissioners; who met at Elizabeth-town, on this occasion, and determined that he should forthwith leave Kaunaumek, and go to the Delaware Indians.

384 By the invitations Mr. Brainerd had lately received, it appears that it was not from necessity, or for want of opportunities to settle in the ministry amongst the English, notwithstanding the disgrace he had been laid under at college, that he was determined to forsake all the outward comforts to be enjoyed in the English settlements, to go and spend his life among the brutish savages, and endure the difficulties and self-denials of an Indian mission. He had, just as he was leaving Kaunaumek, had an earnest invitation to a settlement at East Hampton on Long Island, the fairest, pleasantest town on the whole island, and one of its largest and most wealthy parishes. The people there were unanimous in their desires to have him for their pastor, and for a long time continued in an earnest pursuit of what they desired, and were hardly brought to relinquish their endeavours and give up their hopes of obtaining him. Besides the invitation he had to Millington: which was near his native town, and in the midst of his friends. Nor did Mr. Brainerd choose the business of a missionary to the Indians, rather than accept of those invitations, because he was unacquainted with the difficulties and sufferings which attended such a service; for he had had experience of these difficulties in summer and winter; having spent about a twelvemonth in a lonely desert among these savages, where he had gone through extreme hardships, and been the subject of a train of outward and inward sorrows, which were now fresh in his mind. Notwithstanding all these things, he chose still to go on with this business: and that although the place he was now going to, was at a still much greater distance from most of his friends, acquaintance, and native land.

“*Tuesday, April 17.* Rode to Millington again; and felt perplexed when I set out; was feeble in body, and weak in faith. I was going to preach a lecture; and feared I should never have assistance enough to get through. But contriving to ride alone, at a distance from the company that was going, I spent the time in lifting up my heart to God: had not gone far before my soul was abundantly strengthened with those words, ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?’ I went on, confiding in God; and fearing nothing so much as self-confidence. In this frame I went to the house of God, and enjoyed some assistance. Afterwards felt the spirit of love and meekness in conversation with some friends. Then rode home to my brother’s; and in the evening, singing hymns with friends, my soul seemed to melt; and in prayer afterwards, enjoyed the exercise of *faith*, and was enabled to be *fervent in spirit*: found more of God’s presence, than I have done any time in my late wearisome journey. Eternity appeared very near; my nature was very weak, and seemed ready to be dissolved; the sun declining, and the shadows of the evening drawing on apace. O I longed to fill up the remaining moments all for God! Though my body was so feeble, and wearied with preaching, and much private conversation, yet I wanted to sit up all night to do something for God. To God, the giver of these refreshments, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

“*Wednesday, April 18.* Was very weak, and enjoyed but little spiritual comfort. Was exercised with one who cavilled against *original sin*. May the Lord open his eyes to see the fountain of sin in *himself!*”

After this, he visited several ministers in Connecticut; and then travelled towards Kaunaumeeck, and came to Mr. Sergeant’s at Stockbridge, *Thursday, April 26*. He performed this journey in a very weak state of body. The things he speaks of, appertaining to the frames and exercises of his mind, are at some times deadness and want of spiritual comfort; at other times, resting in God, spiritual sweetness in conversation, engagedness in meditation on the road, assistance in preaching, rejoicing to think that so much more of his work was done, and he so much nearer to the eternal world. And he once and again speaks of a sense of great ignorance, spiritual pollution, &c.

“*Friday and Saturday, April 27, and 28.* Spent some time in visiting friends, and discoursing with my people, (who were now moved down from their own place to Mr. Sergeant’s,) and found them very glad to see me returned. Was exercised in my mind with a sense of my own unworthiness.

“*Lord’s day, April 29.* Preached for Mr. Sergeant, both parts of the day, from [Rev. xiv. 4](#). ‘These are they which were not defiled,’ &c. Enjoyed some freedom in preaching, though not much spirituality. In the evening, my heart was in some measure lifted up in thankfulness to God for any assistance.

“*Monday, April 30.* Rode to Kaunaumeeck, but was extremely ill; did not enjoy the comfort I hoped for in my own house.

“*Tuesday, May 1.* Having received new orders to go to a number of Indians on Delaware river in Pennsylvania, and my people here being mostly removed to Mr. Sergeant’s, I this day took all my clothes, books, &c. and disposed of them, and set out for Delaware river: but made it my way to return to Mr. Sergeant’s; which I did this day, just at night. Rode several hours in the rain through the howling wilderness, although I was so disordered in body, that little or nothing but blood came from me.”

He continued at Stockbridge *the next day*, and on *Thursday* rode a little way, to Sheffield, under a great degree of illness; but with encouragement and cheerfulness of mind under his fatigues. On *Friday* he rode to Salisbury, and continued there till after the sabbath. He speaks of his soul’s being, some part of this time, refreshed in conversation with some Christian friends, about their heavenly home and their journey thither. At other times, he speaks of himself as exceedingly perplexed with barrenness and deadness, and has this exclamation, “Oh, that time should pass with so little done for God!” On *Monday* he rode to Sharon; and speaks of himself as distressed at the consideration of the misimprovement of time.

“*Tuesday, May 8.* Set out from Sharon in Connecticut, and travelled about forty-five miles to a place called the *Fish-kill*;‡ and lodged there. Spent much of my time, while riding, in prayer, that God would go with me to Delaware. My heart sometimes was ready to sink with the thoughts of my work, and going alone in the wilderness, I knew not where: but still it was comfortable to think, that others of God’s children had ‘wandered about in caves and dens of the earth,’ and Abraham, when he was called to go forth, ‘went out, not knowing whither he went.’ O that I might follow after God!”

The *next day* he went forward on his journey; crossed Hudson’s river, and went to Goshen in the Highlands; and so travelled across the woods, from Hudson’s river to Delaware, about a hundred miles, through a desolate and hideous country, above New Jersey; where were very few settlements; in which journey he suffered much fatigue and hardship. He visited some Indians in the way,<sup>385</sup> and discoursed with them concerning Christianity. Was considerably melancholy and disconsolate, being alone in a strange wilderness. On *Saturday* he came to a settlement of Irish and Dutch people, about twelve miles above the Forks of Delaware.

“*Lord’s day, May 13.* Rose early; felt very poorly after my long journey, and after being wet and fatigued. Was very melancholy; have scarce even seen such a gloomy morning in my life; there appeared to be no *sabbath*; the children were all at play; I a stranger in the wilderness, and knew not where to go; and all circumstances seemed to conspire to render my affairs dark and discouraging. Was disappointed respecting an *interpreter*, and heard that the Indians were much scattered, &c. Oh, I mourned after the presence of God, and seemed like a creature banished from his sight! yet he was pleased to support my sinking

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385 See Mr. Brainerd’s Narrative, in a letter to Mr. Pemberton, among his Remains.

soul, amidst all my sorrows; so that I never entertained any thought of quitting my business among the poor Indians; but was comforted to think that death would ere long set me free from these distresses. Rode about three or four miles to the Irish people, where I found some that appeared sober and concerned about religion. My heart then began to be a little encouraged: went and preached first to the Irish, and then to the Indians; and in the evening, was a little comforted; my soul seemed to rest on God, and take courage. O that the Lord would be my support and comforter in an evil world!

“*Monday, May 14.* Was very busy in some necessary studies. Felt myself very loose from all the world; all appeared ‘vanity and vexation of spirit.’ Seemed lonesome and disconsolate, as if I were banished from all mankind, and bereaved of all that is called pleasurable in the world; but appeared to myself so vile and unworthy, it seemed fitter for me to be here than any where.

“*Tuesday, May 15.* Still much engaged in my studies; and enjoyed more health than I have for some time past: but was something dejected in spirit with a sense of my meanness; seemed as if I could never do any thing at all to any good purpose by reason of ignorance and folly. O that a sense of these things might work more habitual humility in my soul!”

He continued much in the same frame the *next day*.

“*Thursday, May 17.* Was this day greatly distressed with a sense of my vileness; appeared to myself too bad to walk on God’s earth, or to be treated with kindness by any of his creatures. God was pleased to let me see my inward pollution and corruption, to such a degree, that I almost despaired of being made holy: ‘Oh! wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ In the afternoon met with the Indians, according to appointment, and preached to them. And while riding to them, my soul seemed to confide in God; and afterwards had some relief and enlargement of soul in prayer, and some assistance in the duty of intercession; vital piety and holiness appeared sweet to me, and I longed for the perfection of it.

“*Friday, May 18.* Felt again something of the sweet spirit of religion; and my soul seemed to confide in God, that he would never leave me. But oftentimes saw myself so mean a creature, that I knew not how to think of preaching. O that I could always live *to* and *upon* God!

“*Saturday, May 19.* Was, some part of the time, greatly oppressed with the weight and burden of my work; it seemed impossible for me ever to go through with the business I had undertaken. Towards night was very calm and comfortable; and I think my soul trusted in God for help.

“*Lord’s day, May 20.* Preached twice to the poor Indians, and enjoyed some freedom in speaking, while I attempted to remove their prejudices against Christianity. My soul longed for assistance from above, all the while; for I saw I had no strength sufficient for that work. Afterwards preached to the Irish people; was much assisted in the first prayer, and something

in sermon. Several persons seemed much concerned for their souls, with whom I discoursed afterwards with much freedom and some power. Blessed be God for any assistance afforded to an unworthy worm. *O that I could live to him!*"

Through the *remainder of this week* he was sometimes ready to sink with a sense of his unworthiness and unfitness for the work of the ministry; and sometimes encouraged and lifted above his fears and sorrows, and was enabled confidently to rely on God; and especially on Saturday, towards night, he enjoyed calmness and composure, and assistance in prayer to God. He rejoiced, "That God remains unchangeably powerful and faithful, a sure and sufficient portion, and the dwelling-place of his children in all generations."

"*Lord's day, May 27.* Visited my Indians in the morning, and attended upon a *funeral* among them; was affected to see their *heathenish practices*. O that they might be 'turned from darkness to light!' Afterwards got a considerable number of them together, and preached to them; and observed them very attentive. After this, preached to the white people from [Heb. ii. 3.](#) 'How shall we escape, if we neglect,' &c. Was enabled to speak with some freedom and power: several people seemed much concerned for their souls; especially one who had been educated a Roman catholic. *Blessed be the Lord for any help.*

"*Monday, May 28.* Set out from the Indians above the Forks of Delaware, on a journey towards Newark in New Jersey, according to my orders. Rode through the wilderness; was much fatigued with the heat; lodged at a place called Black-river; was exceedingly tired and worn out."

On *Tuesday* he came to Newark. The *next day*, went to Elizabeth-town; on *Thursday* he went to New York; and on *Friday* returned to Elizabeth-town. These days were spent in some perplexity of mind. He continued at Elizabeth-town till *Friday in the week following*. Was enlivened, refreshed, and strengthened on the *sabbath* at the Lord's table. The *ensuing days of the week* were spent chiefly in studies preparatory to his *ordination*; and on some of them he seemed to have much of God's gracious presence, and of the sweet influences of his Spirit; but was in a very weak state of body. On *Saturday* he rode to Newark.

"*Lord's day, June 10.* [At Newark] In the morning, was much concerned how I should perform the work of the day; and trembled at the thoughts of being left to myself. Enjoyed very considerable assistance in all parts of the public service. Had an opportunity again to attend on the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and through divine goodness was refreshed in it: my soul was full of love and tenderness towards the children of God, and towards all men; felt a certain sweetness of disposition towards every creature. At night I enjoyed more spirituality and sweet desire of holiness, than I have felt for some time: was afraid of every thought and every motion, lest thereby my heart should be drawn away from God. O that I might never leave the blessed God! 'Lord, in thy presence is fulness of joy.' *O the blessedness of living to God!*



“Monday, June 11. This day the *Presbytery* met together at Newark, in order to my *ordination*. Was very weak and disordered in body; yet endeavoured to repose my confidence in God. Spent most of the day alone; especially the forenoon. At three in the afternoon preached my probation-sermon, from [Acts xxvi. 17, 18](#). ‘Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles,’ &c. being a text given me for that end. Felt not well, either in body or mind; however God carried me through comfortably. Afterwards passed an examination before the *Presbytery*. Was much tired, and my mind burdened with the greatness of that charge I was in the most solemn manner about to take upon me; my mind was so pressed with the weight of the work incumbent upon me, that I could not sleep this night, though very weary and in great need of rest.

*Tuesday, June 12.* Was this morning further examined, respecting my *experimental acquaintance with Christianity*\* At ten o’clock my *ordination* was attended; the sermon preached by the Reverend Mr. Pemberton. At this time I was affected with a sense of the important trust committed to me; yet was composed, and solemn, without distraction: and I hope that then, as many times before, I gave myself up to God, to be for *him*, and not for *another*. O that I might always be engaged in the service of God, and duly remember the solemn charge I have received, in the presence of God, angels, and men. Amen. May I be assisted of God for this purpose. Towards night rode to Elizabeth-town.”



PART VI.

FROM HIS ORDINATION, TILL HE FIRST BEGAN TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSWEKSUNG, AMONG WHOM HE HAD HIS MOST REMARKABLE SUCCESS.

“*Wednesday, June 13.* [1744.] Spent some considerable time in writing an account of the Indian affairs to go to Scotland; some, in conversation with friends; but enjoyed not much sweetness and satisfaction.

“*Thursday, June 14.* Received some particular kindness from friends; and wondered that God should open the hearts of any to treat me with kindness: saw myself to be unworthy of any favour from God, or any of my fellow-men. Was much exercised with pain in my head; however, I determined to set out on my journey towards Delaware in the afternoon; but when the afternoon came, my pain increased exceedingly, so that I was obliged to betake myself to bed. The night following I was greatly distressed with pain and sickness; was sometimes almost bereaved of the exercise of reason by the extremity of pain. Continued much distressed till *Saturday*, when I was somewhat relieved by an emetic: but was unable to walk abroad till the Monday following, in the afternoon; and still remained very feeble. I often admired the goodness of God, that he did not suffer me to proceed on my journey from this place where I was so tenderly used, and to be sick by the way among strangers. God is very gracious to me, both in health and sickness, and intermingles much mercy with all my afflictions and toils. Enjoyed some sweetness in things divine, in the midst of my pain and weakness. O that I could praise the Lord!”

On *Tuesday, June 19*, he set out on his journey home, and in three days reached his place, near the Forks of Delaware. Performed the journey under much weakness of body; but had comfort in his soul, from day to day: and both his weakness of body, and consolation of mind, continued through the week.

“*Lord’s day, June 24.* Extremely feeble; scarce able to walk: however, visited my Indians, and took much pains to instruct them; laboured with some that were much disaffected to Christianity. My mind was much burdened with the weight and difficulty of my work. My whole dependence and hope of success seemed to be on God; who alone I saw could make them willing to receive instruction. My heart was much engaged in prayer, sending up silent requests to God, even while I was speaking to them. O that I could always go in the strength of the Lord!

“*Monday, June 25.* Was something better in health than of late; was able to spend a considerable part of the day in prayer and close studies. Had more freedom and fervency in prayer than usual of late; especially longed for the presence of God in my work, and that the poor heathen might be converted. And in evening prayer my faith and hope in God were much raised. *To an eye of reason every thing that respects the conversion of the heathen is as dark as midnight;* and yet I cannot but hope in God for the accomplishment of something

glorious among them. My soul longed much for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom on earth. Was very fearful lest I should admit some vain thought, and so lose the sense I then had of divine things. *O for an abiding heavenly temper!*

"*Tuesday, June 26.* In the morning my desires seemed to rise, and ascend up freely to God. Was busy most of the day in translating prayers into the language of the Delaware Indians; met with great difficulty, by reason that my interpreter was altogether unacquainted with the business. But though I was much discouraged with the extreme difficulty of that work, yet God supported me; and especially in the evening gave me sweet refreshment. In prayer my soul was enlarged, and my faith drawn into sensible exercise; was enabled to cry to God for my poor Indians; and though the work of their conversion appeared *impossible with man, yet with God I saw all things were possible.* My faith was much strengthened, by observing the wonderful assistance God afforded his servants Nehemiah and Ezra, in reforming his people, and re-establishing his ancient church. I was much assisted in prayer for dear Christian friends, and for others that I apprehended to be Christless; but was more especially concerned for the poor heathen, and those of my own charge: was enabled to be instant in prayer for them; and hoped that God would bow the heavens and come down for their salvation. It seemed to me there could be no impediment sufficient to obstruct that glorious work, seeing the living God, as I strongly hoped, was engaged for it. I continued in a solemn frame, lifting up my heart to God for assistance and grace, that I might be more mortified to this present world, that my whole soul might be taken up continually in concern for the advancement of Christ's kingdom: longed that God would purge me more, that I might be as a chosen vessel to bear his name among the heathens. Continued in this frame till I dropped asleep.

"*Wednesday, June 27.* Felt something of the same solemn concern, and spirit of prayer, that I enjoyed last night, soon after I rose in the morning. In the afternoon rode several miles to see if I could procure any lands for the poor Indians, that they might live together, and be under better advantages for instruction. While I was riding had a deep sense of the greatness and difficulty of my work; and my soul seemed to rely wholly upon God for success, in the diligent and faithful use of means. Saw, with greatest certainty, that *the arm of the Lord must be revealed,* for the help of these poor heathen, if ever they were delivered from the bondage of the powers of darkness. Spent most of the time, while riding, in lifting up my heart for grace and assistance.

"*Thursday, June 28.* Spent the morning in reading several parts of the Holy Scripture, and in fervent prayer for my Indians, that God would set up his kingdom among them, and bring them into his church. About nine I withdrew to my usual place of retirement in the woods; and there again enjoyed some assistance in prayer. My great concern was for the conversion of the heathen to God; and the Lord helped me to plead with him for it. Towards noon rode up to the Indians, in order to preach to them; and while going, my heart went

up to God in prayer for them; could freely tell God, he knew that the cause was not mine, which I was engaged in; but it was his own cause, and it would be for his own glory to convert the poor Indians: and blessed be God, I felt no desire of their conversion, that I might receive honour from the world, as being the instrument of it. Had some freedom in speaking to the Indians.”

The next day he speaks of some serious concern for the kingdom of the blessed Redeemer; but complains much of barrenness, wanderings, inactivity, &c.

“*Saturday, June 30.* My soul was very solemn in reading God’s word; especially the [ninth chapter of Daniel](#). I saw how God had called out his servants to prayer, and made them wrestle with him, when he designed to bestow any great mercy on his church. And, alas! I was ashamed of myself, to think of my dulness and inactivity, when there seemed to be so much to do for the upbuilding of Zion. Oh, how does Zion lie waste! I longed that the church of God might be enlarged: was enabled to pray, I think, in faith; my soul seemed sensibly to confide in God, and was enabled to wrestle with him. Afterwards walked abroad to a place of sweet retirement, and enjoyed some assistance in prayer again; had a sense of my great need of divine help, and felt my soul sensibly depend on God. Blessed be God, this has been a comfortable week to me.

“*Lord’s day, July 1.* In the morning was perplexed with wandering, vain thoughts; was much grieved, judged and condemned myself before God. And oh, how miserable did I feel, because I could not live to God! At ten, rode away with a heavy heart, to preach to my Indians. Upon the road I attempted to lift up my heart to God; but was infested with an unsettled, wandering frame of mind; and was exceeding restless and perplexed, and filled with shame and confusion before God. I seemed to myself to be ‘more brutish than any man;’ and thought none deserved to be ‘cast out of God’s presence’ so much as I. If I attempted to lift up my heart to God, as I frequently did by the way, on a sudden, before I was aware, my thoughts were wandering ‘to the ends of the earth;’ and my soul was filled with surprise and anxiety, to find it thus. Thus also after I came to the Indians my mind was confused; and I felt nothing sensibly of that sweet reliance on God, that my soul has been comforted with in days past. Spent the forenoon in this posture of mind, and preached to the Indians without any heart. In the afternoon I felt still barren, when I began to preach; and for about half an hour, I seemed to myself to know nothing, and to have nothing to say to the Indians; but soon after I found in myself a spirit of love, and warmth, and power, to address the poor Indians; and God helped me to plead with them, to ‘turn from all the vanities of the heathen, to the living God:’ and I am persuaded the Lord touched their consciences; for I never saw such attention raised in them before. And when I came away from them, I spent the whole time while I was riding to my lodgings, three miles distant, in prayer and praise to God. And after I had rode more than two miles, it came into my mind to dedicate myself to God again; which I did with great solemnity, and unspeakable satisfaction; especially gave up

myself to him renewed in the work of the ministry. And this I did by divine grace, I hope, without any exception or reserve: not in the least shrinking back from any difficulties that might attend this great and blessed work. I seemed to be most free, cheerful, and full in this dedication of myself. My whole soul cried, 'Lord, to thee I dedicate myself! O accept of me, and let me be thine for ever. Lord, I desire nothing else, I desire nothing more. O come, come, Lord, accept a poor worm. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*' After this, was enabled to praise God with my whole soul, that he had enabled me to devote and consecrate all my powers to him in this solemn manner. My heart rejoiced in my particular work as a *missionary*; rejoiced in my necessity of self-denial in many respects; and still continued to give up myself to God, and implore mercy of him; praying incessantly, every moment, with sweet fervency. My nature being very weak of late, and much spent, was now considerably overcome: my fingers grew very feeble, and somewhat Numb. so that I could scarcely stretch them out straight; and when I lighted from my horse, could hardly walk, my joints seemed all to be loosed. But I felt abundant *strength in the inner man*. Preached to the white people: God helped me much, especially in prayer. Sundry of my poor Indians were so moved as to come to meeting also; and one appeared much concerned.

"*Monday, July 2.* Had some relish of the divine comforts of yesterday; but could not get that warmth and exercise of faith that I desired. Had sometimes a distressing sense of my past follies, and present ignorance and barrenness: and especially in the afternoon, was sunk down under a load of sin and guilt, in that I had lived so little to God, after his abundant goodness to me yesterday. In the evening, though very weak, was enabled to pray with fervency, and to continue instant in prayer, near an hour. My soul mourned over the power of its corruption, and longed exceedingly to be *washed* and *purged as with hyssop*. Was enabled to pray for my dear absent friends, Christ's ministers, and his church; and enjoyed much freedom and fervency, but not so much comfort, by reason of guilt and shame before God Judged and condemned myself for the follies of the day.

"*Tuesday, July 3.* Was still very weak. This morning was enabled to pray under a feeling sense of my need of help from God, and, I trust, had some faith in exercise; and, blessed be God, was enabled to plead with him a considerable time. Truly God is good to me. But my soul mourned, and was grieved at my sinfulness and barrenness, and longed to be more engaged for God. Near nine withdrew again for prayer; and through divine goodness, had the blessed Spirit of prayer; my soul loved the duty, and longed for God in it. O it is sweet to be *the Lord's*, to be sensibly devoted to him! What a blessed portion is God! How glorious, how lovely in himself! O my soul longed to improve time wholly for God! Spent most of the day in translating prayers into Indian. In the evening was enabled again to wrestle with God in prayer with fervency. Was enabled to maintain a self-diffident and watchful frame

of spirit, in the evening, and was jealous and afraid lest I should admit carelessness and self-confidence.”

The *next day* he seems to have had special assistance and fervency most of the day, but in a less degree than the preceding day. *Tuesday* was spent in great bodily weakness; yet seems to have been spent in continual and exceeding painfulness in religion; but in great bitterness of spirit by reason of his vileness and corruption; he says, “I thought there was not one creature living so vile as I. Oh, my inward pollution! Oh, my guilt and shame before God! I know not what to do. Oh, I longed ardently to be cleansed and washed from the stains of inward pollution! Oh, to be made like God, or rather to be made fit for God to own!”

“*Friday, July 6.* Awoke this morning in the fear of God: soon called to mind my sadness in the evening past; and spent my first waking minutes in prayer for sanctification, that my soul may be washed from its exceeding pollution and defilement. After I arose, I spent some time in reading God’s word and in prayer. I cried to God under a sense of my great indignity. I am, of late, most of all concerned for ministerial qualifications, and the conversion of the heathen: last year I longed to be prepared for a world of glory, and speedily to depart out of this world; but of late all my concern almost is for the conversion of the heathen; and for that end I long to live. But blessed be God, I have less desire to live for any of the pleasures of the world, than ever I had. I long and love to be a pilgrim; and want grace to imitate the life, labours, and sufferings of St. Paul among the heathen. And when I long for holiness now, it is not so much for myself as formerly; but rather that thereby I may become an ‘able minister of the New Testament,’ especially to the heathen. Spent about two hours this morning in reading and prayer by turns; and was in a watchful, tender frame, afraid of every thing that might cool my affections, and draw away my heart from God. Was a little strengthened in my studies; but near night was very weak and weary.

“*Saturday, July 7.* Was very much disordered this morning, and my vigour all spent and exhausted: but was affected and refreshed in reading the sweet story of Elijah’s translation, and enjoyed some affection and fervency in prayer: longed much for ministerial gifts and graces, that I might do something in the cause of God. Afterwards was refreshed and invigorated, while reading Mr. Joseph Alleine’s first Case of Conscience, &c. and enabled then to pray with some ardour of soul, and was afraid of carelessness and self-confidence, and longed for holiness.

“*Lord’s day, July 8.* Was ill last night, not able to rest quietly. Had some small degree of assistance in preaching to the Indians; and afterwards was enabled to preach to the white people with some power, especially in the close of my discourse, from [Jer. iii. 23](#). ‘Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills,’ &c. The Lord also assisted me in some measure in the first prayer: blessed be his name. Near night, though very weary, was enabled to read God’s word with some sweet relish of it, and to pray with affection, fervency, and I trust

with faith: my soul was more sensibly dependent on God than usual. Was watchful, tender, and jealous of my own heart, lest I should admit carelessness and vain thoughts, and grieve the blessed Spirit, so that he should withdraw his sweet, kind, and tender influences. Longed to 'depart, and be with Christ,' more than at any time of late. My soul was exceedingly united to the saints of ancient times, as well as those now living; especially my soul melted for the society of Elijah and Elisha. Was enabled to cry to God with a child-like spirit, and to continue instant in prayer for some time. Was much enlarged in the sweet duty of intercession: was enabled to remember great numbers of dear friends, and precious souls, as well as Christ's ministers. Continued in this frame, afraid of every idle thought, till I dropped asleep.

"Monday, July 9. Was under much illness of body most of the day; and not able to sit up the whole day. Towards night felt a little better. Then spent some time in reading God's word and prayer; enjoyed some degree of fervency and affection; was enabled to plead with God for his cause and kingdom: and, through divine goodness, it was apparent to me, that it was his cause I pleaded for, and not my own; and was enabled to make this an argument with God to answer my requests.

"Tuesday, July 10. Was very ill, and full of pain, and very dull and spiritless. In the evening had an affecting sense of my ignorance, &c. and of my need of God at all times, to do every thing for me; and my soul was humbled before God.

"Wednesday, July 11. Was still exercised with illness and pain. Had some degree of affection and warmth in prayer and reading God's word: longed for Abraham's faith and fellowship with God; and felt some resolution to spend all my time for God, and to exert myself with more fervency in his service; but found my body weak and feeble. In the afternoon, though very ill, was enabled to spend some considerable time in prayer; spent indeed most of the day in that exercise; and my soul was diffident, watchful, and tender, lest I should offend my blessed Friend, in thought or behaviour. I am persuaded my soul confided in, and leaned upon, the blessed God. Oh, what need did I see myself to stand in of God at all times, to assist me and lead me! Found a great want of strength and vigour, both in the outward and inner man."

The exercises and experiences that he speaks of in the *next nine days*, are very similar to those of the preceding days of this and the foregoing week; a sense of his own weakness, ignorance, unprofitableness, and vileness; loathing and abhorring himself; self-diffidence; sense of the greatness of his work, and his great need of divine help, and the extreme danger of self-confidence; longing for holiness and humility, and to be fitted for his work, and to live to God; and longing for the conversion of the Indians; and these things to a very great degree.

"Saturday, July 21. This morning I was greatly oppressed with guilt and shame, from a sense of inward vileness and pollution. About nine, withdrew to the woods for prayer; but

had not much comfort; I appeared to myself the vilest, meanest creature upon earth, and could scarcely live with myself; so mean and vile I appeared, that I thought I should never be able to hold up my face in heaven, if God of his infinite grace should bring me thither. Towards night my burden respecting my work among the Indians began to increase much; and was aggravated by hearing sundry things that looked very discouraging; in particular, that they intended to meet together the next day for an idolatrous feast and dance. Then I began to be in anguish: I thought I must in conscience go, and endeavour to break them up; and knew not how to attempt such a thing. However, I withdrew for prayer, hoping for strength from above. And in prayer I was exceedingly enlarged, and my soul was as much drawn out as ever I remember it to have been in my life, or near. I was in such anguish, and pleaded with so much earnestness and importunity, that when I rose from my knees I felt extremely weak and overcome, I could scarcely walk straight, my joints were loosed, the sweat ran down my face and body, and nature seemed as if it would dissolve. So far as I could judge, I was wholly free from selfish ends in my fervent supplications for the poor Indians. I knew they were met together to worship devils, and not God; and this made me cry earnestly, that God would now appear, and help me in my attempts to break up this idolatrous meeting. My soul pleaded long; and I thought God would hear, and would go with me to vindicate his own cause: I seemed to confide in God for his presence and assistance. And thus I spent the evening praying incessantly for divine assistance, and that I might not be self-dependent, but still have my whole dependence upon God. What I passed through was remarkable, and indeed inexpressible. All things here below vanished; and there appeared to be nothing of any considerable importance to me, but holiness of heart and life, and the conversion of the heathen to God. All my cares, fears, and desires, which might be said to be of a worldly nature, disappeared; and were, in my esteem, of little more importance than a puff of wind. I exceedingly longed, that God would get to himself a name among the heathen; and I appealed to him with the greatest freedom, that he knew I 'preferred him above my chief joy.' Indeed, I had no notion of joy from this world; I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. I continued in this frame all the evening and night. While I was asleep, I dreamed of these things; and when I waked, (as I frequently did,) the first thing I thought of was this great work of pleading for God against Satan.

*“Lord’s day, July 22.* When I waked, my soul was burdened with what seemed to be before me. I cried to God before I could get out of my bed: and as soon as I was dressed, I withdrew into the woods, to pour out my burdened soul to God, especially for assistance in my great work; for I could scarcely think of any thing else. I enjoyed the same freedom and fervency as the last evening; and did with unspeakable freedom give up myself afresh to God, for life or death, for all hardships he should call me to among the heathen: and felt as if nothing could discourage me from this blessed work. I had a strong hope, that God would ‘bow the



heavens and come down,' and do some marvellous work among the heathen. And when I was riding to the Indians, three miles, my heart was continually going up to God for his presence and assistance; and hoping, and almost expecting, that God would make this the day of his power and grace amongst the poor Indians. When I came to them, I found them engaged in their frolic; but through divine goodness I got them to break up and attend to my preaching: yet still there appeared nothing of the special power of God among them. Preached again to them in the afternoon; and observed the Indians were more sober than before: but still saw nothing special among them; from whence Satan took occasion to tempt and buffet me with these cursed suggestions, There is no God, or if there be, he is not able to convert the Indians before they have more knowledge, &c. I was very weak and weary, and my soul borne down with perplexity; but was mortified to all the world, and was determined still to wait upon God for the conversion of the heathen, though the devil tempted me to the contrary.

"Monday, July 23. Retained still a deep and pressing sense of what lay with so much weight upon me yesterday; but was more calm and quiet; enjoyed freedom and composure, after the temptations of the last evening; had sweet resignation to the divine will; and desired nothing so much as the conversion of the heathen to God, and that his kingdom might come in my own heart, and the hearts of others. Rode to a settlement of Irish people, about fifteen miles south-westward; spent my time in prayer and meditation by the way. Near night preached from [Matt. v. 3](#). 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' &c. God was pleased to afford me some degree of freedom and fervency. *Blessed be God for any measure of assistance.*

"Tuesday, July 24. Rode about seventeen miles westward over a hideous mountain, to a number of Indians. Got together near thirty of them: preached to them in the evening, and lodged among them.<sup>386</sup> Was weak, and felt in some degree disconsolate; yet could have no freedom in the thought of any other circumstances or business in life. All my desire was the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God. God does not suffer me to please or comfort myself with hopes of seeing friends, returning to my dear acquaintance, and enjoying worldly comforts."

The *next day* he preached to these Indians again, and then returned to the Irish settlement, and there preached to a numerous congregation. There was a considerable appearance of awakening in the congregation. *Thursday* he returned home, exceedingly fatigued and spent; still in the same frame of mortification to the world, and solicitous for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; and on this day he says thus: "I have felt this week more of the spirit of a *pilgrim on earth* than perhaps ever before; and yet so desirous to see Zion's prosperity, that I was not so willing to leave this scene of sorrows as I used to be." The *two remaining* days of the week he was very ill, and complains of wanderings, dulness, and want of spiritual

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386 See Mr. Brainerd's narrative addressed to Mr. Pemberton, among his Remains.

fervency and sweetness. On the sabbath he was confined by illness, not able to go out to preach. After this, his illness increased upon him, and he continued very ill *all the week*; <sup>387</sup> and says, that “he thought he never before endured such a season of distressing weakness; and that his nature was so spent, that he could neither stand, sit, nor lie with any quiet; and that he was exercised with extreme faintness and sickness at his stomach; and that his mind was as much disordered as his body, seeming to be stupid, and without any kind of affections towards all objects; and yet perplexed, to think that he lived for nothing, that precious time rolled away, and he could do nothing but trifle: and speaks of it as a season wherein *Satan* buffeted him with some peculiar temptations.” Concerning the *next five days* he writes thus, “On *Lord’s day, August 5*, was still very poor. But, though very weak, I visited and preached to the poor Indians twice, and was strengthened vastly beyond my expectations. And indeed, the Lord gave me some freedom and fervency in addressing them; though I had not strength enough to stand, but was obliged to sit down the whole time. Towards night was extremely weak, faint, sick, and full of pain. And thus I have continued much in the same state that I was in last week, through the most of this, (it being now Friday,) unable to engage in any business; frequently unable to pray in the family. I am obliged to let all my thoughts and concerns run at random; for I have neither strength to read, meditate, or pray: and this naturally perplexes my mind. I seem to myself like a man that has all his estate embarked in one small boat, unhappily going adrift, down a swift torrent. The poor owner stands on the shore, and looks, and laments his loss. But, alas! though my all seems to be adrift, and I stand and see it, I dare not lament; for this sinks my spirits more, and aggravates my bodily disorders! I am forced therefore to divert myself with trifles; although at the same time I am afraid, and often feel as if I was guilty of the misimprovement of time. And oftentimes my conscience is so exercised with this miserable way of spending time, that I have no peace; though I have no strength of mind or body to improve it to better purpose. O that God would pity my distressed state!”

The *next three weeks* after this his illness was not so extreme; he was in some degree capable of business, both public and private; although he had some turns wherein his indisposition prevailed to a great degree. He also in this space had, for the most part, much more inward assistance, and strength of mind. He often expresses great longings for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom, especially by the conversion of the heathen to God; and speaks of this hope as all his delight and joy. He continues still to express his usual longings after holiness, living to God, and a sense of his own unworthiness. He several times speaks of his appearing to himself the *vilest creature on earth*; and once says, that he verily thought there were none of God’s children who fell so far short of that holiness and perfection in their obedience which God requires, as he. He speaks of his feeling more dead than ever to the

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387 This week, on Tuesday, he wrote the fourth letter among his Remains.

enjoyments of the world. He sometimes mentions the special assistance he had, this space of time, in preaching to the Indians, and of appearances of religious concern among them. He speaks also of assistance in prayer for absent friends, and especially ministers and candidates for the ministry; and of much comfort he enjoyed in the company of some ministers who came to visit him.

“*Saturday, Sept. 1.* Was so far strengthened, after a season of great weakness, that I was able to spend two or three hours in writing on a divine subject. Enjoyed some comfort and sweetness in things divine and sacred: and as my bodily strength was in some measure restored, so my soul seemed to be somewhat vigorous, and engaged in the things of God.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 2.* Was enabled to speak to my poor Indians with much concern and fervency; and I am persuaded God enabled me to exercise faith in him, while I was speaking to them. I perceived that some of them were afraid to hearken to and embrace *Christianity*, lest they should be enchanted and poisoned by some of the *powows*: but I was enabled to plead with them not to fear these; and confiding in God for safety and deliverance, I bid a challenge to all these *powers of darkness*, to do their worst upon *me* first. I told my people I was a *Christian*, and asked them why the *powows* did not bewitch and poison me. I scarcely ever felt more sensible of my own unworthiness, than in this action: I saw, that the honour of God was concerned in the affair; and I desired to be preserved not from selfish views, but for a testimony of the divine power and goodness, and of the truth of *Christianity*, and that God might be glorified. Afterwards I found my soul rejoice in God for his assisting grace.”

After this he went a journey into New England, and was absent from the place of his abode, at the Forks of Delaware, *about three weeks*. He was in a feeble state the greater part of the time. But in the latter part of the journey he found he gained much in health and strength. And as to the state of his mind, and his religious and spiritual exercises, it was much with him as usual in his journeys; excepting that the frame of his mind seemed more generally to be comfortable. But yet there are complaints of some uncomfortable seasons, want of fervency, and want of retirements, and time alone with God. In his journey, he did not forget the Indians; but once and again speaks of his longing for their conversion.

“*Wednesday, Sept. 26.* Rode home to the Forks of Delaware. What reason have I to bless God, who has preserved me in riding more than four hundred and twenty miles, and has ‘kept all my bones, that not one of them has been broken!’ My health likewise is greatly recovered. O that I could dedicate my all to God! This is all the return I can make to him.

“*Thursday, Sept. 27.* Was somewhat melancholy; had not much freedom and comfort in prayer: my soul is disconsolate when God is withdrawn.

“*Friday, Sept. 28.* Spent the day in prayer, reading, and writing, Felt some small degree of warmth in prayer, and some desires of the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom by the conversion of the heathen, and that God would make me a ‘chosen vessel, to bear his name before them;’ longed for grace to enable me to be faithful.”

The *next day* he speaks of the same longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and the conversion of the Indians; but complains greatly of the ill effects of the diversions of his late journey, as unfixing his mind from that degree of engagedness, fervency, watchfulness, &c. which he enjoyed before. And the like complaints are continued the day after.

"*Monday, Oct. 1.* Was engaged this day in making preparation for my intended journey to Susquehannah: withdrew several times to the woods for secret duties, and endeavoured to plead for the divine presence to go with me to the poor pagans, to whom I was going to preach the gospel. Towards night rode about four miles, and met brother Byram;<sup>388</sup> who was come, at my desire, to be my companion in travel to the Indians. I rejoiced to see him; and, I trust, God made his conversation profitable to me. I saw him, as I thought, more dead to the world, its anxious cares and alluring objects, than I was; and this made me look within myself, and gave me a greater sense of my guilt, ingratitude, and misery.

"*Tuesday, Oct. 2.* Set out on my journey, in company with dear brother Byram, and my interpreter, and two chief Indians from the Forks of Delaware. Travelled about twenty-five miles, and lodged in one of the last houses on our road; after which there was nothing but a hideous and howling *wilderness*.

"*Wednesday, Oct. 3.* We went on our way into the wilderness, and found the most difficult and dangerous travelling, by far, that ever any of us had seen; we had scarce any thing else but lofty mountains, deep valleys, and hideous rocks, to make our way through. However, I felt some sweetness in divine things, part of the day, and had my mind intensely engaged in meditation on a divine subject. Near night my beast that I rode upon hung one of her legs in the rocks, and fell down under me; but through divine goodness I was not hurt. However, she broke her leg; and being in such a hideous place, and near thirty miles from any house, I saw nothing that could be done to preserve her life, and so was obliged to kill her, and to prosecute my journey on foot. This accident made me admire the divine goodness to me, that my bones were not broken, and the multitude of them filled with strong pain. Just at dark we kindled a fire, cut up a few bushes and made a shelter over our heads, to save us from the frost, which was very hard that night; and committing ourselves to God by prayer, we lay down on the ground, and slept quietly."

The *next day* they went forward on their journey, and at night took up their lodging in the woods in like manner.

"*Friday, Oct. 5.* We arrived at Susquehannah river, at a place called *Opeholhaupung*.<sup>389</sup> found there twelve Indian houses: after I had saluted the king in a friendly manner, I told him my business, and that my desire was to teach them *Christianity*. After some consultation, the Indians gathered, and I preached to them. And when I had done, I asked if they would

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388 Minister at a place called Rockciticus, about forty miles from Mr. Brainerd's lodgings.

389 See his Narrative addressed to Mr. Pemberton.

hear me again. They replied, that they would consider of it; and soon after sent me word, that they would immediately attend, if I would preach: which I did, with freedom, both times. When I asked them again, whether they would hear me further, they replied, they would the next day. I was exceeding sensible of the impossibility of doing any thing for the poor heathen without special assistance from above: and my soul seemed to rest on God, and leave it to him to do as he pleased in that which I saw was his own cause: and indeed, through divine goodness, I had felt something of this frame most of the time while I was travelling thither, and in some measure before I set out.

“*Saturday, Oct. 6.* Rose early and besought the Lord for help in my great work. Near noon preached again to the Indians; and in the afternoon visited them from house to house, and invited them to come and hear me again the next day, and put off their hunting design, which they were just entering upon, till Monday. ‘This night,’ I trust, ‘the Lord stood by me,’ to encourage and strengthen my soul: I spent more than an hour in secret retirement; was enabled to ‘pour out my heart ‘before God,’ for the increase of grace in my soul, for ministerial endowments, for success among the poor Indians, for God’s ministers and people, for distant dear friends, &c. *Blessed be God!*”

The *next day* he complains of great want of fixedness and intensesness in religion, so that he could not keep any spiritual thought one minute without distraction; which occasioned anguish of spirit. He felt *amazingly guilty*, and *extremely miserable*; and cries out, “Oh, my soul, what death it is, to have the affections unable to centre in God, by reason of darkness, and consequently roving after that satisfaction elsewhere, that is only to be found here!” However, he preached twice to the Indians with some freedom and power; but was afterwards damped by the *objections* they made against *Christianity*. In the evening, in a sense of his great defects in preaching, he “entreated God not to impute to him blood-guiltiness;” but yet was at the same time enabled to *rejoice in God*.

“*Monday, Oct. 8.* Visited the Indians with a design to take my leave of them, supposing they would this morning go out to hunting early; but beyond my expectation and hope, they desired to hear me preach again. I gladly complied with their request, and afterwards endeavoured to answer their *objections* against *Christianity*. Then they went away; and we spent the rest of the afternoon in reading and prayer, intending to go homeward very early the next day. My soul was in some measure refreshed in secret prayer and meditation. *Blessed be the Lord for all his goodness.*

“*Tuesday, Oct. 9.* We rose about four in the morning, and commending ourselves to God by prayer, and asking his special protection, we set out on our journey homewards about five, and travelled with great steadiness till past six at night; and then made us a fire, and a shelter of barks, and so rested. I had some clear and comfortable thoughts on a divine subject, by the way, towards night. In the night the wolves howled around us; but God preserved us.”

The *next day* they rose early, and set forward, and travelled that day till they came to an Irish settlement, with which Mr. *Brainerd* was acquainted, and lodged there. He speaks of some sweetness in divine things, and thankfulness to God for his goodness to him in this journey, though attended with shame for his barrenness. On *Thursday* he continued in the same place; and both he and Mr. *Byram* preached there to the people.

“*Friday, Oct. 12.* Rode home to my lodgings; where I poured out my soul to God in secret prayer, and endeavoured to bless him for his abundant goodness to me in my late journey. I scarce ever enjoyed more health, at least, of later years; and God marvellously, and almost miraculously, supported me under the fatigues of the way, and travelling on foot. Blessed be the Lord, who continually preserves me in all my ways.”

On *Saturday* he went again to the Irish settlement, to spend the sabbath there, his Indians being gone.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 14.* Was much confused and perplexed in my thoughts; could not pray; and was almost discouraged, thinking I should never be able to preach any more. Afterwards, God was pleased to give me some relief from these confusions; but still I was afraid, and even trembled before God. I went to the place of public worship, lifting up my heart to God for assistance and grace in my great work: and God was gracious to me, helping me to plead with him for holiness, and to use the strongest arguments with him; drawn from the incarnation and sufferings of Christ for this very end, that men might be made holy. Afterwards I was much assisted in preaching. I know not that ever God helped me to preach in a more close and distinguishing manner for the trial of men’s state. Through the infinite goodness of God, I felt what I spoke; he enabled me to treat on divine truth with uncommon clearness: and yet I was so sensible of my defects in preaching, that I could not be proud of my performance, as at some times; and blessed be the Lord for this mercy. In the evening I longed to be entirely alone, to bless God for help in a time of extremity; and longed for great degrees of holiness, that I might show my gratitude to God.”

The *next morning* he spent some time before sun-rise in prayer, in the same sweet and grateful frame of mind that he had been in the evening before: and afterwards went to his Indians, and spent some time in teaching and exhorting them.

“*Tuesday, Oct. 16.* Felt a spirit of solemnity and watchfulness; was afraid I should not live *to* and *upon* God: longed for more intenseness and spirituality. Spent the day in writing; frequently lifting up my heart to God for more heavenly-mindedness. In the evening enjoyed sweet assistance in prayer, and thirsted and pleaded to be as holy as the blessed *angels*: longed for ministerial gifts and graces, and success in my work: was sweetly assisted in the duty of intercession, and enabled to remember and plead for numbers of dear friends, and Christ’s ministers.”

He seemed to have much of the same frame of mind the two next days.

“*Friday, Oct. 19.* Felt an abasing sense of my own impurity and unholiness; and felt my soul melt and mourn, that I had abused and grieved a very gracious God, who was still kind to me, notwithstanding all my unworthiness.

My soul enjoyed a sweet season of bitter repentance and sorrow, that I had wronged that blessed God, who, I was persuaded, was reconciled to me in his dear Son. My soul was now tender, devout, and solemn. And I was afraid of nothing but sin; and afraid of that in every action and thought.”

*The four next days* were manifestly spent in a most constant tenderness, watchfulness, diligence, and self-diffidence. But he complains of wanderings of mind, languor of affections, &c.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 24.* Near noon, rode to my people; spent some time, and prayed with them: felt the frame of a *pilgrim* on earth; longed much to leave this gloomy mansion; but yet found the exercise of patience and resignation. And as I returned home from the Indians, spent the whole time in lifting up my heart to God. In the evening enjoyed a blessed season alone in prayer; was enabled to cry to God with a child-like spirit, for the space of near an hour; enjoyed a sweet freedom in supplicating for myself, for dear friends, ministers, and some who are preparing for that work, and for the church of God; amid longed to be as lively myself in God’s service as the angels.

“*Thursday, Oct. 25.* Was busy in writing. Was very sensible of my absolute dependence on God in all respects; saw that I could do nothing, even in those affairs that I have sufficient natural faculties for, unless God should smile upon my attempt. ‘Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves,’ I saw was a sacred truth.

“*Friday, Oct. 26.* In the morning my soul was melted with a sense of divine goodness and mercy to such a vile unworthy worm. I delighted to lean upon God, and place my whole trust in him. My soul was exceedingly grieved for sin, and prized and longed after holiness; it wounded my heart deeply, yet sweetly, to think how I had abused a kind God. I longed to be perfectly holy, that I might not grieve a gracious God; who will continue to love, notwithstanding his love is abused! I longed for holiness more for this end, than I did for my own happiness’ sake: and yet this was my greatest happiness, never more to dishonour, but always to glorify, the blessed God. Afterwards rode up to the Indians, in the afternoon, &c.”

*The four next days* he was exercised with much disorder and pain of body, with a degree of melancholy and gloominess of mind, bitterly complaining of deadness and unprofitableness, yet mourning and longing after God.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 31.* Was sensible of my barrenness and decays in the things of God: my soul failed when I remembered the fervency I had enjoyed at the throne of grace. Oh, I thought, if I could but be spiritual, warm, heavenly-minded, and affectionately breathing after God, this would be better than life to me! My soul longed exceedingly for death, to be loosed from this dulness and barrenness, and made for ever active in the service of God. I

seemed to live for nothing, and to do no good: and oh, the burden of such a life! Oh, death, death, my kind friend, hasten, and deliver me from dull mortality, and make me spiritual and vigorous to eternity!

“*Thursday, Nov. 1.* Had but little sweetness in divine things; but afterwards, in the evening, felt some life, and longings after God. I longed to be always solemn, devout, and heavenly-minded; and was afraid to leave off praying, lest I should again lose a sense of the sweet things of God.

“*Friday, Nov. 2.* Was filled with sorrow and confusion in the morning, and could enjoy no sweet sense of divine things, nor get any relief in prayer. Saw I deserved that every one of God’s creatures should be let loose, to be the executioners of his wrath against me; and yet therein saw I deserved what I did not fear as my portion. About noon rode up to the Indians; and while going could feel no desires for them, and even dreaded to say any thing to them; but God was pleased to give me some freedom and enlargement, and made the season comfortable to me. In the evening had enlargement in prayer. But, alas! what comforts and enlargements I have felt for these many weeks past, have been only transient and short; and the greater part of my time has been filled up with deadness, or struggles with deadness, and bitter conflicts with corruption. I have found myself exercised sorely with some particular things that I thought myself most of all freed from. And thus I have ever found it, when I have thought the battle was over, and the conquest gained, and so let down my watch, the enemy has risen up and done me the greatest injury.

“*Saturday, Nov. 3.* I read the life and trials of a godly man, and was much warmed by it: I wondered at my past deadness; and was more convinced of it than ever. Was enabled to confess and bewail my sin before God, with self-abhorrence.

“*Lord’s day, Nov. 4.* Had, I think, some exercise of faith in prayer in the morning: longed to be spiritual. Had considerable help in preaching to my poor Indians: was encouraged with them, and hoped that God designed mercy for them.”

The *next day*\* he set out on a journey to New York, to the meeting of the Presbytery there; and was from home *more than a fortnight*. He seemed to enter on his journey with great reluctance; fearing that the diversions of it would prove a means of cooling his religious affections, as he had found in other journeys. But yet in this journey he had some special seasons wherein he enjoyed extraordinary evidences and fruits of God’s gracious presence. He was greatly fatigued, and exposed to cold and storms: and when he returned from New York to New Jersey, on *Friday*, was taken very ill, and was detained by his illness some time.

“*Wednesday, Nov. 21.* Rode from Newark to Rockciticus in the cold, and was almost overcome with it. Enjoyed some sweetness in conversation with dear Mr. Jones, while I dined with him: my soul loves the people of God, and especially the ministers of Jesus Christ, who feel the same trials that I do.



“*Thursday, Nov. 22.* Came on my way from Rockciticus to Delaware river. Was very much disordered with a cold and pain in my head. About six at night I lost my way in the wilderness, and wandered over rocks and mountains, down hideous steeps, through swamps, and most dreadful and dangerous places; and the night being dark, so that few stars could be seen, I was greatly exposed. I was much pinched with cold, and distressed with an extreme pain in my head, attended with sickness at my stomach; so that every step I took was distressing to me. I had little hope for several hours together, but that I must lie out in the woods all night, in this distressed case. But about nine o’clock I found a house, through the abundant goodness of God, and was kindly entertained. Thus I have frequently been exposed, and sometimes lain out the whole night; but God has hitherto preserved me; and blessed be his name. Such fatigues and hardships as these serve to wean me more from the earth; and, I trust, will make heaven the sweeter. Formerly, when I was thus exposed to cold, rain, &c. I was ready to please myself with the thoughts of enjoying a comfortable house, a warm fire, and other outward comforts; but now these have less place in my heart, (through the grace of God,) and my eye is more to God for comfort. In this world I expect tribulation; and it does not now, as formerly, appear strange to me. I do not in such seasons of difficulty flatter myself that it will be better hereafter; but rather think, *how much worse it might be*; how much greater trials *others* of God’s children have endured; and how much greater are yet *perhaps reserved for me*. Blessed be God, that he makes the thoughts of my journey’s end and of my dissolution a great comfort to me, under my sharpest trials; and scarce ever lets these thoughts be attended with terror or melancholy; but they are attended frequently with great joy.

“*Friday, Nov. 23.* Visited a sick man; discoursed and prayed with him. Then visited another house, where was one dead and laid out; looked on the corpse, and longed that my time might come to *depart*, that I might be *with Christ*. Then went home to my lodgings, about one o’clock. Felt poorly; but was able to read most of the afternoon.”

Within the space of the *next twelve days* he passed under many changes in the frames and exercises of his mind. He had many seasons of the special influences of God’s Spirit, animating, invigorating, and comforting him in the ways of God and the duties of religion: but had some turns of great dejection and melancholy. He spent much time, within this space, in hard labour, with others, to make for himself a little cottage or hut, to live in by himself through the winter. Yet he frequently preached to the Indians, and speaks of special assistance he had from time to time, in addressing himself to them; and of his sometimes having considerable encouragement, from the attention they gave. But on *Tuesday, December 4*, he was sunk into great discouragement, to see most of them going in company to an idolatrous *feast* and *dance*, after he had taken abundant pains to dissuade them from these things.

“*Thursday, Dec. 6.* Having now a happy opportunity of being retired in a house of my own, which I have lately procured and moved into, and considering that it is now a long time since I have been able, either on account of bodily weakness, or for want of retirement, or some other difficulty, to spend any time in secret fasting and prayer; considering also the greatness of my work, and the extreme difficulties that attend it; and that my poor Indians are now *worshipping devils*, notwithstanding all the pains I have taken with them, which almost overwhelms my spirit; moreover, considering my extreme barrenness, spiritual deadness and dejection, of late; as also the power of some particular corruptions; I set apart this day for secret prayer and fasting, to implore the blessing of God on myself, on my poor people, on my friends, and on the church of God. At first I felt a great backwardness to the duties of the day, on account of the seeming impossibility of performing them; but the Lord helped me to break through this difficulty. God was pleased, by the use of means, to give me some clear conviction of my sinfulness, and a discovery of *the plague of my own heart*, more affecting than what I have of late had. And especially I saw my sinfulness in this, that when God had *withdrawn* himself, then, instead of living and dying in *pursuit* of him, I have been disposed to one of these two things; either, *first*, to yield an unbecoming respect to some *earthly* objects, as if happiness were to be derived from them; or, *secondly*, to be secretly *froward* and impatient, and unsuitably desirous of *death*, so that I have sometimes thought I could not bear to think my life must be lengthened out. And that which often drove me to this impatient desire of death, was a despair of doing any good in life; and I chose death, rather than a life spent for nothing. But now God made me sensible of my sin in these things, and enabled me to cry to him for *forgiveness*. Yet this was not all I wanted; for my soul appeared exceedingly polluted, my heart seemed like a nest of vipers, or a cage of unclean and hateful birds: and therefore I wanted to be purified ‘by the blood of sprinkling, that cleanseth from all sin.’ And this, I hope, I was enabled to pray for in faith. I enjoyed much more intenseness, fervency, and spirituality, than I expected; God was better to me than my fears. And towards night I felt my soul rejoice, that God is unchangeably happy and glorious; that he will be glorified, whatever becomes of his creatures. I was enabled to persevere in prayer till some time in the evening; at which time I saw so much need of divine help, in every respect, that I knew not how to leave off, and had forgot that I needed food. This evening I was much assisted in meditating on [Isa. lii. 3](#). ‘For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought,’ &c. Blessed be the Lord for any help in the past day.

“*Friday, Dec. 7.* Spent some time in prayer, in the morning; enjoyed some freedom and affection in the duty, and had longing desires of being made ‘faithful to the death.’ Spent a little time in writing on a divine subject: then visited the Indians, and preached to them; but under inexpressible dejection. I had no heart to speak to them, and could not do it but as I forced myself: I knew they must hate to hear me, as having but just got home from their

idolatrous feast and devil-worship. In the evening had some freedom in prayer and meditation.

“*Saturday, Dec. 8.* Have been uncommonly free this day from dejection, and from that distressing apprehension, that I could do nothing; was enabled to pray and study with some comfort; and especially was assisted in writing on a divine subject. In the evening my soul rejoiced in God; and I blessed his name for shining on my soul. O the sweet and blessed change I then felt, when God ‘brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light!’

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 9.* Preached, both parts of the day, at a place called *Greenwich*, in New Jersey, about ten miles from my own house. In the first discourse I had scarce any warmth or affectionate longing for souls. In the intermediate season I got alone among the bushes, and cried to God for pardon of my deadness; and was in anguish and bitterness, that I could not address souls with more compassion and tender affection. I judged and condemned myself for want of this divine temper; though I saw I could not get it as of myself, any more than I could make a world. In the latter exercise, blessed be the Lord, I had some fervency, both in prayer and preaching; and especially in the application of my discourse, I was enabled to address precious souls with affection, concern, tenderness, and importunity. The Spirit of God, I think, was there; as the effects were apparent, tears running down many cheeks.

“*Monday, Dec. 10.* Near noon I preached again: God gave me some assistance, and enabled me to be in some degree faithful; so that I had peace in my own soul, and a very comfortable composure, ‘although Israel should not be gathered.’ Came away from *Greenwich*, and rode home; arrived just in the evening. By the way my soul blessed God for his goodness; and I rejoiced, that so much of my work was done, and I so much nearer my blessed reward. Blessed be God for grace to be faithful.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 11.* Felt very poorly in body, being much tired and worn out the last night. Was assisted in some measure in writing on a divine subject: but was so feeble and sore in my breast, that I had not much resolution in my work. Oh, how I long for that world ‘where the weary are at rest!’ and yet through the goodness of God I do not now feel impatient.

“*Wednesday, Dec. 12.* Was again very weak; but somewhat assisted in secret prayer, and enabled with pleasure and sweetness to cry, ‘Come, Lord Jesus! come, Lord Jesus! come quickly.’ My soul ‘longed for God, for the living God.’ O how delightful it is, to pray under such sweet influences! Oh how much better is this, than one’s *necessary food*! I had at this time no disposition to eat, (though late in the morning,) for earthly food appeared wholly tasteless. O how much ‘better is thy love than wine,’ than the sweetest wine! I visited and preached to the Indians in the afternoon; but under much dejection. Found my *interpreter* under some concern for his soul; which was some comfort to me; and yet filled me with new care. I longed greatly for his conversion; lifted up my heart to God for it, while I was

talking to him; came home, and poured out my soul to God for him: enjoyed some freedom in prayer, and was enabled, I think, to leave all with God.

“*Thursday, Dec. 13.* Endeavoured to spend the day in fasting and prayer, to implore the divine blessing, more especially on my poor people; and in particular, I sought for converting grace for my *interpreter*, and three or four more under some concern for their souls. I was much disordered in the morning when I arose; but having determined to spend the day in this manner, I attempted it. Some freedom I had in pleading for these poor concerned souls, several times; and when interceding for them, I enjoyed greater freedom from wandering and distracting thoughts, than in any part of my supplications. But, in the general, I was greatly exercised with wanderings; so that in the evening it seemed as if I had need to pray for nothing so much as for the pardon of sins committed in the day past, and the vileness I then found in myself. The sins I had most sense of, were pride, and wandering thoughts, whereby I mocked God. The former of these cursed iniquities excited me to think of writing, preaching, or converting heathens, or performing some other great work, that my name might live when I should be dead. My soul was in anguish, and ready to drop into despair, to find so much of that cursed temper. With this, and the other evil I laboured under, *viz.* wandering thoughts, I was almost overwhelmed, and even ready to give over striving after a spirit of devotion; and oftentimes sunk into a considerable degree of despondency, and thought I was ‘more brutish than any man.’ Yet after all my sorrows, I trust, through grace, this day and the exercises of it have been for my good, and taught me more of my corruption, and weakness without Christ, than I knew before.

“*Friday, Dec. 14.* Near noon went to the Indians; but knew not what to say to them, and was ashamed to look them in the face: I felt I had no power to address their consciences, and therefore had no boldness to say any thing. Was, much of the day, in a great degree of despair about ever ‘doing or seeing any good in the land of the living.’”

He continued under the same dejection the *next day*.

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 16.* Was so overwhelmed with dejection, that I knew not how to live. I longed for death exceedingly: my soul was *sunk into deep waters*, and *the floods* were ready to *drown me*. I was so much oppressed, that my soul was in a kind of horror: could not keep my thoughts fixed in prayer, for the space of one minute, without fluttering and distraction; and was exceedingly ashamed that I did not live to God. I had no distressing doubt about my own state; but would have cheerfully ventured (as far as I could possibly know) into eternity. While I was going to preach to the Indians, my soul was in anguish; I was so overborne with discouragement, that I despaired of doing any good, and was driven to my wit’s end; I knew nothing what to say, nor what course to take. But at last I insisted on the evidence we have of the truth of Christianity from the *miracles* of Christ; many of which I set before them: and God helped me to make a close application to those who refused to believe the truth of what I taught them. Indeed I was enabled to speak to the consciences of all, in some

measure, and was somewhat encouraged to find, that God enabled me to be faithful once more. Then came and preached to another company of them; but was very weary and faint. In the evening I was refreshed, and enabled to pray, and praise God with composure and affection: had some enlargement and courage with respect to my work: was willing to live, and longed to do more for God than my weak state of body would admit of. I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me;’ and by his grace, I am willing to *spend* and *be spent* in his service, when I am not thus sunk in dejection, and a kind of despair.

“*Monday, Dec. 17.* Was comfortable in mind most of the day; and was enabled to pray with some freedom, cheerfulness, composure, and devotion; had also some assistance in writing on a divine subject.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 18.* Went to the Indians, and discoursed to them near an hour, without any power to come close to their hearts. But at last I felt some fervency, and God helped me to speak with warmth. My *interpreter* also was amazingly assisted; and I doubt not but ‘the Spirit of God was upon him;’ (though I had no reason to think he had any true and saving grace, but was only under conviction of his lost state;) and presently upon this most of the grown persons were much affected, and the tears ran down their cheeks; and one *old man* (I suppose, a hundred years old) was so affected, that he wept, and seemed convinced of the importance of what I taught them. I staid with them a considerable time, exhorting and directing them; and came away, lifting up my heart to God in prayer and praise, and encouraged and exhorted my *interpreter* to ‘strive to enter in at the strait gate.’ Came home, and spent most of the evening in prayer and thanksgiving; and found myself much enlarged and quickened. Was greatly concerned that the Lord’s work, which seemed to be begun, might be carried on with power, to the conversion of poor souls, and the glory of divine grace.

*Wednesday, Dec. 19.* Spent a great part of the day in prayer to God for the *outpouring* of his *Spirit* on my poor people; as also to bless his name for awakening my *interpreter* and some others, and giving us some tokens of his presence yesterday. And, blessed be God, I had much freedom, five or six times in the day, in prayer and praise, and felt a weighty concern upon my spirit for the salvation of those precious souls, and the enlargement of the Redeemer’s kingdom among them. My soul hoped in God for some success in my ministry: and blessed be his name for so much hope.

“*Thursday, Dec. 20.* Was enabled to visit the throne of grace frequently this day; and through divine goodness enjoyed much freedom and fervency sundry times: was much assisted in crying for mercy for my poor people, and felt cheerfulness and hope in my requests for them. I spent much of the day in writing; but was enabled to intermix prayer with my studies.

“*Friday, Dec. 21.* Was enabled again to pray with freedom, cheerfulness, and hope. God was pleased to make the duty comfortable and pleasant to me; so that I delighted to persevere, and repeatedly to engage in it. Towards noon visited my people, and spent the whole time

in the way to them in prayer, longing to see *the power of God* among them, as there appeared something of it the last Tuesday; and I found it sweet to rest and hope in God. Preached to them twice, and at two distinct places: had considerable freedom each time, and so had my *interpreter*. Several of them followed me from one place to the other: and I thought there was some divine influence discernible amongst them. In the evening, was assisted in prayer again. *Blessed be the Lord.*“

Very much the same things are expressed concerning his inward frame, exercises, and assistances on *Saturday*, as on the preceding days. He observes, that this was a comfortable week to him. But then concludes, “Oh that I had no reason to complain of much barrenness! Oh that there were no vain thoughts and evil affections lodging within me! The Lord knows how I long for that world, where they rest not day nor night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,*” &c. On the following *Sabbath*, he speaks of assistance and freedom in his public work, but as having less of the sensible presence of God, than frequently in the week past; but yet says, his soul was kept from sinking in discouragement. On *Monday* again he seemed to enjoy very much the same liberty and fervency, through the day, that he enjoyed through the greater part of the preceding week.’<sup>390</sup>

“*Tuesday, Dec. 25.* Enjoyed very little quiet sleep last night, by reason of bodily weakness, and the closeness of my studies yesterday; yet my heart was somewhat lively in prayer and praise; I was delighted with the divine glory and happiness, and rejoiced that God was God, and that he was unchangeably possessed of glory and blessedness. Though God *held my eyes waking*, yet he helped me to improve my time profitably amidst my pains and weakness, in continued meditations on [Luke xiii. 7.](#) Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit,’ &c. My meditations were sweet; and I wanted to set before sinners their sin and danger.”

He continued in a very low state, as to his bodily health, for *some days*; which seems to have been a great hinderance to him in his religious exercises and pursuits. But yet he expresses some degree of divine assistance, from day to day, through the *remaining part of this week*. He preached several times this week to his Indians; and there appeared still some concern amongst them for their souls. On *Saturday* he rode to the Irish settlement, about fifteen miles from his lodgings, in order to spend the sabbath there.

“*Lord’s day, Dec. 30.* Discoursed, both parts of the day, from [Mark viii. 34.](#) ‘Whosoever will come after me,’ &c. God gave me very great freedom and clearness, and (in the afternoon especially) considerable warmth and fervency. In the evening also had very great clearness while conversing with friends on divine things: I do not remember ever to have had more clear apprehensions of religion in my life: but found a struggle, in the evening, with spiritual pride.”

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390 This day he wrote the fifth letter among his Remains.

On *Monday* he preached again in the same place with freedom and fervency; and rode home to his lodging, and arrived in the evening, under a considerable degree of bodily illness, which continued the *two next days*. And he complains much of spiritual emptiness and barrenness on those days.

“*Thursday, Jan. 3, 1745.* Being sensible of the great want of divine influences, and the outpouring of God’s Spirit, I spent this day in fasting and prayer, to seek so great a mercy for myself, my poor people in particular, and the church of God in general. In the morning was very lifeless in prayer, and could get scarce any sense of God. Near noon enjoyed some sweet freedom to pray that the *will of God* might in every respect become *mine*; and I am persuaded it was so at that time in some good degree. In the afternoon, I was exceeding weak, and could not enjoy much fervency in prayer; but felt a great degree of dejection; which, I believe, was very much owing to my bodily weakness and disorder.

“*Friday, Jan. 4.* Rode up to the Indians near noon; spent some time under great disorder: my soul was *sunk down into deep waters*, and I was almost overwhelmed with melancholy.

“*Saturday, Jan. 5.* Was able to do something at writing; but was much disordered with pain in my head. At night was distressed with a sense of my spiritual pollution, and ten thousand youthful, yea, and childish follies, that nobody but myself had any thought about; all which appeared to me now fresh, and in a lively view, as if committed yesterday, and made my soul ashamed before God, and caused me to hate myself.

“*Lord’s day, Jan. 6.* Was still distressed with vapoury disorders. Preached to my poor Indians: but had little heart or life. Towards night my soul was pressed under a sense of my unfaithfulness. O the joy and peace that arises from a sense of ‘having obtained mercy of God to be faithful!’ And oh the misery and anguish that spring from an apprehension of the contrary!”

His dejection continued the *two next days*; but not to so great a degree on *Tuesday*, when he enjoyed some freedom and fervency in preaching to the Indians.

*Wednesday, Jan. 9.* In the morning God was pleased to remove that gloom which has of late oppressed my mind, and gave me freedom and sweetness in prayer. I was encouraged, strengthened, and enabled to plead for grace for myself, and mercy for my poor Indians; and was sweetly assisted in my intercessions with God for others. Blessed be his holy name for ever and ever. Amen, and Amen. Those things that of late appeared most difficult and almost impossible, now appeared not only possible, but easy. My soul so much delighted to continue instant in prayer, at this blessed season, that I had no desire for my *necessary food*: even dreaded leaving off praying at all, lest I should lose this spirituality, and this blessed thankfulness to God which I then felt. I felt now quite willing to live, and undergo all trials that might remain for me in a world of sorrow: but still longed for heaven, that I might glorify God in a perfect manner. O ‘come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.’ Spent the day in reading a little; and in some diversions, which I was necessitated to take by reason of

much weakness and disorder. In the evening enjoyed some freedom and intensesness in prayer.”

The *three remaining days of the week* he was very low and feeble in body; but nevertheless continued constantly in the same comfortable sweet frame of mind, as is expressed on Wednesday. On the *sabbath* this sweetness in spiritual alacrity began to abate; but still he enjoyed some degree of comfort, and had assistance in preaching to the Indians.

“*Monday, Jan. 14.* Spent this day under a great degree of bodily weakness and disorder; and had very little freedom, either in my studies or devotions; and in the evening, I was much dejected and melancholy. It pains and distresses me, that I live so much of my time for nothing. I long to do much in a little time, and if it might be the Lord’s will, to *finish my work* speedily in this tiresome world. I am sure I do not desire to live for any thing in this world; and through grace I am not afraid to look the *king of terrors* in the face. I know I shall be afraid, if God leaves me; and therefore I think it always my duty to lay in for that solemn hour. But for a very considerable time past, my soul has rejoiced to think of death in its nearest approaches; and even when I have been very weak, and seemed nearest eternity. ‘Not unto me, not unto me, but to God be the glory.’ I feel that which convinces me, that if God do not enable me to maintain a holy dependence upon him, death will easily be a terror to me; but at present, I must say, ‘I long to depart, and to be with Christ,’ which is the best of all. When I am in a sweet resigned frame of soul, I am willing to tarry awhile in a world of sorrow, I am willing to be from home as long as God sees fit it should be so; but when I want the influence of this temper, I am then apt to be impatient to be gone. Oh when will the day appear, that I shall be perfect in holiness, and in the enjoyment of God!”

The *next day* was spent under a great degree of dejection and melancholy; which (as he himself was persuaded) was owing partly to bodily weakness, and vapoury disorders.

“*Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 16 and 17.* I spent most of the time in writing on a sweet divine subject, and enjoyed some freedom and assistance. Was likewise enabled to pray more frequently and fervently than usual: and my soul, I think, rejoiced in God; especially on the evening of the last of these days: *praise* then seemed *comely*, and I delighted to bless the Lord. O what reason have I to be thankful, that God ever helps me to labour and study for him! he does but *receive his own*, when I am enabled in any measure to praise him, labour for him, and live to him. Oh, how comfortable and sweet it is, to feel the assistance of divine grace in the performance of the duties God has enjoined us! *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*“

The same enlargement of heart, and joyful frame of soul, continued through the *next day*. But on the *day following* it began to decline; which decay seems to have continued the whole of the *next week*: yet he enjoyed some seasons of special and sweet assistance.

“*Lord’s day, Jan. 27.* Had the greatest degree of inward anguish that almost ever I endured. I was perfectly overwhelmed, and so confused, that after I began to discourse to the Indians, before I could finish a sentence, sometimes I forgot entirely what I was aiming at;



or if, with much difficulty, I had recollected what I had before designed, still it appeared strange, and like something I had long forgotten, and had now but an imperfect remembrance of. I know it was a degree of distraction, occasioned by vapoury disorders, melancholy, spiritual desertion, and some other things that particularly pressed upon me this morning, with an uncommon weight, the principal of which respected my Indians. This distressing gloom never went off the whole day; but was so far removed, that I was enabled to speak with some freedom and concern to the Indians, at two of their settlements; and I think there was some appearance of the presence of God with us, some seriousness, and seeming concern among the Indians, at least a few of them. In the evening this gloom continued still, till family prayer,<sup>391</sup> about nine o'clock, and almost through this, until I came near the close, when I was praying (as I usually do) for the illumination and conversion of my poor people; and then the cloud was scattered, so that I enjoyed sweetness and freedom, and conceived hopes that God designed mercy for some of them. The same I enjoyed afterwards in secret prayer; in which precious duty I had for a considerable time sweetness and freedom, and (I hope) faith, in praying for myself, my poor Indians, and dear friends and acquaintance in New England, and elsewhere, and for the dear interest of Zion in general. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*"

He spent the *rest of this week*, or at least the most of it, under dejection and melancholy; which on Friday rose to an extreme height; he being then, as he himself observes, much exercised with vapoury disorders. This exceeding gloominess continued on Saturday, till the evening, when he was again relieved in family prayer; and after it was refreshed in secret, and felt willing to live, and endure hardships in the cause of God; and found his hopes of the advancement of Christ's kingdom, as also his hopes to *see the power of God* among the poor Indians, considerably raised.

"*Lord's day, Feb. 3.* In the morning I was somewhat relieved of that gloom and confusion that my mind has of late been greatly exercised with: was enabled to pray with some composure and comfort. But, however, went to my Indians trembling; for my soul 'remembered the wormwood and the gall' (I might almost say the *hell*) of Friday last; and I was greatly afraid I should be obliged again to drink of that *cup of trembling*, which was inconceivably more bitter than death, and made me long for the grave more, unspeakably more, than for hid treasures, yea, inconceivably more than the men of this world long for such treasures. But God was pleased to hear my cries, and to afford me great assistance; so that I felt peace in my own soul; and was satisfied, that if not one of the Indians should be profited by my preaching, but should all be damned, yet I should be accepted and rewarded as faithful; for

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391 Though Mr. Brainerd now dwelt by himself in the forementioned little cottage, which he had built for his own use; yet that was near to a family of white people with whom he had lived before, and with whom he still attended family prayer.

I am persuaded God enabled me to be so. Had some good degree of help afterwards, at another place; and much longed for the conversion of the poor Indians. Was somewhat refreshed, and comfortable, towards night, and in the evening. O that my soul might praise the Lord for his goodness! Enjoyed some freedom in the evening, in meditation on [Luke xiii. 24](#). 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate,' &c."

In the *three next days* he was the subject of much dejection; but the *three remaining days* of the week seem to have been spent with much composure and comfort. On the next *sabbath* he preached at Greenwich in New Jersey. In the evening he rode eight miles to visit a sick man at the point of death, and found him speechless and senseless.

"*Monday, Feb. 11.* About break of day the sick man died. I was affected at the sight: spent the morning with the mourners: and after prayer, and some discourse with them, I returned to Greenwich, and preached again from [Psal. lxxxix. 15](#). 'Blessed is the people that know,' &c. and the Lord gave me assistance; I felt a sweet love to souls, and to the kingdom of Christ; and longed that poor sinners might *know the joyful sound*. Several persons were much affected. And after meeting I was enabled to discourse with freedom and concern, to some persons that applied to me under spiritual trouble. Left the place, sweetly composed, and rode home to my house about eight miles distant. Discoursed to friends, and inculcated divine truths upon some. In the evening was in the most solemn frame that almost I ever remember to have experienced: I know not that ever death appeared more real to me, or that ever I saw myself in the condition of a dead corpse, laid out, and dressed for a lodging in the silent grave, so evidently as at this time. And yet I felt exceeding comfortably; my mind was composed and calm, and *death* appeared *without a sting*. I think I never felt such an universal mortification to all created objects as now. Oh, how great and solemn a thing it appeared to die! Oh, how it lays the greatest honour in the dust! And oh, how vain and trifling did the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world appear! I could not, I dare not, so much as think of any of them; for *death, death*, solemn (though not frightful) *death* appeared at the door. Oh, I could see myself dead, and laid out, and enclosed in my coffin, and put down into the cold grave, with the greatest solemnity, but without terror! I spent most of the evening in conversing with a dear Christian friend; and, blessed be God, it was a comfortable evening to us both. What are friends? What are comforts? What are sorrows? What are distresses?' The time is short: it remains, that they which weep be as though they wept not; and they which rejoice, as though they rejoiced not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.' *Blessed be God for the comforts of the past day.*

"*Tuesday, Feb. 12.* Was exceeding weak; but in a sweet, resigned, composed frame, most of the day: felt my heart freely go forth after God in prayer.

"*Wednesday, Feb. 13.* Was much exercised with vapoury disorders; but still enabled to maintain solemnity, and, I think, spirituality.

“*Thursday, Feb. 14.* Spent the day in writing on a divine subject: enjoyed health, and freedom in my work; had a solemn sense of death; as I have indeed had every day this week, in some measure: what I felt on Monday last has been abiding, in some considerable degree, ever since.

“*Friday, Feb. 15.* Was engaged in writing again almost the whole day. In the evening was much assisted in meditating on that precious text, [John vii. 37](#). ‘Jesus stood and cried,’ &c. I had then a sweet sense of the free grace of the gospel; my soul was encouraged, warmed, and quickened. My desires were drawn out after God in prayer; and my soul was watchful, afraid of losing so sweet a guest as I then entertained. I continued long in prayer and meditation, intermixing one with the other; and was unwilling to be diverted by any thing at all from so sweet an exercise. I longed to proclaim the grace I then meditated upon, to the world of sinners. O how *quick* and *powerful* is the *word* of the blessed God!”

The *next day* he complains of great conflicts with corruption, and much discomposure of mind.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 17.* Preached to the *white* people (my *interpreter* being absent) in the wilderness upon the sunny side of a hill: had a considerable assembly, consisting of people who lived (at least many of them) not less than thirty miles asunder; some of them came near twenty miles. I discoursed to them, all day, from [John vii. 37](#). ‘Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst,’ &c. In the afternoon it pleased God to grant me great freedom and fervency in my discourse; and I was enabled to imitate the example of Christ in the text, who *stood and cried*. I think I was scarce ever enabled to offer the free grace of God to perishing sinners with more freedom and plainness in my life. And afterwards I was enabled earnestly to invite the children of God to come renewedly, and drink of this fountain of water of life, from whence they have heretofore derived unspeakable satisfaction. It was a very comfortable time to me. There were many tears in the assembly; and I doubt not but that the Spirit of God was there, convincing poor sinners of their need of Christ. In the evening I felt composed, and comfortable, though much tired. I had some sweet sense of the excellency and glory of God; and my soul rejoiced, that he was ‘God over all, blessed for ever;’ but was too much crowded with company and conversation, and longed to be more alone with God. Oh that I could for ever bless God for the mercy of this day, who ‘answered me in the joy of my heart.’”

The remainder of *this week* seems to have been spent under a decay of this life and joy, and in distressing conflicts with corruption; but not without some seasons of refreshment and comfort.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 24.* In the morning was much perplexed: my *interpreter* being absent, I knew not how to perform my work among the Indians. However, I rode to them, got a Dutchman to interpret for me, though he was but poorly qualified for the business. Afterwards I came and preached to a few white people from [John vi. 67](#). ‘Then said Jesus unto

the twelve,' &c. Here the Lord seemed to unburden me in some measure, especially towards the close of my discourse: I felt freedom to open the *love of Christ* to his own dear *disciples*. When the rest of the world *forsakes* him, and are *forsaken* by him, that he calls them no more, he then turns to his own, and says, *Will ye also go away?* I had a sense of the free grace of Christ to his own people, in such seasons of general apostacy, and when they themselves in some measure backslide with the world. O the free grace of Christ, that he seasonably reminds his people of their danger of *backsliding*, and invites them to persevere in their adherence to himself! I saw that *backsliding* souls, who seemed to be about to *go away* with the world, might return, and welcome, to him *immediately*; without any thing to recommend them; notwithstanding all their former backslidings. And thus my discourse was suited to my own soul's case: for, of late, I have found a great want of this sense and apprehension of divine grace; and have often been greatly distressed in my own soul, because I did not suitably apprehend this 'fountain to purge away sin;' and to have been too much labouring for spiritual life, peace of conscience, and progressive holiness, in my own strength: but now God showed me, in some measure, *the arm* of all strength, and *the fountain* of all grace. In the evening I felt solemn, devout, and sweet, resting on free grace for assistance, acceptance, and peace of conscience."

Within the space of the *next nine days* he had frequent refreshing, invigorating influences of God's Spirit; attended with complaints of dulness, and with longings after spiritual life and holy fervency.

"*Wednesday, March 6.* Spent most of the day in preparing for a journey to New England. Spent some time in prayer, with a special reference to my intended journey. Was afraid I should forsake *the fountain of living waters*, and attempt to derive satisfaction from *broken cisterns*, my dear friends and acquaintance, with whom I might meet in my journey. I looked to God to keep me from this *vanity*, as well as others. Towards night, and in the evening, was visited by some friends, some of whom, I trust, were real Christians; who discovered an affectionate regard to me, and seemed grieved that I was about to leave them; especially seeing I did not expect to make any considerable stay among them, if I should live to return from New England.<sup>392</sup> O how kind has God been to me! how has he raised up friends in every place, where his providence has called me! Friends are a great comfort; and it is God that gives them; it is *he* makes them friendly to me. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'"

The *next day* he set out on his journey; and it was about *five weeks* before he returned. The special design of this journey, he himself declares afterwards, in his diary for March 21, where, speaking of his conversing with a certain minister in New England, he says, "Contrived

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392 It seems he had a design, by what afterwards appears, to remove and live among the Indians at Susquehannah river.

with him how to raise some money among Christian friends, in order to support a colleague with me in the wilderness, (I having now spent two years in a very solitary manner,) that we might be together; as Christ sent out his disciples two and two: and as this was the principal concern I had in view, in taking this journey, so I took pains in it, and hope God will succeed it, if for his glory.” He first went into various parts of New Jersey, and visited several ministers there: then went to New York; and from thence into New England, going to various parts of Connecticut. He then returned into New Jersey; and met a number of ministers at Woodbridge, “who,” he says, “met there to consult about the affairs of Christ’s kingdom, in some important articles.” He seems, for the most part, to have been free from melancholy in this journey; and many times to have had extraordinary assistance in public ministrations, and his preaching sometimes attended with very hopeful appearances of a good effect on the auditory. He also had many seasons of special comfort and spiritual refreshment, in conversation with ministers and other Christian friends, and also in meditation and prayer when alone.

“*Saturday, April 13.* Rode home to my own house at the Forks of Delaware: was enabled to remember the goodness of the Lord, who has now preserved me while riding full six hundred miles in this journey; has kept me that none of my bones have been broken. Blessed be the Lord, who has preserved me in this tedious journey, and returned me in safety to my own house. Verily it is God that has upheld me, and guarded my goings.

“*Lord’s day, April 14.* Was disordered in body with the fatigues of my late journey; but was enabled however to preach to a considerable assembly of white people, gathered from all parts round about, with some freedom, from [Ezek. xxxiii. 11](#). ‘As I live, saith the Lord God,’ &c. Had much more assistance than I expected.”

*This week* he went a journey to Philadelphia, in order to engage the *governor* there to use his interest with the chief man of the *Six Nations*, (with whom he maintained a strict friendship,) that he would give him leave to live at Susquehannah, and instruct the Indians that are within their territories.<sup>393</sup> In his way to and from thence, he lodged with Mr. Beaty, a young presbyterian minister. He speaks of seasons of sweet spiritual refreshment that he enjoyed at his lodgings.

“*Saturday, April 20.* Rode with Mr. Beaty to Abington, to attend Mr. Treat’s administration of the sacrament, according to the method of the church of Scotland. When we arrived, we found Mr. Treat preaching; afterwards I preached a sermon from [Matt. v. 3](#). ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,’ &c. God was pleased to give me great freedom and tenderness, both in prayer and sermon: the assembly was sweetly melted, and scores were all in tears. It was, as

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393 The Indians at Susquehannah are a mixed company of many nations, speaking various languages, and few of them properly of the Six Nations. But yet the country having formerly been conquered by the Six Nations, they claim the land; and the Susquehannah Indians are a kind of vassals to them.

then I hoped, and was afterwards abundantly satisfied by conversing with them, a 'word spoken in season to many weary souls.' I was extremely tired, and my spirits much exhausted, so that I could scarcely speak loud; yet I could not help rejoicing in God.

"*Lord's day, April 21.* In the morning was calm and composed, and had some outgoings of soul after God in secret duties, and longing desires of his presence in the *sanctuary* and at his *table*; that his presence might be in the assembly; and that his children might be entertained with a *feast of fat things*. In the forenoon Mr. Treat preached. I felt some affection and tenderness during the administration of the ordinance. Mr. Beaty preached to the multitude abroad, who could not half have crowded into the meeting-house. In the season of the communion, I had comfortable and sweet apprehensions of the blissful communion of God's people, when they shall meet at their Father's table in his kingdom, in a state of perfection. In the afternoon I preached abroad, to the whole assembly, from [Rev. xiv. 4](#). 'These are they that follow the Lamb,' &c. God was pleased again to give me very great freedom and clearness, but not so much warmth as before. However, there was a most amazing attention in the whole assembly; and, as I was informed afterwards, this was a sweet season to many.

"*Monday, April 22.* I enjoyed some sweetness in retirement, in the morning. At eleven o'clock Mr. Beaty preached, with freedom and life. Then I preached from [John vii. 37](#). 'In the last day,' &c. and concluded the solemnity. Had some freedom; but not equal to what I had enjoyed before: yet in the prayer the Lord enabled me to cry, I hope, with a child-like temper, with tenderness and brokenness of heart. Came home with Mr. Beaty to his lodgings; and spent the time, while riding, and afterwards, very agreeably on divine things.

"*Tuesday, April 23.* Left Mr. Beaty's, and returned home to the Forks of Delaware: enjoyed some sweet meditations on the road, and was enabled to lift up my heart to God in prayer and praise."

The *two next days* he speaks of much bodily disorder, but of some degrees of spiritual assistance and freedom.

"*Friday, April 26.* Conversed with a Christian friend with some warmth; and felt a spirit of mortification to the world, in a very great degree. Afterwards was enabled to pray fervently, and to rely on God sweetly, for 'all things pertaining to life and godliness.' Just in the evening was visited by a dear christian friend, with whom I spent an hour or two in conversation, on the very soul of religion. There are many with whom I can talk *about religion*; but alas! I find few with whom I can talk *religion itself*: but, blessed be the Lord, there are some that love to feed on the kernel, rather than the shell."

The *next day* he went to the Irish settlement, often before mentioned, about fifteen miles distant; where he spent the *sabbath*, and preached with some considerable assistance. On *Monday* he returned, in a very weak state, to his own lodgings.

“*Tuesday, April 30.* Was scarce able to walk about, and was obliged to betake myself to bed much of the day; and spent away the time in a very solitary manner; being neither able to read, meditate, nor pray, and had none to converse with in that wilderness. Oh, how heavily does time pass away, when I can do nothing to any good purpose; but seem obliged to pass away precious time! But of late, I have seen it my duty to *divert* myself by all lawful means, that I may be fit, at least some small part of my time, to labour for God. And here is the difference between my present diversions, and those I once pursued, when in a natural state. Then I made a god of diversions, delighted in them with a neglect of God, and drew my highest satisfaction from them: now I use them as *means* to help me in *living to God*; fixedly delighting in *him*, and not in them, drawing my highest satisfaction from *him*. Then they were my *all*; now they are only means leading to my *all*. And those things that are the greatest diversion when pursued with this view, do not tend to hinder but promote my spirituality; and I see now, more than ever, that they are absolutely necessary.

“*Wednesday, May 1.* Was not able to sit up more than half the day; and yet had such recruits of strength sometimes, that I was able to write a little on a divine subject. Was grieved that I could no more live to God. In the evening had some sweetness and intensesness in secret prayer.

“*Thursday, May 2.* In the evening, being a little better in health, I walked into the woods, and enjoyed a sweet season of meditation and prayer. My thoughts ran upon [Ps. xvii. 15](#). ‘I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.’ And it was indeed a precious text to me. I longed to preach to the whole world; and it seemed to me, they must needs all be melted in hearing such precious divine truths, as I had then a view and relish of. My thoughts were exceeding clear, and my soul was refreshed. Blessed be the Lord, that in my late and present weakness, now for many days together, my mind is not gloomy, as at some other times.

“*Friday, May 3.* Felt a little vigour of body and mind in the morning; had some freedom, strength, and sweetness in prayer. Rode to, and spent some time with, my Indians. In the evening again retiring into the woods, I enjoyed some sweet meditations on [Isa. liii. 1](#). ‘Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him,’ &c.”

The *three next days* were spent in much weakness of body: but yet he enjoyed some assistance in public and private duties; and seems to have remained free from melancholy.

“*Tuesday, May 7.* Spent the day mainly in making preparation for a journey into the wilderness. Was still weak, and concerned how I should perform so difficult a journey. Spent some time in prayer for the divine blessing, direction, and protection in my intended journey; but wanted bodily strength to spend the day in fasting and prayer.”

The *next day* he set out on his journey to Susquehannah, with his interpreter. He endured great hardships and fatigues in his way thither through a hideous wilderness; where after having lodged one night in the open woods, he was overtaken with a north-easterly storm, in which he was almost ready to perish. Having no manner of shelter, and not being able

to make a fire in so great a rain, he could have no comfort if he stopt; therefore he determined to go forward in hopes of meeting with some shelter, without which he thought it impossible to live the night through; but their horses happening to have eat poison (for want of other food) at a place where they lodged the night before were so sick that they could neither ride nor lead them, but were obliged to drive them and travel on foot; until, through the mercy of God, just at dusk they came to a bark-but, where they lodged that night. After he came to Susquehannah, he travelled about a hundred miles on the river, and visited many towns and settlements of the Indians; saw some of seven or eight distinct tribes; and preached to different nations by different interpreters. He was sometimes much discouraged, and sunk in his spirits, through the opposition that appeared in the Indians to Christianity. At other times he was encouraged by the disposition that some of these people manifested to hear, and willingness to be instructed. He here met with some that had formerly been his hearers at Kaunaumeeek, and had removed hither; who saw and heard him again with great joy. He spent a fortnight among the Indians on this river, and passed through considerable labours and hardships, frequently lodging on the ground, and sometimes in the open air; and at length he fell extremely ill, as he was riding in the wilderness, being seized with an ague, followed with a burning fever, and extreme pains in his head and bowels, attended with a great evacuation of blood; so that he thought he must have perished in the wilderness. But at last coming to an Indian trader's hut, he got leave to stay there; and though without physic or food proper for him, it pleased God, after about a week's distress, to relieve him so far that he was able to ride. He returned homewards from Juncauta, an island far down the river; where was a considerable number of Indians, who appeared more free from prejudices against Christianity, than most of the other Indians. He arrived at the Forks of Delaware on *Thursday*, May 30, after having rode in this journey about three hundred and forty miles.<sup>394</sup> He came home in a very weak state, and under dejection of mind; which was a great hinderance to him in religious exercises. However, on the sabbath, after having preached to the Indians, he preached to the *white* people with some success, from [Isa. liii. 10](#). 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him,' &c. some being awakened by his preaching. The next day he was much exercised for want of spiritual life and fervency.

*Tuesday, June 4.* Towards evening was in distress for God's presence, and a sense of divine things: withdrew myself to the woods, and spent near an hour in prayer and meditation; and I think the Lord had compassion on me, and gave me some sense of divine things; which was indeed refreshing and quickening to me. My soul enjoyed intenseness and freedom in prayer, so that it grieved me to leave the place.

*Wednesday, June 5.* Felt thirsting desires after God in the morning. In the evening enjoyed a precious season of retirement: was favoured with some clear and sweet meditations

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394 This is the journey which he occasionally mentions in his printed Journal.



upon a sacred text; divine things opened with clearness and certainty, and had a divine stamp upon them. My soul was also enlarged and refreshed in prayer; and I delighted to continue in the duty; and was sweetly assisted in praying for fellow-Christians, and my dear brethren in the ministry. Blessed be the dear Lord for such enjoyments. O how sweet and precious it is, to have a clear apprehension and tender sense of the *mystery of godliness*, of true holiness, and likeness to the best of beings! O what a blessedness it is, to be as much like God, as it is possible for a creature to be like his great Creator! Lord, give me more of *thy likeness*; 'I shall be satisfied, when I awake with it.'

*Thursday, June 6.* Was engaged a considerable part of the day in meditation and study on divine subjects. Enjoyed some special freedom, clearness, and sweetness in meditation. O how refreshing it is, to be enabled to improve time well!"

The *next day* he went a journey of near fifty miles to Neshaminy, to assist at a sacramental occasion, to he attended at Mr. Beaty's meeting-house; being invited thither by him and his people.

"*Saturday, June 8.* Was exceeding weak and fatigued with riding in the heat yesterday: but being desired, I preached in the afternoon, to a crowded audience, from [Isa. xl. 1.](#) 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.' God was pleased to give me great freedom, in opening the sorrows of God's people, and in setting before them comforting considerations. And, blessed be the Lord, it was a sweet melting season in the assembly.

"*Lord's day, June 9.* Felt some longing desires of the presence of God to be with his people on the solemn occasion of the day. In the forenoon Mr. Beaty preached; and there appeared some warmth in the assembly. Afterwards I assisted in the administration of the Lord's supper: and towards the close of it, I discoursed to the multitude *extempore*, with some reference to that sacred passage, [Isa. liii. 10.](#) 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.' Here God gave me great assistance in addressing sinners: and the word was attended with amazing power; many scores, if not hundreds, in that great assembly, consisting of three or four thousand, were much affected; so that there was a 'very great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon.' In the evening I could hardly look any body in the face, because of the imperfections I saw in my performances in the day past.

"*Monday, June 10.* Preached with a good degree of clearness and some sweet warmth, from [Psal. xvii. 15.](#) 'I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' And blessed be God, there was a great solemnity and attention in the assembly, and sweet refreshment among God's people; as was evident then, and afterwards.

"*Tuesday, June 11.* Spent the day mainly in conversation with dear Christian friends; and enjoyed some sweet sense of divine things. O how desirable it is, to keep company with God's dear children! These are the 'excellent ones of the earth in whom,' I can truly say, 'is all my delight.' O what delight will it afford, to meet them all in a state of perfection! Lord, prepare me for that state."

The *next day* he left Mr. Beaty's, and went to Maiden-head in New Jersey; and spent the *next seven days* in a comfortable state of mind, visiting several ministers in those parts.

"*Tuesday, June 18.* Set out from New Brunswick with a design to visit some Indians at a place called *Crossweeksung* in New Jersey, towards the sea.<sup>395</sup> In the afternoon, came to a place called *Cranberry*, and meeting with a serious minister, Mr. Macknight, I lodged there with him. Had some enlargement and freedom in prayer with a number of people."

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395 Mr. Brainerd having, when at Boston, wrote and left with a friend a brief relation of facts touching his labours with the Indians, and reception among them, during the space of time between November 5, 1744, and June 19, 1745, (with a view to connect his Narrative, addressed to Mr. Pemberton. and his Journal, in case they should ever be reprinted,) concludes the same with this passage: "As my body was very feeble, so my mind was scarce ever so much damped and discouraged about the conversion of the Indians, as at this time. And in this state of body and mind I made my first visit to the Indians in New Jersey, where God was pleased to display his power and grace in the remarkable manner that I have represented in my printed Journal."

## PART VII.

FROM HIS BEGINNING TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSSWEEKSUNG, TILL HE RETURNED FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH ILL WITH THE CONSUMPTION WHEREOF HE DIED.

We are now come to that part of Mr. Brainerd's life, wherein he had his greatest *success*, in his labours for the good of souls, and in his particular business as a missionary to the *Indians*. An account of which, if here published, would doubtless be very entertaining to the reader, after he has seen, by the preceding parts of this account of his life, how great and long-continued his desires for the spiritual good of this sort of people were; how he prayed, laboured, and wrestled, and how much he denied himself, and suffered, to this end. After all Mr. Brainerd's agonizing in prayer, and travailing in birth, for the conversion of Indians, and all the interchanges of his raised hopes and expectations, and then disappointments and discouragements; and after waiting in a way of persevering prayer, labour, and suffering, as it were through a long *night*; at length the *day* dawns: "Weeping continues for a night, but joy comes in the morning. He went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and now he comes with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The desired event is brought to pass at last; but at a time, in a place, and upon subjects, that scarce ever entered into his heart. An account of this would undoubtedly now much gratify the Christian reader: and it should have been here inserted, as it stands in his diary, had it not been, that a particular account of this glorious and wonderful success was drawn up by Mr. Brainerd himself, pursuant to the order of the Honourable Society in Scotland, and published by him in his lifetime. I hope those of my readers, who are not already possessed of his public *Journal*, will procure one of those books, that they may not be without that which in some respects is the most *remarkable*, and to a Christian mind would be the most *pleasant* part, of the whole story. That the reader who is furnished with one of those books, may know the *place* where the defects of this history are to be supplied from thence, I shall either expressly observe it as I go along, or else make a dash or stroke thus ; which when the reader finds in this 7th part of this history, he is to understand by it, that in that place something in Mr. Brainerd's *diary*, worth observing, is *left out*, because the same for substance was published before in his printed *Journal*. †

"*Wednesday, June 19, 1745.* Rode to the Indians at Crossweeksung: found few at home; discoursed to them, however, and observed them very serious and attentive. At night I was extremely worn out, and scarce able to walk or sit up. Oh, how tiresome is earth! how dull the body!

"*Thursday, June 20.* Towards night preached to the Indians again; and had more hearers than before. In the evening enjoyed some peace and serenity of mind, some composure and comfort in prayer alone; and was enabled to lift up my head with some degree of joy, under

an apprehension that my redemption draws nigh. Oh, blessed be God, that there remains a rest to his poor weary people!

“*Friday, June 21.* Rode to Freehold, to see Mr. William Tennent; and spent the day comfortably with him. My sinking spirits were a little raised and encouraged; and I felt my soul breathing after God, in the midst of Christian conversation. And in the evening, was refreshed in secret prayer; saw myself a poor worthless creature, without wisdom to direct, or strength to help myself. Oh, blessed be God, that lays me under a happy, a blessed necessity of living upon himself!

“*Saturday, June 22.* About noon rode to the Indians again; and near night preached to them. Found my body much strengthened, and was enabled to speak with abundant plainness and warmth. And the power of God evidently attended the word; so that sundry persons were brought under great concern for their souls, and made to shed many tears, and to wish for Christ to save them. My soul was much refreshed, and quickened in my work: and I could not but spend much time with them, in order to open both their misery and remedy. This was indeed a sweet afternoon to me. While riding, before I came to the Indians, my spirits were refreshed, and my soul enabled to cry to God almost incessantly, for many miles together. In the evening also I found the consolations of God were not small: I was then willing to live, and in some respects desirous of it, that I might do something for the dear kingdom of Christ; and yet death appeared pleasant: so that I was in some measure *in a strait between two*, having a desire to depart. I am often weary of this world, and want to leave it on that account; but it is desirable to be *drawn*, rather than *driven*, out of it.”

In the *four next days* is nothing remarkable in his diary, but what is in his public Journal.

*Thursday, June 27.* My soul rejoiced to find, that God enabled me to be faithful, and that he was pleased to awaken these poor Indians by my means. O how heart-reviving and soul-refreshing is it to me to see the fruit of my labours!

*Friday, June 28.* In the evening my soul was revived, and my heart lifted up to God in prayer, for my poor Indians, myself, and friends, and the dear church of God. And O how refreshing, how sweet was this! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not his goodness and tender mercy.

“*Saturday, June 29.* Preached twice to the Indians; and could not but wonder at their seriousness, and the strictness of their attention. Blessed be God that has inclined their hearts to hear. And O how refreshing it is to me, to see them attend with such uncommon diligence and affection, with tears in their eyes, and concern in their hearts! In the evening could not but lift up my heart to God in prayer, while riding to my lodgings; and blessed be his name, had assistance and freedom. O how much *better than life* is the presence of God!”

His diary gives an account of nothing remarkable on the *two next days*, besides what is in his public Journal; excepting his heart being lifted up with thankfulness, rejoicing in God, &c.

“*Tuesday, July 2.* Rode from the Indians to Brunswick, near forty miles, and lodged there. Felt my heart drawn out after God in prayer, almost all the forenoon; especially while riding. And in the evening, could not help crying to God for those poor Indians; and after I went to bed, my heart continued to go out to God for them, till I dropped asleep. O blessed be God that I may pray!”

He was so fatigued by constant preaching to these Indians, yielding to their earnest and importunate desires, that he found it necessary to give himself some relaxation. He spent therefore about a week in New Jersey, after he left these Indians, visiting several ministers, and performing some necessary business, before he went to the Forks of Delaware. And though he was very weak in body, yet he seems to have been strong in spirit. On *Friday, July 12*, he arrived at his own house in the Forks of Delaware; continuing still free from melancholy; from day to day, enjoying freedom, assistance, and refreshment in the inner man. But on *Wednesday*, the next week, he seems to have had some melancholy thoughts about his doing so little for God, being so much hindered by weakness of body.

“*Thursday, July 18.* Longed to spend the little inch of time I have in the world more for God. Felt a spirit of seriousness, tenderness, sweetness, and devotion; and wished to spend the whole night in prayer and communion with God.

“*Friday, July 19.* In the evening walked abroad for prayer and meditation, and enjoyed composure and freedom in these sweet exercises; especially in meditation on [Rev. iii. 12](#). ‘Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God,’ &c. This was then a delightful theme to me, and it refreshed my soul to dwell upon it. Oh, when shall I *go no more out* from the service and enjoyment of the dear Lord! *Lord, hasten the blessed day.*“

Within the space of the *next six days* he speaks of much inward refreshment and enlargement, from time to time.

“*Friday, July 26.* In the evening God was pleased to help me in prayer, beyond what I have experienced for some time; especially my soul was drawn out for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom, and for the conversion of my poor people: and my soul relied on God for the accomplishment of that great work. Oh, how sweet were the thoughts of *death* to me at this time! Oh, how I longed to be with Christ, to be employed in the glorious work of angels, and with an angel’s freedom, vigour, and delight! And yet how willing was I to stay awhile on earth, that I might do something, if the Lord pleased, for his interest in the world! My soul, my very soul, longed for the ingathering of the poor heathen; and I cried to God for them most willingly and heartily; I could not but cry. This was a sweet season; for I had some lively taste of heaven, and a temper of mind suited in some measure to the employments and entertainments of it. My soul was grieved to leave the place; but my body was weak and

worn out, and it was near nine o'clock. Oh, I longed that the remaining part of my life might be filled up with more fervency and activity in the things of God! Oh the inward peace, composure, and God-like serenity of such a frame! heaven must needs differ from this only in degree, and not in kind. *Lord, ever give me this bread of life.*"

Much of this frame seemed to continue the *next day*.

"*Lord's day, July 28.* In the evening my soul was melted, and my heart broken, with a sense of past barrenness and deadness: and oh, how I then longed to live to God, and bring forth much fruit to his glory!

"*Monday, July 29.* Was much exercised with a sense of vileness, with guilt and shame before God."

For other things remarkable, while he was this time at the Forks of Delaware, the reader must be referred to his public *Journal*. As particularly for his labours and success there among the Indians.

On *Wednesday, July 31*, he set out on his return to Crossweeksung, and arrived there the *next day*. In his way thither, he had longing desires that he might come to the Indians there, in the 'fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;' attended with a sense of his own great weakness, dependence, and worthlessness.

"*Friday, Aug. 2.* In the evening I retired, and my soul was drawn out in prayer to God; especially for my poor people, to whom I had sent word that they might gather together, that I might preach to them the next day. I was much enlarged in praying for their saving conversion; and scarce ever found my desires of any thing of this nature so sensibly and clearly (to my own satisfaction) disinterested, and free from selfish views. It seemed to me I had no care, or hardly any desire, to be the instrument of so glorious a work, as I wished and prayed for among the Indians: if the blessed work might be accomplished to the honour of God, and the enlargement of the dear Redeemer's kingdom, this was all my desire and care; and for this mercy I hoped, but with trembling; for I felt what Job expresses, [chap. ix. 16](#). 'If I had called, and he had answered,' &c. My rising hopes, respecting the conversion of the Indians, have been so often dashed, that my spirit is as it were broken, and courage wasted, and I hardly dare hope."

Concerning his labours and marvellous success amongst the Indians, for the *following ten days*, let the reader see his public *Journal*. The things worthy of note in his *diary*, not there published, are his earnest and importunate prayers for the Indians, and the *travail of his soul* for them from day to day; and his great refreshment and joy in beholding the wonderful mercy of God, and the glorious manifestations of his power and grace in his work among them; and his ardent thanksgivings to God; his heart rejoicing in Christ, as King of his church, and King of his soul: in particular, at the sacrament of the Lord's supper at Mr. Macknight's meeting-house; together with a sense of his own exceeding unworthiness, which sometimes was attended with dejection and melancholy.

“*Monday, Aug. 19.* Near noon, I rode to Freehold, and preached to a considerable assembly, from *Matt. v. 3.* ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,’ &c. It pleased God to leave me to be very dry and barren; so that I do not remember to have been so straitened for a whole twelve-month past. God is just, and he has made my soul acquiesce in his will in this regard. It is contrary to *flesh and blood*, to be cut off from all freedom, in a large auditory, where their expectations were much raised: but so it was with me; and God helped me to say *Amen* to it; ‘Good is the will of the Lord.’ In the evening I felt quiet and composed, and had freedom and comfort in secret prayer.

*Tuesday, Aug. 20.* Was composed and comfortable, still in a resigned frame. Travelled from Mr. Tennent’s in Freehold to Elizabeth-town. Was refreshed to see friends, and relate to them what God had done, and was still doing, among my poor people.

*Wednesday, Aug. 21.* Spent the forenoon in conversation with Mr. Dickinson, contriving something for the settlement of the Indians together in a body, that they might be under better advantages for instruction. In the afternoon spent time agreeably with other friends; wrote to my brother at college: but was grieved that time slid away, while I did so little for God.

“*Friday, Aug. 23.* In the morning was very weak; but favoured with some freedom and sweetness in prayer: was composed and comfortable in mind. After noon rode to Crossweeksung to my poor people.

“*Saturday, Aug. 24.* Had composure and peace, while riding from the Indians to my lodgings: was enabled to pour out my soul to God for dear friends in New England. Felt a sweet tender frame of spirit: my soul was composed and refreshed in God. Had likewise freedom and earnestness in praying for my dear people: blessed be God. ‘O the peace of God that passeth all understanding!’ It is impossible to describe time sweet peace of conscience, and tenderness of soul, I then enjoyed. O the blessed foretastes of heaven!

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 25.* I rode to my lodgings in the evening, blessing the Lord for his gracious visitation of the Indians, and the soul-refreshing things I had seen time day past amongst them, and praying that God would still carry on his divine work among them.

“*Monday, Aug. 26.* I went from the Indians to my lodgings, rejoicing for the goodness of God to my poor people; and enjoyed freedom of soul in prayer, and other duties, in the evening. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*“

The *next day* he set out on a journey towards the Forks of Delaware, designing to go from thence to Susquehannah, before he returned to Crossweeksung. It was *five days* from his departure from Crossweeksung, before he reached the Forks, going round by the way of Philadelphia, and waiting on the governor of Pennsylvania, to get a recommendation from him to the chiefs of the Indians; which he obtained. He speaks of much comfort and spiritual refreshment in this journey; and also a sense of his exceeding unworthiness, thinking himself the meanest creature that ever lived.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 1.* [At the Forks of Delaware] God gave me the *spirit of prayer*, and it was a blessed season in that respect. My soul cried to God for mercy, in an affectionate manner. In the evening also my soul rejoiced in God.”

His private *diary* has nothing remarkable, for the *two next days*, but what is in his public *Journal*.

“*Wednesday, Sept. 4.* Rode fifteen miles to an Irish settlement, and preached there from [Luke xiv. 22](#). ‘And yet there is room.’ God was pleased to afford me some tenderness and enlargement in the first prayer, and much freedom, as well as warmth, in sermon. There were many tears in the assembly: the people of God seemed to melt, and others to be in some measure awakened. Blessed be the Lord, that lets me see his work going on in one place and another.”

The account for *Thursday* is the same for substance as in his public *Journal*.

“*Friday, Sept. 6.* Enjoyed some freedom and intensesness of mind in prayer alone; and longed to have my soul more warmed with divine and heavenly things. Was somewhat melancholy towards night, and longed to die and quit a scene of sin and darkness; but was a little supported in prayer.”

This melancholy continued the *next day*.

*Lord’s day, Sept. 8.* In the evening God was pleased to enlarge me in prayer, and give me freedom at the throne of grace. I cried to God for the enlargement of his kingdom in the world, and in particular among my dear people; was also enabled to pray for many dear ministers of my acquaintance, both in these parts and in New England; and also for other dear friends in New England. And my soul was so engaged and enlarged in the sweet exercise, that I spent near an hour in it, and knew not how to leave the mercy-seat. Oh, how I delighted to pray and cry to God! I saw God was both able and willing to do all that I desired, for myself and friends, and his church in general. I was likewise much enlarged and assisted in family prayer, And afterwards, when I was just going to bed, God helped me to renew my petitions with ardency and freedom. Oh, it was to me a blessed evening of prayer! *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*”

The *next day* he set out from the Forks of Delaware to go to Susquehannah. And on the *fifth day* of his journey he arrived at Shaumoking, a large Indian town on Susquehannah river. He performed the journey under a considerable degree of melancholy.

“*Saturday, Sept. 14.* [At Shaumoking] In the evening my soul was enlarged and sweetly engaged in prayer; especially that God would set up his kingdom in this place, where the *devil* now reigns in the most eminent manner. And I was enabled to ask this for God, for his glory, and because I longed for the enlargement of his kingdom, to the honour of his dear name. I could appeal to God with the greatest freedom, that he knew it was *his* dear cause, and not my own, that engaged my heart: and my soul cried, ‘Lord, set up thy kingdom, for thine own glory. Glorify thyself; and I shall rejoice. Get honour to thy blessed name; and



this is all I desire. Do with me just what thou wilt. Blessed be thy name for ever, that thou art God, and that thou wilt glorify thyself. O that the whole world might glorify thee! O let these poor people be brought to know thee, and love thee, for the glory of thy dear ever-blessed name!" I could not but hope, that God would bring in these miserable, wicked Indians; though there appeared little human probability of it; for they were then *dancing* and *revelling*, as if possessed by the *devil*. But yet I *hoped*, though *against hope*, that God would be glorified, and that his name would be glorified by these poor Indians. I continued long in prayer and praise to God; and had great freedom, enlargement, and sweetness, remembering dear friends in New England, as well as the people of my charge. Was entirely free from that dejection of spirit with which I am frequently exercised. *Blessed be God!*"

His *diary from this time to Sept. 22*, (the last day of his continuance among the Indians at Susquehannah,) is not legible, by reason of the badness of the ink. It was probably written with the juice of some berries found in the woods, having no other ink in that wilderness. So that for this space of time the reader must be wholly referred to his public *Journal*.

On *Monday Sept. 23*, he left the Indians, in order to return to the Forks of Delaware, in a very weak state of body, and under dejection of mind, which continued the *two first days* of his journey.

"*Wednesday, Sept. 25*. Rode still homeward. In the forenoon enjoyed freedom and intenseness of mind in meditation on [Job xlii. 5, 6](#). 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' The Lord gave me clearness to penetrate into the sweet truths contained in that text. It was a comfortable and sweet season to me.

"*Thursday, Sept. 26*. Was still much disordered in body, and able to ride but slowly. Continued my journey, however. Near night, arrived at the Irish settlement, about fifteen miles from mine own house. This day, while riding, I was much exercised with a sense of my barrenness; and verily thought there was no creature that had any true grace, but what was more spiritual and fruitful. I could not think that any of God's children made so poor a hand of living to God.

"*Friday, Sept. 27*. Spent a considerable time in the morning in prayer and praise to God. My mind was somewhat intense in the duty, and my heart in some degree warmed with a sense of divine things. My soul was melted to think that 'God had accounted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,' notwithstanding all my barrenness and deadness. My soul was also in some measure enlarged in prayer for the dear people of my charge, as well as for other dear friends. In the afternoon visited some Christian friends, and spent the time, I think, profitably: my heart was warmed, and more engaged in the things of God. In the evening I enjoyed enlargement, warmth, and comfort in prayer: my soul relied on God for assistance and grace to enable me to do something in his cause; my heart was drawn out in thankfulness to God for what he had done for his own glory among my poor people of late.

I felt encouraged to proceed in his work, being persuaded of his power, and hoping *his arm* might be further *revealed*, for the enlargement of his dear kingdom: and my soul 'rejoiced in hope of the glory of God,' in hope of the advancement of his declarative glory in the world, as well as of enjoying him in a world of glory. *Oh, blessed be God, the living God, for ever!*"

He continued in this comfortable, sweet frame of mind the *two next days*. On the *day following* he went to his own house, in the Forks of Delaware, and continued still in the same frame. The *next day*, which was *Tuesday*, he visited his Indians. *Wednesday* he spent mostly in writing the meditations he had in his late journey in Susquehannah. On *Thursday* he left the Forks of Delaware, and travelled towards Crossweeksung, where he arrived on *Saturday*, (October 5,) and continued from day to day in a comfortable state of mind. There is nothing material in his *diary* for *this day and the next*, but what is in his printed Journal.

*Monday, Oct. 7.* Being called by the church and people of East Hampton on Long Island, as a member of a council, to assist and advise in affairs of difficulty in that church, I set out on my journey this morning, before it was well light, and travelled to Elizabeth-town, and there lodged. Enjoyed some comfort on the road, in conversation with Mr. Wm. Tennent, who was sent for on the same business."

He prosecuted his journey with the other ministers who were sent for; and did not return till Oct. 24. While he was at East Hampton, the importance of the business that the council were come upon, lay with such weight on his mind, and he was so concerned for the interest of religion in that place, that he slept but little for several nights successively. In his way to and fro from East Hampton, he had several seasons of sweet refreshment, wherein his soul was enlarged and comforted with divine consolations, in secret retirement; and he had special assistance in public ministerial performances in the house of God: and yet, at the same time, a sense of extreme vileness and unprofitableness. From time to time he speaks of soul-refreshment and comfort in conversation with the ministers that travelled with him; and seems to have little or nothing of melancholy, till he came to the west end of Long Island, in his return. After that he was oppressed with dejection and gloominess of mind, for several days together. For an account of the *four first days* after his return from his journey, I refer the reader to his public *Journal*.

"*Monday, Oct. 28.* Had an evening of sweet refreshing; my thoughts were raised to a blessed eternity; my soul was melted with desires of perfect holiness, and perfectly glorifying God.

"*Tuesday, Oct. 29.* About noon rode and viewed the Indian lands at Cranberry: was much dejected, and greatly perplexed in mind; knew not how to see any body again, my soul was so sunk within me. Oh that these trials might make me more humble and holy. Oh that God would keep me from giving way to sinful dejection, which may hinder my usefulness.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 30.* My soul was refreshed with a view of the continuance of God’s blessed work among the Indians.

“*Thursday, Oct. 31.* Spent most of the day in writing; enjoyed not much spiritual comfort; but was not so much sunk with melancholy as at some other times.”

“*Friday, Nov. 1.* See the public *Journal*.

“*Saturday, Nov. 2.* Spent the day with the Indians, and wrote some things of importance; and longed to do more for God than I did or could do in this present and imperfect state.”

*Nov. 3, and 4.* See the public *Journal*. *Tuesday, Nov. 5.* He left the Indians, and spent the remaining part of this week in travelling to various parts of New Jersey, in order to get a *collection* for the use of the Indians, and to obtain a *schoolmaster* to instruct them. And in the mean time he speaks of very sweet refreshment and entertainment with Christian friends, and of his being sweetly employed, while riding, in meditation on divine subjects; his heart being enlarged, his mind clear, his spirit refreshed with divine truths, and his “heart burning within him, while he went by the way and the Lord opened to him the Scriptures.”

“*Lord’s day, Nov. 10.* [At Elizabeth-town.] Was comfortable in the morning, both in body and mind: preached in the forenoon from [2 Cor. v. 20](#). ‘Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,’ &c. God was pleased to give me freedom and fervency in my discourse; and the presence of God seemed to be in the assembly; numbers were affected, and there were many tears among them. In the afternoon preached from [Luke xiv. 22](#). ‘And yet there is room.’ Was favoured with divine assistance in the first prayer, and poured out my soul to God with a filial temper of mind; the living God also assisted me in the sermon.”

The *next day* he went to New-town on Long Island, to a meeting of the Presbytery. He speaks of some sweet meditations he had while there, on “Christ delivering up the kingdom to the Father;” and of his soul being much refreshed and warmed with the consideration of that blissful day.

“*Friday, Nov. 15.* Could not cross the ferry by reason of the violence of the wind; nor could I enjoy any place of retirement at the ferry-house; so that I was in perplexity. Yet God gave me some satisfaction and sweetness in meditation, and in lifting up my heart to him in the midst of company. And although some were drinking and talking profanely, which was indeed a grief to me, yet my mind was calm and composed. And I could not but bless God, that I was not like to spend an eternity in such company. In the evening I sat down and wrote with composure and freedom; and can say (through pure grace) it was a comfortable evening to my soul, an evening I was enabled to spend in the service of God.

“*Saturday, Nov. 16.* Crossed the ferry about ten o’clock; arrived at Elizabeth-town near night. Was in a calm, composed frame of mind, and felt an entire resignation with respect to a loss I had lately sustained, in having my horse stolen from me the last *Wednesday* night, at New-town. Had some longings of soul for the dear people of Elizabeth-town, that God would *pour out his Spirit* upon them, and *revive his work* amongst them.”

He spent the *four next days* at Elizabeth-town, for the most part in a free and comfortable state of mind, intensely engaged in the service of God, and enjoying, at some times, the special assistances of his Spirit. On *Thursday*, this week, he rode to Freehold, and spent the day under considerable dejection.

“*Friday, Nov. 22.* Rode to Mr. Tennent’s, and from thence to Crossweeksung. Had but little freedom in meditation, while riding; which was a grief and burden to my soul. Oh that I could fill up all my time, whether in the house or by the way, for God! I was enabled, I think, this day to give up my soul to God, and put over all my concerns into his hands; and found some real consolation in the thought of being entirely at the divine disposal, and having no will or interest of my own. I have received my *all* from God; oh that I could return my *all* to God! Surely God is worthy of my highest affection, and most devout adoration; he is infinitely worthy, that I should make him my last end, and live for ever to him. Oh that I might never more, in any one instance, live to myself!

“*Saturday, Nov. 23.* Visited my people; spent the day with them: wrote some things of importance. But was pretty much dejected most of the day.”

There is nothing very material in his *diary* for the *four next days*, but what is also in his public *Journal*.

“*Thursday, Nov. 28.* I enjoyed some divine comfort and fervency in the public exercise, and afterwards. And while riding to my lodgings, was favoured with some sweet meditations on [Luke ix. 31](#). ‘Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.’ My thoughts ran with freedom, and I saw and felt what a glorious subject the *death* of CHRIST is for *glorified* souls to dwell upon in their conversation. Oh, the *death* of CHRIST! how infinitely *precious*!”

For the *three next days*, see the public *Journal*.

“*Monday, Dec. 2.* Was much affected with grief, that I had not lived more to God; and felt strong resolutions to double my diligence in my Master’s service.”

After this he went to a meeting of the *Presbytery* at a place in New Jersey called *Connecticut-Farms*; which occasioned his absence from his people the remainder of this week. He speaks of some seasons of sweetness, solemnity, and spiritual affection in his absence. Lord’s day, *Dec. 8.* See his public *Journal*.

“*Monday, Dec. 9.* Spent most of the day in procuring provisions, in order to my setting up house-keeping among the Indians. Enjoyed little satisfaction through the day, being very much out of my element.

“*Tuesday, Dec. 10.* Was engaged in the same business as yesterday. Towards night, got into my own house.”<sup>396</sup>

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396 This is the third house that he built to dwell in by himself among the Indians: the first at Kaunaumeeek in the county of Albany; the second at the Forks of Delaware in Pennsylvania, and now this at Crossweeksung in New Jersey.

“Wednesday, Dec. 11. Spent the forenoon in necessary labour about my house. In the afternoon, rode out upon business, and spent the evening with some satisfaction among friends in conversation on a serious and profitable subject.”

Thursday, Dec. 12. See his public *Journal*.

“Friday, Dec. 13. Spent the day mainly in labour about my house. In the evening, spent some time in writing; but was very weary, and much outdone with the labour of the day.

“Saturday, Dec. 14. Rose early, and wrote by candlelight some considerable time: spent most of the day in writing; but was somewhat dejected. In the evening was exercised with a pain in my head.”

For the *two next days* see his public *Journal*. The *remainder of this week* he spent chiefly in writing: some part of the time under a degree of melancholy; but some part of it with a sweet ardency in religion.

“Saturday, Dec. 21. After my labours with the Indians, I spent some time in writing some things divine and solemn; and was much wearied with the labours of the day; found that my spirits were extremely spent, and that I could do no more. I am conscious to myself that my labours are as great and constant as my nature will bear, and that ordinarily I go to the extent of my strength; so that I do all I can: but the misery is, I do not labour with that heavenly temper, that single eye to the glory of God, that I long for.”

Lord's day, Dec. 22. See the public *Journal*.

“Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 23 and 24. Spent these days in writing, with the utmost diligence. Felt in the main a sweet mortification to the world, and a desire to live and labour only for God; but wanted more warmth and spirituality, a more sensible and affectionate regard to the glory of God.”

Wednesday, Dec. 25. See the public *Journal*.

“Thursday and Friday, Dec. 26 and 27. Laboured in my studies, to the utmost of my strength; and though I felt a steady disposition of mind to live to God, and that I had nothing in this world to live for; yet I did not find that sensible affection in the service of God, that I wanted to have; my heart seemed barren, though my head and hands were full of labour.”

For the *four next days* see his public *Journal*.<sup>397</sup>

“Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1746. I am this day beginning a *new year*; and God has carried me through numerous trials and labours in the past. He has amazingly supported my feeble frame; for ‘having obtained help of God, I continue to this day.’ O that I might live nearer to God this year than I did the last! The business to which I have been called, and which I have been enabled to go through, I know, has been as great as nature could bear up under, and what would have sunk and overcome me quite, without special support. But alas, alas! though I have done the labours, and endured the trials, *with what spirit* have I done the one,

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397 On the first of these days he wrote the sixth letter published among his remains.

and borne the other? how *cold* has been the frame of my heart oftentimes! and how little have I sensibly eyed the glory of God, in all my doings and sufferings! I have found that I could have no peace without filling up all my time with labours; and thus 'necessity has been laid upon me;' yea, in that respect, I have loved to labour: but the misery is, I could not sensibly labour *for God*, as I would have done. May I for the future be enabled more sensibly to make the glory of God my *all!*"

For the space *from this time till the next Monday*, see the public *Journal*.

"*Monday, Jan. 6.* Being very weak in body, I rode for my health. While riding, my thoughts were sweetly engaged, for a time, upon 'the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which brake in pieces' all before it, and 'waxed great, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth;' and I longed that Jesus should 'take to himself his great power, and reign to the ends of the earth.' And oh, how sweet were the moments, wherein I felt my soul warm with hopes of the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom! I wanted nothing else but that Christ should reign, to the glory of his blessed name."

The *next day* he complains of want of fervency.

"*Wednesday, Jan. 8.* In the evening my heart was drawn out after God in secret: my soul was refreshed and quickened; and, I trust, faith was in exercise. I had great hopes of the ingathering of precious souls to Christ; not only among my own people, but others also. I was sweetly resigned and composed under my bodily weakness; and was willing to live or die, and desirous to labour for God to the utmost of my strength.

"*Thursday, Jan. 9.* Was still very weak, and much exercised with vapoury disorders. In the evening enjoyed some enlargement and spirituality in prayer. Oh that I could always spend my time profitably, both in health and weakness!

"*Friday, Jan. 10.* My soul was in a sweet, calm, composed frame, and my heart filled with love to all the world; and Christian simplicity and tenderness seemed then to prevail and reign within me. Near night visited a serious baptist minister, and had some agreeable conversation with him; and found that I could taste God in friends."

For the *four next days* see the public *Journal*.

"*Wednesday, Jan. 15.* My spirits were very low and flat, and I could not but think I was a burden to God's earth; and could scarcely look any body in the face, through shame and sense of barrenness. *God pity a poor unprofitable creature!*"

The *two next days* he had some comfort and refreshment. For the *two following days* see the public *Journal*. The *next day* he set out on a journey to Elizabeth-town, to confer with the *Correspondents*, at their meeting there; and enjoyed much spiritual refreshment from day to day, through this week. The things expressed in this space of time, are such as these; serenity, composure, sweetness, and tenderness of soul; thanksgiving to God for his success among the Indians; delight in prayer and praise; sweet and profitable meditations on various divine subjects; longing for more love, for more vigour to live to God, for a life

more entirely devoted to him, that he might spend all his time profitably for God and in his cause; conversing on spiritual subjects with affection; and lamentation for unprofitableness.

“*Lord’s day, Jan. 26.* [At Connecticut-Farms.] Was calm and composed. Was made sensible of my utter inability to preach without divine help; and was in some good measure willing to leave it with God, to give or withhold assistance, as he saw would be most for his own glory. Was favoured with a considerable degree of assistance in my public work. After public worship, I was in a sweet and solemn frame of mind, thankful to God that he had made me in some measure faithful in addressing precious souls, but grieved that I had been no more fervent in my work; and was tenderly affected towards all the world, longing that every sinner might be saved; and could not have entertained any bitterness towards the worst enemy living. In the evening rode to Elizabeth-town: while riding was almost constantly engaged in lifting up my heart to God, lest I should lose that sweet heavenly solemnity and composure of soul I then enjoyed. Afterwards was pleased to think that God *reigneth*; and thought I could never be uneasy with any of his dispensations; but must be entirely satisfied, whatever trials he should cause me or his church to encounter. Never felt more sedateness, divine serenity, and composure of mind; could freely have left the dearest earthly friend, for the society of ‘angels, and spirits of just men made perfect:’ my affections soared aloft to the blessed Author of every dear enjoyment. I viewed the emptiness and unsatisfactory nature of the most desirable earthly objects, any further than God is seen in them: and longed for a life of spirituality and inward purity; without which, I saw, there could be no true pleasure.”

He retained a great degree of this excellent frame of mind the *four next days*. As to his public services for and among the Indians, and his success at this time, see the public *Journal*.

“*Saturday, Feb. 1.* Towards night enjoyed some of the clearest thoughts on a divine subject, (*viz.* that treated of [1 Cor. xv. 13 16](#). ‘But if there be no resurrection of the dead,’ &c.) that ever I remember to have had upon any subject whatsoever; and spent two or three hours in writing them. I was refreshed with this intenseness: my mind was so engaged in these meditations, I could scarcely turn it to any thing else; and indeed I could not be willing to part with so sweet an entertainment.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 2.* After public worship, my bodily strength being much spent, my spirits sunk amazingly; and especially on hearing that I was so generally taken to be a *Roman catholic*, sent by the papists to draw the Indians into an insurrection against the English, that some were in fear of me, and others were for having me taken up by authority and punished. Alas, what will not the devil do to bring a slur and disgrace on the work of God! Oh, how holy and circumspect had I need to be! Through divine goodness, I have been en-

abled to 'mind my own business,' in these parts, as well as elsewhere; and to let all men, and all denominations of men, alone, as to their *party notions*; and only preached the plain and necessary truths of *Christianity*, neither inviting to, nor excluding from, *my meeting* any, of any sort or persuasion whatsoever. Towards night the Lord gave me freedom at the throne of grace, in my first prayer before my *catechetical* lecture: and in opening the 46th Psalm to my people, my soul confided in God, although the wicked world should slander and persecute me, or even condemn and execute me as a traitor to my king and country. Truly God is a 'present help in time of trouble.' In the evening my soul was in some measure comforted, having some hope that one poor soul was brought home to God this day; though the case did by no means appear clear. Oh that I could fill up every moment of time, during my abode here below, in the service of my God and King.

"*Monday, Feb. 3.* My spirits were still much sunk with what I heard the day before, of my being suspected to be engaged in the *Pretender's* interest: it grieved me, that after there had been so much evidence of a glorious *work of grace* among these poor Indians, as that the most carnal men could not but take notice of the great *change* made among them, so many poor souls should still suspect the whole to be only a *popish* plot, and so cast an awful reproach on this blessed work of the divine Spirit; and at the time wholly exclude themselves from receiving any benefit by this divine influence. This put me upon searching whether I had ever dropped any thing inadvertently, that might give *occasion* to any to suspect that I was stirring up the Indians against the English: and could think of nothing, unless it was my attempting sometimes to vindicate the rights of the Indians, and complaining of the horrid practice of making the Indians drunk, and then cheating them out of their lands and other properties: and once, I remembered, I had done this with too much warmth of spirit, which much distressed me; thinking that it might possibly prejudice them against this work of grace, to their everlasting destruction. God, I believe, did me good by this trial; which served to humble me, and show me the necessity of watchfulness, and of being 'wise as a serpent,' as well as 'harmless as a dove.' This exercise led me often to the throne of grace; and there I found some support; though I could not get the burden wholly removed. Was assisted in prayer, especially in the evening."

He remained still under a degree of exercise of mind about this affair; which continued to have the same effect upon him, to cause him to reflect upon, and humble himself, and frequent the throne of grace: but soon found himself much more relieved and supported. He was, this week, in an extremely weak state, and obliged (as he expresses it) "to consume considerable time in diversions for his health." For *Saturday, Feb. 7.* and the *sabbath* following, see his public *Journal*.

The *Monday* after he set out on a journey to the Forks of Delaware, to visit the Indians there. He performed the journey under great weakness, and sometimes was exercised with much pain; but says nothing of dejection and melancholy. He arrived at his own house at



the Forks on *Friday*. The things appertaining to his inward frames and exercises, expressed within this week, are, sweet composure of mind; thankfulness to God for his mercies to him and others; resignation to the divine will; comfort in prayer and religious conversation; his heart drawn out after God, and affected with a sense of his own barrenness, as well as the fulness and freeness of divine grace.

“*Lord’s day, Feb. 16* In the evening was in a sweet composed flame of mind. It was exceeding refreshing and comfortable to think that God had been with me, affording me some good measure of assistance. I then found freedom and sweetness in prayer and thanksgiving to God; and found my soul sweetly engaged and enlarged in prayer for dear friends and acquaintance. Blessed be the name of the Lord, that ever I am enabled to do any thing for his dear interest and kingdom. Blessed be God who enables me to be faithful. Enjoyed more resolution and courage for God, and more refreshment of spirit, than I have been favoured with for many weeks past.

“*Monday, Feb. 17.* I was refreshed and encouraged: found a spirit of prayer, in the evening, and earnest longings for the illumination and conversion of these poor Indians.”

*Tuesday, Feb. 18.* See the public *Journal*.

“*Wednesday, Feb. 19.* My heart was comforted and refreshed, and my soul filled with longings for the conversion of the Indians here.

“*Thursday, Feb. 20.* God was pleased to support and refresh my spirits, by affording me assistance this day, and so hopeful a prospect of success. I returned home rejoicing and blessing the name of the Lord; found freedom and sweetness afterwards in secret prayer, and had my soul drawn out for dear friends. Oh, how blessed a thing is it, to labour for God faithfully, and with encouragement of success! *Blessed be the Lord for ever and ever, for the assistance and comfort granted this day.*

“*Friday, Feb. 21.* My soul was refreshed and comforted, and I could not but bless God, who had enabled me in some good measure to be faithful in the day past. Oh, how sweet it is to be spent and worn out for God!

“*Saturday, Feb. 22.* My spirits were much supported, though my bodily strength was much wasted. Oh that God would be gracious to the souls of these poor Indians!

“God has been very gracious to me this week: he has enabled me to preach every day; and has given me some assistance, and encouraging prospect of success in almost every sermon. Blessed be his name. Divers of the white people have been awakened this week, and sundry of the Indians much cured of prejudices and jealousies they had conceived against Christianity, and some seem to be really awakened.”

*Lord’s day, Feb. 23.* See the public *Journal*. The *next day*, he left the Forks of Delaware, to return to Crossweeksung; and spent the *whole week till Saturday*, before he arrived there; but preached by the way every day, excepting one; and was several times greatly assisted; and had much inward comfort, and earnest longings to fill up all his time in the service of

God. He utters such expressions as these, after preaching: "Oh that I may be enabled to plead the cause of God faithfully, to my dying moment! Oh how sweet it would be to spend myself wholly for God, and in his cause, and to be freed from selfish motives in my labours."

For *Saturday* and *Lord's day*, *March* 1 and 2, see the public *Journal*. The *four next days* were spent in great bodily weakness; but he speaks of some seasons of considerable inward comfort.

"*Thursday*, *March* 6. I walked alone in the evening, and enjoyed sweetness and comfort in prayer, beyond what I have of late enjoyed: my soul rejoiced in my *pilgrimage state*, and I was delighted with the thoughts of labouring and *enduring hardness* for God: felt some longing desires to preach the gospel to dear immortal souls; and confided in God, that *he* would be *with me* in my work, and that he 'never would leave nor forsake me,' to the end of my race. *Oh, may I obtain mercy of God to be faithful to my dying moment!*

"*Friday*, *March* 7. In the afternoon went on in my work with freedom and cheerfulness, God assisting me; and enjoyed comfort in the evening."

For the *two next days* see the public *Journal*.

"*Monday*, *March* 10. My soul was refreshed with freedom and enlargement; and I hope, the lively exercise of faith, in secret prayer, this night; my will was sweetly resigned to the divine will, and my hopes respecting the enlargement of the dear kingdom of Christ somewhat raised, and could commit Zion's cause to God as his own."

On *Tuesday* he speaks of some sweetness and spirituality in Christian conversation. On *Wednesday* complains that he enjoyed not much comfort and satisfaction, through the day, because he did but little for God. On *Thursday*, spent considerable time in company, on a special occasion; but in perplexity, because without savoury religious conversation. For *Friday*, *Saturday*, and *Lord's day*, see the public *Journal*.

In the former part of the week following he was very ill; and also under great dejection; being, as he apprehended, rendered unserviceable by illness, and fearing that he should never be serviceable any more; and therefore exceedingly longed for death. But afterwards was more encouraged, and life appeared more desirable, because, as he says, he "had a little dawn of hope, that he might be useful in the world." In the latter part of the week he was in some measure relieved of his illness, in the use of means prescribed by a physician. For *Saturday* and *Lord's day*, *March* 22 and 23, see his public *Journal*.

"*Monday*, *March* 24. After the Indians were gone to their work, to clear their lands, I got alone, and poured out my soul to God, that he would smile upon these feeble beginnings, and that he would settle an Indian town, that might be *a mountain of holiness*; and found my soul much refreshed in these petitions, and much enlarged for Zion's interest, and for numbers of dear friends in particular. My sinking spirits were revived and raised, and I felt animated in the service God has called me to. This was the dearest hour I have enjoyed for many days, if not weeks. I found an encouraging hope, that something would be done for

God, and that God would use and help me in his work. And oh, how sweet were the thoughts of labouring for God, when I felt any spirit and courage, and had any hope that ever I should be succeeded!”

The *next day* his *schoolmaster* was taken sick with a pleurisy; and he spent great part of the remainder of this week in attending him: which in his weak state was almost an over-bearing burden; he being obliged constantly to wait upon him, from day to day, and to lie on the floor at night. His spirits sunk in a considerable degree, with his bodily strength, under this burden. For *Saturday* and *Lord’s day*, March 29 and 30, see the public *Journal*.

“*Monday, March 31.* Towards night enjoyed some sweet meditations on those words: ‘It is good for me to draw near to God.’ My soul, I think, had some sweet sense of what is intended in those words.”

The *next day* he was extremely busy in tending the schoolmaster, and in some other necessary affairs, that greatly diverted him from what he looked upon as his proper business: but yet speaks of comfort and refreshment at some times of the day.

“*Wednesday, April 2.* Was somewhat exercised with a spiritless frame of mind; but was a little relieved and refreshed in the evening with meditation alone in the woods. But, alas! my days pass away as the *chaff*! it is but little I do, or can do, that turns to any account; and it is my constant misery and burden, that I am so fruitless in the vineyard of the Lord. Oh that I were *spirit*, that I might be active for God. This, (I think,) more than any thing else, makes me long, that ‘this corruptible might put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality.’ God deliver me from clogs, fetters, and a *body of death*, that impede my service for him.”

The *next day* he complains bitterly of some exercises by corruption he found in his own heart.

“*Friday, April 4.* Spent most of the day in writing on [Rev. xxii. 17.](#) ‘And whosoever will,’ &c. Enjoyed some freedom and encouragement in my work; and found some comfort in prayer.

“*Saturday, April 5.* After public worship a number of my dear Christian Indians came to my house; with whom I felt a sweet union of soul. My heart was knit to them; and I cannot say I have felt such a sweet and fervent *lure to the brethren* for some time past; and I saw in them appearances of the same love. This gave me something of a view of the heavenly state; and particularly that part of the happiness of heaven, which consists in the *communion of saints*: and this was affecting to me.”

For *the two next days* see the public *Journal*. On *Tuesday* he went to a meeting of the Presbytery appointed at Elizabeth-town. In his way thither he enjoyed some sweet meditations; but after he came there he was (as he expresses it) very *vapoury and melancholy, and under an awful gloom*, that oppressed his mind. And this continued till *Saturday evening*, when he began to have some relief and encouragement. He spent the *sabbath* at Staten-Island;

where he preached to an assembly of Dutch and English, and enjoyed considerable refreshment and comfort, both in public and private. In the evening he returned to Elizabeth-town.

“*Monday, April 14.* My spirits this day were raised and refreshed, and my mind composed, so that I was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day. In the evening my head was clear, my mind serene; I enjoyed sweetness in secret prayer, and meditation on [Ps. lxxiii. 28](#). ‘But it is good for me to draw near to God,’ &c. Oh, how free, how comfortable, cheerful, and yet solemn, do I feel when I am in a good measure freed from those damps and melancholy glooms, that I often labour under! And blessed be the Lord, I find myself relieved in this respect.

“*Tuesday, April 15.* My soul longed for more spirituality; and it was my burden, that I could do no more for God. Oh, my barrenness is my daily affliction and heavy load! Oh, how precious is time: and how it pains me, to see it slide away, while I do so very little to any good purpose! *Oh that God would make me more fruitful and spiritual.*“

The *next day* he speaks of his being almost overwhelmed with vapoury disorders; but yet not so as wholly to destroy the composure of his mind.

“*Thursday, April 17.* Enjoyed some comfort in prayer, some freedom in meditation, and composure in my studies. Spent some time in writing in the forenoon. In the afternoon spent some time in conversation with several dear ministers. In the evening preached from [Ps. lxxiii. 28](#). ‘But it is good for me to draw near to God.’ God helped me to feel the truth of my text, both in the first prayer and in sermon. I was enabled to pour out my soul to God, with great freedom, fervency, and affection; and blessed be the Lord, it was a comfortable season to me. I was enabled to speak with tenderness, and yet with faithfulness; and divine truths seemed to fall with weight and influence upon the hearers. My heart was melted for the dear assembly, and I loved every body in it; and scarce ever felt more love to immortal souls in my life: my soul cried, ‘Oh that the dear creatures might be saved! O that God would have mercy on them!’”

He seems to have been in a very comfortable frame of mind the *two next days*.

“*Lord’s day, April 20.* <sup>398</sup> Enjoyed some freedom, and, I hope, exercise of faith in prayer, in the morning; especially when I came to pray for Zion. I was free from that gloomy discouragement that so often oppresses my mind; and my soul rejoiced in the hopes of Zion’s prosperity, and the enlargement of the dear kingdom of the great Redeemer. Oh that his kingdom might come.

“*Monday, April 21.* Was composed and comfortable in mind most of the day; and was mercifully freed from those gloomy damps that I am frequently exercised with. Had freedom and comfort in prayer several times; and especially had some rising hopes of Zion’s enlargement and prosperity. Oh, how refreshing were these hopes to my soul! Oh that the kingdom

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398 This day he entered into the 29th year of his age

of the dear Lord might come. Oh that the poor Indians might quickly be gathered in, in great numbers!

“*Tuesday, April 22.* My mind was remarkably free this day from melancholy damps and glooms, and animated in my work. I found such fresh vigour and resolution in the service of God, that the *mountains* seemed to become a *plain* before me. Oh, blessed be God for an interval of refreshment, and fervent resolution in my Lord’s work! In the evening my soul was refreshed in secret prayer, and my heart drawn out for divine blessings; especially for the church of God, and his interest among my own people, and for dear friends in remote places. *Oh that Zion might prosper, and precious souls he brought home to God!*”

In this comfortable, fervent frame of mind he remained the *two next days*. For the *four days next following, viz. Friday, Saturday, Lord’s day, and Monday*, see his public *Journal*. On *Tuesday* he went to Elizabeth-town, to attend the meeting of the Presbytery there: and seemed to spend the time while absent from his people on this occasion, in a free and comfortable state of mind.

“*Saturday, May 3.* Rode from Elizabeth-town home to my people, at or near Cranberry; whither they are now removed, and where, I hope, God will settle them as a Christian congregation. Was refreshed in lifting up my heart to God, while riding; and enjoyed a thankful frame of spirit for divine favours received the week past. Was somewhat uneasy and dejected in the evening; having no house of my own to go into in this place: but God was my support.”

For *Lord’s day* and *Monday* see the public *Journal*.

“*Tuesday, May 6.* Enjoyed some spirit and courage in my work; was in a good measure free from melancholy: blessed be God for freedom from this *death*.

“*Wednesday, May 7.* Spent most of the day in writing, as usual. Enjoyed some freedom in my work. Was favoured with some comfortable meditations this day. In the evening was in a sweet composed frame of mind; was pleased and delighted to leave all with God, respecting myself, for time and eternity, and respecting the people of my charge, and dear friends. Had no doubt but that God would take care of me, and of his own interest among my people; and was enabled to use freedom in prayer, as a child with a tender father. *Oh, how sweet is such a frame!*”

“*Thursday, May 8.* In the evening was somewhat refreshed with divine things, and enjoyed a tender, melting frame in secret prayer, wherein my soul was drawn out for the interest of Zion, and comforted with the lively hope of the appearing of the kingdom of the great Redeemer. These were sweet moments: I felt almost loth to go to bed, and grieved that sleep was necessary. However, I lay down with a tender, reverential fear of God, sensible that ‘his favour is life,’ and his smiles better than all that earth can boast of, infinitely better than life itself.”

*Friday, May 9.* See the public *Journal*.

“*Saturday, May 10.* Rode to Allen’s-town, to assist in the administration of the Lord’s supper. In the afternoon preached from [Tit. ii. 14.](#) ‘Who gave himself for us,’ &c. God was pleased to carry me through with some competency of freedom; and yet to deny me that enlargement and power I longed for. In the evening my soul mourned, and could not but mourn, that I had treated so excellent a subject in so defective a manner; that I had borne so broken a testimony for so worthy and glorious a Redeemer. And if my discourse had met with the utmost applause from all the world, (as I accidentally heard it applauded by some persons of judgment,) it would not have given me any satisfaction. Oh, it grieved me to think, that I had had no more holy warmth and fervency, that I had been no more melted in discoursing of Christ’s death, and the end and design of it! Afterwards enjoyed some freedom and fervency in secret and family prayer, and longed much for the presence of God to attend his word and ordinances the next day.

“*Lord’s day, May 11.* Assisted in the administration of the Lord’s supper; but enjoyed little enlargement: was grieved and sunk with some things I thought undesirable, &c. In the afternoon went to the house of God weak and sick in soul, as well as feeble in body: and longed that the people might be entertained and edified with divine truths, and that an honest fervent testimony might be borne for God; but knew not how it was possible for *me* to do any thing of that kind, to any good purpose. Yet God, who is rich in mercy, was pleased to give me assistance, both in prayer and preaching. God helped me to wrestle for his presence in prayer, and to tell him that he had promised, ‘Where two or three are met together in his name, there he would be in the midst of them;’ and that we were, at least some of us, so met; and pleaded, that for his truth’s sake he would be with us. And blessed be God, it was sweet to my soul thus to plead, and rely on God’s promises. Discoursed upon [Luke ix. 30, 31.](#) ‘And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.’ Enjoyed special freedom, from the beginning to the end of my discourse, without interruption. Things pertinent to the subject were abundantly presented to my view; and such a fulness of matter, that I scarce knew how to dismiss the various heads and particulars I had occasion to touch upon. And, blessed be the Lord, I was favoured with some fervency and power, as well as freedom; so that the word of God seemed to awaken the attention of a stupid audience, to a considerable degree. I was inwardly refreshed with the consolations of God; and could with my whole heart say, ‘Though there be no fruit in the vine, &c. yet will I rejoice in the Lord.’ After public service, was refreshed with the sweet conversation of some Christian friends.”

The *four next days* seem to have been mostly spent with spiritual comfort and profit.

“*Friday, May 16.* Near night enjoyed some agreeable and sweet conversation with a dear minister, which, I trust, was blessed to my soul. My heart was warmed, and my soul engaged to live to God; so that I longed to exert myself with more vigour than ever I had done in his cause: and those words were quickening to me, ‘Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring

forth much fruit.' Oh, my soul longed, and wished, and prayed, to be enabled to live to God with utmost constancy and ardour! In the evening God was pleased to shine upon me in secret prayer, and draw out my soul after himself; and I had freedom in supplication for myself, but much more in intercession for others: so that I was sweetly constrained to say, 'Lord, use me as thou wilt; do as thou wilt with me: but oh, promote thine own cause! Zion is thine; oh visit thine heritage! Let thy kingdom come! Oh let thy blessed interest be advanced in the world!' When I attempted to look to God, respecting my worldly circumstances, and his providential dealings with me, in regard of my settling down in my congregation, which seems to be necessary, and yet very difficult, and contrary to my fixed intention for years past, as well as my disposition which has been, and still is, at times especially, to go forth, and spend my life in preaching the gospel from place to place, and gathering souls *afar off* to Jesus the great Redeemer I could only say, 'The will of the Lord be done; it is no matter for me.' The same frame of mind I felt with respect to another important affair I have lately had some serious thoughts of: I could say, with utmost calmness and composure, 'Lord, if it be most for thy glory, let me proceed in it; but if thou seest that it will in any wise hinder my usefulness in thy cause; oh prevent my proceeding: for all I want, respecting this world, is such circumstances as may best capacitate me to do service for God in the world.' But blessed be God, I enjoyed liberty in prayer for my dear flock, and was enabled to pour out my soul into the bosom of a tender Father: my heart within me was melted, when I came to plead for my dear people, and for the kingdom of Christ in general. Oh, how sweet was this evening to my soul! I knew not how to go to bed; and when got to bed, longed for some way to improve time for God, to some excellent purpose. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*

"*Saturday, May 17.* Walked out in the morning, and felt much of the same frame I enjoyed the evening before: had my heart enlarged in praying for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and found the utmost freedom in leaving all my concerns with God.

"I find *discouragement* to be an exceeding *hinderance* to my spiritual fervency and affection: but when God enables me sensibly to find that I have done something *for him*, this refreshes and animates me, so that I could break through all hardships, undergo any labours, and nothing seems too much either to do or to suffer. But oh, what a death it is, to strive, and strive; to be always in a *hurry*, and yet do *nothing*, or at least nothing *for GOD*! Alas, alas, that time flies away, and I do so little for God!

"*Lord's day, May 18.* I felt my own utter insufficiency for my work: God made me to see that I was a *child*; yea, that I was a *fool*. I discoursed, both parts of the day, from [Rev. iii. 20](#). "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." God gave me freedom and power in the latter part of my forenoon's discourse: although, in the former part of it, I felt peevish and provoked with the unmannerly behaviour of the *white* people, who crowded in between my people and me; which proved a great temptation to me. But blessed be God, I got these shackles off before the middle of my discourse, and was favoured with a sweet frame of spirit in the

latter part of the exercise; was full of love, warmth, and tenderness, in addressing my dear people. In the intermission-season, could not but discourse to my people on the kindness and patience of Christ in *standing* and *knocking at the door*, &c. In the evening I was grieved that I had done so little for God. Oh that I could be a *flame of fire* in the service of my God!”

*Monday, May 19.* See the public *Journal*. On *Tuesday* he complains of want of freedom and comfort; but had some return of these on *Wednesday*.

“*Thursday, May 22.* In the evening was in a frame somewhat remarkable: had apprehended for several days before, that it was the design of Providence I should *settle* among my people here; and had in my own mind begun to make provision for it, and to contrive means to hasten it; and found my heart something engaged in it, hoping I might then enjoy more agreeable circumstances of life, in several respects: and yet was never fully determined, never quite pleased with the thoughts of being settled and confined to one place. Nevertheless I seemed to have some freedom in that respect, because the congregation I thought of settling with, was one that God had enabled me to gather from amongst pagans. For I never, since I began to preach, could feel any freedom to ‘enter into other men’s labours,’ and settle down in the ministry where the ‘gospel was preached before.’ I never could make that appear to be my province: when I felt any disposition to consult my ease and worldly comfort, God has never given me any liberty in that respect, either since or for some years before I began to preach. But God having succeeded my labours, and made me instrumental in gathering a church for him among these Indians, I was ready to think, it might be his design to give me a quiet settlement and a stated home of my own. And this, considering the late frequent sinking and failure of my spirits, and the need I stood in of some agreeable society, and my great desire of enjoying conveniencies and opportunities for profitable studies, was not altogether disagreeable to me. Although I still wanted to go about far and wide, in order to spread the blessed gospel among benighted souls, far remote; yet I never had been so willing to settle in any one place, for more than five years past, as I was in the foregoing part of this week. But now these thoughts seemed to be wholly dashed to pieces; not by necessity, but of choice: for it appeared to me, that God’s dealings towards me had fitted me for a life of solitariness and hardship; and that I had nothing to lose, nothing to do with earth, and consequently nothing to lose by a total renunciation of it. It appeared to me just right, that I should be destitute of house and home, and many comforts of life, which I rejoiced to see others of God’s people enjoy. And at the same time, I saw so much of the excellency of Christ’s kingdom, and the infinite desirableness of its advancement in the world, that it swallowed up all my other thoughts; and made me willing, yea, even rejoice, to be made a pilgrim or hermit in the wilderness, to my dying moment, if I might thereby promote the blessed interest of the great Redeemer. And if ever my soul presented itself to God for his service, without any reserve of any kind, it did so now. The language of my thoughts and disposition now was, ‘*Here I am, Lord, send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me*



to the rough, the savage pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort in earth, or earthly comfort; send me even to death itself, if it be but in thy service, and to promote thy kingdom.' And at the same time I had as quick and lively a sense of the value of worldly comforts, as ever I had; but only saw them infinitely overmatched by the worth of Christ's kingdom, and the propagation of his blessed gospel. The quiet settlement, the certain place of abode, the tender friendship, which I thought I might be likely to enjoy in consequence of such circumstances, appeared as valuable to me, considered absolutely and in themselves, as ever before; but considered comparatively, they appeared nothing. Compared with the value and preciousness of an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, they vanished like the stars before the rising sun. And sure I am, that although the comfortable accommodations of life appeared valuable and dear to me, yet I did surrender and resign myself, soul and body, to the service of God, and promotion of Christ's kingdom: though it should be in the loss of them all. And I could not do any other, because I could not will or choose any other. I was constrained, and yet chose, to say, 'Farewell, friends and earthly comforts, the dearest of them all, the very dearest, if the Lord calls for it; adieu, adieu; I will spend my life, to my latest moments, *in caves and dens of the earth*, if the kingdom of Christ may thereby be advanced.' I found extraordinary freedom at this time in pouring out my soul to God, for his cause; and especially that his kingdom might be extended among the Indians, far remote; and I had a great and strong hope, that God would do it. I continued wrestling with God in prayer for my dear little flock here; and more especially for the Indians elsewhere; as well as for dear friends in one place and another; till it was bed-time, and I feared I should hinder the family, &c. But oh, with what reluctancy did I find myself obliged to consume time in sleep! I longed to be as *a flame of fire*, continually glowing in the divine service, preaching and building up Christ's kingdom, to my latest, my dying moment.

"*Friday, May 23.* In the morning was in the same frame of mind as in the evening before. The glory of Christ's kingdom so much outshone the pleasure of earthly accommodations and enjoyments, that they appeared comparatively nothing, though in themselves good and desirable. My soul was melted in secret meditation and prayer, and I found myself divorced from any part in this world: so that in those affairs that seemed of the greatest importance to me, in respect of the present life, and those wherein the tender powers of the mind are most sensibly touched, I could only say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' But just the same things that I felt the evening before, I felt now; and found the same freedom in prayer for the people of my charge, for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians, and for the enlargement and spiritual welfare of Zion in general, and my dear friends in particular, now, as I did then; and longed to burn out in one continued flame for God. Retained much of the same frame through the day. In the evening was visited by my brother John Brainerd; the first visit I have ever received from any near relative since I have been a missionary. Felt the same frame of spirit in the evening as in the morning; and found that 'it was good for

me to draw near to God,' and leave all my concerns and burdens with him. Was enlarged and refreshed in pouring out my soul for the propagation of the gospel of the Redeemer among the distant tribes of Indians. Blessed be God. If ever I filled up a day with studies and devotion, I was enabled so to fill up this day.

“*Saturday, May 24.* Enjoyed this day something of the same frame of mind as I felt the day before.”

*Lord's day, May 25.* See the public *Journal*. *This week*, at least the former part of it, he was in a very weak state: but yet seems to have been free from melancholy, which often had attended the failing of his bodily strength. He from time to time speaks of comfort and inward refreshment, this week. *Lord's day, June 1.* See the public *Journal*.

“*Monday, June 2.* In the evening enjoyed some freedom in secret prayer and meditation.

“*Tuesday, June 3.* My soul rejoiced, early in the morning, to think, that all things were at God's disposal. Oh, it pleased me to leave them there! Felt afterwards much as I did on Thursday evening, May 22, last; and continued in this frame for several hours. Walked out into the wilderness, and enjoyed freedom, fervency, and comfort in prayer; and again enjoyed the same in the evening.

“*Wednesday, June 4.* Spent the day in writing, and enjoyed some comfort, satisfaction, and freedom in my work. In the evening I was favoured with a sweet refreshing frame of soul in secret prayer and meditation. Prayer was now wholly turned into praise, and I could do little else but try to adore and bless the living God. The wonders of his grace displayed in gathering to himself a church among the poor Indians here, were the subject matter of my meditation, and the occasion of exciting my soul to praise and bless his name. My soul was scarce ever more disposed to inquire, ‘What I should render to God for all his benefits, than at this time. Oh, I was brought into a strait, a sweet and happy strait, to know what to do! I longed to make some returns to God; but found I had nothing to return: I could only rejoice, that God had done the work himself; and that none in heaven or earth might pretend to share the honour of it with him. I could only be glad, that God's declarative glory was advanced by the conversion of these souls, and that it was to the enlargement of his kingdom in the world: but saw I was so poor, that I had nothing to offer to him. My soul and body, through grace, I could cheerfully surrender to him: but it appeared to me, this was rather a cumber than a gift; and nothing could I do to glorify his dear and blessed name. Yet I was glad at heart that he was unchangeably possessed of glory and blessedness. Oh that he might be adored and praised by all his intelligent creatures, to the utmost of their power and capacities! My soul would have rejoiced to see others praise him, though I could do nothing towards it myself.”

The *next day* he speaks of his being subject to some degree. of melancholy; but of being somewhat relieved in the evening. *Friday, June 6.* See the public *Journal*.

“*Saturday, June 7.* Rode to Freehold to assist Mr. Tennent in the administration of the Lord’s supper. In the afternoon preached from [Psal. lxxiii. 28.](#) ‘But it is good for me to draw near to God,’ &c. God gave me some freedom and warmth in my discourse; and I trust his presence was in the assembly. Was comfortably composed, and enjoyed a thankful frame of spirit; and my soul was grieved that I could not render something to God for his benefits bestowed. O that I could be swallowed up in his praise!

“*Lord’s day, June 8.* Spent much time, in the morning, in secret duties; but between hope and fear, respecting the enjoyment of God in the business of the day then before us. Was agreeably entertained in the forenoon, by a discourse from Mr. Tennent, and felt somewhat melted and refreshed. In the season of communion, enjoyed some comfort; and especially in serving one of the tables. Blessed be the Lord, it was a *time of refreshing* to me, and I trust to many others. A number of my dear people sat down by themselves at the last table; at which time God seemed to be in the midst of them. And the thoughts of what God had done among them were refreshing and melting to me. In the afternoon God enabled me to preach with uncommon freedom, from [2 Cor. v. 20.](#) ‘Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,’ &c. Through the great goodness of God, I was favoured with a constant flow of pertinent matter, and proper expressions, from the beginning to the end of my discourse. In the evening I could not but rejoice in God, and bless him for the manifestations of grace in the day past. Oh, it was a sweet and solemn day and evening! a season of comfort to the godly, and of awakening to some souls. *Oh that I could praise the Lord!*

“*Monday, June 9.* Enjoyed some sweetness in secret duties. Preached the concluding sermon from [Gen. v. 24.](#) ‘And Enoch walked with God,’ &c. God gave me enlargement and fervency in my discourse; so that I was enabled to speak with plainness and power; and God’s presence seemed to be in the assembly. Praised be the Lord, it was a sweet meeting, a desirable assembly. I found my strength renewed, and lengthened out, even to a wonder; so that I felt much stronger at the conclusion than in the beginning of this sacramental solemnity. I have great reason to bless God for this solemnity, wherein I have found assistance in addressing others, and sweetness in my own soul.”

On *Tuesday* he found himself spent and his spirits exhausted by his late labours; and on *Wednesday* complains of vapoury disorders, and dejection of spirit, and of enjoying but little comfort or spirituality.

“*Thursday, June 12.* In the evening enjoyed freedom of mind, and some sweetness in secret prayer: it was a desirable season to me; my soul was enlarged in prayer for my own dear people, and for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom, and especially for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians, hack in the wilderness. Was refreshed in prayer for dear friends in New England, and elsewhere: I found it sweet to pray at this time; and could with all my heart say, ‘It is good for me to draw near to God.’

“*Friday, June 13.* I came away from the meeting of the Indians this day, rejoicing and blessing God for his grace manifested at this season.

“*Saturday, June 14.* Rode to Kingston, to assist the Rev. Mr. Wales in the administration of the Lord’s supper. In the afternoon preached; but, almost fainted in pulpit: yet God strengthened me when I was just gone, and enabled me to speak his word with freedom, fervency, and application to the conscience. And, praised be the Lord, ‘out of weakness I was made strong.’ I enjoyed some sweetness in and after public worship; but was extremely tired. Oh, how many are the mercies of the Lord! ‘To them that have no might, he increaseth strength.’

“*Lord’s day, June 15.* Was in a dejected, spiritless flume, that I could not hold up my head, nor look any body in the face. Administered the Lord’s supper at Mr. Wales’s desire; and found myself in a good measure unburdened and relieved of my pressing load, when I came to ask a blessing on the elements: here God gave me enlargement, and a tender affectionate sense of spiritual things; so that it was a season of comfort, in some measure, to me, and, I trust, more so to others. In the afternoon preached to a vast multitude, from [Rev. xxii. 17.](#) ‘And whosoever will,’ &c. God helped me to offer a testimony for himself, and to leave sinners inexcusable in neglecting his grace. I was enabled to speak with such freedom, fluency, and clearness, as commanded the attention of the great. Was extremely tired, in the evening, but enjoyed composure and sweetness.

“*Monday, June 16.* Preached again; and God helped me amazingly, so that this was a sweet, refreshing season to my soul and others. Oh, for ever blessed be God for help afforded at this time, when my body was so weak, and while there was so large an assembly to hear. Spent the afternoon in a comfortable, agreeable manner.”

The *next day* was spent comfortably. On *Wednesday* he went to a meeting of ministers at Hopewell. *Thursday, June 19.* See his public Journal.<sup>399</sup> On *Friday* and *Saturday* he was very much amiss; but yet preached to his people on Saturday. His illness continued on the *sabbath*; but he preached, notwithstanding, to his people both parts of the day; and after the public worship was ended, he endeavoured to apply divine truths to the consciences of some, and addressed them personally for that end; several were in tears, and some appeared much affected. But he was extremely wearied with the services of the day, and was so ill at night that he could have no bodily rest; but remarks, that “God was his support, and that he was not left destitute of comfort in him.” On *Monday* he continued very ill, but speaks of his mind being calm and composed, resigned to the divine dispensations, and content with his feeble state. By the account he gives of himself, the remaining part of this week, he continued very feeble, for the most part dejected in mind. He enjoyed no great freedom nor sweetness in spiritual things; excepting that for some very short spaces of time he had re-

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399 The public Journal that has been so often referred to, concludes with the account of this day.

freshment and encouragement, which engaged his heart on divine things; and sometimes his heart was melted with spiritual affection.

“*Lord’s day, June 29.* Preached, both parts of the day, from [John xiv. 19](#). ‘Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more,’ &c. God was pleased to assist me, to afford me both freedom and power, especially towards the close of my discourses, both forenoon and afternoon. God’s power appeared in the assembly, in both exercises. Numbers of God’s people were refreshed and melted with divine things; one or two comforted, who had been long under distress: convictions, in divers instances, powerfully revived; and one man in years much awakened, who had not long frequented our meeting, and appeared before as stupid as a stock. God amazingly renewed and lengthened out my strength. I was so spent at noon, that I could scarce walk, and all my joints trembled; so that I could not sit, nor so much as hold my hand still: and yet God strengthened me to preach with power in the afternoon; although I had given out word to my people that I did not expect to be able to do it. Spent some time afterwards in conversing, particularly, with several persons, about their spiritual state; and had some satisfaction concerning one or two. Prayed afterwards with a sick child, and gave a word of exhortation. Was assisted in all my work. *Blessed be God.* Returned home with more health than I went out with; although my linen was wringing wet upon me, from a little after ten in the morning till past five in the afternoon. My spirits also were considerably refreshed; and my soul rejoiced in hope, that I had through grace done something for God. In the evening walked out, and enjoyed a sweet season in secret prayer and praise. But oh, I found the truth of the psalmist’s words, ‘My goodness extendeth not to thee!’ I could not make any returns to God; I longed to live only to him, and to be in tune for his praise and service for ever. Oh, for spirituality and holy fervency, that I might *spend and be spent* for God to my latest moment!

“*Monday, June 30.* Spent the day in writing; but under much weakness and disorder. Felt the labours of the preceding day; although my spirits were so refreshed the evening before, that I was not then sensible of my being spent.

“*Tuesday, July 1.* In the afternoon visited and preached to my people, from [Heb. ix. 27](#). ‘And as it is appointed unto men once to die,’ &c. on occasion of some persons lying at the point of death, in my congregation. God gave me some assistance; and his word made some impressions on the audience, in general. This was an agreeable and comfortable evening to my soul: my spirits were somewhat refreshed, with a small degree of freedom and help enjoyed in my work.”

On *Wednesday* he went to Newark, to a meeting of the Presbytery: complains of lowness of spirits; and greatly laments his spending his time so unfruitfully. The *remaining part of the week* he spent there and at Elizabeth-town; and speaks of comfort and divine assistance from day to day; but yet greatly complains for want of more spirituality.



“*Lord’s day, July 6.* [At Elizabeth-town] Enjoyed some composure and serenity of mind in the morning: heard Mr. Dickinson preach in the forenoon, and was refreshed with his discourse; was in a melting frame some part of the time of sermon: partook of the Lord’s supper, and enjoyed some sense of divine things in that ordinance. In the afternoon I preached from [Ezek. xxxiii. 11.](#) ‘As I live, saith the Lord God,’ &c. God favoured me with freedom and fervency; and helped me to plead his cause beyond my own power.

“*Monday, July 7.* My spirits were considerably refreshed and raised in the morning. There is no comfort, I find, in any enjoyment, without enjoying God, and being engaged in his service. In the evening had the most agreeable conversation that ever I remember in all my life, upon God’s being *all in all*, and all enjoyments being just *that* to us which God makes them, and no more. It is good to begin and end with God. Oh, how does a sweet solemnity lay a foundation for true pleasure and happiness!

“*Tuesday, July 8.* Rode home, and enjoyed some agreeable meditations by the way.

“*Wednesday, July 9.* Spent the day in writing; enjoyed some comfort and refreshment of spirit in my evening retirement.

“*Thursday, July 10.* Spent most of the day in writing. Towards night rode to Mr. Tennent’s; enjoyed some agreeable conversation: went home, in the evening, in a solemn, sweet frame of mind; was refreshed in secret duties, longed to live wholly and only for God, and saw plainly there was nothing in the world worthy of my affection; so that my heart was dead to all below; yet not through dejection, as at some times, but from views of a better inheritance.

“*Friday, July 11.* Was in a calm, composed frame in the morning, especially in the season of my secret retirement. I think I was well pleased with the will of God, whatever it was, or should be, in all respects I had then any thought of. Intending to administer the Lord’s supper the next Lord’s day, I looked to God for his presence and assistance upon that occasion; but felt a disposition to say, ‘The will of the Lord be done,’ whether it be to give me assistance, or not. Spent some little time in writing: visited the Indians, and spent some time in serious conversation with them; thinking it not best to preach, many of them being absent.

“*Saturday, July 12.* This day was spent in fasting and prayer by my congregation, as preparatory to the sacrament. I discoursed, both parts of the day, from [Rom. iv. 25.](#) ‘Who was delivered for our offences,’ &c. God gave me some assistance in my discourses, and something of divine power attended the word; so that this was an agreeable season. Afterwards led them to a solemn renewal of their covenant, and fresh dedication of themselves to God. This was a season both of solemnity and sweetness, and God seemed to be ‘in the midst of us.’ Returned to my lodgings, in the evening, in a comfortable frame of mind.

“*Lord’s day, July 13.* In the forenoon discoursed on the *bread of life*, from [John vi. 35.](#) God gave me some assistance, in part of my discourse especially; and there appeared some tender affection in the assembly under divine truths; my soul also was somewhat refreshed.

Administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper to thirty-one persons of the Indians. God seemed to be present in this ordinance; the communicants were sweetly melted and refreshed, most of them. Oh, how they melted, even when the elements were first uncovered! There was scarcely a dry eye among them when I took off the linen, and showed them the symbols of Christ's *broken body*. Having rested a little, after the administration of the sacrament, I visited the communicants, and found them generally in a sweet, loving frame; not unlike what appeared among them on the former sacramental occasion, on April 27. In the afternoon, discoursed upon *coming to Christ*, and the *satisfaction* of those who do so, from the same verse I insisted on in the forenoon. This was likewise an agreeable season, a season of much tenderness, affection, and enlargement in divine service; and God, I am persuaded, crowned our assembly with his divine presence. I returned home much spent, yet rejoicing in the goodness of God.

"Monday, July 14. Went to my people, and discoursed to them from [Psal. cxix. 106](#). 'I have sworn, and I will perform it,' &c. Observed, 1. That all God's *judgments* or commandments are *righteous*. 2. That God's people have *sworn to keep* them; and this they do especially at the Lord's table. There appeared to be a powerful divine influence on the assembly, and considerable melting under the word. Afterwards I led them to a renewal of their covenant before God, (that they would watch over themselves and one another, lest they should fall into sin and dishonour the name of Christ,) just as I did on Monday, April 28. This transaction was attended with great solemnity; and God seemed to own it by exciting in them a fear and jealousy of themselves, lest they should sin against God; so that the presence of God seemed to be amongst us in this conclusion of the sacramental solemnity."

The *next day* he set out on a journey towards Philadelphia; from whence he did not return till Saturday. He went this journey, and spent the week, under a great degree of illness of body, and dejection of mind.

"*Lord's day*, July 20. Preached twice to my people, from [John xvii. 24](#). 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.' Was helped to discourse with great clearness and plainness in the forenoon. In the afternoon, enjoyed some tenderness, and spake with some influence. Divers were in tears; and some, to appearance, in distress.

"Monday, July 21. Preached to the Indians, chiefly for the sake of some *strangers*. Then proposed my design of taking a journey speedily to Susquehannah: exhorted my people to pray for me, that God would be with me in that journey, &c. Then chose divers persons of the congregation to travel with me. Afterwards spent some time in discoursing to the *strangers*, and was somewhat encouraged with them. Took care of my people's secular business, and was not a little exercised with it. Had some degree of composure and comfort in secret retirement.

“*Tuesday, July 22.* Was in a dejected frame most of the day: wanted to wear out life, and have it at an end; but had some desires of *living to God*, and wearing out life *for him*. *Oh that I could indeed do so!*”

The *next day*, he went to Elizabeth-town, to a meeting of the Presbytery; and spent this, and *Thursday*, and the former part of *Friday*, under a very great degree of melancholy, and exceeding gloominess of mind; not through any fear of future punishment, but as being distressed with a senselessness of all good, so that the whole world appeared empty and gloomy to him. But in the latter part of *Friday* he was greatly relieved and comforted.

“*Saturday, July 26.* Was comfortable in the morning; my countenance and heart were not sad, as in days past; enjoyed some sweetness in lifting up my heart to God. Rode home to my people, and was in a comfortable, pleasant frame by the way; my spirits were much relieved of their burden, and I felt free to go through all difficulties and labours in my Master’s service.

“*Lord’s day, July 27.* Discoursed to my people, in the forenoon, from sp [Luke xii. 37.](#) on the duty and benefit of *watching*: God helped me in the latter part of my discourse, and the power of God appeared in the assembly. In the afternoon discoursed from [Luke xiii. 25.](#) ‘When once the master of the house is risen up,’ &c. Here also I enjoyed some assistance, and the Spirit of God seemed to attend what was spoken, so that there was a great solemnity, and some tears among Indians and others.

“*Monday, July 28.* Was very weak, and scarce able to perform any business at all; but enjoyed sweetness and comfort in prayer, both morning and evening; and was composed and comfortable through the day: my mind was intense, and my heart fervent, at least in some degree, in secret duties; and I longed to *spend and be spent for God*.

“*Tuesday, July 29.* My mind was cheerful, and free from those melancholy damps that I am often exercised with: had freedom in looking up to God at sundry times in the day. In the evening I enjoyed a comfortable season in secret prayer; was helped to plead with God for my own dear people, that he would carry on his own blessed work among them; was assisted also in praying for the divine presence to attend me in my intended journey to Susquehannah; add was helped to remember dear brethren and friends in New England. I scarce knew how to leave the throne of grace, and it grieved me that I was obliged to go to bed; I longed to do something for God, but knew not how. *Blessed be God for this freedom from dejection.*

“*Wednesday, July 30.* Was uncommonly comfortable, both in body and mind; in the forenoon especially: my mind was solemn, I was assisted in my work, and God seemed to be near to me; so that the day was as comfortable as most I have enjoyed for some time. In the evening was favoured with assistance in secret prayer, and felt much as I did the evening before. Blessed be God for that freedom I then enjoyed at the throne of grace, for myself, my people, and my dear friends. *It is good for me to draw near to God.*”



He seems to have continued very much in the same free, comfortable state of mind the next day.

“Friday, Aug. 1. In the evening enjoyed a sweet season in secret prayer; clouds of darkness and perplexing care were sweetly scattered, and nothing anxious remained. Oh, how serene was my mind at this season! how free from that distracting concern I have often felt! ‘Thy will be done,’ was a petition sweet to my soul; and if God had bidden me choose for myself in any affair, I should have chosen rather to have referred the choice to him; for I saw he was infinitely wise, and could not do any thing amiss, as I was in danger of doing. Was assisted in prayer for my dear flock, that God would promote his own work among them, and that God would go with me in my intended journey to Susquehannah: was helped to remember dear friends in New England, and my dear brethren in the ministry. I found enough in the sweet duty of prayer to have engaged me to continue in it the whole night, would my bodily state have admitted of it. Oh, how sweet it is to be enabled heartily to say *Lord, not my will, but thine be done!*”

“Saturday, Aug. 2. Near night preached from [Matt xi. 29](#). ‘Take my yoke upon you,’ &c. Was considerably helped; and the presence of God seemed to be somewhat remarkably in the assembly; divine truths made powerful impressions, both upon saints and sinners. Blessed be God for such a revival among us. In the evening was very weary, but found my spirits supported and refreshed.

“Lord’s day, Aug. 3. Discoursed to my people, in the forenoon, from [Col. iii. 4](#). and observed, that *Christ* is the believer’s *life*. God helped me, and gave me his presence in this discourse; and it was a season of considerable power in the assembly. In the afternoon preached from [Luke xix. 41, 42](#). ‘And when he was come near, he beheld the city,’ &c. I enjoyed some assistance; though not so much as in the forenoon. In the evening I enjoyed freedom and sweetness in secret prayer; God enlarged my heart, freed me from melancholy damps, and gave me satisfaction in drawing near to himself. *Oh that my soul could magnify the Lord, for these seasons of composure and resignation to his will!*”

“Monday, Aug. 4. Spent the day in writing; enjoyed much freedom and assistance in my work: was in a composed and comfortable frame most of the day; and in the evening enjoyed some sweetness in prayer. Blessed be God, my spirits were yet up, and I was free from sinking damps; as I have been in general ever since I came from Elizabeth-town last. *Oh what a mercy is this!*”

“Tuesday, Aug. 5. Towards night preached at the funeral of one of my Christians, from [Isa. lvii. 2](#). ‘He shall enter into peace,’ &c. I was oppressed with the nervous headache, and considerably dejected: however, had a little freedom some part of the time I was discoursing. Was extremely weary in the evening; but notwithstanding, enjoyed some liberty and cheerfulness of mind in prayer; and found the dejection that I feared, much removed, and my spirits considerably refreshed.”

He continued in a very comfortable, cheerful frame of mind the *next day*, with his heart enlarged in the service of God.

“*Thursday, Aug. 7.* Rode to my house, where I spent the last winter, in order to bring some things I needed for my Susquehannah journey: was refreshed to see that place, which God so marvellously visited with the showers of his grace. Oh how amazing did the *power of God* often appear there! *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*“

The *next day* he speaks of liberty, enlargement, and sweetness of mind in prayer and religious conversation.

“*Saturday, Aug. 9.* In the afternoon visited my people; set their affairs in order, as much as possible, and contrived for them the management of their worldly business; discoursed to them in a solemn manner, and concluded with prayer. Was composed and comfortable in the evening, and somewhat fervent in secret prayer; had some sense and view of the eternal world, and round a serenity of mind. Oh that I could magnify the Lord for any freedom he affords me in prayer!

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 10.* Discoursed to my people, both parts of the day, from [Acts iii. 19](#). ‘Repent ye, therefore,’ &c. In discoursing of *repentance* in the forenoon, God helped me, so that my discourse was searching; some were in tears, both of the Indians and white people, and the word of God was attended with some power. In the intermission I was engaged in discoursing to some in order to their baptism; as well as with one who had then lately met with some comfort, after spiritual trouble and distress. In the afternoon was somewhat assisted again, though weak and weary. Afterwards *baptized* six persons; three adults, and three children. Was in a comfortable frame in the evening, and enjoyed some satisfaction in secret prayer. I scarce ever in my life felt myself so full of tenderness as this day.

“*Monday, Aug. 11.* Being about to set out on a journey to Susquehannah the next day, with leave of Providence, I spent some time this day in prayer with my people, that God would bless and succeed my intended journey; that he would send forth his blessed Spirit with his word, and set up his kingdom among the poor Indians in the wilderness. While I was opening and applying part of the 110th and 2d Psalms, the *power* of God seemed to descend on the assembly in some measure; and while I was making the first prayer, numbers were melted, and I found some affectionate enlargement of soul myself. Preached from [Acts iv. 31](#). ‘And when they had prayed, the place was shaken,’ &c. God helped me, and my interpreter also: there was a shaking and melting among us; and divers, I doubt not, were in some measure ‘filled with the Holy Ghost.’ Afterwards Mr. Macknight prayed: I then opened the two last stanzas of the 72d Psalm; at which time God was present with us; especially while I insisted upon the promise of *all nations blessing* the great *Redeemer*. My soul was refreshed to think, that this day, this blessed glorious season, should surely come; and I trust, numbers of my dear people were also refreshed. Afterwards prayed; had some freedom, but was almost spent: then walked out, and left my people to carry on religious exercises among themselves:



they prayed repeatedly, and sung, while I rested and refreshed myself. Afterwards went to the meeting; prayed with and dismissed the assembly. Blessed be God, this has been a day of grace. There were many tears and affectionate sobs among us this day. In the evening my soul was refreshed in prayer: enjoyed liberty at the throne of grace, in praying for my people and friends, and the church of God in general. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*"

The *next day* he set out on his journey towards Susquehannah, and six of his Christian Indians with him, whom he had chosen out of his congregation, as those that he judged most fit to assist him in the business he was going upon. He took his way through Philadelphia; intending to go to Susquehannah river, far down, where it is settled by the white people, below the country inhabited by the Indians; and so to travel up the river to the Indian habitations. For although this was much farther about, yet hereby he avoided the huge mountains, and hideous wilderness, that must be crossed in the nearer way; which in time past he found to be extremely difficult and fatiguing. He rode this week as far as Charlestown, a place of that name about thirty miles westward of Philadelphia; where he arrived on *Friday*: and in his way hither was, for the most part, in a composed, comfortable state of mind.

"*Saturday, Aug. 16.* [At Charlestown] It being a day kept by the people of the place where I now was, as preparatory to the celebration of the Lord's supper, I tarried; heard Mr. Treat preach; and then preached myself. God gave me some good degree of freedom, and helped me to discourse with warmth, and application to the conscience. Afterwards I was refreshed in spirit, though much tired; and spent the evening agreeably, having some freedom in prayer, as well as Christian conversation.

"*Lord's day, Aug. 17.* Enjoyed liberty, composure, and satisfaction, in the secret duties of the morning: had my heart somewhat enlarged in prayer for dear friends, as well as for myself. In the forenoon attended Mr. Treat's preaching, partook of the Lord's supper, five of my people also communicating in this holy ordinance: I enjoyed some enlargement and outgoing of soul in this season. In the afternoon preached from [Ezek. xxxiii. 11](#). 'Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God,' &c. Enjoyed not so much sensible assistance as the day before: however, was helped to some fervency in addressing immortal souls. Was somewhat confounded in the evening, because I thought I had done little or nothing for God; yet enjoyed some refreshment of spirit in Christian conversation and prayer. Spent the evening, till near midnight, in religious exercises; and found my bodily strength, which was much spent when I came from the public worship, something renewed before I went to bed.

"*Monday, Aug. 18.* Rode on my way towards Paxton, upon Susquehannah river. Felt my spirits sink, towards night, so that I had little comfort.

"*Tuesday, Aug. 19.* Rode forward still; and at night lodged by the side of Susquehannah. Was weak and disordered both this and the preceding day, and found my spirits considerably damped, meeting with none that I thought godly people.

“*Wednesday, Aug. 20.* Having lain in a cold sweat all night, I coughed much bloody matter this morning, and was under great disorder of body, and not a little melancholy; but what gave me some encouragement, was, I had a secret hope that I might speedily get a dismissal from earth, and all its toils and sorrows. Rode this day to one Chambers’, upon Susquehannah, and there lodged. Was much afflicted, in the evening, with an ungodly crew, drinking, swearing, &c. Oh, what a *hell* would it be, to be numbered with the *ungodly*! Enjoyed some agreeable conversation with a traveller, who seemed to have some relish of true religion.

“*Thursday, Aug. 21.* Rode up the river about fifteen miles, and there lodged, in a family that appeared quite destitute of God. Laboured to discourse with the man about the life of religion, but found him very artful in evading such conversation. Oh, what a death it is to some to hear of *the things of God*! Was out of my element; but was not so dejected as at some times.

“*Friday, Aug. 22.* Continued my course up the river; my people now being with me, who before were parted from me; travelled above all the English settlements; at night lodged in the open woods; and slept with more comfort than while among an ungodly company of white people. Enjoyed some liberty in secret prayer this evening; and was helped to remember dear friends, as well as my dear flock, and the church of God in general.

“*Saturday, Aug. 23.* Arrived at the Indian town, called *Shaumoking*, near night. Was not so dejected as formerly; but yet somewhat exercised. Felt somewhat composed in the evening; enjoyed some freedom in leaving my *all* with God. Through the great goodness of God, I enjoyed some liberty of mind; and was not distressed with a despondency, as frequently heretofore.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 24.* Towards noon, visited some of the Delawares, and discoursed with them about Christianity. In the afternoon discoursed to the *king*, and others, upon divine things; who seemed to dispose to hear. Spent most of the day in these exercises. In the evening enjoyed some comfort and satisfaction; and especially had some sweetness in secret prayer. This duty was made so agreeable to me, that I loved to walk abroad and repeatedly engage in it. *Oh, how comfortable is a little glimpse of God!*

“*Monday, Aug. 25.* Spent most of the day in writing. Sent out my people that were with me, to talk with the Indians, and contract a friendship and familiarity with them, that I might have a better opportunity of treating with them about Christianity. Some good seemed to be done by their visit this day, divers appeared willing to hearken to Christianity. My spirits were a little refreshed this evening; and I found some liberty and satisfaction in prayer.

“*Tuesday, Aug. 26.* About noon discoursed to a considerable number of Indians: God helped me, I am persuaded: I was enabled to speak with much plainness, and some warmth and power. The discourse had impression upon some, and made them appear very serious. I thought things now appeared as encouraging, as they did at Crossweeks. At the time of

my first visit to those Indians, I was a little encouraged: I pressed things with all my might; and called out my people, who were then present, to give in *their testimony* for God; which they did. Towards night was refreshed; felt a heart to pray for the setting up of God's kingdom here; as well as for my dear congregation below, and my dear friends elsewhere.

“*Wednesday, Aug. 27.* There having been a thick smoke in the house where I lodged all night before, whereby I was almost choked, I was this morning distressed with pains in my head and neck, and could have no rest. In the morning the smoke was still the same; and a cold easterly storm gathering, I could neither live within doors nor without any long time together. I was pierced with the rawness of the air abroad, and in the house distressed with the smoke. I was this day very vapoury, and lived in great distress, and had not health enough to do any thing to any purpose.

“*Thursday, Aug. 28.* In the forenoon I was under great concern of mind about my work. Was visited by some who desired to hear me preach; discoursed to them, in the afternoon, with some fervency, and laboured to persuade them to *turn to God*. Was full of concern for the kingdom of Christ, and found some enlargement of soul in prayer, both in secret and in my family. Scarce ever saw more clearly, than this day, that it is God's *work* to convert souls, and especially poor *heathens*. I knew I could not *touch* them; I saw I could only speak to *dry bones*, but could give them no *sense* of what I said. My eyes were up to God for help: I could say, the *work* was *his*; and if done, the *glory* would be *his*.

“*Friday, Aug. 29.* Felt the same concern of mind as the day before. Enjoyed some freedom in prayer, and a satisfaction to leave all with God. Travelled to the Delawares, found few at home: felt poorly, but was able to spend some time alone in reading God's word and in prayer, and enjoyed some sweetness in these exercises. In the evening was assisted repeatedly in prayer, and found some comfort in coming to the throne of grace.

“*Saturday, Aug. 30.* Spent the forenoon in visiting a *trader*, that came down the river *sick*; who appeared as ignorant as any Indian. In the afternoon spent some time in writing, reading, and prayer.

“*Lord's day, Aug. 31.* Spent much time in the morning in secret duties: found a weight upon my spirits, and could not but cry to God with concern and engagement of soul. Spent some time also in reading and expounding God's word to my dear family, that was with me, as well as in singing and prayer with them. Afterwards, spake the word of God to some few of the Susquehannah Indians. In the afternoon felt very weak and feeble. Near night was something refreshed in mind, with some views of things relating to my great work. Oh, how heavy is my work, when *faith* cannot take hold of an *almighty arm*, for the performance of it! Many times have I been ready to sink in this case. *Blessed be God, that I may repair to a full fountain.*

“*Monday, Sept. 1.* Set out on a journey towards a place called *The great island*, about fifty miles distant from Shaumoking, in the north-western branch of Susquehannah. Travelled

some part of the way, and at night lodged in the woods. Was exceeding feeble this day, and sweat much the night following.

“*Tuesday, Sept. 2.* Rode forward; but no faster than my people went on foot. Was very weak, on this as well as the preceding days. I was so feeble and faint, that I feared it would kill me to lie out in the open air; and some of our company being parted from us, so that we had now no axe with us, I had no way but to climb into a young pine-tree, and with my knife to lop the branches, and so made a shelter from the dew. But the evening being cloudy, and very likely for rain, I was still under fears of being extremely exposed: sweat much in the night, so that my linen was almost wringing wet all night. I scarce ever was more weak and weary than this evening, when I was able to sit up at all. This was a melancholy situation I was in; but I endeavoured to quiet myself with considerations of the possibility of my being in much worse circumstances, amongst enemies, &c.

“*Wednesday, Sept. 3.* Rode to the Delaware-town; found divers drinking and drunken. Discoursed with some of the Indians about Christianity; observed my *interpreter* much engaged and assisted in his work; some few persons seemed to hear with great earnestness and engagement of soul. About noon rode to a small town of Shauwaunoes, about eight miles distant; spent an hour or two there, and returned to the Delaware-town, and lodged there. Was scarce ever more confounded with a sense of my own unfruitfulness and unfitness for my work, than now. Oh, what a dead, heartless, barren, unprofitable wretch did I now see myself to be! My spirits were so low, and my bodily strength so wasted, that I could do nothing at all. At length, being much overdone, lay down on a *buffalo-skin*; but sweat much the whole night.

“*Thursday, Sept. 4.* Discoursed with the Indians, in the morning, about Christianity; my *interpreter*, afterwards, carrying on the discourse to a considerable length. Some few appeared well-disposed, and somewhat affected. Left this place, and returned towards Shaumoking; and at night lodged in the place where I lodged the Monday night before: was in very uncomfortable circumstances in the evening, my people being belated, and not coming to me till past ten at night; so that I had no fire to dress any victuals, or to keep me warm, or keep off wild beasts; and I was scarce ever more weak and worn out in all my life. However, I lay down and slept before my people came up, expecting nothing else but to spend the whole night alone, and without fire.

“*Friday, Sept. 5.* Was exceeding weak, so that I could scarcely ride; it seemed sometimes as if I must fall off from my horse, and lie in the open woods: however, got to Shaumoking towards night: felt something of a spirit of thankfulness, that God had so far returned me: was refreshed to see one of my Christians, whom I left here in my late excursion.

“*Saturday, Sept. 6.* Spent the day in a very weak state; coughing and spitting blood, and having little appetite to any food I had with me: was able to do very little, except discourse a while of divine things to my own people, and to some few I met with. Had, by this time,

very little life or heart to speak for God, through feebleness of body, and flatness of spirits. Was scarcely ever more ashamed and confounded in myself, than now. I was sensible, that there were numbers of God's people, who knew I was then out upon a design (or at least the pretence) of doing something for God, and in his cause, among the poor Indians; and they were ready to suppose, that I was *fervent in spirit*: but oh, the heartless frame of mind that I felt filled me with confusion! Oh (methought) if God's people knew me, as God knows, they would not think so highly of my zeal and resolution for God, as perhaps now they do! I could not but desire they should see how heartless and irresolute I was, that they might be undeceived, and 'not think of me above what they ought to think.' And yet I thought, if they saw the utmost of my flatness and unfaithfulness, the smallness of my courage and resolution for God, they would be ready to shut me out of their doors, as unworthy of the company or friendship of Christians.

"*Lord's day, Sept. 7.* Was much in the same weak state of body, and afflicted frame of mind, as in the preceding day: my soul was grieved, and mourned that I could do nothing for God. Read and expounded some part of God's word to my own dear family, and spent some time in prayer with them; discoursed also a little to the pagans: but spent the sabbath with a little comfort.

"*Monday, Sept. 8.* Spent the forenoon among the Indians; in the afternoon left Shaumoking, and returned down the river a few miles. Had proposed to have tarried a considerable time longer among the Indians upon Susquehannah; but was hindered from pursuing my purpose by the sickness that prevailed there, the weakly circumstances of my own people that were with me, and especially my own extraordinary weakness, having been exercised with great nocturnal sweats, and a coughing up of blood, in almost the whole of the journey. I was a great part of the time so feeble and faint, that it seemed as though I never should be able to reach home; and at the same time very destitute of the comforts, and even necessaries, of life; at least, what was necessary for one in so weak a state. In this journey I sometimes was enabled to speak the word of God with some power, and divine truths made some impressions on divers that heard me; so that several, both men and women, old and young, seemed to *cleave to us*, and be well disposed towards *Christianity*; but *others mocked* and shouted, which damped those who before seemed friendly, at least some of them. Yet God, at times, was evidently present, assisting me, my interpreter, and other dear friends who were with me. God gave, sometimes, a good degree of freedom in prayer for the ingathering of souls there; and I could riot but entertain a strong hope, that the journey should not be wholly fruitless. Whether the issue of it would be the setting up of Christ's kingdom *there*, or only the drawing of some few persons down to my congregation in New Jersey; or whether they were now only being prepared for some further attempts, that might be made among them, I did not determine: but I was persuaded the journey would not be lost. *Blessed be God, that I had any encouragement and hope.*

“*Tuesday, Sept. 9.* Rode down the river near thirty miles. Was extremely weak, much fatigued, and wet with a thunder-storm. Discoursed with some warmth and closeness to some poor ignorant souls, on the *life* and *power* of *religion*; what were, and what were not, the *evidences* of it. They seemed much astonished when they saw my Indians ask a blessing and give thanks at dinner; concluding *that a* very high evidence of grace in them: but were astonished when I insisted that neither that, nor yet secret prayer, was any sure evidence of grace. Oh the ignorance of the world! How are some empty outward *forms*, that may all be entirely *selfish*, mistaken for true religion, infallible evidences of it! The Lord pity a deluded world!



“*Wednesday, Sept. 10.* Rode near twenty miles homeward. Was much solicited to preach, but was utterly unable, through bodily weakness. Was extremely overdone with the heat and showers this day, and coughed up a considerable quantity of blood.

“*Thursday, Sept. 11.* Rode homeward; but was very weak, and sometimes scarce able to ride. Had a very importunate invitation to preach at a meeting-house I came by, the people being then gathering; but could not, by reason of weakness. Was resigned and composed under my weakness; but was much exercised with concern for my companions in travel, whom I had left with much regret, some lame, and some sick.

“*Friday, Sept. 12.* Rode about fifty miles; and came just at night to a Christian friend's house, about twenty-five miles westward from Philadelphia. Was courteously received, and kindly entertained, and found myself much refreshed in the midst of my weakness and fatigues.

“*Saturday, Sept. 13.* Was still agreeably entertained with Christian friendship, and all things necessary for my weak circumstances. In the afternoon heard Mr. Treat preach; and was refreshed in conversation with him in the evening.

“*Lord's day, Sept. 14.* At the desire of Mr. Treat and the people, I preached both parts of the day (but short) from [Luke xiv. 23](#). ‘And the Lord said unto the servant, go out,’ &c. God gave me some freedom and warmth in my discourse; and, I trust, helped me in some measure to labour *in singleness of heart*. Was much tired in the evening, but was comforted with the most tender treatment I ever met with in my life. My mind through the whole of this day was exceeding calm; and I could ask for nothing in prayer, with any encouragement of soul, but that ‘the will of God might be done.’

“*Monday, Sept. 15.* Spent the whole day in concert with Mr. Treat, in endeavours to compose a difference, subsisting between certain persons in the congregation where we now were; and there seemed to be a blessing on our endeavours. In the evening baptized a child: was in a calm, composed frame, and enjoyed, I trust, a spiritual sense of divine things, while administering the ordinance. Afterwards spent the time in religious conversation, till late in the night. This was indeed a pleasant, agreeable evening.



*Tuesday, Sept. 16.* Continued still at my friend's house, about twenty-five miles westward of Philadelphia. Was very weak, unable to perform any business, and scarcely able to sit up.

*Wednesday, Sept. 17.* Rode into Philadelphia. Still very weak, and my cough and spitting of blood continued. Enjoyed some agreeable conversation with friends, but wanted more spirituality.

*Thursday, Sept. 18.* Went from Philadelphia to Mr. Treat's: was agreeably entertained on the road: and was in a sweet, composed frame, in the evening.

*Friday, Sept. 19.* Rode from Mr. Treat's to Mr. Stockston's at Prince-town: was extremely weak, but kindly received and entertained. Spent the evening with some degree of satisfaction.

*Saturday, Sept. 20.* Arrived among my own people, just at night: found them praying together; went in, and gave them some account of God's dealings with me and my companions in the journey; which seemed affecting to them. I then prayed with them, and thought the divine presence was amongst us; divers were melted into tears, and seemed to have a sense of divine things. Being very weak, I was obliged soon to repair to my lodgings, and felt much worn out in the evening. Thus God has carried me through the fatigues and perils of another journey to Susquehannah, and returned me again in safety, though under a great degree of bodily indisposition. Oh that my soul were truly thankful for renewed instances of mercy! Many hardships and distresses I endured in this journey; but the Lord supported me under them all."

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## PART VIII.

AFTER HIS RETURN FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH, UNTIL HIS DEATH.

HITHERTO Mr. Brainerd had kept a constant *diary*, giving an account of what passed from day to day, with very little interruption: but henceforward his diary is very much interrupted by his illness; under which he was often brought so low, as either not to be capable of writing, or not well able to bear the burden of a care so constant, as was requisite, to recollect every evening what had passed in the day, and digest it, and set down an orderly account of it in writing. However, his *diary* was not wholly neglected; but he took care, from time to time, to take some notice in it of the most material things concerning himself and the state of his mind, even till within a few days of his death; as the reader will see afterwards.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 21, 1746.* I was so weak I could not preach, nor pretend to ride over to my people in the forenoon. In the afternoon rode out; sat in my chair, and discoursed to my people from [Rom. xiv. 7, 8](#). ‘For none of us liyeth to himself,’ &c. I was strengthened and helped in my discourse; and there appeared something agreeable in the assembly. I returned to my lodgings extremely tired; but thankful that I had been enabled to speak a word to my poor people I had been so long absent from. Was able to sleep very little this night, through weariness and pain. Oh, how blessed should I be, if the little I do were all done with right views! Oh that, ‘whether I live, I might live to the Lord,’ &c.

“*Saturday, Sept. 27.* Spent this day, as well as the whole week past, under a great degree of bodily weakness, exercised with a violent cough, and a considerable fever. I had no appetite to any kind of food; and frequently brought up what I ate, as soon as it was down; and oftentimes had little rest in my bed by reason of pains in my breast and back. I was able, however, to ride over to my people about two miles every day, and take some care of those who were then at work upon a small house for me to reside in amongst the Indians.<sup>401</sup> I was sometimes

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400 Mr. Shepard, in his *Select Cases Resolved*, under the first case says as follows. “I have lately known one very able, wise, and godly, put upon the rack, by him that, envying God’s people’s peace, knows how to change himself into an angel of light; for it being his usual course, in the time of his health, to make a diary of his hourly life, and finding much benefit by it, he was in conscience pressed, by the power and delusion of Satan, to make and take the same daily survey of his life in the time of his sickness; by means of which he spent his enfeebled spirits, cast on fuel to fire his sickness. Had not a friend of his convinced him of his erroneous conscience misleading him at that time, he had murdered his body, out of conscience to save his soul, and to preserve his grace. And do you think these were the motions of God’s Spirit, which like those locusts, [Rev. ix. 9, 10](#), had faces like men, but had tails like scorpions, and stings in their tails?

401 This was the fourth house he built for his residence among the Indians. Besides that at Kaunaumeek, and that at the Forks of Delaware, and another at Crossweeksung, he built one now at Cranbury.

scarce able to walk, and never able to sit up the whole day, through the week. Was calm and composed, and but little exercised with melancholy damps, as in former seasons of weakness. Whether I should ever recover or no, seemed very doubtful; but this was many times a comfort to me, that *life* and *death* did not depend upon *my* choice. I was pleased to think, that he who is infinitely wise, had the determination of this matter; and that I had no trouble to consider and weigh things upon all sides, in order to make the choice, whether I should live or die. Thus my time was consumed; I had little strength to pray, none to write or read, and scarce any to meditate: but through divine goodness, I could with great composure look *death* in the face, and frequently with sensible joy. Oh how blessed it is, to be *habitually prepared* for death! The Lord grant that I may be *actually ready also!*

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 28.* Rode to my people; and, though under much weakness, attempted to preach from [2 Cor. xiii. 5](#). ‘Examine yourselves,’ &c. Discoursed about half an hour; at which season divine power seemed to attend the word: but being extremely weak, I was obliged to desist: and after a turn of faintness, with much difficulty rode to my lodgings; where betaking myself to my bed, I lay in a burning fever, and almost delirious, for several hours; till towards morning my fever went off with a violent sweat. I have often been feverish, and unable to rest quietly after preaching; but this was the most severe, distressing turn that ever preaching brought upon me. Yet I felt perfectly at rest in my own mind, because I had made my utmost attempts to speak for God, and knew I could do no more.

“*Tuesday, Sept. 30.* Yesterday, and to-day, was in the same weak state, or rather weaker than in days past; was scarce able to sit up half the day. Was in a composed frame of mind, remarkably free from dejection and melancholy damps; as God has been pleased, in a great measure, to deliver me from these unhappy glooms, in the general course of my present weakness hitherto, and also from a peevish, froward spirit. And oh how great a mercy is this! Oh that I might always be perfectly quiet in seasons of greatest weakness, although nature should sink and fail!

Oh that I may always be able with utmost sincerity to say, ‘Lord, not my will, but thine be done!’ This, through grace, I can say at present, with regard to life or death, ‘The Lord do with me as seems good in his sight;’ that whether I live or die, I may *glorify him*, who is ‘worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and dominion for ever. Amen.’

“*Saturday, Oct. 4.* Spent the former part of this week under a great degree of infirmity and disorder, as I had done several weeks before: was able, however, to ride a little every day, although unable to sit up half the day, till Thursday. Took some care daily of some persons at work upon my house. On Friday afternoon found myself wonderfully revived and strengthened; and having some time before given notice to my people, and those of them at the Forks of Delaware in particular, that I designed, with leave of Providence, to administer the sacrament of the Lord’s supper upon the first sabbath in October, the sabbath now approaching, on Friday afternoon I preached, preparatory to the sacrament, from [2](#)

Cor. xiii. 5. finishing what I had proposed to offer upon the subject the sabbath before. The sermon was blessed of God to the stirring up religious affection, and a spirit of devotion, in the people of God; and to the greatly affecting one who had *backslidden* from God, which caused him to judge and condemn himself. I was surprisingly strengthened in my work while I was speaking; but was obliged immediately after to repair to bed, being now removed into my own house among the Indians; which gave me such speedy relief and refreshment, as I could not well have lived without. Spent some time on Friday night in conversing with my people about divine things, as I lay upon my bed; and found my soul refreshed, though my body was weak. This being Saturday, I discoursed particularly with divers of the communicants; and this afternoon preached from *Zech. xii. 10.* 'And I will pour on the house of David,' &c. There seemed to be a tender melting, and hearty mourning for sin, in numbers in the congregation. My soul was in a comfortable frame, and I enjoyed freedom and assistance in public service; was myself, as well as most of the congregation, much affected with the humble confession and apparent broken-heartedness of the forementioned *backslider*; and could not but rejoice, that God had given him such a sense of his sin and unworthiness. Was extremely tired in the evening; but lay on my bed, and discoursed to my people.

"*Lord's day, Oct. 5.* Was still very weak; and in the morning considerably afraid I should not be able to go through the work of the day; having much to do, both in private and public. Discoursed before the administration of the sacrament, from *John i. 29.* 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' Where I considered, I. In what respects Christ is called the *Lamb of God*: and observed that he is so called, (1.) From the *purity* and *innocence* of his nature. (2.) From his *meekness* and *patience* under sufferings. (3.) From his being that *atonement*, which was pointed out in the *sacrifice* of lambs, and in particular by the *paschal* lamb. II. Considered how and in what sense he 'takes away the sin of the world:' and observed, that the means and manner, in and by which he takes away the sins of men, was his 'giving himself for them,' doing and suffering in their room and stead, &c. And he is said to take away the sin of *the world*, not because *all* the world shall *actually* be redeemed from sin by him; but because, (1.) He has done and suffered *sufficient* to answer for the sins of the world, and so to redeem all mankind. (2.) He *actually* does take away the sins of the *elect* world. And, III. Considered how we are to *behold* him, in order to have our sins taken away. (1.) Not with our *bodily* eyes. Nor, (2.) By *imagining* him on the cross, &c. But by a *spiritual* view of his glory and goodness, engaging the soul to *rely* on him, &c. The divine presence attended this discourse; and the assembly was considerably melted with divine truths. After sermon baptized two persons. Then administered the Lord's supper to near forty communicants of the Indians, besides divers dear Christians of the white people. It seemed to be a season of divine power and grace; and numbers seemed to rejoice in God. Oh, the sweet union and harmony then appearing among the religious people! My soul was refreshed, and my religious friends, of the white people, with me. After the sacrament, could scarcely

get home, though it was not more than twenty roods; but was supported and led by my friends, and laid on my bed; where I lay in pain till some time in the evening; and then was able to sit up and discourse with friends. Oh, how was this day spent in prayers and praises among my dear people! One might hear them, all the morning, before public worship, and in the evening, till near midnight, praying and singing praises to God, in one or other of their houses. My soul was refreshed, though my body was weak.”

This week, in two days, though in a very low state, he went to Elizabeth-town, to attend the meeting of the *Synod* there: but was disappointed by its removal to New York. He continued in a very composed, comfortable frame of mind.

“*Saturday, Oct. 11* Towards night was seized with an ague, which was followed with a hard fever, and considerable pain: was treated with great kindness, and was ashamed to see so much concern about so unworthy a creature, as I knew myself to be. Was in a comfortable frame of mind, wholly submissive, with regard to *life or death*. It was indeed a peculiar satisfaction to me, to think, that it was not *my* concern or business to determine whether I should live or die. I likewise felt peculiarly satisfied, while under this uncommon degree of disorder; being now fully convinced of my being really weak, and unable to perform my work. Whereas at other times my mind was perplexed with fears, that I was a misimprover of time, by conceiting I was sick, when I was not in reality so. Oh, how precious is time! And how guilty it makes me feel, when I think I have trifled away and misimproved it, or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty, to the utmost of my ability and capacity!

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 12.* Was scarce able to sit up in the forenoon: in the afternoon attended public worship, and was in a composed, comfortable frame.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 19.* Was scarcely able to do any thing at all in the week past, except that on Thursday I rode out about four miles; at which time I took cold. As I was able to do little or nothing, so I enjoyed not much spirituality, or lively religious affection; though at some times I longed much to be more fruitful and full of heavenly affection; and was grieved to see the hours slide away, while I could do nothing for God. Was able this week to attend public worship. Was composed and comfortable, willing either to die or live; but found it hard to be reconciled to the thoughts of living *useless*. Oh that I might never live to be a burden to God’s creation; but that I might be allowed to repair *home*, when my *sojourning* work is done!”

This week he went back to his Indians at Cranberry, to take some care of their spiritual and temporal concerns; and was much spent with riding; though he rode but a little way in a day.

“*Thursday, Oct. 23.* Went to my own house, and set things in order. Was very weak, and somewhat melancholy: laboured to do something, but had no strength; and was forced to lie down on my bed, very solitary.

“*Friday, Oct. 24.* Spent the day in overseeing and directing my people about mending their fence, and securing their wheat. Found that all their concerns of a secular nature depended upon me. Was somewhat refreshed in the evening, having been able to do something valuable in the day-time. Oh, how it pains me to see time pass away, when I can do nothing to any purpose!

“*Saturday, Oct. 25.* Visited some of my people; spent some time in writing, and felt much better in body than usual. When it was near night, I felt so well, that I had thoughts of expounding: but in the evening was much disordered again, and spent the night in coughing, and spitting blood.

“*Lord’s day, Oct. 26.* In the morning was exceeding weak: spent the day, till near night, in pain to see my poor people wandering *as sheep not having a shepherd*, waiting and hoping to see me able to preach to them before night. It could not but distress me to see them in this case, and to find myself unable to attempt any thing for their spiritual benefit. But towards night, finding myself a little better, I called them together to my house, and sat down, and read and expounded [Matt. v. 1-16](#). This discourse, though delivered in much weakness, was attended with power to many of the hearers; especially what was spoken upon the last of these verses; where I insisted on the infinite wrong done to religion, by having our *light* become *darkness*, instead of *shining before men*. Many in the congregation were now deeply affected with a sense of their deficiency, in regard of a spiritual conversation, that might recommend religion to others, and a spirit of concern and watchfulness seemed to be excited in them. There was one, in particular, who had fallen into the sin of drunkenness some time before, now deeply convinced of his sin, and the great dishonour done to religion by his misconduct, and he discovered a great degree of grief and concern on that account. My soul was refreshed to see this. And though I had no strength to speak so much as I would have done, but was obliged to lie down on the bed; yet I rejoiced to see such an humble melting in the congregation; and that divine truths, though faintly delivered, were attended with so much efficacy upon the auditory.

“*Monday, Oct. 27.* Spent the day in overseeing and directing the Indians about mending the fence round their wheat: was able to walk with them, and contrive their business, all the forenoon. In the afternoon was visited by two dear friends, and spent some time in conversation with them. Towards night I was able to walk out, and take care of the Indians again. In the evening enjoyed a very peaceful frame.

“*Tuesday, Oct. 28.* Rode to Prince-town, in a very weak state: had such a violent fever, by the way, that I was forced to alight at a friend’s house, and lie down for some time. Near night was visited by Mr. Treat, Mr. Beaty and his wife, and another friend: my spirits were refreshed to see them; but I was surprised, and even ashamed, that they had taken so much pains as to ride thirty or forty miles to see me. Was able to sit up most of the evening; and spent the time in a very comfortable manner with my friends.

“*Wednesday, Oct. 29.* Rode about ten miles with my friends that came yesterday to see me; and then parted with them all but one, who stayed on purpose to keep me company, and cheer my spirits. Was extremely weak, and very feverish, especially towards night; but enjoyed comfort and satisfaction.

“*Thursday, Oct. 30.* Rode three or four miles, to visit Mr. Wales: spent some time, in an agreeable manner, in conversation; and though extremely weak, enjoyed a comfortable, composed frame of mind.

“*Friday, Oct. 31.* Spent the day among friends, in a comfortable frame of mind, though exceeding weak, and under a considerable fever.

“*Saturday, Nov. 1* Took leave of friends after having spent the forenoon with them, and returned home to my own house. Was much disordered in the evening, and oppressed with my cough; which has now been constant for a long time, with a hard pain in my breast, and fever.

“*Lord’s day, Nov. 2.* Was unable to preach, and scarcely able to sit up, the whole day. Was grieved, and almost sunk, to see my poor people destitute of the means of grace; especially considering they could not read, and so were under great disadvantages for spending the sabbath comfortably. Oh, me thought, I could be contented to be sick, if my poor flock had a faithful pastor to feed them with spiritual knowledge! A view of their want of this was more afflictive to me than all my bodily illness.

“*Monday, Nov. 3.* Being now in so weak and low a state, that I was utterly incapable of performing my work, and having little hope of recovery, unless by much riding, I thought it my duty to take a long journey into New England, and to divert myself among my friends, whom I had not now seen for a long time. And accordingly took leave of my congregation this day. Before I left my people, I visited them all in their respective houses, and discoursed to each one, as I thought most proper and suitable for their circumstances, and found great freedom and assistance in so doing. I scarcely left one house but some were in tears; and many were not only affected with my being about to *leave* them, but with the solemn *addresses* I made them upon divine things; for I was helped to be *fervent in spirit* while I discoursed to them. When I had thus gone through my congregation, (which took me most of the day,) and had taken leave of them, and of the school, I left home, and rode about two miles, to the house where I lived in the summer past, and there lodged. Was refreshed, this evening, in that I had left my congregation so well-disposed and affected, and that I had been so much assisted in making my farewell-addresses to them.

“*Tuesday, Nov. 4.* Rode to Woodbridge, and lodged with Mr. Pierson; continuing in a weak state.

“*Wednesday, Nov. 5.* Rode to Elizabeth-town; intending as soon as possible to prosecute my journey into New England. But was, in an hour or two after my arrival, taken much worse.

“After this, for near a week, I was confined to my chamber, and most of the time to my bed: and then so far revived as to be able to walk about the house; but was still confined within doors.

“In the beginning of this extraordinary turn of disorder, after my coming to Elizabeth-town, I was enabled through mercy to maintain a calm, composed, and patient spirit, as I had been before from the beginning of my weakness. After I had been in Elizabeth-town about a fortnight, and had so far recovered that I was able to walk about the house, upon a day of thanksgiving kept in this place, I was enabled to recall and recount over the mercies of God, in such a manner as greatly affected me, and filled me with thankfulness and praise. Especially my soul praised God for his work of grace among the Indians, and the enlargement of his dear kingdom. My soul blessed God for what he is in himself, and adored him, that he ever would display himself to creatures. I rejoiced that he was God, and longed that all should know it, and feel it, and rejoice in it. ‘Lord, glorify thyself,’ was the desire and cry of my soul. Oh that *all people* might love and praise the blessed God; that he might have all possible honour and glory from the intelligent world!<sup>402</sup>

“After this comfortable thanksgiving-season, I frequently enjoyed freedom, enlargement, and engagedness of soul in prayer, and was enabled to intercede with God for my dear congregation, very often for every family, and every person, in particular. It was often a great comfort to me, that I could pray heartily to God for those, to whom I could not speak, and whom I was not allowed to see. But at other times, my spirits were so flat and low, and my bodily vigour so much wasted, that I had scarce any affections at all.

“In *December* I had revived so far as to be able to walk abroad, and visit friends, and seemed to be on the gaining hand with regard to my health, in the main, until Lord’s day, *December 21*. At which time I went to the public worship; and it being sacrament day, I laboured much at the Lord’s table, to bring forth a certain corruption, and have it *slain*, as being an *enemy* to God and my own soul; and could not but hope, that I had gained some strength against this, as well as other corruptions; and felt some brokenness of heart for my sin.

“After this, having perhaps taken some cold, I began to decline as to bodily health; and continued to do so, till the latter end of January, 1747. Having a violent cough, a considerable fever, an asthmatic disorder, and no appetite for any manner of food, nor any power of digestion, I was reduced to so low a state, that my friends, I believe, generally despaired of my life; and some of them, for some time together, thought I could scarce live a day. At this time, I could think of nothing, with any application of mind, and seemed to be in a great measure void of all affection, and was exercised with great temptations; but yet was not ordinarily afraid of death.

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402 About this time he wrote the seventh letter among his Remains.



“On *Lord’s day, Feb. 1.* Though in a very weak and low state, I enjoyed a considerable deal of comfort and sweetness in divine things; and was enabled to plead and use arguments with God in prayer, I think, with a childlike spirit. That passage of Scripture occurred to my mind, and gave me great assistance, ‘If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?’ This text I was helped to plead and insist upon; and saw the divine faithfulness engaged for dealing with me better than any earthly parent can do with his child. This season so refreshed my soul, that my body seemed also to be a gainer by it. And from this time I began gradually to amend. And as I recovered some strength, vigour, and spirit, I found at times some freedom and life in the exercises of devotion, and some longings after spirituality and a life of usefulness to the interests of the great Redeemer. At other times I was awfully barren and lifeless, and out of frame for the things of God; so that I was ready often to cry out, ‘Oh that it were with me as in months past!’ Oh that God had taken me away in the midst of my usefulness, with a sudden stroke, that I might not have been under a necessity of trifling away time in diversions! Oh that I had never lived to spend so much precious time, in so poor a manner, and to so little purpose! Thus I often reflected, was grieved, ashamed, and even confounded, sunk and discouraged.

“On *Tuesday, Feb. 24.* I was able to ride as far as Newark, (having been confined within Elizabeth-town almost four months,) and the next day returned to Elizabeth-town. My spirits were somewhat refreshed with the ride, though my body was weary.

“On *Saturday, Feb. 28.* Was visited by an Indian of my own congregation; who brought me letters, and good news of the sober and good behaviour of my people in general. This refreshed my soul; I could not but soon retire, and bless God for his goodness; and found, I trust, a truly thankful frame of spirit, that God seemed to be building up that congregation for himself.

“On *Wednesday, March 4.* I met with a reproof from a friend, which, although I thought I did not deserve it from him, yet was, I trust, blessed of God to make me more tenderly afraid of sin, more jealous over myself, and more concerned to keep both heart and life pure and unblamable. It likewise caused me to reflect on my past deadness, and want of spirituality, and to abhor myself, and look on myself as most unworthy. This frame of mind continued the next day; and for several days after, I grieved to think, that in my necessary diversions I had not maintained more seriousness, solemnity, heavenly affection and conversation. Thus my spirits were often depressed and sunk; and yet I trust that reproof was made to be beneficial to me.

“*Wednesday, March 11,* being kept in Elizabeth-town as a day of fasting and prayer, I was able to attend public worship; which was the first time I was able so to do after December 21. Oh, how much weakness and distress did God carry me through in this space of time! But *having obtained help from him,* I yet live: Oh that I could live more to his glory!

“*Lord’s day, March 15.* Was able again to attend the public worship, and felt some earnest desires of being restored to the ministerial work: felt, I think, some spirit and life to speak for God.

“*Wednesday, March 18.* Rode out with a design to visit my people; and the next day arrived among them: but was under great dejection in my journey.

“*On Friday* morning I rose early, walked about among my people, and inquired into their state and concerns and found an additional weight and burden on my spirits, upon hearing some things disagreeable. I endeavoured to go to God with my distresses, and made some kind of lamentable complaint; and in a broken manner spread my difficulties before God; but, notwithstanding, my mind continued very gloomy. About ten o’clock I called my people together, and after having explained and sung a psalm, I prayed with them. There was a considerable deal of affection among them; I doubt not, in some instances, that which was more than merely natural.”

This was the *last interview* that he ever had with his people. About eleven o’clock the same day he left them; and the next day came to Elizabeth-town; his melancholy remaining still: and he continued for a considerable time under a great degree of dejection through vapoury disorders.

“*Saturday, March 28.* Was taken this morning with violent griping pains. These pains were extreme and constant for several hours; so that it seemed impossible for me, without a miracle, to live twenty-four hours in such distress. I lay confined to my bed the whole day, and in distressing pain all the former part of it: but it pleased God to bless means for the abatement of my distress. Was exceedingly weakened by this pain, and continued so for several days following; being exercised with a fever, cough, and nocturnal sweats. In this distressed case, so long as my head was free of vapoury confusions, *death* appeared agreeable to me; I looked on it as the end of toils, and an entrance into a place ‘where the weary are at rest;’ and I think I had some relish of the entertainments of the heavenly state; so that by these I was allured and drawn as well as driven by the fatigues of life. Oh, how happy it is, to be drawn by desires of a state of perfect holiness!

“*Saturday, April 4.* Was sunk and dejected, very restless and uneasy, by reason of the misimprovement of time; and yet knew not what to do. I longed to spend time in fasting and prayer, that I might be delivered from indolence and coldness in the things of God; but, alas, I had not bodily strength for these exercises! Oh, how blessed a thing is it to enjoy peace of conscience! but how dreadful is a want of inward peace and composure of soul! It is impossible, I find, to enjoy this happiness without *redeeming time*, and maintaining a spiritual frame of mind.

“*Lord’s day, April 5.* It grieved me to find myself so inconceivably barren. My soul thirsted for grace; but alas, how far was I from obtaining what appeared to me so exceeding excellent! I was ready to despair of ever being a holy creature, and yet my soul was desirous

of following hard after God; but never did I see myself so far from *having apprehended, or being already perfect*, as at this time. The Lord's supper being this day administered, I attended the ordinance: and though I saw in myself a dreadful emptiness and want of grace, and saw myself as it were at an infinite distance from that purity which becomes the gospel; yet at the communion, especially the distribution of the bread, I enjoyed some warmth of affection, and felt a tender *love to the brethren*; and I think, to the glorious Redeemer, the *first-born* among them. I endeavoured then to *bring forth* mine and *his enemies*, and *slay them before him*; and found great freedom in begging deliverance from this spiritual death, as well as in asking divine favours for my friends and congregation, and the church of Christ in general.

"*Tuesday, April 7.* In the afternoon rode to Newark, in order to marry the Reverend Mr. Dickinson;<sup>403</sup> and in the evening performed that work. Afterwards rode home to Elizabeth-town, in a pleasant frame, full of composure and sweetness.

"*Thursday, April 9.* Attended the ordination of Mr. Tucker,<sup>404</sup> and afterwards the examination of Mr. Smith: was in a comfortable frame of mind this day, and felt my heart, I think, sometimes in a spiritual frame.

"*Friday, April 10.* Spent the forenoon in Presbyterial business: in the afternoon, rode to Elizabeth-town; found my brother John there:<sup>405</sup> spent some time in conversation with him; but was extremely weak and outdone, my spirits considerably sunk, and my mind dejected.

"*Monday, April 13.* Assisted in examining my brother. In the evening, was in a solemn devout frame; but was much overdone and oppressed with a violent head-ache.

"*Tuesday, April 14.* Was able to do little or nothing: spent some time with Mr. Byram and other friends. This day my brother went to my people.

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403 The late learned and very excellent Mr. Jonathan Dickinson, pastor of a church in Elizabeth-town, president of the college of New Jersey, and one of the Correspondents of the Honourable Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge. He had a great esteem for Mr. Brainerd, and kindly entertained him in his house during his sickness in the winter past; and after a short illness, he died in the next ensuing October, two days before Mr. Brainerd.

404 A worthy pious young gentleman; who lived in the ministry but a very short time: he died at Stratfield in Connecticut, the December following his ordination, being a little while after Mr. Brainerd's death at Northampton. He was taken ill on a journey, returning from a visit to his friends at Milton, (in the Massachusetts,) which, as I take it, was his native place, and Harvard college the place of his education.

405 This brother of his had been sent for by the Correspondents, to take care of, and instruct Mr. Brainerd's congregation of Indians; he being obliged by his illness to be absent from them. And he continued to take care of them till Mr. Brainerd's death; and since his death, has been ordained his successor in his mission, and to the charge of his congregation which continues much to flourish under his pastoral care.

“*Wednesday, April 15.* Found some freedom at the throne of grace several times this day. In the afternoon was very weak, and spent the time to very little purpose; and yet in the evening had, I thought, some religious warmth and spiritual desires in prayer: my soul seemed to go forth after God, and take complacency in his divine perfections. But, alas! afterwards awfully let down my watch, and grew careless and secure.

“*Thursday, April 16.* Was in bitter anguish of soul in the morning, such as I have scarce ever felt, with a sense of sin and guilt. I continued in distress the whole day, attempting to pray wherever I went; and indeed could not help so doing; but looked upon myself so vile, I dared not look any body in the face; and was even grieved that any body should show me any respect, or at least that they should be so deceived as to think I deserved it.

“*Friday, April 17.* In the evening could not but think that God helped me to ‘draw near to the throne of grace,’ though most unworthy, and gave me a sense of his favour; which gave me inexpressible support and encouragement. Though I scarcely dared to hope the mercy was real, it appeared so great; yet could not but rejoice that ever God should discover his reconciled face to such a vile sinner. Shame and confusion, at times, covered me; and then hope, and joy, and admiration of divine goodness gained the ascendant. Sometimes I could not but admire the divine goodness, that the Lord had not let me fall into all the grossest, vilest acts of sins and open scandal that could be thought of; and felt myself so necessitated to praise God, that this was ready for a little while to swallow up my shame and pressure of spirit on account of my sins.”

After this, his dejection and pressure of spirit returned; and he remained under it the two next days.

“*Monday, April 20.* Was in a very disordered state, and kept my bed most of the day. I enjoyed a little more comfort than in several of the preceding days. *This day I arrived at the age of twenty-nine years.*

“*Tuesday, April 21.* I set out on my journey for New England, in order (if it might be the will of God) to recover my health by riding; travelled to New York, and there lodged.”

This proved his final departure from New Jersey. he travelled slowly, and arrived among his friends at East Haddam, about the beginning of May. There is very little account in his *diary* of the time that passed from his setting out on his journey to May 10. He speaks of his sometimes finding his heart rejoicing in the glorious perfections of God, and longing to live to him; but complains of the unfixtness of his thoughts, and their being easily diverted from divine subjects, and cries out of his leanness, as testifying against him, in the loudest manner. And concerning those *diversions* he was obliged to use for his health, he says, that he sometimes found he could use diversions with “*singleness of heart,*” aiming at the glory of God; but that he also found there was a necessity of great care and watchfulness, lest he should lose that spiritual temper of mind in his diversions, and lest they should degenerate into what was merely selfish, without any supreme aim at the glory of God in them.

“*Lord’s day, May 10.* (At Had-Lime) I could not but feel some measure of gratitude to God at this time, (wherein I was much exercised,) that he had always disposed me, in my ministry, to insist on the great doctrine of *regeneration, the new creature, faith in Christ, progressive sanctification, supreme love to God, living entirely to the glory of God, being not our own,* and the like. God thus helped me to see, in the surest manner, from time to time, that these, and the like doctrine necessarily connected with them, are the *only foundation* of safety and salvation for perishing sinners; and that those divine dispositions, which are consonant hereto, are that *holiness*, ‘without which no man shall see the Lord.’ The exercise of these God-like tempers wherein the soul acts in a kind of concert with God, and would be and do every thing that is pleasing to him I saw, would stand by the soul in a dying hour; for God must, I think, *deny himself*, if he cast away *his own image*, even the soul that is one in desires with himself.

“*Lord’s day, May 17.* [At Millington] Spent the forenoon at home, being unable to attend the public worship. At this time, God gave me some affecting sense of my own vileness and the exceeding sinfulness of my heart; that there seemed to be nothing but sin and corruption within me. ‘Innumerable evils compassed me about:’ my want of spirituality and holy living, my neglect of God, and living to myself. All the abominations of my heart and life seemed to be open to my view; and I had nothing to say, but, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ Towards noon I saw, that the grace of God in Christ is infinitely free towards sinners, and such sinners as I was. I also saw, that God is the supreme good, that in his presence is life; and I began to long to die, that I might *be with him*, in a state of freedom from all sin. Oh, how a small glimpse of his excellency refreshed my soul! Oh, how worthy is the blessed God to be loved, adored, and delighted in for himself, for his own divine excellencies!

“Though I felt much dulness, and want of a spirit in prayer this week; yet I had some glimpses of the excellency of divine things; and especially one morning, in secret meditation and prayer, the excellency and beauty of holiness, as a likeness to the glorious God, was so discovered to me, that I began to long earnestly to be in that world where holiness dwells in perfection. I seemed to long for this perfect holiness, not so much for the sake of my own happiness, (although I saw clearly that this was the greatest, yea, the only happiness of the soul,) as that I might please God, live entirely to him, and glorify him to the utmost stretch of my rational powers and capacities.

“*Lord’s day, May 24.* [Long Meadow in Springfield] Could not but think, as I have often remarked to others, that much more of *true religion* consists in *deep humility, brokenness of heart, and an abasing sense of barrenness and want of grace and holiness*, than most who are called *Christians* imagine; especially those who have been esteemed the converts of the *late day*. Many seem to know of no other religion but elevated *joys* and *affections*, arising only from some flights of *imagination*, or some *suggestion* made to their mind, of *Christ* being *theirs*, God *living them*, and the like.”

On *Thursday, May 28*. He came from Long Meadow to Northampton: appearing vastly better than, by his account, he had been in the winter; indeed so well, that he was able to ride twenty-five miles in a day, and to walk half a mile; and appeared cheerful, and free from melancholy; but yet undoubtedly, at that time, in a confirmed, incurable consumption.

I had much opportunity, before this, of particular information concerning him, from many who were well acquainted with him; and had myself once an opportunity of considerable conversation and some acquaintance with him, at New-Haven, near four years before, at the time of the *commencement*, when he offered that confession to the rector of the college, which has been already mentioned in this history; I being one he was pleased then several times to consult on that affair: but now I had opportunity for a more full acquaintance with him. I found him remarkably sociable, pleasant, and entertaining in his conversation; yet solid, savoury, spiritual, and very profitable. He appeared meek, modest, and humble; far from any stiffness, moroseness, superstitious demureness, or affected singularity in speech or behaviour, and seeming to dislike all such things. We enjoyed not only the benefit of his conversation, but had the comfort and advantage of hearing him pray in the family, from time to time. His manner of praying was very agreeable; most becoming a worm of the dust, and a disciple of Christ, addressing an infinitely great and holy God, and Father of mercies; not with florid expressions, or a studied eloquence; not with any intemperate vehemence, or indecent boldness. It was at the greatest distance from any appearance of ostentation, and from every thing that might look as though he meant to recommend himself to those that were about him, or set himself off to their acceptance. It was free also from vain repetitions, without impertinent excursions, or needless multiplying of words. He expressed himself with the strictest propriety, with weight, and pungency; and yet what his lips uttered seemed to flow from the *fulness of his heart*, as deeply impressed with a great and solemn sense of our necessities, unworthiness, and dependence, and of God's infinite greatness, excellency, and sufficiency, rather than merely from a warm and fruitful brain, pouring out good expressions. And I know not that ever I heard him so much as ask a blessing or return thanks at table, but there was something remarkable to be observed both in the matter and manner of the performance. In his prayers, he insisted much on the prosperity of Zion, the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the flourishing and propagation of religion among the Indians. And he generally made it one petition in his prayer, "that we might not outlive our usefulness."

"*Lord's day, May 31*. [At Northampton] I had little inward sweetness in religion most of the week past; not realizing and beholding spiritually the *glory of God, and the blessed Redeemer*; from whence always arise *my comforts and joys in religion*, if I have any at all: and if I cannot so behold the excellencies and perfections of God, as to cause me to rejoice in him for what he is *in himself*, I have no solid foundation for joy. To rejoice, only because

I apprehend I have an *interest in Christ*, and shall be finally saved, is a poor mean business indeed.”

This week he consulted Dr. Mather, at my house, concerning his illness, who plainly told him, that there were great evidences of his being in a confirmed *consumption*, and that he could give him no encouragement that he should ever recover. But it seemed not to occasion the least discomposure in him, not to make any manner of alteration as to the cheerfulness and serenity of his mind, or the freedom or pleasantness of his conversation.

“*Lord’s day, June 7.* My attention was greatly engaged, and my soul so drawn forth, this day, by what I heard of the ‘exceeding preciousness of the saving grace of God’s Spirit,’ that it almost overcame my body, in my weak state. I saw, that true grace is exceeding precious indeed; that it is very rare; and that there is but a very small degree of it, even where the reality of it is to be found; at least, I saw this to be *my case*.”

In the preceding week I enjoyed some comfortable seasons of meditation. One morning the cause of God appeared exceeding precious to me: the Redeemer’s kingdom is all that is valuable in the earth, and I could not but long for the promotion of it in the world. I saw also, that this cause is God’s, that he has an infinitely greater regard and concern for it than I could possibly have; that if I have any true love to this blessed interest, it is only a drop derived from that ocean: hence, I was ready to ‘lift up my head with joy;’ and conclude, ‘Well, if God’s cause be so dear and precious to him, he will promote it.’

And thus I did as it were rest on God, that surely he would promote that which was so agreeable to his own will; though the time when must still be left to his sovereign pleasure.”

He was advised by physicians still to continue riding, as what would tend, above any other means, to prolong his life. He was at a loss, for some time, which way to bend his course next; but finally determined to ride from hence to Boston; we having concluded that one of this family should go with him, and be helpful to him in his weak and low state.

“*Tuesday, June 9.* I set out on a journey from Northampton to Boston. Travelled slowly, and got some acquaintance with divers ministers on the road.

“Having now continued to ride for some considerable time together, I felt myself much better than I had formerly done; and found, that in proportion to the prospect I had of being restored to a state of usefulness, so I desired the continuance of life: but *death* appeared inconceivably more desirable to me than a *useless life*; yet blessed be God, I found my heart, at times, fully resigned and reconciled to this greatest of afflictions, if God saw fit thus to deal with me.

“*Friday, June 12.* I arrived in Boston this day, somewhat fatigued with my journey. Observed that there is no *rest*, but in God: fatigues of body, and anxieties of mind, attend us, both in town and country; no place is exempted.

“*Lord’s day, June 14.* I enjoyed some enlargement and sweetness in family prayer, as well as in secret exercises; God appeared excellent, his ways full of pleasure and peace, and all I wanted was a spirit of holy fervency, to live to him.

“*Wednesday, June 17.* This, and the two preceding days, I spent mainly in visiting the ministers of the town, and was treated with great respect by them.

“On *Thursday, June 18.* I was taken exceeding ill, and brought to the gates of death, by the breaking of small ulcers in my lungs, as my physician supposed. In this extreme weak state I continued for several weeks, and was frequently reduced so low, as to be utterly speechless, and not able so much as to whisper a word; and even after I had so far revived, as to walk about the house, and to step out of doors, I was exercised every day with a faint turn, which continued usually four or five hours: at which times, though I was not so utterly speechless, but that I could say *Yes* or *No*, yet I could not converse at all, nor speak one sentence, without making stops for breath; and divers times in this season, my friends gathered round my bed, to see me breathe my last, which they looked for every moment, as I myself also did.

“How I was, the first day or two of my illness, with regard to the exercise of reason, I scarcely know; I believe I was somewhat shattered with the violence of the fever, at times: but the third day of my illness, and constantly afterwards, for four or five weeks together, I enjoyed as much serenity of mind, and clearness of thought, as perhaps I ever did in my life; and I think my mind never penetrated with so much ease and freedom into divine things, as at this time; and I never felt so capable of demonstrating the truth of many important doctrine of the gospel as now. And as I saw clearly the *truth* of those great doctrine, which are justly styled the doctrine of *grace*; so I saw with no less clearness, that the *essence* of *religion* consisted in the soul’s *conformity to God*, and acting above all selfish views, for *his glory*, longing to be *for him*, to live *to him*, and please and honour *him* in all things: and this from a clear view of his infinite excellency and worthiness *in himself*, to be loved, adored, worshipped, and served by all intelligent creatures. Thus I saw, that when a soul *loves* God with a supreme love, he therein acts *like* the blessed God himself, who most justly loves himself in that manner. So when God’s interest and his are become one, and he longs that God should be *glorified*, and rejoices to think that he is unchangeably possessed of the highest glory and blessedness, herein also he acts in *conformity* to God. In like manner, when the soul is fully *resigned to*, and rests satisfied and contented *with*, the divine will, here it is also *conformed* to God.

“I saw further, that as this divine temper, whereby the soul exalts God, and treads self in the dust, is wrought in the soul by God’s discovering his own glorious perfections *in the face of Jesus Christ* to it, by the special influences of the Holy Spirit, so he cannot but have *regard to it*, as his own work; and as it is his image in the soul, he cannot but take *delight* in it. Then I saw again, that if God should slight and reject his own *moral image*, he must needs



*deny himself*; which he cannot do. And thus I saw the *stability* and *infallibility* of this religion; and that those who are truly possessed of it, have the most complete and satisfying *evidence* of their being interested in all the benefits of Christ's redemption, having their hearts *conformed to him*; and that these, these only, are qualified for the employments and entertainments of God's kingdom of glory; as none but these have any relish for the business of heaven, which is to ascribe glory to God, and not to themselves; and that God (though I would speak it with great reverence of his name and perfection) cannot, without denying himself, finally cast such away.

“The next thing I had then to do, was to inquire, whether *this* was *my* religion: and here God was pleased to help me to the most easy remembrance and critical review of what had passed in course, of a religious nature, through several of the latter years of my life. And although I could discover much corruption attending my best duties, many selfish views and carnal ends, much spiritual pride and self-exaltation, and innumerable other evils which compassed me about; yet God was pleased, as I was reviewing, quickly to put this question out of doubt, by showing me that I had, from time to time, acted above the utmost influence of mere self-love; that I had longed to please and glorify him, as my highest happiness, &c. And this review was through grace attended with a present feeling of the same divine temper of mind; I felt now pleased to think of the glory of God, and longed for heaven, as a state wherein I might glorify God perfectly, rather than a place of happiness for myself: and this feeling of the love of God in my heart, which I trust the Spirit of God excited in me afresh, was sufficient to give me full satisfaction, and make me long, as I had many times before done, to be with Christ. I did not now want any of the *sudden suggestions*, which many are so pleased with, ‘That Christ and his benefits are mine; that God loves me,’ &c. in order to give me satisfaction about my state: no, my soul now abhorred those delusions of *Satan*, which are thought to be the *immediate witness of the Spirit*, while there is nothing but an *empty suggestion* of a certain fact, without any gracious discovery of the *divine glory*, or of the *Spirit's work* in their own hearts. I saw the awful delusion of this kind of confidence, as well as of the whole of *that* religion, from which they usually spring, or at least of which they are the attendants. The *false* religion of the late day, (though a day of wondrous grace,) the *imagination*s, and impressions made only on the *animal* affections together with the *sudden suggestions* made to the mind by *Satan*, *transformed into an angel of light*, of certain facts not revealed in Scripture and many such like things, I fear, have made up the greater part of the religious appearance in many places.

“These things I saw with great clearness, when I was thought to be dying. And God gave me great concern for his church and interest in the world, at this time: not so much because the late remarkable influence upon the minds of people was abated, as because that false religion those heats of imagination, and wild and selfish commotions of the animal affections which attended the work of grace, had prevailed so far. *This* was that which my mind dwelt

upon, almost day and night: and *this*, to me, was the darkest appearance, respecting religion, in the land; for it was *this*, chiefly, that had prejudiced the world against inward religion. And I saw the great misery of all was, that so few saw any manner of *difference* between those exercises that were spiritual and holy, and those which have *self-love* only for their beginning, centre, and end.

“As God was pleased to afford me clearness of thought, and composure of mind, almost continually, for several weeks together under my great weakness; so he enabled me, in some measure, to improve my time, as I hope, to valuable purposes. I was enabled to write a number of important *letters* to friends in remote places: <sup>406</sup> and sometimes I wrote when I was speechless, *i. e.* unable to maintain conversation with any body; though perhaps I was able to speak a word or two so as to be heard. At this season also, while I was confined at Boston, I read with care and attention some papers of old Mr. Shepard’s, lately come to light, and designed for the press: and as I was desired, and greatly urged, made some corrections, where the sense was left dark, for want of a word or two. Besides this, I had many *visitants*; with whom, when I was able to speak, I always conversed of the things of religion; and was peculiarly disposed and assisted in distinguishing between the *true and false* religion of the times. There was scarce any subject, that has been matter of debate in the late day, but what I was in at one time or other brought to a sort of necessity to discourse upon, and show my opinion; and that frequently before numbers of people; and especially, I discoursed repeatedly on the nature and necessity of that *humiliation, self-emptiness*, or full conviction of a person’s being utterly undone in himself, which is necessary in order to a saving *faith*, and the extreme *difficulty* of being brought to this, and the great danger there is of persons taking up with some *self-righteous appearances* of it. The *danger* of this I especially dwelt upon, being persuaded that multitudes perish in this hidden way; and because so little is said from most pulpits to discover any danger here: so that persons being never effectually brought to *die in themselves*, are never truly *united to Christ*, and so perish. I also discoursed much on what I take to be the essence of true religion, endeavouring plainly to describe that God-like temper and disposition of soul, and that holy conversation and behaviour, that may justly claim the honour of having God for its original and patron. And I have reason to hope God blessed my way of discoursing and distinguishing to some, both ministers and people; so that my time was not wholly lost.”

He was much visited, while in Boston, by many persons of considerable note and character, and by some of the first rank; who showed him uncommon respect, and appeared highly pleased and entertained with his conversation. And besides his being honoured with the company and respect of ministers of the town, he was visited by several ministers from various parts of the country. He took all opportunities to discourse of the peculiar nature

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406 Among these are the eighth, ninth, and tenth letters, among his Remains.

and distinguishing characters of true, spiritual, and vital religion; and to hear his testimony against the various false appearances of it, consisting in, or arising from, impressions on the *imagination*, sudden and supposed immediate *suggestions* of truths not contained in the Scripture, and that faith which consists *primarily* in a person believing that Christ died for him in particular, &c. What he said was, for the most part, heard with uncommon attention and regard: and his discourses and reasonings appeared manifestly to have great weight and influence, with many that he conversed with, both ministers and others.<sup>407</sup>

Also the Honourable Commissioners in Boston, of the incorporated Society in London for propagating the Gospel in New England and parts adjacent, having newly had committed to them a legacy of the late reverend and famous Dr. Daniel Williams of London, for the support of *two missionaries* to the heathen, were pleased, while he was in Boston, to consult him about a mission to those Indians called the *Six Nations*, particularly about the qualifications requisite in a missionary to those Indians; and were so satisfied with his sentiments on this head, and had that confidence in his faithfulness, and his judgment and discretion in things of this nature, that they desired him to undertake to find and recommend a couple of persons fit to be employed in this business; and very much left the matter with him.

Likewise certain pious and generously disposed gentlemen in Boston, being moved by the wonderful narrative of his labours and success among the Indians in New Jersey, and more especially by their conversation with him on the same subject, took opportunity to inquire more particularly into the state and necessities of his congregation, and the school among them, with a charitable intention of contributing something to promote the excellent design of advancing the interests of Christianity among the Indians; and understanding that there was a want of Bibles for the school, three dozen of Bibles were immediately procured, and 14*l.* in bills (of the old tenor) given over and above, besides more large benefactions made afterwards, which I shall have occasion to mention in their proper place.

Mr. Brainerd's restoration from his extremely low state in Boston, so as to go abroad again and to travel, was very unexpected to him and his friends. My daughter who was with him, writes thus concerning him, in a letter dated June 23. "On Thursday, he was very ill with a violent fever, and extreme pain in his head and breast, and at turns, delirious. So he remained till Saturday evening, when he seemed to be in the agonies of death; the family was up with him till one or two o'clock, expecting every hour would be his last. On sabbath-day he was a little revived, his head was better, but very full of pain, and exceeding sore at his breast, much put to it for breath, &c. Yesterday he was better upon all accounts. Last night he slept but little. This morning he was much worse. Dr. Pynchon says, he has no

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407 I have had advantage for the more full information of his conduct and conversation, the entertainment he met with, and what passed relating him while in Boston; as he was constantly attended, during his continuance there, by one of my children, in order to his assistance in his illness.

hopes of his life; nor does he think it likely he will ever come out of the chamber; though he says, he *may* be able to come to Northampton ”

In another letter, dated June 29, she says as follows. “Mr. Brainerd has not so much pain, nor fever, since I last wrote, as before; yet he is extremely weak and low, and very faint, expecting every day will be his last. He says, it is impossible for him to live, for he has hardly vigour enough to draw his breath. I went this morning into town, and when I came home, Mr. Bromfield said, he never expected I should see him alive; for he lay two hours, as they thought, dying; one could scarcely tell whether he was alive or not; he was not able to speak for some time: but now is much as he was before. The *doctor* thinks he will drop away in such a turn. Mr. Brainerd says he never felt any thing so much like *dissolution*, as what he felt to-day; and says he never had any conception of its being possible for any creature to be alive, and yet so weak as he is from day to day. Dr. Pynchon says, he should not be surprised if he should so recover as to live half a year; nor would it surprise him if he should die in half a day. Since I began to write he is not so well, having had a faint turn again; yet patient and resigned, having no distressing fears, but the contrary.”

His physician, the honourable Joseph Pynchon, Esq. when he visited him in his extreme illness in Boston, attributed his sinking so suddenly into a state so extremely low, and nigh unto death, to the breaking of ulcers, that had been long gathering in his lungs, (as Mr. Brainerd himself intimates in a forementioned passage in his diary,) and there discharging and diffusing their purulent matter. This, while nature was labouring and struggling to throw it off, which could be done no otherwise than by a gradual straining of it through the small vessels of those vital parts, occasioned a high fever and violent coughing, threw the whole frame of nature into the utmost disorder, and brought it near to a dissolution. But it was supposed, if the strength of nature held till the lungs had this way gradually cleared themselves of this putrid matter, he might revive, and continue better, till new ulcers gathered and broke; but that this would surely sink him again, and there was no hope of his recovery. He expressed himself to one of my neighbours, who at that time saw him in Boston, that he was as *certainly* a dead man as if he was shot through the heart.

But so it was ordered in divine providence, that the strength of nature held out through this great conflict, so as just to escape the grave at that turn; and then he revived, to the astonishment of all that knew his case. After he began to revive, he was visited by his youngest brother, Mr. Israel Brainerd, a student at Yale college; who having heard of his extreme illness, went from thence to Boston, in order to see him, if he might find him alive, which he but little expected.

This visit was attended with a mixture of joy and sorrow to Mr. Brainerd. He greatly rejoiced to see his brother, especially because he had desired an opportunity of some religious conversation with him before he died. But this meeting was attended with sorrow, as his brother brought to him the sorrowful tidings of his sister Spencer's death at Haddam; a

sister, between whom and him had long subsisted a peculiarly dear affection, and much intimacy in spiritual matters, and whose house he used to make his home when he went to Haddam, his native place. He had heard nothing of her sickness till this report of her death. But he had these comforts together with the tidings, *viz.* a confidence of her being gone to heaven, and an expectation of his soon meeting her there. His brother continued with him till he left the town, and came with him from thence to Northampton. Concerning the last sabbath Mr. Brainerd spent in Boston, he writes in his *diary* as follows.

“*Lord’s day, July 19.* I was just able to attend public worship, being earned to the house of God in a chaise. Heard Dr. Sewall preach in the forenoon: partook of the Lord’s supper at this time. In this sacrament I saw astonishing divine *wisdom* displayed; such wisdom as I saw required the tongues of angels and glorified saints to celebrate. It seemed to me I never should do any thing at adoring the infinite *wisdom* of God, discovered in the contrivance of man’s redemption, until I arrived at a world of perfection; yet I could not help striving to ‘call upon my soul, and all within me, to bless the name of God.’ In the afternoon heard Mr. Prince preach. I saw more of God in the *wisdom* discovered in the plan of man’s redemption, than I saw of any other of his perfections, through the whole day.”

He left Boston the next day. But before he came away, he had occasion to bear a very full, plain, and open *testimony* against that opinion, that the *essence* of saving *faith* lies in *believing that Christ died for me in particular*; and that this is the *first* act of faith in a true believer’s closing with Christ. He did it in a long conference he had with a gentleman, who has very publicly and strenuously appeared to defend that tenet. He had this discourse with him in the presence of a number of considerable persons, who came to visit Mr. Brainerd before he left the town, and to take their leave of him. In which debate he made this plain declaration, (at the same time confirming what he said by many arguments,) That the *essence* of saving *faith* was wholly left out of the *definition* which that gentleman has published; and that the faith which he had *defined*, had nothing of God in it, nothing above nature, nor indeed above the power of the devils; and that all such as had *this* faith, and had *no better*, though they might have this to never so high a degree, would surely perish. And he declared also, that he never had greater *assurance* of the *falseness* of the principles of those that maintained *such* a faith, and of their dangerous and destructive tendency, or a more affecting sense of the great delusion and misery of those that depended on getting to heaven by *such* a faith, (while they had *no better*,) than he lately had when he was supposed to be at the point to *die*, and expected every minute to pass into *eternity*. Mr. Brainerd’s discourse at this time, and the forcible reasonings by which he confirmed what he asserted, appeared to be greatly to the satisfaction of those present; as several of them took occasion expressly to manifest to him, before they took leave of him.

When this conversation was ended, having bid an affectionate farewell to his friends, he set out in the cool of the afternoon, on his journey to Northampton, attended by his

brother, and my daughter that went with him to Boston; and would have been accompanied out of the town by a number of gentlemen, besides that honourable person who gave him his company for some miles on that occasion, as a testimony of their esteem and respect, had not his aversion to any thing of pomp and show prevented it.

“*Saturday, July 25*, I arrived here at Northampton; having set out from Boston on Monday, about four o’clock, P. M. In this journey I rode about sixteen miles a day, one day with another. Was sometimes extremely tired and faint on the road, so that it seemed impossible for me to proceed any further: at other times I was considerably better, and felt some freedom both of body and mind.

“*Lord’s day, July 26*. This day I saw clearly that I should never be *happy*; yea, that God himself could not make me happy, unless I could be in a capacity to ‘please and glorify him for ever.’ Take away *this*, and admit me into all the fine *heavens* that can be conceived of by men or angels, and I should still be *miserable* for ever.”

Though he had so far revived, as to be able to travel thus far, yet he manifested no expectation of recovery: he supposed, as his physician did, that his being brought so near to death at Boston, was owing to the breaking of ulcers in his lungs. He told me that he had several such ill turns before, only not to so high a degree, but as he supposed, owing to the same cause, *viz.* the breaking of ulcers; and that he was brought lower and lower every time; and it appeared to him, that in his last sickness he was brought as low as it was possible, and yet live; and that he had not the least expectation of surviving the next return of this breaking of ulcers; but still appeared perfectly calm in the prospect of death.

On *Wednesday* morning, the week after he came to Northampton, he took leave of his brother Israel, never expecting to see him again in this world; he now setting out from hence on his journey to New-Haven.

When Mr. Brainerd came hither, he had so much strength as to be able, from day to day, to ride out two or three miles, and to return; and sometimes to pray in the family; but from this time he gradually decayed, becoming weaker and weaker.

While he was here, his conversation from first to last was much on the same subjects as when in Boston. He spoke much of the nature of *true religion* in heart and practice, as distinguished from its various *counterfeits*; expressing his great concern, that the latter so much prevailed in many places. He often manifested his great abhorrence of all such doctrine and *principles* in religion, as had any tendency to antinomianism; of all such notions, as seemed to diminish the necessity of holiness of life, or to abate men’s regard to the commands of God, and a strict, diligent, and universal practice of virtue and piety, under a pretence of depreciating bur works, and magnifying Gods free grace. He spoke often, with much detestation, of such *experiences* and pretended *discoveries* and *joys*, as have nothing of the nature of *sanctification* in them, as do not tend to strictness, tenderness, and diligence in religion, to meekness and benevolence towards mankind, and an humble behaviour. He also declared,

that he looked on such pretended *humility* as worthy of no regard, which was not manifested by *modesty*, of *conduct* and *conversation*. He spake often, with abhorrence, of the spirit and practice that appears among the greater part of *separatists* at this day in the land, particularly those in the eastern parts of Connecticut; in their condemning and separating from the *standing* ministry and churches, their crying down *learning* and a *learned* ministry, their notion of an *immediate call* to the work of the ministry, and the forwardness of *laymen* to set up themselves as public teachers. He had been much conversant in the eastern part of Connecticut, (it being near his native place,) when the same principles, notion, and spirit began to operate, which have since prevailed to a greater height; and had acquaintance with some of those persons who are become heads and leaders of the *separatists*. He had also been conversant with persons of the same way elsewhere; and I heard him say, once and again, he knew by his acquaintance with this sort of people, that what was chiefly and most generally in repute among *them* as the *power of godliness*, was an entirely *different* thing from that true vital piety recommended in the *Scriptures*, and had *nothing in it* of that nature. He manifested a great dislike of a disposition in persons to much *noise* and *show* in religion, and affecting to be abundant in proclaiming and publishing their own *experiences*. Though at the same time he did not condemn, but approved of Christians speaking of their own experiences on some occasions, and to some persons, with due modesty and discretion. He *himself* sometimes, while at my house, spake of his own experiences; but it was always with apparent *reserve*, and in the exercise of care and judgment with respect to occasions, persons, and circumstances. He mentioned some remarkable things of his own religious experience to two young gentlemen, candidates for the ministry, who watched with him (each at a different time) when he was very low, and not far from his end; but he desired both of them not to speak of what he had told them till *after his death*.

The subject of that debate I mentioned before, which he had with a certain gentleman, the day he left Boston, seemed to lie with much weight on his mind after he came hither; and he began to write a *letter* to that gentleman, expressing his sentiments concerning the dangerous tendency of some of the tenets he had expressed in conversation, and in the writings he had published; with the considerations by which the exceeding hurtful nature of those notions is evident; but he had not strength to finish his letter.

After he came hither, as long as he lived, he spoke much of that future prosperity of Zion which is so often foretold and promised in the Scripture. It was a theme he delighted to dwell upon; and his mind seemed to be carried forth with earnest concern about it, and intense desires, that religion might speedily and abundantly revive and flourish. Though he had not the least expectation of recovery, yea, the nearer death advanced, and the more the symptoms of its approach increased, still the more did his mind seem to be taken up with this subject. He told me, when near his end, that "he never in all his life had his mind so led forth in desires and earnest prayers for the flourishing of *Christ's kingdom* on earth, as since

he was brought so exceeding low at Boston.” He seemed much to wonder, that there appeared no more of a disposition in ministers and people to pray for the flourishing of religion through the world; that so little a part of their *prayers* was generally taken up about it, in their families, and elsewhere; and particularly, he several times expressed his wonder, that there appeared no more forwardness to comply with the *proposal* lately made, in a *Memorial* from a number of ministers in Scotland, and sent over into America, for *united extraordinary prayer*, among Christ’s ministers and people, for the *coming of Christ’s kingdom*: and he sent it as his dying advice to *his own congregation*, that they should practise agreeably to that proposal.<sup>408</sup>

Though he was constantly exceeding weak, yet there appeared in him a continual care well to improve *time* and fill it up with something that might be profitable, and in some respect for the glory of God or the good of men; either profitable conversation, or writing letters to absent friends, or noting something in his diary, or looking over his former writings, correcting them, and preparing them to be left in the hands of others at his death, or giving some directions concerning the future management of his people, or employment in secret devotions. He seemed never to be easy, however ill, if he was not doing something for God, or in his service. After he came hither, he wrote a *preface* to a *diary* of the famous Mr. Shepard’s, (in those papers before mentioned, lately found,) having been much urged to it by those gentlemen in Boston who had the care of the publication: which diary, with his *preface*, has since been published.<sup>409</sup>

In his diary for *Lord’s day*, Aug. 9, he speaks of longing desires after *death*, through a sense of the excellency of a state of *perfection*. In his diary for *Lord’s day*, Aug. 16, he speaks of his having so much refreshment of *soul* in the house of God, that it seemed also to refresh his *body*. And this is not only noted in his diary, but was very observable to others: it was very apparent, not only that his *mind* was exhilarated with inward consolation, but also that his *animal* spirits and *bodily* strength seemed to be remarkably restored, as though he had forgot his illness. But this was the last time that ever he attended public worship on the sabbath.

On *Tuesday* morning that week (I being absent on a journey) he prayed with my family; but not without much difficulty, for want of bodily strength; and this was the last family

408 His congregation, since this, have with great cheerfulness and unanimity fallen in with this advice, and have practised agreeably to the proposal from Scotland; and have at times appeared with uncommon engagedness and fervency of spirit in their meetings and united devotions, pursuant to that proposal. Also the presbyteries of New York and New Brunswick, since this, have with one consent fallen in with the proposal, as likewise some others of God’s people in those parts.

409 A part of this preface is inserted in the Reflections on these Memoirs in a subsequent part of this volume.



prayer that ever he made. He had been wont, till now, frequently to ride out two or three miles; but this week, on Thursday, was the last time he ever did so.

“*Lord’s day, Aug. 23.* This morning I was considerably refreshed with the thought, yea, the hope and expectation of the *enlargement of Christ’s kingdom*; and I could not but hope the time was at hand, when Babylon the great would *fall, and rise no more*. This led me to some spiritual meditations, that were very refreshing to me. I was unable to attend public worship, either part of the day; but God was pleased to afford me fixedness and satisfaction in divine thoughts. Nothing so refreshes my soul, as when I can *go to God, yea, to God my exceeding joy*. When he is so, sensibly, to my soul, oh how unspeakably delightful is this!

“In the week past I had divers turns of inward refreshing; though my body was inexpressibly weak, followed continually with agues and fevers. Sometimes my soul centred in God, as my only *portion*; and I felt that I should be for ever unhappy if *he* did not *reign*. I saw the sweetness and happiness of being *his* subject, at his disposal. This made all my difficulties quickly vanish.

“From this *Lord’s day, viz. Aug. 23*, I was troubled very much with vapoury disorders, and could neither write nor read, and could scarcely live; although, through mercy, was not so much oppressed with heavy melancholy and gloominess, as at many other times.

Till this week he had been wont to lodge in a room above stairs; but he now grew so weak, that he was no longer able to go up stairs and down. *Friday, Aug. 28*, was the last time he ever went above-stairs; henceforward he betook himself to a lower room.

On *Wednesday, Sept. 2*, being the day of our public lecture, he seemed to be refreshed with seeing the neighbouring ministers that came hither to the lecture, and expressed a great desire once more to go to the house of God on that day: and accordingly rode to the meeting, and attended divine service, while the Reverend Mr. Woodbridge, of Hatfield, preached. He signified that he supposed it to be the last time that ever he should attend the public worship; as it proved. And indeed it was the last time that ever he went out at our gate alive.

On the Saturday evening next following he was unexpectedly visited by his brother, Mr. John Brainerd, who came to see him from New Jersey. He was much refreshed by this unexpected visit, this brother being peculiarly dear to him; and he seemed to rejoice in a devout and solemn manner, to see him, and to hear the comfortable tidings he brought concerning the state of his dear congregation of Christian Indians. A circumstance of this visit, of which he was exceeding glad, was, that his brother brought him some of his *private writings* from New Jersey, and, particularly his *diary* that he had kept for many years past.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 6.* I began to read some of my private writings, which my brother brought me; and was considerably refreshed with what I met with in them.

“*Monday, Sept. 7.* I proceeded further in reading my old private writings, and found they had the same effect upon me as before. I could not but rejoice and bless God for what passed long ago, which without writing had been entirely lost.

“This evening, when I was in great distress of body, my soul longed that God should be glorified: I saw there was no heaven but this. I could not but speak to the bystanders then of the only *happiness, viz. pleasing* God. O that I could for ever live to God! The day, I trust, is at hand, the perfect day. *Oh, the day of deliverance from all sin.*

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 13.* I was much refreshed and engaged in meditation and writing, and found a heart to act for God. My spirits were refreshed, and my soul delighted to do something for God.”

On the evening following that Lord’s day, his feet began to appear sensibly swelled; which thenceforward swelled more and more. A symptom of his dissolution coming on. The next day his brother John left him, being obliged to return to New Jersey on some business of great importance and necessity; intending to return again with all possible speed, hoping to see his brother yet once more in the land of the living.

Mr. Brainerd having now, with much deliberation, considered of the important affair before mentioned, which was referred to him by the Honourable Commissioners in Boston, of the Corporation in London for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and parts adjacent, *viz. the fixing upon and recommending of two persons proper to be employed as missionaries to the Six Nations*, he about this time wrote a letter, recommending two young gentlemen of his acquaintance to those commissioners, *viz. Mr. Elihu Spencer of East Haddam, and Mr. Job Strong of Northampton*. The commissioners, on the receipt of this letter, cheerfully and unanimously agreed to accept of and employ the persons he had recommended. They accordingly have since waited on the commissioners to receive their instructions; and pursuant to these, have applied themselves to a preparation for the business of their mission. One of them, Mr. Spencer, has been solemnly *ordained* to that work, by several of the ministers of Boston, in the presence of an ecclesiastical council convened for that purpose; and is now gone forth to the nation of *Oncidaes*, about a hundred and seventy miles beyond Albany.

He also this week, *viz. on Wednesday, Sept. 16*, wrote a letter to a particular gentleman in Boston (one of those charitable persons before mentioned, who appeared so forward to contribute of their substance for promoting Christianity among the Indians) relating to the growth of the Indian school. And the need of another schoolmaster, or some person to assist the schoolmaster in instructing the Indian children. These gentlemen, on the receipt of this letter, had a meeting, and agreed with great cheerfulness to give 200*l.* (in bills of the old tenor) for the support of another schoolmaster; and desired the Reverend Mr. Pemberton of New York, (who was then at Boston, and was also, at their desire, present at their meeting,) as soon as possible to procure a suitable person for that service; and also agreed to allow 75*l.* to defray some special charges that were requisite to encourage the mission to the Six Nations, (besides the salary allowed by the commissioners,) which was also done on some intimations given by Mr. Brainerd.

Mr. Brainerd spent himself much in writing those letters, being exceeding weak: but it seemed to be much to his satisfaction, that he had been enabled to do it; hoping that it was something done for God, and which might be for the advancement of Christ's kingdom and glory. In writing the last of these letters, he was obliged to use the hand of another, not being able to write himself.

On the Thursday of this week (Sept. 17.) was the last time that ever he went out of his lodging room. That day he was again visited by his brother Israel, who continued with him thenceforward till his death. On that evening, he was taken with something of a *diarrhœa*; which he looked upon as another sign of his approaching *death*: whereupon he expressed himself thus; "Oh, the glorious time is now coming! I have longed to serve God perfectly: now God will gratify those desires!" And from time to time, at the several steps and new symptoms of the sensible approach of his dissolution, he was so far from being sunk or damped, that he seemed to be *animated*, and made more cheerful; as being glad at the appearance of *death's* approach. He often used the epithet, *glorious*, when speaking of the day of his *death*, calling it *that glorious day*. And as he saw his dissolution gradually approaching, he talked much about it; and with perfect calmness he spoke of a future state. He also settled all his affairs, giving directions very particularly and minutely, concerning what he would have done in one respect and another after his decease. And the nearer death approached, the more desirous he seemed to be of it. He several times spoke of the *different kinds of willingness to die*; and represented it as an ignoble, mean kind, to be willing to leave the body, only to get rid of *pain*; or to go to heaven, only to get *honour* and advancement there.

"*Saturday, Sept. 19.* Near night, while I attempted to walk a little, my thoughts turned thus; 'How infinitely sweet it is, to love God, and be all for him!' Upon which it was suggested to me, 'You are not an angel, not lively and active.' To which my whole soul immediately replied, 'I as sincerely desire to love and glorify God, as any angel in heaven.' Upon which it was suggested again, 'But you are filthy, not fit for heaven.' Hereupon instantly appeared the blessed robes of Christ's *righteousness*, which I could not but exult and triumph in; and I viewed the infinite excellency of God, and my soul even broke with longings that God should be *glorified*. I thought of dignity in heaven; but instantly the thought returned, 'I do not go to heaven to get honour, but to give all possible glory and praise.' Oh, how I longed that God should be glorified on *earth* also! Oh, I was *made* for eternity, if God might be glorified! *Bodily pains* I cared not for; though I was then in extremity, I never felt easier. I felt willing to *glorify God* in that state of bodily distress, as long as he pleased I should continue in it. The *grave* appeared really sweet, and I longed to lodge my weary bones in it: but oh, that God might be *glorified! this was the burden of all my cry*. Oh, I knew I should be *active* as an angel in heaven; and that I should be stripped of my *filthy garments!* so that there was no objection. But, oh, to *love* and *praise* God more, to please him for ever! this my soul panted after, and even now pants for while I write. Oh that God might be *glorified*

in the whole earth! 'Lord, let thy kingdom come.' I longed for a Spirit of *preaching* to descend and rest on *ministers*, that they might address the consciences of men with closeness and power. I saw God 'had the residue of the Spirit;' and my soul longed it should be 'poured from on high.' I could not but plead with God for my dear *congregation*, that he would preserve it, and not suffer *his great name* to lose its glory in that work; my soul still longing that God might be *glorified*."

The extraordinary frame he was in that evening could not be hid; "his mouth spake out of the abundance of his heart," expressing in a very affecting manner much the same things as are written in his *diary*; and among very many other extraordinary expressions, which he then uttered, were such as these; "My heaven is to *please* God, and *glorify* him, and to give all to him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory: that is the heaven I long for; that is my *religion*, and that is my *happiness*, and always was ever since I suppose I had any true religion: and all those that are of *that* religion shall meet *me* in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honour to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there; but to love, and please, and glorify God is all. Had I a *thousand souls*, if they were worth any thing, I would give them all to God; but I have nothing to give, when all is done. It is impossible for any rational creature to be *happy* without acting all *for God*: God himself could not make him happy any other way. I long to be in heaven, *praising* and *glorifying* God with the holy angels: all my desire is to *glorify* God, My heart goes out to the *burying place*; it seems to me a *desirable* place: but oh to *glorify*, God! that is it; that is above all. It is a great comfort to me to think that I have done a little *for God* in the world: oh! it is but a *very small* matter; yet I *have done a little*; and I lament it that I have not done *more* for him. There is nothing in the world worth living for, but *doing good* and *finishing God's work*, doing the work that Christ did. I see nothing else in the world that can yield any satisfaction, besides *living to God*, *pleasing him*, and *doing his whole will*. My greatest joy and comfort *has been* to do something for promoting the interest of religion, and the souls of particular persons: and now in my illness, while I am full of pain and distress from day to day, all the comfort I have is in being able to do some little *char* (or small piece of work), for *God*; either by something that I say, or by writing, or some other way."

He intermingled with these and other like expressions, many pathetic *counsels* to those who were about him: particularly to my children and servants. He applied himself to some of my younger children at this time; calling them to him, and speaking to them one by one; setting before them in a very plain manner the nature and essence of true piety, and its great importance and necessity; earnestly warning them not to rest in any thing short of a true and thorough change of heart, and a life devoted to God. He counselled them not to be slack in the great business of religion, nor in the least to delay it; enforcing his counsels with this, that his words were the words of a *dying man*: said he, "I shall die here, and here I shall be

buried, and here you will see my grave, and do you remember what I have said to you. I am going into eternity; and it is sweet to me to think of eternity: the endlessness of it makes it sweet: but oh, what shall I say to the eternity of the *wicked*! I cannot mention it, nor think of it; the thought is too dreadful. When you see my grave, then remember what I said to you while I was alive; then think with yourself, how the man who lies in that grave counselled and warned me to prepare for death.”

His *body* seemed to be marvellously strengthened, through the inward vigour and refreshment of his *mind*; so that, although *before* he was so weak that he could hardly utter a sentence, yet *now* he continued his most affecting and profitable discourse to us for more than an hour, with scarce any intermission; and said of it, when he had done, “it was the last sermon that ever he should preach.” This extraordinary frame of mind continued the next day; of which he says in his diary as follows.

“*Lord’s day, Sept. 20.* Was still in a sweet and comfortable frame: and was again melted with desires that God might be *glorified*, and with longings to love and live to him. Longed for the influences of the divine Spirit to descend on *ministers*, in a special manner. And oh, I longed to be *with* God, to *behold his glory*, and to bow in his presence!”

It appears by what is noted in his *diary*, both of this day and the evening preceding, that his mind at this time was much impressed with a sense of the importance of the work of the *ministry*, and the need of the grace of God, and his special spiritual assistance in this work. It also appeared in what he expressed in conversation; particularly in his discourse to his brother Israel, who was then a member of Yale college at New Haven, prosecuting his studies for the work of the ministry.<sup>410</sup> He now, and from time to time, in this his dying state, recommended to his brother a life of self-denial, of weanedness from the world, and devotedness to God, and an earnest endeavour to obtain much of the grace of God’s Spirit, and God’s gracious influences on his heart; representing the great need which *ministers* stand in of them, and the unspeakable benefit of them from his own experience. Among many other expressions, he said thus; “When ministers feel these *special gracious influences on their hearts*, it wonderfully assists them to come at the *consciences* of men, and as it were to *handle* them; whereas, without them, whatever *reason* and *oratory* we make use of, we do but make use of *stumps*, instead of *hands*.”

*Monday, Sept. 21.* I began to correct a little volume of my private writings. God, I believe, remarkably helped me in it; my strength was surprisingly lengthened out, my thoughts were

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410 This young gentleman was an ingenious, serious, studious, and hopefully truly pious person; there appeared in him many qualities giving hope of his being a great blessing in his day. But it has pleased God, since the death of his brother, to take him away also. He died that winter, at New Haven, on January 6, 1748, of a nervous fever, after about a fortnight’s illness.

quick and lively, and my soul refreshed, hoping it might be a work for God. *Oh, how good, how sweet it is, to labour for God!*

*Tuesday, Sept. 22.* Was again employed in reading and correcting, and had the same success as the day before. I was exceeding weak; but it seemed to refresh my soul thus to spend time.

*Wednesday, Sept. 23.* I finished my corrections of the little piece before mentioned, and felt uncommonly peaceful: it seemed as if I had now done all my work in this world, and stood ready for my call to a better. As long as I see any thing to be done for God, life is worth having: but oh, how vain and unworthy it is, to live for any lower end! This day I indited a letter, I think, of great importance, to the Reverend Mr. Byram in New Jersey. Oh that God would bless and succeed that letter, which was written for the benefit of his church! <sup>411</sup> Oh that God would *purify the sons of Levi*, that his glory may be advanced! This night I endured a dreadful turn, wherein my life was expected scarce an hour or minute together. But blessed be God, I have enjoyed considerable sweetness in divine things this week, both by night and day.

*Thursday, Sept. 24.* My strength began to fail exceedingly; which looked further as if I had done all my work: however, I had strength to fold and superscribe my letter. About two I went to bed, being weak and much disordered, and lay in a burning fever till night, without any proper rest. In the evening I got up, having lain down in some of my clothes; but was in the greatest distress that ever I endured, having an uncommon kind of hiccough; which either strangled me, or threw me into a straining to vomit; and at the same time was distressed with griping pains. Oh, the distress of this evening! I had little expectation of my living the night through, nor indeed had any about me: and I longed for *the finishing* moment! I was obliged to repair to bed by six o'clock; and through mercy enjoyed some rest; but was grievously distressed at turns with the hiccough. My soul breathed after God, 'When shall I come to God, even to God, my exceeding joy?' Oh for his blessed likeness!

*Friday, Sept. 25.* This day I was unspeakably weak, and little better than speechless all the day: however, I was able to write a little, and felt comfortably in some part of the day. Oh, it refreshed my soul, to think of former things, of desires to glorify God, of the pleasures of living to him! Oh, my dear God, I am speedily coming to thee, I hope. Hasten the day, O Lord, if it be thy blessed will. *Oh come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen. †*

*Saturday, Sept. 26.* I felt the sweetness of divine things this forenoon; and had the consolation of a consciousness that I was doing something for God.

*Lord's day, Sept. 27.* This was a very comfortable day to my soul; I think *I awoke with God*. I was enabled to *lift up my soul to God* early this morning; and while I had little bodily

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411 It was concerning the qualifications of ministers, and the examination and licensing of candidates for the work of the ministry.

strength, I found freedom to lift up my heart to God for myself and others. Afterwards was pleased with the thoughts of speedily entering into the unseen world.”

Early this morning, as one of the family came into the room, he expressed himself thus: “I have had more *pleasure* this morning, than all the *drunkards* in the world enjoy.” So much did he esteem the joy of *faith* above the *pleasures of sin*. He felt that morning an unusual appetite to food, with which his mind seemed to be *exhilarated*, looking on it as a sign of the very near approach of *death*. At this time he also said, “I was born on a *sabbath-day*; and I have reason to think I was new-born on a *sabbath-day*; and I hope I shall die on this *sabbath-day*. I shall look upon it as a favour, if it may be the will of God that it should be so: I long for the time. Oh, ‘why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?’ I am very willing to part with all: I am willing to part with my dear brother John, and never to see him again, to go to be for ever with the Lord. <sup>412</sup> *Oh, when I go there, how will God’s dear church on earth be upon my mind!*”

Afterwards, the same morning, being asked, how he did? he answered, “I am almost in eternity. I long to be there. My work is done: I have done with all my friends: all the world is nothing to me. I long to be in heaven, *praising and glorifying God* with the holy *angels*. *All my desire is to glorify God.*“

During the whole of these last two weeks of his life, he seemed to continue in this frame of heart; loose from all the world, as having finished his work, and done with all things here below. He had now nothing to do but to die, and to abide in an earnest desire and expectation of the happy moment, when his soul should take its flight to a state of perfect holiness, in which he should be found perfectly glorifying and enjoying God. He said, “That the consideration of the day of death, and the day of judgment, had a long time been peculiarly sweet to him.” From time to time he spake of his being willing to leave the body and the world *immediately*, that day, that night, that moment, if it was the will of God. He also was much engaged in expressing his longings that the church of Christ on *earth* might flourish, and Christ’s kingdom here might be advanced, notwithstanding he was about to leave the *earth*, and should not with his eyes behold the desirable event, nor be instrumental in promoting it. He said to me, one morning, as I came into the room, “My thoughts have been employed on the old dear theme, *the prosperity* of God’s church on *earth*. As I waked out of sleep, I was led to cry for the pouring out of God’s Spirit, and the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, which the dear Redeemer did and suffered so much for. It is that especially makes me long

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412 He had, before this, expressed a desire, if it might be the will of God, to live till his brother returned from New Jersey: who, when he went away, intended, if possible, to perform his journey, and return in a fortnight; hoping once more to meet his brother in the land of the living. The fortnight was now near expired, it ended the next day.

for it.” He expressed much hope that a glorious advancement of Christ’s kingdom was *near* at hand.

He once told me, that “he had formerly longed for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the glorious times of the church, and hoped they were coming; and should have been willing to have lived to promote religion at that time, if that had been the will of God; but, says he, I am willing it should be as it is; I would not have the choice to make for myself, for ten thousand worlds.” He expressed on his deathbed a full persuasion that he should in *heaven* see the prosperity of the church on *earth*, and should rejoice with Christ therein; and the consideration of it seemed to be highly pleasing and satisfying to his mind.

He also still dwelt much on the great importance of the work of gospel *ministers*; and expressed his longings, that they might be *filled with the Spirit of God*. He manifested much desire to see some of the neighbouring ministers, with whom he had some acquaintance, and whose sincere friendship he was confident, that he might converse freely with them on that subject, before he died. And it so happened, that he had opportunity with some of them according to his desire.

Another thing that lay much on his heart, from time to time, in these near approaches of death, was the spiritual prosperity of his own congregation of Christian Indians in New Jersey: and when he spake of them, it was with peculiar tenderness; so that his speech would be presently interrupted and drowned with tears.

He also expressed much satisfaction in the disposals of Providence, with regard to the circumstances of his *death*; particularly that God had before his death given him an opportunity in Boston, with so many considerable persons, ministers and others, to give in *his testimony* for God against false religion, and many mistakes that lead to it, and promote it. He was much pleased that he had an opportunity there to lay before pious and charitable gentlemen the state of the Indians, and their necessities, to so good effect; and that God had since enabled him to write to them further concerning these affairs; and to write other letters of importance, that he hoped might be of good influence with regard to the state of religion among the Indians, and elsewhere, after his death. He expressed great thankfulness to God for his *mercy* in these things. He also mentioned it as what he accounted a merciful circumstance of his death, that he should die *here*.<sup>413</sup> And speaking of these things, he said, “God

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413 The editor takes leave to make the remark, that when Mr. Brainerd was at Boston, sick nigh unto death, it was with reluctance he thought of dying in a place where funerals are often attended with a pomp and show, which (especially on occasion of his own) he was very averse to any appearance of: and though it was with some difficulty he got his mind reconciled to the prospect then before him, yet at last he was brought to acquiesce in the divine will, with respect to this circumstance of his departure. However, it pleased God to order the event so as to gratify his desire, which he had expressed, of getting back to Northampton, with a view particularly to a more silent and private burial.



had granted him all his desire;" and signified, that now he could with the greater alacrity leave the world.

"Monday, Sept. 28. I was able to read, and make some few corrections in my private writings; but found I could not write as I had done; I found myself sensibly declined in all respects. It has been only from a little while before noon, till about one or two o'clock, that I have been able to do any thing for some time past: yet this refreshed my heart, that I could do any thing, either public or private, that I hoped was for God."

This evening he was supposed to be dying: he thought so himself, and was thought so by those who were about him. He seemed glad at the appearance of the near approach of death. He was almost speechless, but his lips appeared to move: and one that sat very near him, heard him utter such expressions as these, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Oh, why is his chariot so long in coming." After he revived, he blamed himself for having been too eager to be gone. And in expressing what he found in the frame of his mind at that time, he said, he then found an inexpressibly sweet love to those that he looked upon as *belonging to Christ*, beyond almost all that ever he felt before; so that it "seemed (to use his own words) like a little piece of *heaven* to have one of them near him." And being asked, whether he heard the prayer that was (at his desire) made with him; he said, "Yes, he heard every word, and had an uncommon sense of the things that were uttered in that prayer, and that every word reached his heart."

On the evening of *Tuesday, Sept. 29*, as he lay on his bed, he seemed to be in an extraordinary frame; his mind greatly engaged in sweet meditations concerning the prosperity of Zion. There being present here at that time two young gentlemen of his acquaintance, that were *candidates* for the *ministry*, he desired us all to unite in singing a psalm on that subject, even Zion's prosperity. And on his desire we sung a part of the 102d Psalm. This seemed much to refresh and revive him, and gave him new strength; so that, though before he could scarcely speak at all, now he proceeded with some freedom of speech, to give his dying counsels to those two young gentlemen before mentioned, relating to their preparation for, and prosecution of, that great work of the ministry they were designed for; and in particular, earnestly recommended to them frequent secret *fasting* and *prayer*: and enforced his counsel with regard to this, from his own *experience* of the great comfort and benefit of it; which (said he) I should not mention, were it not that I am a *dying* person. And after he had finished his counsel, he made a prayer in the audience of us all; wherein, besides praying for this family, for his brethren, and those candidates for the ministry, and for his own congregation, he earnestly prayed for the reviving and flourishing of religion in the world. Till now, he had every day sat up part of the day; but after this he never rose from his bed.

*Wednesday, Sept. 30*. I was obliged to keep my bed the whole day, through weakness. However, redeemed a little time, and, with the help of my brother, read and corrected about a dozen pages in my MS. giving an account of my conversion.



*Thursday, Oct. 1.* I endeavoured again to do something by way of writing, but soon found my powers of body and mind utterly fail. Felt not so sweetly as when I was able to do something that I hoped would do some good. In the evening was discomposed and wholly delirious; but it was not long before God was pleased to give me some sleep, and fully composed my mind. <sup>414</sup> Oh, blessed be God for his great goodness to me, since I was so low at Mr. Bromfield's, on *Thursday, June 18*, last. He has, except those few minutes, given me the clear exercise of my reason, and enabled me to labour much for him, in things both of a public and private nature; and perhaps to do more good than I should have done if I had been well; besides the comfortable influences of his blessed Spirit, with which he has been pleased to refresh my soul. *May his name have all the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Friday, Oct. 2.* My soul was this day, at turns, sweetly set on God: I longed to be *with him*, that I might *behold his glory*. I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to him, even my dearest friends, my dearest flock, my absent brother, and all my concerns for time and eternity. Oh that *his kingdom* might come in the world; that they might all love and glorify him, for what he is in himself; and that the blessed Redeemer might 'see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied!' 'Oh come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen.'" <sup>415</sup>

The next evening we very much expected his brother John from New Jersey; it being about a week after the time that he proposed for his return, when he went away. And though our expectations were still disappointed; yet Mr. Brainerd seemed to continue unmoved, in the same calm and peaceful frame that he had before manifested; as having resigned all to God, and having done with his friends, and with all things here below.

On the morning of the next day, being *Lord's day, Oct. 4*, as my daughter Jerusha (who chiefly attended him) came into the room, he looked on her very pleasantly, and said, "Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me?—I am quite willing to part with you: I am willing to part with all my friends: I am willing to part with my dear brother John, although I love him the best of any creature living: I have committed him and all my friends to God, and can leave them with God. Though, if I thought I should not see you and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we shall spend a happy eternity together!" <sup>416</sup> In the evening, as one came into the room with a Bible in her hand, he expressed

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414 &gt;From this time forward he had the free use of his reason till the day before his death; excepting that at some times he appeared a little lost for a moment, at first waking out of sleep.

415 Here ends his diary: these are the last words that are written in it, either by his own hand, or by any other from his mouth.

416 Since this, it has pleased a holy and sovereign God to take away this my dear child by death, on the 14th of February, next following, after a short illness of five days, in the eighteenth year of her age. She was a person of much the same spirit with Mr. Brainerd. She had constantly taken care of and attended him in his sickness, for nineteen weeks before his death; devoting herself to it with great delight, because she looked on him as an eminent servant of Jesus Christ. In this time he had much conversation with her on the things of religion; and

himself thus; “Oh that dear book! that lovely book! I shall soon see it opened! the mysteries that are in it, and the mysteries of God’s providence, will be all unfolded!”

His distemper now very apparently preyed on his vitals in an extraordinary manner: not by a sudden breaking of *ulcers* in his lungs, as at Boston, but by a constant discharge of purulent matter, in great quantities: so that what he brought up by expectoration, seemed to be as it were mouthfuls of almost clear *pus*; which was attended with very inward pain and distress.

On *Thursday, Oct. 6*, he lay for a considerable time as if he were dying. At which time he was heard to utter, in broken whispers, such expressions as these; “He will come, he will not tarry. I shall soon be in glory. I shall soon glorify God with the angels.” But after some time he revived.

The next day, *Wednesday, Oct. 7*, his brother John arrived from New Jersey; where he had been detained much longer than he intended, by a mortal sickness prevailing among the Christian Indians, and by some other circumstances that made his stay with them necessary. Mr. Brainerd was affected and refreshed with seeing him, and appeared fully satisfied with the reasons of his delay; seeing the interest of religion and of the souls of his people required it.

The next day, *Thursday, Oct. 8*, he was in great distress and agonies of body; and for the greater part of the day, was much disordered as to the exercise of his reason. In the evening he was more composed, and had the use of his reason well; but the pain of his body continued and increased. He told me, it was impossible for any to conceive of the distress he felt in his breast. He manifested much concern lest he should dishonour God by impatience, under his extreme agony; which was such, that he said, the thought of enduring it one minute longer was almost insupportable. He desired that others would be much in lifting up their hearts continually to God for him, that God would support him, and give him patience. He signified, that he expected to die that night; but seemed to fear a longer delay: and the disposition of his mind with regard to death appeared still the same that it had been all along. And notwithstanding his bodily agonies, yet the interest of Zion lay still with great weight on his mind; as appeared by some considerable discourse he had that evening with

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in his dying state, often expressed to us, her parents, his great satisfaction concerning her true piety, and his confidence that he should meet her in heaven: and his high opinion of her, not only as a true Christian, but a very eminent saint: one whose soul was uncommonly fed and entertained with things that appertain to the most spiritual, experimental, and distinguishing parts of religion; and one who, by the temper of her mind, was fitted to deny herself for God, and to do good, beyond any young women whatsoever that he knew of. She had manifested a heart uncommonly devoted to God, in the course of her life, many years before her death: and said on her death-bed, that “she had not seen one minute for several years, wherein she desired to live one minute longer, for the sake of any other good in life, but doing good, living to God, and doing what might be for his glory.”

the Reverend Mr. Billing, one of the neighbouring ministers, (who was then present,) concerning the great importance of the work of the ministry, &c. And afterwards, when it was very late in the night, he had much very proper and profitable discourse with his brother John, concerning his congregation in New Jersey, and the interest of religion among the Indians. In the latter part of the night, his bodily distress seemed to rise to a greater height than ever; and he said to those then about him, that “it was another thing to die than people imagined;” explaining himself to mean that they were not aware what *bodily* pain and anguish is undergone before death. Towards day, his eyes fixed; and he continued lying immovable, till about six o’clock in the morning, and then expired, on Friday, Oct. 9, 1747; when his soul, as we may well conclude, was received by his dear Lord and Master, as an eminently faithful servant, into that state of perfection of holiness, and fruition of God, which he had so often and so ardently longed for; and was welcomed by the glorious assembly in the upper world, as one peculiarly fitted to join them in their blessed employ and enjoyment.

Much respect was shown to his memory at his *funeral* which was on the Monday following, after a sermon preached the same day, on that solemn occasion. His funeral was attended by eight of the neighbouring ministers, and seventeen other gentlemen of liberal education, and a great concourse of people.

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**MR. BRAINERD'S JOURNAL,  
IN TWO PARTS.**



**ADVERTISEMENT.**

THE Journal having been so much referred to in the *Life and Diary*, and being originally a part of the Diary itself, this work would be very imperfect without it. It was first printed not only in two parts, but with some variation in the Titles, which are here subjoined. The *First Part* was,

“Mirabilia Dei inter Indicos;Or the Rise and Progress of a remarkable Work of GraceAmongst a number of the Indians,In the Provinces of New Jersey and Pennsylvania;Justly represented in a JOURNAL kept by order of the Honourable Society (in Scotland) for Propagating Christian Knowledge; with some General Remarks;By DAVID BRAINERD,Minister of the Gospel, and Missionary from the said Society:Published by the Reverend and worthy Correspondents of the said Society;with a Preface by them.”

The *Second Part* was,

“Divine Grace Displayed;Or the Continuance and Progress of a remarkable Work of GraceAmong some of the IndiansBelonging to the Provinces of New Jersey and Pennsylvania;Justly represented in a Journal kept by order of the Honourable Society (in Scotland)for Propagating Christian Knowledge;with some General Remarks;To which is subjoined an Appendix, containing some account of sundry things, especially of the Difficulties attendingthe Work of a Missionary among the Indians:By David Brainerd,Minister of the Gospel, and Missionary from the said Society:Published by the Reverend and worthy Correspondents of the said Society.”

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**PREFACE.**

The design of this publication is to give God the glory of his distinguishing grace, and gratify the pious curiosity of those who are waiting and praying for that blessed time, when the Son of God, in a more extensive sense than has yet been accomplished, shall receive “the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.”

Whenever any of the guilty race of mankind are awakened to a just concern for their eternal interest, are humbled at the footstool of a sovereign God, and are persuaded and enabled to accept the offers of redeeming love, it must always be acknowledged a wonderful work of divine grace, which demands our thankful praises. But doubtless it is a more affecting evidence of almighty power, a more illustrious display of sovereign mercy, when those are enlightened with the knowledge of salvation, who have for many ages dwelt in the grossest darkness and heathenism, and are brought to a cheerful subjection to the government of our divine Redeemer, who from generation to generation had remained the voluntary slaves of “the prince of darkness.”

This is that delightful scene which will present itself to the reader’s view, while he attentively peruses the following pages. Nothing certainly can be more agreeable to a benevolent and religious mind, than to see those that were sunk in the most degenerate state of human nature, at once, not only renounce those barbarous customs they had been inured to from their infancy, but surprisingly transformed into the character of real and devout Christians.

This mighty change was brought about by the plain and faithful preaching of the gospel, attended with an uncommon effusion of the divine Spirit, under the ministry of the Reverend David Brainerd, a Missionary employed by the *Honourable Society* in Scotland, for *propagating* Christian Knowledge.

And surely it will administer abundant matter of *praise* and *thanksgiving* to that honourable body, to find that their generous attempt to send the gospel among the Indian nations upon the borders of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, has met with such surprising success.

It would perhaps have been more agreeable to the taste of politer readers, if the following Journal had been cast into a different method, and formed into one connected *narrative*. But the worthy author, amidst his continued labours, had no time to spare for such an undertaking. Besides, the pious reader will take a peculiar pleasure to see this work described in its native simplicity, and the operations of the Spirit upon the minds of these poor benighted pagans, laid down just in the method and order in which they happened. This, it must be confessed, will occasion frequent repetitions; but these, as they tend to give a fuller view of this amazing dispensation of divine grace in its rise and progress, we trust, will be easily forgiven.



When we see such numbers of the most ignorant and barbarous of mankind, in the space of a few months, “turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God,” it gives us encouragement to wait and pray for that blessed time, when our victorious Redeemer shall, in a more signal manner than he has yet done, display the “banner of his cross,” march on from “conquering to conquer, till the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.” Yea, we cannot but lift up our heads with joy, and hope that it may be the dawn of that bright and illustrious day, when the Sun Of Righteousness shall “arise and shine from one end of the earth to the other;” when, to use the language of the inspired prophets, “the Gentiles shall come to his light, and sing to the brightness of his rising;” in consequence of which, “the wilderness and solitary places shall be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.”

It is doubtless the duty of all, in their different stations, and according to their respective capacities, to use their utmost endeavours to bring forward this promised, this desired day. There is a great want of *schoolmasters* among these Christianized Indians, to instruct their youth in the *English language*, and the principles of the *christian faith*; for this as yet, there is no certain provision made: <sup>417</sup> if any are inclined to contribute to so good a design, we are persuaded they will do an acceptable service to the “kingdom of the Redeemer.” And we earnestly desire the most indigent to join, at least, in their wishes and prayers, that *this work* may *prosper* more and more, till the “whole earth is filled with the glory of the Lord.”

**The CORRESPONDENTS.**

THE

**R I S E   A N D   P R O G R E S S**

OF A

**R E M A R K A B L E   W O R K   O F   G R A C E ,   &   C .**

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417 In the observations intermixed with the diary, after the date of June 18th and Sept. 16th, 1747, it appears that some gentlemen from Boston took this affair into their charitable consideration; partly in consequence of this hint, and more especially from Mr. Brainerd’s application by letter. –W.



PART I.

FROM A. D. 1745 JUNE 19th TO NOV. 4th, AT CROSSWEEKSUNG AND FORKS OF DELAWARE.

CROSSWEEKSUNG, *in New Jersey, June, 1745.*

*June 19.* Having spent most of my time for *more than a year past* amongst the Indians in the Forks of Delaware in Pennsylvania; and having in that time made two journeys to Susquehannah river, far back in that province, in order to treat with the Indians there, respecting Christianity; and not having had any considerable appearance of *special* success in either of those places, which damped my spirits, and was not a little discouraging to me; upon hearing that there was a number of Indians in and about a place called (by the Indians) Crossweeksung in New Jersey, near fourscore miles south-eastward from the Forks of Delaware, I determined to make them a visit, and see what might be done towards the Christianizing of them; and accordingly arrived among them this day.

I found very few persons at the place I visited, and perceived the Indians in these parts were very much scattered, there being not more than two or three families in a place, and these small settlements six, ten, fifteen, twenty, and thirty miles, and some more, from the place I was then at. However, I preached to those few I found, who appeared well disposed, and not inclined to object and *cavil*, as the Indians had frequently done elsewhere.

When I had concluded my discourse, I informed them (there being none but a few women and children) that I would willingly visit them again the next day. Whereupon they readily set out, and travelled ten or fifteen miles, in order to give notice to some of their friends at that distance. These women, like the woman of Samaria, seemed desirous that others might “see the man that told them what they had done” in their lives past, and the misery that attended their *idolatrous* ways.

*June 20.* Visited and preached to the Indians again as I proposed. Numbers more were gathered at the invitations of their friends, who heard me the day before. These also appeared as attentive, orderly, and well disposed as the others. And none made any *objection*, as Indians in other places have usually done.

*June 22.* Preached to the Indians again. Their number, which at first consisted of about seven or eight persons, was now increased to near *thirty*. There was not only a solemn attention among them, but some considerable impressions, it was apparent, were made upon their minds by divine truths. Some began to *feel* their misery and perishing state, and appeared concerned for a deliverance from it.

*Lord's day, June 23.* Preached to the Indians, and spent the day with them. Their number still increased; and all with one consent seemed to rejoice in my coming among them. Not a word of opposition was heard from any of them against Christianity, although in times past they had been as opposite to any thing of that nature, as any Indians whatsoever. And

some of them not many months before, were *enraged* with my *interpreter*, because he attempted to teach them something of Christianity.

*June 24.* Preached to the Indians at their desire, and upon their own motion. To see poor pagans desirous of hearing the gospel of Christ, animated me to discourse to them, although I was now very weakly, and my spirits much exhausted. They attended with the greatest seriousness and diligence; and there was some concern for their souls' salvation apparent among them.

*June 27.* Visited and preached to the Indians again. Their number now amounted to about *forty* persons. Their solemnity and attention still continued; and a considerable concern for their souls became very apparent among sundry of them.

*June 28.* The Indians being now gathered, a considerable number of them, from their several and distant *habitations*, requested me to preach *twice a day* to them, being desirous to hear as much as they possibly could while I was with them. I cheerfully complied with their motion, and could not but admire the goodness of God, who, I was persuaded, had inclined them thus to inquire after the way of salvation.

*June 29.* Preached again twice to the Indians. Saw, as I thought, the hand of God very evidently, and in a manner somewhat remarkable, making provision for their subsistence together, in order to their being instructed in divine things. For this day and the day before, with only walking a little way from the place of our daily meeting, they killed *three deer*, which were a seasonable supply for their wants, and without which, it seems, they could not have subsisted together in order to attend the means of grace.

*Lord's day, June 30.* Preached twice this day also. Observed yet more concern and affection among the poor heathens than ever; so that they even constrained me to tarry yet longer with them; although my constitution was exceedingly worn out, and my health much impaired by my late fatigues and labours, and especially by my late journey to Susquehannah in May last, in which I lodged on the ground for several weeks together.

*July 1.* Preached again twice to a very serious and attentive assembly of Indians, they having now learned to attend the worship of God with *Christian decency* in all respects. There were now between *forty* and *fifty*, persons of them present, old and young. I spent some considerable time in discoursing with them in a more private way, inquiring of them what they remembered of the great truths that had been taught them from day to day; and may justly say, it was amazing to see how they had *received* and *retained* the instructions given them, and what a measure of *knowledge* some of them had acquired in a few days.

*July 2.* Was obliged to leave these Indians at Crossweeksung, thinking it my duty, as soon as health would admit, again to visit those at the Forks of Delaware. When I came to take leave of them, and spoke something particularly to each of them, they all earnestly inquired when I would come again, and expressed a great desire of being further instructed. And of their own accord agreed, that when I should come again, they would all meet and

live together during my continuance with them; and that they would do their utmost endeavours to gather all the Indians in these parts that were yet further remote. And when I parted, one told me with many tears, "She wished God would change her heart:" another, that "she wanted to find Christ:" and an old man that had been one of their *chiefs*, wept bitterly with concern for his soul. I then promised them to return as speedily as my health and business elsewhere would admit, and felt not a little concerned at parting, lest the good impressions then apparent upon numbers of them, might decline and wear off, when the means came to cease; and yet could not but hope that he who, I trusted, had begun a good work among them, and who I knew did not stand in need of means to carry it on, would maintain and promote it. At the same time I must confess, that I had often seen encouraging appearances among the Indians elsewhere prove wholly abortive; and it appeared the favour would be so great, if God should now, after I had passed through so considerable a series of almost fruitless labours and fatigues, and after my rising hopes had been so often frustrated among these poor pagans, give me any *special* success in my labours with them. I could not believe, and scarce dared to hope, that the event would be so happy, and scarce ever found myself more suspended between hope and fear, in any affair, or at any time, than this.

This encouraging disposition and readiness to receive instruction, now apparent among these Indians, seems to have been the happy effect of the conviction that one or two of them met with some time since at the Forks of Delaware, who have since endeavoured to show their friends the evil of idolatry, &c. And although the other Indians seemed but little to regard, but rather to deride them, yet this, perhaps, has put them into a *thinking* posture of mind, or at least, given them some thoughts about Christianity, and excited in some of them a *curiosity to hear*, and so made way for the present encouraging attention. An apprehension that this might be the case here, has given me encouragement that God may in *such* a manner bless the means I have used with Indians in other places, where there is as yet no appearance of it. If so, may his name have the glory of it; for I have learned by experience that he only can open the ear, engage the attention, and incline the heart of poor benighted, prejudiced pagans to receive instruction.

Forks Of Delaware, in *Pennsylvania*, July, 1745.

*Lord's day*, July 14. Discoursed to the Indians twice, several of whom appeared concerned, and were, I have reason to think, in some measure convinced by the divine Spirit of their sin and misery; so that they wept much the whole time of divine service. Afterwards discoursed to a number of white people then present.

July 18. Preached to my people, who attended diligently, beyond what had been common among these Indians: and some of them appeared concerned for their souls.

*Lord's day*, July 21. Preached to the Indians first, then to a number of *white* people present, and in the afternoon to the Indians again. Divine truth seemed to make very con-

siderable impressions upon several of them, and caused the tears to flow freely. Afterwards I baptized my *interpreter* and his *wife*, who were the first I baptized among the Indians.

They are both persons of some *experimental* knowledge in religion; have both been awakened to a solemn concern for their souls; have to appearance been brought to a sense of their misery and *undoneness* in themselves; have both appeared to be comforted with divine consolations; and it is apparent both have passed a *great*, and I cannot but hope a *saving*, change.

It may perhaps be satisfactory and agreeable that I should give some brief relation of the man's exercise and experience since he has been with me, especially seeing he is employed as my *interpreter* to others. When I first employed him in this business in the beginning of summer, 1744, he was well fitted for his work in regard of his acquaintance with the Indian and English language, as well as with the manners of both nations; and in regard of his desire that the Indians should conform to the customs and manners of the English, and especially to their manner of living. But he seemed to have little or no impression of religion upon his mind, and in that respect was very *unfit* for his work, being incapable of understanding and communicating to others many things of importance; so that I laboured under great disadvantages in addressing the Indians, for want of his having an *experimental*, as well as more *doctrinal*, acquaintance with divine truths; and, at times, my spirits sunk and were much discouraged under this difficulty, especially when I observed that divine truths made little or no impressions upon his mind for many *weeks* together.

He indeed behaved *soberly* after I employed him, (although before he had been a *hard drinker*,) and seemed honestly engaged as far as he was capable in the performance of his work; and especially he appeared very desirous that the Indians should renounce their heathenish notions and practices, and conform to the customs of the Christian world. But still he seemed to have no concern about his *own soul*, till he had been with me a considerable time.

Near the latter end of July, 1744, I preached to an assembly of white people, with more freedom and fervency than I could possibly address the Indians with, without their having first attained a greater measure of doctrinal knowledge. At this time he was present, and was somewhat awakened to a concern for his soul; so that the next day he discoursed freely with me about his *spiritual* concerns, and gave me an opportunity to use further endeavours to fasten the impressions of his perishing state upon his mind: and I could plainly perceive for some time after this, that he addressed the Indians with more *concern* and *fervency* than he had formerly done.

But these impressions seemed quickly to decline, and he remained in a great measure careless and secure, until some time late in the *fall* of the year following, at which time he fell into a weak and languishing state of body, and continued much disordered for several weeks together. At this season divine truth took hold of him, and made deep impressions

upon his mind. He was brought under great concern for his soul, and his exercise was not now *transient* and unsteady, but *constant* and abiding, so that his mind was burdened from day to day; and it was now his great inquiry, "What he should do to be saved?" His spiritual trouble prevailed, till at length his sleep, in a measure, departed from him, and he had little rest day or night; but walked about under a great pressure of mind, (for he was still able to walk,) and appeared like *another* man to his neighbours, who could not but observe his behaviour with wonder.

After he had been some time under this exercise, while he was striving to obtain mercy, he says, there seemed to be an *impassable mountain* before him. He was pressing towards heaven, as he thought, but "his way was hedged up with thorns, that he could not stir an inch further." He looked this way and that way, but could find no way at all. He thought, if he could but make his way through these thorns and briers, and climb up the first *steep pitch* of the mountain, that then there might be hope for him; but no way or means could he find to accomplish this. Here he laboured for a time, but all in vain; he saw it was *impossible*, he says, for him ever to help himself through this insupportable difficulty. He felt it signified nothing, "it signified just nothing at all for him to strive and struggle any more." And here, he says, he gave over striving, and felt that it was a gone case with him, as to his *own* power, and that all his attempts were, and for ever would be, vain and fruitless. And yet was more calm and composed under this view of things, than he had been while striving to help himself.

While he was giving me this account of his exercise, I was not without fears that what he related was but the working of his own *imagination*, and not the effect of any divine *illumination* of mind. But before I had time to discover my fears, he added, that at this time he felt himself in a miserable and perishing condition; that he saw plainly what he had been doing all his days, and that he had *never done one good thing*, as he expressed it. He knew, he said, he was not guilty of some wicked actions that he knew some others guilty of. He had not been used to steal, quarrel, and murder; the latter of which vices are common among the Indians. He likewise knew that he had done many things that were right; he had been kind to his neighbours, &c. But still his cry was, "that he had never done one good thing." I knew, said he, that I had not been so bad as some others in some things, and that I had done many things which folks call *good*; but all this did me no good now, I saw that "all was bad, and that I never had done one good thing;" meaning that he had never done any thing from a right *principle*, and with a right *view*, though he had done many things that were *materially* good and right. And now I thought, said he, that I must sink down to hell, that there was no hope for me, "because I never could do any thing that was good;" and if God let me alone never so long, and I should try never so much, still I should do nothing but what is *bad, &c.*

This further account of his exercise satisfied me that it was not the mere working of his imagination, since he appeared so evidently to die to himself, and to be divorced from a dependence upon his own righteousness, and good deeds, which mankind in a *fallen* state are so much attached to, and inclined to hope for salvation upon.

There was one thing more in his view of things at this time that was very remarkable. He not only saw, he says, what a miserable state he *himself* was in, but he likewise saw the *world around him*, in general, were in the *same* perishing circumstances, notwithstanding the profession many of them made of Christianity, and the hope they entertained of obtaining everlasting happiness. And this he saw clearly, “as if he was now awaked out of sleep, or had a cloud taken from before his eyes.” He saw that the life he had lived was the way to eternal death, that he was now on the brink of endless misery: and when he looked round, he saw multitudes of others who had lived the same life with himself, persons who had no more goodness than he, and yet dreamed that they were safe enough, as he had formerly done. He was fully persuaded by their conversation and behaviour, that they had never felt their sin and misery, as he now felt his.

After he had been for some time in this condition, sensible of the impossibility of his helping himself by any thing he could do, or of being delivered by any *created* arm, so that he “had given up all for lost,” as to his own attempts, and was become more calm and composed; then, he says, it was borne in upon his mind as if it had been audibly spoken to him, “There is hope, there is hope.” Whereupon his soul seemed to rest and be in some measure satisfied, though he had no considerable joy.

He cannot here remember distinctly any views he had of Christ, or give any clear account of his soul’s acceptance of him, which makes his experience appear the more doubtful, and renders it less satisfactory to himself and others, than it might be, if he could remember distinctly the apprehensions and actings of his mind at this season. But these exercises of soul were attended and followed with a very great *change* in the man, so that it might justly be said, he was become *another man*, if not a *new man*. His conversation and deportment were much altered, and even the careless world could not but admire what had befallen him to make so great a change in his temper, discourse, and behaviour. And especially there was a surprising alteration in his *public performances*. He now addressed the Indians with admirable *fergency*, and scarce knew when to leave off: and sometimes when I had concluded my discourse, and was returning homeward, he would tarry behind to repeat and inculcate what had been spoken.

His change is *abiding*, and his life, so far as I know, *unblemished* to this day, though it is now more than six months since he experienced this change; in which space of time he has been as much exposed to *strong drink*, as possible, in divers places where it has been moving free as water; and yet has never, that I know of, discovered any hankering desire after it. He seems to have a very considerable experience of *spiritual exercise*, and discourses

feelingly of the conflicts and consolations of a real Christian. His heart echoes to the *soul-humbling* Doctrine of grace, and he never appears better pleased than when he hears of the *absolute sovereignty of God*, and the salvation of sinners in a way of *mere free grace*. He has likewise of late had more satisfaction respecting his *own state*, has been much enlivened and assisted in his work, so that he has been a great comfort to me.

And upon a view and strict observation of his serious and savoury conversation, his Christian temper, and unblemished behaviour for so considerable a time, as well as his experience I have given an account of, I think that I have reason to hope that he is “created anew in Christ Jesus to good works.” His name is *Moses’ Tinda Tauta-my*; he is about fifty years of age, and is pretty well acquainted with the pagan notions and customs of his countrymen, and so is the better able now to expose them. He has, I am persuaded, already been, and I trust will yet be, a blessing to the other Indians.

July 23. Preached to the Indians, but had few hearers: those who are constantly at home seem of late to be under some serious impressions of a religious nature.

July 26. Preached to my people, and afterwards baptized my *interpreter’s children*.

Lord’s day, July 28. Preached again, and perceived my people, at least some of them, more thoughtful than ever about their souls’ concerns. I was told by some, that their seeing my interpreter and others *baptized*, made them more concerned than any thing they had ever seen or heard before. There was indeed a considerable appearance of divine power amongst them when that ordinance was administered. *May that divine influence spread and increase more abundantly!*

July 30. Discoursed to a number of my people, and gave them some particular advice and direction, being now about to leave them for the present, in order to renew my visit to the Indians in New Jersey. They were very attentive to my discourse, and earnestly desirous to know when I designed to return to them again.

Crossweeksung, *in New Jersey, August, 1745.*

Aug. 3. I visited the Indians in these parts in June last, and tarried with them some considerable time, preaching almost daily: at which season God was pleased to pour upon them a spirit of awakening and concern for their souls, and surprisingly to engage their attention to divine truths. I now found them serious, and a number of them under deep concern for an interest in Christ; their convictions of their sinful and perishing state having, in my absence from them, been much promoted by the labours and endeavours of the Reverend Mr. William Tennent, to whom I had advised them to apply for direction, and whose house they frequented much while I was gone. I preached to them this day with some view to [Rev. xxii. 17](#). “And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely:” though I could not pretend to handle the subject *methodically* among them.

The Lord, I am persuaded, enabled me, in a manner somewhat *uncommon*, to set before them the Lord Jesus Christ as a kind and compassionate Saviour, inviting distressed and

perishing sinners to accept everlasting mercy. And a surprising concern soon became apparent among them. There were about twenty adult persons together, (many of the Indians at remote places not having as yet had time to come since my return hither,) and not above two that I could see with dry eyes. Some were much concerned, and discovered vehement longings of soul after Christ, to save them from the misery they felt and feared.

*Lord's day, Aug. 4.* Being invited by a neighbouring minister to assist in the administration of the Lord's supper, I complied with his request, and took the Indians along with me; and not only those that were together the day before, but many more that were coming to hear me; so that there were near fifty in all, old and young. They attended the several discourses of the day, and some of them that could understand English, were much affected, and all seemed to have their concern in some measure raised.

Now a change in their manners began to appear very visible. In the evening when they came to sup together, they would not taste a morsel till they had sent to me to come and ask a blessing on their food: at which time sundry of them wept, especially when I minded them how they had in times past eat their feasts in *honour* to *devils*, and neglected to thank God for them.

*Aug. 5.* After a sermon had been preached by another minister, I preached, and concluded the public work of the solemnity from [John vii. 37](#). "In the last day," &c. and in my discourse addressed the Indians in particular, who sat by themselves in a part of the house; at which time one or two of them were struck with deep concern, as they afterwards told me, who had been little affected before: others had their concern increased to a considerable degree. In the evening (the greater part of them being at the house where I lodged) I discoursed to them, and found them universally engaged about their souls' concerns, inquiring "What they should do to be saved?" And all their conversation among themselves turned upon *religious* matters, in which they were much assisted by my interpreter, who was with them day and night.

This day there was one woman, who had been much concerned for her soul, ever since she first heard me preach in June last, who obtained comfort, I trust, solid and well grounded: she seemed to be filled with love to Christ, at the same time behaved humbly and tenderly, and appeared afraid of nothing so much as of grieving and offending him whom her soul loved.

*Aug. 6.* In the morning I discoursed to the Indians at the house where I lodged: many of them were then much affected, and appeared surprisingly tender, so that a few words about their souls' concerns would cause the tears to flow freely, and produce many sobs and groans. In the afternoon, they being returned to the place where I had usually preached amongst them, I again discoursed to them there. There were about fifty-five persons in all, about forty that were capable of attending divine service with understanding. I insisted upon [1 John iv. 10](#). "Herein is love," &c. They seemed eager of hearing; but there appeared nothing



very remarkable, except their attention, till near the close of my discourse; and then divine truths were attended with a surprising influence, and produced a great concern among them. There was scarce *three* in *forty* that could refrain from tears and bitter cries. They all, as one, seemed in an agony of soul to obtain an interest in Christ; and the more I discoursed of the love and compassion of God in sending his Son to suffer for the sins of men, and the more I invited them to come and partake of his love, the more their distress was aggravated, because they felt themselves unable to come. It was surprising to see how their hearts seemed to be pierced with the tender and melting invitations of the gospel, when there was not a word of terror spoken to them.

There were this day two persons that obtained relief and comfort, which (when I came to discourse with them particularly) appeared solid, rational, and scriptural. After I had inquired into the grounds of their comfort, and said many things I thought proper to them, I asked them what they wanted God to do further for them? They replied, "They wanted Christ should wipe their hearts quite clean," &c. Surprising were now the *doings of the Lord*, that I can say no less of this day (and I need say no more of it) than that the *arm of the Lord* was powerfully and marvellously *revealed* in it.

Aug. 7. Preached to the Indians from *Isa. liii. 3.-10*. There was a remarkable influence attending the word, and great concern in the assembly; but scarce equal to what appeared the day before, that is, not quite so universal. However, most were much affected, and many in great distress for their souls; and some few could neither go nor stand, but lay flat on the ground, as if pierced at heart, crying incessantly for mercy. Several were newly awakened, and it was remarkable, that as fast as they came from remote places round about, the Spirit of God seemed to seize them with concern for their souls.

After public service was concluded, I found two persons more that had newly met with comfort, of whom I had good hopes: and a third that I could not but entertain some hopes of, whose case did not appear so clear as the other; so that here were now six in all that had got some relief from their spiritual distresses, and five whose experience appeared very clear and satisfactory. And it is worthy of remark, that those who obtained comfort first, were in general deeply affected with concern for their souls, when I preached to them in June last.

Aug. 8. In the afternoon I preached to the Indians; their number was about *sixty-five* persons, men, women, and children: I discoursed from *Luke xiv. 16-23*. and was favoured with *uncommon* freedom in my discourse. There was much visible concern among them while I was discoursing publicly; but afterwards when I spoke to one and another more particularly, whom I perceived under much concern, the power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly "like a rushing mighty wind," and with an astonishing energy bore down all before it.

I stood amazed at the influence that seized the audience almost universally, and could compare it to nothing more aptly than the irresistible force of a mighty torrent or swelling

deluge, that with its insupportable weight and pressure bears down and sweeps before it whatever is in its way. Almost all persons of all ages were bowed down with concern together, and scarce one was able to withstand the *shock* of this surprising operation. Old men and women who had been drunken wretches for many years, and some little children not more than six or seven years of age, appeared in distress for their souls, as well as persons of middle age. And it was apparent these children (some of them at least) were not *merely* frighted with seeing the general concern; but were made sensible of their danger, time badness of their hearts, and their misery without Christ, as some of them expressed it. The most stubborn hearts were now obliged to bow. A principal man among the Indians, who before was most secure and self-righteous, and thought his state good because he knew more than the generality of the Indians had formerly done, and who with a great degree of confidence the day before, told me “he had been a Christian more than ten years,” was now brought under solemn concern for his soul, and wept bitterly. Another man advanced in years, who had been a *murderer*, a *powow*, (or conjurer,) and a notorious drunkard, was likewise brought now to cry for mercy with many tears, and to complain much that he could be no more concerned when he saw his danger so very great.

They were almost universally praying and crying for mercy in every part of the house, and many out of doors, and numbers could neither go nor stand. Their concern was so great, each one for himself, that none seemed to take any notice of those about them, but each prayed freely for himself. And, I am led to think, they were to their own apprehension as much retired as if they had been individually by themselves in the thickest desert; or, I believe rather, that they thought nothing about *any* but themselves and their own states, and so were every one praying *apart*, although all *together*.

It seemed to me there was now an exact fulfilment of that prophecy, [Zech. xii. 10, 11, 12.](#) for there was now “a great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon;” and each seemed to “mourn apart.” Methought this had a near resemblance to the day of God’s power mentioned [Josh. x. 14.](#) for I must say, I never saw *any day like it* in all respects: it was a day wherein I am persuaded the Lord did much to destroy the kingdom of darkness among this people.

This concern in general was most rational and just, those who had been awakened any considerable time, complained more especially of the badness of their *hearts*; and those newly awakened of the badness of their *lives* and *actions* past; and all were afraid of the anger of God, and of everlasting misery as the desert of their sins. Some of the *white* people, who came out of curiosity to “hear what this babbler would say” to the poor ignorant Indians, were much awakened, and some appeared to be wounded with a view of their perishing state.

Those who had lately obtained relief, were filled with comfort at this season; they appeared calm and composed, and seemed to rejoice in Christ Jesus; and some of them took

their distressed friends by the hand, telling them of the goodness of Christ, and the comfort that is to be enjoyed in him, and thence invited them to come and give up their hearts to him. And I could observe some of them in the most honest and unaffected manner, (without any design of being taken notice of,) lifting up their eyes to heaven, as if crying for mercy, while they saw the distress of the poor souls around them.

There was one remarkable instance of awakening this day, that I cannot but take particular notice of here. A young Indian woman, who I believe never knew before she had a soul, nor ever thought of any such thing, hearing that there was something strange among the Indians, came it seems to see what was the matter. In her way to the Indians she called at my lodgings, and when I told her I designed presently to preach to the Indians, laughed and seemed to mock; but went however to them. I had not proceeded far in my public discourse before she felt *effectually* that she had a soul; and before I had concluded my discourse, was so convinced of her sin and misery, and so distressed with concern for her soul's salvation, that she seemed like one pierced through with a dart, and cried out incessantly. She could neither go nor stand, nor sit on her seat without being held up. After public service was over, she lay flat on the ground praying earnestly, and would take no notice of, nor give any answer to, any that spoke to her. I hearkened to know what she said, and perceived the burden of her prayer to be, *Guttummaukalummehe wechaumeh kmeleh Ndah, i. e.* "Have mercy on me, and help me to give you my heart." And thus she continued praying incessantly for many hours together. This was indeed a surprising day of God's power, and seemed enough to convince an atheist of the truth, importance, and power of God's word.

*Aug. 9.* Spent almost the whole day with the Indians, the former part of it in discoursing to many of them privately, and especially to some who had lately received comfort, and endeavouring to inquire into the grounds of it, as well as to give them some proper instructions, cautions, and directions.

In the afternoon discoursed to them publicly. There were now present about seventy persons, old and young. I opened and applied the parable of the sower, [Matt. xiii](#). Was enabled to discourse with much plainness, and found afterwards that this discourse was very instructive to them. There were many tears among them while I was discoursing publicly, but no considerable cry: yet some were much affected with a few words spoken from [Matt. xi. 28](#). "Come unto me, all ye that labour," &c. with which I concluded my discourse. But while I was discoursing near night to two or three of the awakened persons, a divine influence seemed to attend what was spoken to them in a powerful manner, which caused the persons to cry out in anguish of soul, although I spoke not a word of terror; but, on the contrary, set before them the fulness and all-sufficiency of Christ's merits, and his willingness to save all that came to him; and thereupon pressed them to come without delay.

The cry of these was soon heard by others, who, though scattered before, immediately gathered round. I then proceeded in the same strain of gospel-invitation, till they were all

melted into tears and cries, except two or three; and seemed in the greatest distress to find and secure an interest in the great Redeemer. Some who had but little more than a *ruffle* made in their *passions* the day before, seemed now to be deeply affected and wounded at heart: and the concern in general appeared near as prevalent as it was the day before. There was indeed a very *great mourning* among them, and yet every one seemed to *mourn apart*. For so great was their concern, that almost every one was praying and crying for himself, as if none had been near. *Guttumaukalummeh, guttumaukalummeh, i. e.* “Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me;” was the common cry.

It was very affecting to see the poor Indians, who the other day were hallooing and yelling in their *idolatrous* feasts and *drunken* frolics, now crying to God with such importunity for an interest in his dear Son! Found two or three persons, who, I had reason to hope, had taken comfort upon good grounds since the evening before: and these, with others that had obtained comfort, were together, and seemed to rejoice much that God was carrying on his work with such power upon others.

*Aug. 10.* Rode to the Indians, and began to discourse more privately to those who had obtained comfort and satisfaction; endeavouring to instruct, direct, caution, and comfort them. But others being eager of hearing every word that related to spiritual concerns, soon came together one after another; and when I had discoursed to the *young converts* more than half an hour, they seemed much melted with divine things, and earnestly desirous to be with Christ. I told them of the godly soul’s perfect purity and full enjoyment of Christ, immediately upon its separation from the body; and that it would be for ever inconceivably more happy than *they* had ever been for any short space of time, when Christ seemed near to them in prayer or other duties. And that I might make way for speaking of the resurrection of the body, and thence of the complete blessedness of the man, I said, But perhaps some of you will say, I love my body as well as my soul, and I cannot bear to think that my body should lie dead if my soul is happy. To which they all cheerfully replied, *Muttoh, muttoh*, (before I had opportunity to prosecute what I designed respecting the resurrection,) No, no. They did not regard their *bodies*, if their *souls* might but be with Christ. Then they appeared “willing to be absent from the body that they might be present with the Lord.”

When I had spent some time with these, I turned to the other Indians, and spoke to them from [Luke xix. 10](#). “For the Son of man is come to seek,” &c. I had not discoursed long before their concern rose to a great degree, and the house was filled with cries and groans. And when I insisted on the compassion and care of the Lord Jesus Christ for *those that were lost*, who thought themselves *undone*, and could find no way of escape, this melted them down the more, and aggravated their distress, that they could not find and come to so kind a Saviour.

Sundry persons who before had been but slightly awakened, were now deeply wounded with a sense of their sin and misery. And one man in particular, who was never before

awakened, was now made to feel that “the word of the Lord was quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword.” He seemed to be pierced at heart with distress, and his concern appeared most rational and scriptural: for he said, “all the wickedness of his past life was brought fresh to his remembrance, and he saw all the vile actions he had done formerly as if done but yesterday.”

Found one that had newly received comfort, after pressing distress from day to day. Could not but rejoice and admire divine goodness in what appeared this day. There seems to be some good done by every discourse; some newly awakened every day, amid some comforted. It was refreshing to observe the conduct of those that had obtained comfort, while others were distressed with fear and concern; that is, lifting up their hearts to God for them.

*Lord's day, Aug. 11.* Discoursed in the forenoon from the parable of the *prodigal son*, [Luke xv](#). Observed no such remarkable effect of the word upon the assembly as in days past. There were numbers of careless spectators of the white people; some Quakers, and others. In the afternoon I discoursed upon a part of St. Peter's sermon, [Acts ii](#). and at the close of my discourse to the Indians, made an address to the *white* people, and divine truths seemed then to be attended with power both to English and Indians. Several of the *white heathen* were awakened, and could not longer be idle spectators, but found they had *souls* to save or lose as well as the Indians; and a great concern spread through the whole assembly. So that *this* also appeared to be a day of God's power, especially towards the conclusion of it, although the influence attending the word seemed scarce so powerful now as in some days past.

The number of the Indians, old and young, was now upwards of seventy, and one or two were newly awakened this day, who never had appeared to be moved with concern for their souls before. Those who had obtained relief and comfort, and had given hopeful evidences of having passed a saving change, appeared humble amid devout, and behaved in an agreeable and Christian-like manner. I was refreshed to see the tenderness of conscience manifest in some of them, one instance of which I cannot but notice. Perceiving one of them very sorrowful in the morning, I inquired into the cause of her sorrow, and found the difficulty was, she had been angry with her child the evening before, and was now exercised with fears, lest her anger had been inordinate and sinful, which so grieved her, that she waked and began to sob before day-light, and continued weeping for several hours together.

*Aug. 14.* Spent the day with the Indians. There was one of them who had some time since put away his wife, (as is common among them,) and taken another woman, and being now brought under some serious impressions, was much concerned about that affair in particular, and seemed fully convinced of the wickedness of that practice, and earnestly desirous to know what God would have him do in his present circumstances. When the law of God respecting *marriage* had been opened to them, and the cause of his leaving his wife inquired into; and when it appeared she had given him no just occasion by *unchastity* to

desert her, and that she was willing to forgive his past misconduct, and to live peaceably with him for the future, and that she moreover insisted on it as *her right* to enjoy him; he was then told, that it was his indispensable duty to renounce the woman he had last taken, and receive the other who was his proper wife, and live peaceably with her during life. With this he readily and cheerfully complied, and thereupon *publicly* renounced the woman he had last taken, and *publicly* promised to live with and be kind to his wife during life, she also promising the same to him. And here appeared a clear demonstration of the power of God's word upon their hearts. I suppose a few weeks before, the whole world could not have persuaded this man to a compliance with Christian rules in this affair.

I was not without fears, lest this proceeding might be like putting "new wine into old bottles," and that some might be prejudiced against Christianity, when they saw the demands made by it. But the maim being much concerned about the matter, the determination of it could be deferred no longer, and it seemed to have a good, rather than an ill, effect among the Indians, who generally owned, that the laws of Christ were good and right respecting the affairs of marriage. In the afternoon I preached to them from the apostle's discourse to Cornelius, [Acts x. 34.](#), &c. There appeared some affectionate concern among them, though not equal to what appeared in several of the former days. They still attended and heard as for their lives, and the Lord's work seemed still to be promoted, and propagated among them.

*Aug. 15.* Preached from [Luke iv. 16-21.](#) "And he came to Nazareth," &c. The word was attended with power upon the hearts of the hearers. There was much concern, many tears, and affecting cries among them, and some in a special manner were deeply wounded and distressed for their souls. There were some newly awakened who came but this week, and convictions seemed to be promoted in others. Those who had received comfort, were likewise refreshed and strengthened, and the work of grace appeared to advance in all respects. The *passions* of the congregation in general were not so much moved, as in some days past, but their *hearts* seemed as solemnly and deeply affected with divine truths as ever, at least in many instances, although the concern did not seem to be so universal, and to reach every individual in such a manner as it had appeared to do some days before.

*Aug. 16.* Spent a considerable time in conversing privately with sundry of the Indians. Found one that had got relief and comfort, after pressing concern, and could not but hope, when I came to discourse particularly with her, that her comfort was of the right kind. In the afternoon, I preached to them from [John vi. 26-34.](#) Toward the close of my discourse, divine truths were attended with considerable power upon the audience, and more especially after public service was over, when I particularly addressed sundry distressed persons.

There was a great concern for their souls spread pretty generally among them; but especially there were two persons newly awakened to a sense of their sin and misery, one of whom was lately come, and the other had all along been very attentive, and desirous of being

awakened, but could never before have any lively view of her perishing state. But now her concern and spiritual distress was such, that, I thought, I had never seen *any* more pressing. Sundry *old* men were also in distress for their souls; so that they could not refrain from weeping and crying out aloud, and their bitter groans were the most convincing, as well as affecting, evidence of the reality and depth of their inward anguish. God is powerfully at work among them! True and genuine convictions of sin are daily promoted in many instances, and some are newly awakened from time to time, although some few, who felt a commotion in their *passions* in days past, seem now to discover that their *hearts* were never duly affected. I never saw the work of God appear so independent of means as at this time. I discoursed to the people, and spoke what, I suppose, had a proper tendency to promote convictions; but God's *manner* of working upon them appeared so entirely *supernatural*, and *above* means, that I could scarce believe he used me as an *instrument*, or what I spake as *means* of carrying on his work; for it seemed, as I thought, to have no connexion with, nor dependence upon, means in any respect. And although I could not but continue to use the means which I thought proper for the promotion of the work, yet God seemed, as I apprehended, to work entirely without them. I seemed to do nothing, and indeed to have nothing to do, but to "stand still and see the salvation of God;" and found myself obliged and delighted to say, "Not unto us," not unto instruments and means, "but to thy name be glory." God appeared to work entirely alone, and I saw no room to attribute any part of this work to any created arm.

Aug. 17. Spent much time in private conferences with the Indians. Found one who had newly obtained relief and comfort, after a long season of spiritual trouble and distress he having been one of my hearers in the Forks of Delaware for more than a year, and now followed me here under deep concern for his soul and had abundant reason to hope that his comfort was well grounded, and truly divine. Afterwards discoursed publicly from [Acts viii. 29-39.](#) and took occasion to treat concerning *baptism*, in order to their being instructed and prepared to partake of that ordinance. They were yet hungry and thirsty for the word of God, and appeared *unwearied* in their attendance upon it.

Lord's day, Aug. 18. Preached in the forenoon to an assembly of *white* people, made up of Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, &c. Afterwards preached to the Indians from [John vi. 35-40.](#) "He that eateth my flesh," &c. There was considerable concern visible among them, though not equal to what has frequently appeared of late.

Aug. 19. Preached from [Isa. lv. 1.](#) "Ho, every one that thirsteth," &c. Divine truths were attended with power upon those who had received comfort, and others also. The former were sweetly melted and refreshed with divine invitations, the latter much concerned for their souls, that they might obtain an interest in these glorious gospel-provisions that were set before them. There were numbers of poor *impotent* souls that waited at the *pool* for *healing*, and the *angel* seemed, as at other times of late, *to trouble the waters*; so that there

was yet a most desirable and comfortable prospect of the spiritual recovery of diseased, perishing sinners.

Aug. 23. Spent some time with the Indians in private discourse; afterwards preached to them from [John vi. 44-50](#). "No man can come to me, except," &c. There was, as has been usual, a great attention and some affection among them. Several appeared deeply concerned for their souls, and could not but express their inward anguish by tears and cries. But the amazing divine influence that has been so powerfully among them in general, seems, at present, in some degree abated, at least in regard of its *universality*, though many who have got no special comfort, still retain deep impressions of divine things.

Aug. 24. Spent the forenoon in discoursing to some of the Indians, in order to their receiving the ordinance of *baptism*. When I had opened the nature of the ordinance, the obligations attending it, the duty of devoting ourselves to God in it, and the privilege of being *in covenant* with him, sundry of them seemed to be filled with love to God, and delighted with the thoughts of giving up themselves to him in that solemn and public manner, melted and refreshed with the hopes of enjoying the blessed Redeemer.

Afterwards I discoursed publicly from [1 Thess. iv. 13-17](#). "But I would not have you be ignorant," &c. There was a solemn attention, and some visible concern and affection in the time of public service, which was afterwards increased by some further exhortation given them to come to Christ, and give up their hearts to him, that they might be fitted to "ascend up and meet him in the air," when he shall "descend with a shout, and time voice of the archangel."

There were several Indians newly come, who thought their state good, and themselves happy, because they had sometimes lived with the *white people* under gospel-light, had learned to read, were civil, &c. although they appeared utter strangers to their own hearts, and altogether unacquainted with the power of religion, as well as with the doctrine of *grace*. With those I discoursed particularly after public worship, and was surprised to see their self-righteous disposition, their strong attachment to the covenant of works for salvation, and the high value they put upon their supposed attainments. Yet after much discourse, one appeared in a measure convinced, that "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified," and wept bitterly, inquiring "what he must do to be saved!"

*This* was very comfortable to others, who had gained some *experimental* acquaintance with their own hearts; for *before* they were grieved with the conversation and conduct of these *new comers*, who boasted of their knowledge, and thought well of themselves, but evidently discovered to those that had any experience of divine truths, that they knew nothing of their own hearts.

*Lord's day, Aug. 25.* Preached in the forenoon from [Luke xv. 3-7](#). There being a multitude of *white people* present, I made an address to *them*, at the close of my discourse to the Indians: but could not so much as keep them orderly; for scores of them kept walking and gazing



about, and behaved more indecently than *any Indians* I ever addressed; and a view of their abusive conduct so sunk my spirits, that I could scarce go on with my work.

In the afternoon discoursed from [Rev. iii. 20.](#) at which time the Indians behaved seriously, though many others were vain. Afterwards baptized *twenty-five* persons of the Indians, *fifteen* adults, and *ten* children. Most of the adults I have comfortable reason to hope are renewed persons; and there was not one of them but what I entertained some hopes of in that respect, though the case of two or three of them appeared more doubtful.

After the crowd of spectators was gone, I called the baptized persons together, and discoursed to them in particular, at the same time inviting others to attend. I minded them of the solemn obligations they were now under to live to God, warned them of the evil and dreadful consequences of careless living, especially after this public profession of Christianity; gave them directions for their future conduct, and encouraged them to watchfulness and devotion, by setting before them the *comfort* and happy *conclusion* of a religious life. This was a desirable and sweet season indeed! Their hearts were engaged and cheerful in duty, and they rejoiced that they had in a public and solemn manner dedicated themselves to God. Love seemed to reign among them! They took each other by the hand with tenderness and affection, as if their hearts were knit together, while I was discoursing to them: and all their deportment toward each other was such, that a *serious spectator* might justly be excited to cry out with admiration, "Behold how they love one another!" Sundry of the other Indians, at seeing and hearing these things, were much affected, and wept bitterly, longing to be partakers of the same joy and comfort that these discovered by their very countenances as well as conduct.

*Aug. 26.* Preached to my people from [John vi. 51-55.](#) After I had discoursed some time, I addressed those in particular who entertained hopes that they were "passed from death to life." Opened to them the persevering nature of those consolations Christ gives his people, and which I trusted he had bestowed upon some in that assembly; showed them that such have already the "beginnings of eternal life," ([ver. 54..](#)) and that their *heaven* shall speedily be completed, &c.

I no sooner began to discourse in this strain, but the *dear Christians* in the congregation began to be melted with affection to, and desire of, the enjoyment of Christ, and of a state of perfect purity. They wept affectionately, and yet joyfully, and their tears and sobs discovered *brokenness* of heart, and yet were attended with *real comfort* and *sweetness*; so that this was a tender, affectionate, humble, delightful melting, and appeared to be the genuine effect of a Spirit of *adoption*, and very far from that spirit of *bondage* that they not long since laboured under. The influence seemed to spread from these through the whole assembly, and there quickly appeared a wonderful concern among them. Many who had not yet found Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, were surprisingly engaged in seeking after him. It was indeed a lovely and very desirable assembly. Their number was now about *ninety-five* persons,

old and young, and almost all affected either with *joy*, in Christ Jesus, or with *utmost concern* to obtain an interest in him.

Being fully convinced it was now my duty to take a journey far back to the Indians on Susquehannah river, (it being now a proper season of the year to find them generally at home,) after having spent some hours in public and private discourses with my people, I told them, that I must now leave them for the present, and go to their *brethren* far remote, and preach to them; that I wanted the Spirit of God should go with me, without whom nothing could be done to any good purpose among the Indians as they themselves had opportunity to see, and observe, by the barrenness of our meetings at some times, when there was much pains taken to affect and awaken sinners, and yet to little or no purpose and asked them, if they could not be willing to spend the *remainder of the day* in prayer for me, that God would go with me, and succeed my endeavours for the conversion of those poor souls. They cheerfully complied with the motion, and soon after I left them (the sun being then about an hour and a half high at night) they began, and continued praying all night,) till *break of day*, or very near, never mistrusting, they tell me, till they went out and viewed the stars, and saw the *morning-star* a considerable height, that it was later than common bedtime. Thus eager and unwearied were they in their devotions! A remarkable night it was, attended, as my interpreter tells me, with a powerful influence upon those who were yet under concern, as well as those that had received comfort.

There were, I trust, this day two distressed souls brought to the enjoyment of solid comfort in him, in whom the *weary* find rest. It was likewise remarkable, that this day an *old* Indian, who has all his days been an obstinate *idolater*, was brought to give up his *rattles* (which they use for music in their *idolatrous* feasts and dances) to the other Indians, who quickly destroyed them; and this without any attempt of mine in the affair, I having said nothing to him about it; so that it seemed it was nothing but just the power of God's word, without any particular application to *this* sin, that produced this effect. Thus God has begun, thus he has hitherto surprisingly carried on a work of grace amongst these Indians. May the glory be ascribed to him, who is the sole Author of it!

Forks Of Delaware, in *Pennsylvania*, Sept. 1745.

*Lord's day*, Sept. 1. Preached to the Indians here from [Luke xiv. 16 23](#). The word appeared to be attended with some power, and caused some tears in the assembly. Afterwards preached to a number of *white* people present, and observed many of them in tears, and some who had formerly been as careless and unconcerned about religion perhaps as the Indians. Towards night discoursed to the Indians again, and perceived a greater attention, and more visible concern among them than has been usual in *these parts*.

Sept. 3. Preached to the Indians from . "He is despised and rejected of men," &c. The divine presence seemed to be in the midst of the assembly, and a considerable concern spread amongst them. Sundry persons seemed to be awakened, amongst whom were two

stupid creatures that I could scarce ever before keep awake while I was discoursing to them. Could not but rejoice at this appearance of things, although at the same time I could not but fear, lest the concern they at present manifested, might prove *like a morning cloud*, as something of that nature had formerly done in these parts.

*Sept. 5.* Discoursed to the Indians from the parable of the sower, afterwards conversed particularly with sundry persons, which occasioned them to weep, and even cry out in an affecting manner, and seized others with surprise and concern; and I doubt not but that a divine power accompanied what was then spoken. Sundry of these persons had been with me to Crossweeksung, and had there seen, and some of them, I trust, felt the power of God's word in an *effectual* and saving manner. I asked one of them, who had obtained comfort, and given hopeful evidences of being truly religious, Why he now cried? He replied, "When he thought how Christ was slain like a lamb, and spilt his blood for sinners, he could not help crying, when he was all alone:" and thereupon burst out into tears and cries again. I then asked his wife, who had likewise been abundantly comforted, wherefore she cried? She answered, "She was grieved that the Indians here would not come to Christ, as well as those at Crossweeksung." I asked her if she found a heart to pray for them, and whether Christ had seemed to be near to her of late in prayer, as in time past? (which is my usual method of expressing a sense of the divine presence.) She replied, "Yes, he had been near to her; and that at some times when she had been praying alone, her heart loved to pray so, that she could not bear to leave the place, but wanted to stay and pray longer."

*Sept. 7.* Preached to the Indians from [John vi. 35-39](#). There was not so much appearance of concern among them as at several other times of late; yet they appeared serious and attentive.

*Lord's day, Sept. 8.* Discoursed to the Indians in the forenoon from [John xii. 44-50](#). in the afternoon from [Acts ii. 36-39](#). The word of God at this time seemed to fall with *weight* and influence upon them. There were but few present, but most that were, were in tears, and sundry cried out under distressing concern for their souls.

There was one man considerably awakened, who never before discovered any concern for his soul. There appeared a remarkable work of the divine Spirit among them, almost generally, not unlike what has been of late at Crossweeksung. It seemed as if the divine influence had spread from thence to this place; although something of it appeared here in the awakening of my interpreter, his wife, and some few others.

Sundry of the careless white people now present were *awakened*, (or at least *startled*,) seeing time power of God so prevalent among the Indians. I then made a particular address to them, which seemed to make some impression upon them, and excite some affection in them.

There are sundry Indians in these parts who have always refused to hear me preach, and have been enraged against those that have attended my preaching. But of late they are

more bitter than ever, scoffing at Christianity, and sometimes asking my hearers, "How often they have cried?" and "Whether they have not now cried enough to do the turn?" &c. So that they have already "trial of cruel mockings."

*Sept. 9.* Left the Indians in the Forks of Delaware, and set out on a journey towards Susquehannah river, directing my course towards the Indian town more than a hundred and twenty miles west-ward from the Forks. Travelled about fifteen miles, and there lodged.

*Sept. 13.* After having lodged out three nights, arrived at the Indian town I aimed at on Susquehannah, called Shaumoking, (one of the places, and the largest of them, that I visited in May last,) and was kindly received and entertained by the Indians: but had little satisfaction by reason of the heathenish dance and revel they then held in the house where I was obliged to lodge, which I could not suppress, though I often entreated them to desist, for the sake of one of their own friends who was then sick in the house, and whose disorder was much aggravated by the noise. Alas! how destitute of *natural affection* are these poor uncultivated pagans! although they seem somewhat kind in their own way. Of a truth, "the dark corners of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

This town (as I observed in my Journal of May last) lies partly on the east side of the river, partly on the west, and partly on a large island in it, and contains upwards of fifty houses, and they tell me, near three hundred persons, though I never saw much more than half that number in it; but of three different tribes of Indians, speaking three languages wholly *unintelligible* to each other. About one half of its inhabitants are Delawares, the others called Senakes, and Tutelas. The Indians of this place are counted the most drunken, mischievous, and *ruffianly fellows* of any in these parts: and *Satan* seems to have his *seat* in this *town* in an eminent manner.

*Sept. 14.* Visited he Delaware king, (who was supposed to be at the point of death when I was here in May last, but was now recovered,) and discoursed with him and others respecting Christianity, and spent the afternoon with them, and had more encouragement than I expected. The *king* appeared kindly disposed, and willing to be instructed: this gave me some encouragement that God would open an *effectual door* for my preaching the gospel here, and set up his kingdom in this place. Which was a support and refreshment to me in the wilderness, and rendered my solitary circumstances comfortable and pleasant.

*Lord's day, Sept. 15.* Visited the *chief* of the Delawares again; was kindly received by him, and discoursed to the Indians in the afternoon. Still entertained hopes that God would open their hearts to receive the gospel, though many of them in the place were so drunk from day to day, that I could get no opportunity to speak to them. Towards night discoursed with one that understood the languages of the Six Nations, (as they are usually called,) who discovered an inclination to hearken to Christianity; which gave me some hopes that the gospel might hereafter be sent to those nations far remote.

Sept. 16. Spent the forenoon with the Indians, endeavouring to instruct them from house to house, and to engage them, as far as I could, to be friendly to Christianity. Towards night went to one part of the town where they were *sober*, and got together near fifty persons of them, and discoursed to them, having first obtained the king's *cheerful* consent. There was a surprising attention among them, and they manifested a considerable desire of being further instructed. There was also one or two that seemed to be touched with some concern for their souls, who appeared well pleased with some conversation in private, after I had concluded my public discourse to them.

My spirits were much refreshed with this appearance of things, and I could not but return with my interpreter (having no *other companion* in this journey) to my poor hard lodgings, rejoicing in hopes that God designed to set up his kingdom here, where Satan now reigns in the most eminent manner; and found uncommon freedom in addressing the throne of grace for the accomplishment of so great and glorious a work.

Sept. 17. Spent the forenoon in visiting and discoursing to the Indians. About noon left Shaumoking, (most of the Indians going out this day on their hunting design,) and travelled down the river south-westward.

Sept. 19. Visited an Indian town called *Juncauta*, situate on an island in Susquehannah. Was much discouraged with the temper and behaviour of the Indians here, although they appeared friendly when I was with them the last spring, and then gave me encouragement to come and see them again. But they now seemed resolved to retain their pagan notions, and persist in their *idoltrous* practices.

Sept. 20. Visited the Indians again at *Juncauta* island, and found them almost universally very busy in making preparations for a great *sacrifice* and *dance*. Had no opportunity to get them together in order to discourse with them about Christianity, by reason of their being so much engaged about their *sacrifice*. My spirits were much sunk with a prospect so very discouraging, and especially seeing I had now no interpreter but a pagan, who was as much attached to *idolatry* as any of them; (my own interpreter having left me the day before, being obliged to attend upon some important business elsewhere, and knowing that he could neither speak nor understand the language of *these* Indians;) so that I was under the greatest disadvantages imaginable. However, I attempted to discourse privately with some of them, but without any appearance of success: notwithstanding, I still tarried with them.

In the evening they met together, near a hundred of them, and danced round a large fire, having prepared ten fat deer for the *sacrifice*. The fat of whose inwards they burnt in the fire while they were dancing, and sometime raised the flame to a prodigious height, at the same time yelling and shouting in such a manner, that they might easily have been heard two miles or more. They continued their *sacred dance* all night, or near the matter, after which they ate the *flesh* of the *sacrifice*, and so retired each one to his lodging.

I enjoyed little satisfaction this night, being entirely alone on the island, (as to any Christian company,) and in the midst of this *idolatrous* revel; and having walked to and fro till body and mind were pained and much oppressed, I at length crept into a little crib made for corn, and there slept on the poles.

*Lord's day, Sept. 21.* Spent the day with the Indians on the island. As soon as they were well up in the morning, I attempted to instruct them, and laboured for that purpose to get them together, but quickly found they had something else to do; for near noon they gathered together all their *powows*, (or conjurers,) and set about half a dozen of them to playing their juggling tricks, and acting their frantic distracted postures, in order to find out why they were then so sickly upon the island, numbers of them being at that time disordered with a *fever*, and bloody *flux*. In this exercise they were engaged for several hours, making all the wild, ridiculous, and distracted motions imaginable; sometimes singing; sometimes howling; sometimes extending their hands to the utmost stretch, spreading all their fingers; and they seemed to push with them, as if they designed to fright something away, or at least keep it off at arm's-end; sometimes stroking their faces with their hands, then spurning water as fine as mist; sometimes sitting flat on the earth, then bowing down their faces to the ground; wringing their sides, as if in pain and anguish; twisting their faces, turning up their eyes, grunting, puffing, &c.

Their monstrous actions tended to excite ideas of horror, and seemed to have something in them, as I thought, peculiarly suited to raise the devil, *if he could* be raised by any thing odd, ridiculous, and frightful. Some of them, I could observe, were much more fervent and devout in the business than others, and seemed to *chant, peep, and mutter* with a great degree of warmth and vigour, as if determined to awaken and engage the powers below. I sat at a small distance, not more than thirty feet from them, (though undiscovered,) with my Bible in my hand, resolving, if possible, to spoil their sport, and prevent their receiving any answers from the *infernal* world, and there viewed the whole scene. They continued their hideous charms and incantations for more than three hours, until they had all wearied themselves out, although they had in that space of time taken sundry intervals of rest; and at length broke up, I apprehended, without receiving any answer at all.

After they had done *powowing*, I attempted to discourse with them about Christianity; but they soon scattered, and gave me no opportunity for any thing of that nature. A view of these things, while I was entirely alone in the wilderness, destitute of the society of any one that so much as "named the name of Christ," greatly sunk my spirits, gave me the most gloomy turn of mind imaginable, almost stripped me of all resolution and hope respecting further attempts for propagating the gospel, and converting the pagans, and rendered this the most burdensome and disagreeable sabbath that ever I saw. But nothing, I can truly say, sunk and distressed me like the loss of my hope respecting *their conversion*. This concern appeared so great, and seemed to be so much *my own*, that I seemed to have nothing to do

on *earth* if this failed. A prospect of the greatest success in the saving conversion of souls under *gospel-light*, would have done little or nothing towards compensating for the loss of my hope in this respect; and my spirits now were so damped and depressed, that I had no heart nor power to make any further attempts among them for that purpose, and could not possibly recover my hope, resolution, and courage, by the utmost of my endeavours.

The Indians of this island can many of them understand the English language considerably well, having formerly lived in some part of Maryland among or near the white people, but are very vicious, drunken, and profane, although not so *savage* as those who have less acquaintance with the English. Their customs in divers respects differ from those of other Indians upon this river. They do not bury their dead in a common form, but let their flesh consume above-ground in close cribs made for that purpose; and at the end of a year, or sometimes a longer space of time, they take the bones, when the flesh is all consumed, and wash and scrape them, and afterwards bury them with some ceremony. Their method of *charming* or conjuring over the sick, seems somewhat different from that of other Indians, though for substance the same: and the whole of it, among these and others, perhaps is an imitation of what seems, by Naaman's expression, [2 Kings v. 11.](#) to have been the custom of the ancient heathens. For it seems chiefly to consist in their "striking their hands over the diseased," repeatedly stroking them, "and calling upon their gods," excepting the spurting of water like a mist, and some other frantic ceremonies, common to the other *conjurations* I have already mentioned.

When I was in these parts in May last, I had an opportunity of learning many of the notions and customs of the Indians, as well as of observing many of their practices. I then travelled more than a hundred and thirty miles upon the river above the English settlements; and had in that journey a view of some persons of *seven* or *eight* distinct tribes, speaking so many different languages. But of all the sights I ever saw among them, or indeed any where else, none appeared so frightful, or so near akin to what is usually imagined of *infernal powers* none ever excited such images of terror in my mind as the appearance of one who was a devout and zealous reformer, or rather restorer of what he supposed was the ancient religion of the Indians. He made his appearance in his *pontifical garb*, which was a coat of *bears' skins* dressed with the hair on, and hanging down to his toes, a pair of bear-skin stockings, and a great *wooden* face, painted the one half black, and the other tawny, about the colour of an Indian's skin, with an extravagant mouth, cut very much awry; the face fastened to a bear-skin cap, which was drawn over his head. He advanced toward me with the instrument in his hand that he used for music in his *idolatrous worship*, which was a dry *tortoise-shell*, with *sorr e* corn in it, and the neck of it drawn on to a piece of wood, which made a very convenient handle. As he came forward, he beat his tune with the *rattle*, and danced with all his might, but did not suffer any part of his body, not so much as his fingers, to be seen: and no man would have guessed by his appearance and actions, that he could

have been a human creature, if they had not had some intimation of it otherwise. When he came near me, I could not but shrink away from him, although it was then noonday, and I knew who it was, his appearance and gestures were so prodigiously frightful. He had a house consecrated to religious uses, with divers images cut out upon the several parts of it; I went in and found the ground beat almost as hard as a rock with their frequent dancing in it. I discoursed with him about Christianity, and some of my discourse he seemed to like, but some of it he disliked entirely. He told me that God had taught him his religion, and that he never would turn from it, but wanted to find some that would join heartily with him in it; for the Indians, he said, were grown very degenerate and corrupt. He had thoughts, he said, of leaving all his friends, and travelling abroad, in order to find some that would join with him; for he believed God had some good people somewhere that felt as he did. He had not always, he said, felt as he now did, but had *formerly* been like the rest of the Indians, until about four or five years before that time: then he said his heart was very much distressed, so that he could not live among the Indians, but got away into the woods, and lived alone for some months. At length, he says, God comforted his heart, and showed him what he should do; and since that time he had known God and tried to serve him; and loved all men, be they who they would, so as he never did before. He treated me with uncommon courtesy, and seemed to be hearty in it. And I was told by the Indians, that he opposed their drinking strong liquor with all his power; and if at any time he could not dissuade them from it, by all he could say, he would leave them and go crying into the woods. It was manifest he had a set of religious notions that he had looked into *for himself*, and not taken for *granted* upon bare tradition; and he relished or disrelished whatever was spoken of a religious nature according as it either agreed or disagreed with *his standard*. And while I was discoursing he would sometimes say, "Now that I like: so God has taught me," &c. And some of his sentiments seemed very just. Yet he utterly denied the being of a *devil*, and declared there was no such a creature known among the Indians of old times, whose religion he supposed he was attempting to revive. He likewise told me that departed souls all went southward, and that the difference between the good and bad was this, that the *former* were admitted into a beautiful town with *spiritual* walls, or walls agreeable to the nature of souls; and that the *latter* would for ever hover round those walls, and in vain attempt to get in. He seemed to be sincere, honest, and conscientious in his *own way*, and according to his own religious notions, which was more than I ever saw in any other pagan. I perceived he was looked upon and derided amongst most of the Indians as a *precise zealot*, that made a needless noise about religious matters; but I must say, there was something in his temper and disposition that looked more like true religion than any thing I ever observed amongst other heathens.

But, alas! how deplorable is the state of the Indians upon this river! The brief representation I have here given of their notions and manners, is sufficient to show that they are "led captive by Satan at his will," in the most eminent manner: and, methinks, might likewise be



sufficient to excite the compassion, and engage the prayers, of pious souls for these their fellow-men, who sit in “the regions of the shadow of death.”

Sept. 22. Made some further attempts to instruct and Christianize the Indians on this island, but all to no purpose. They live so near the white people, that they are always in the way of strong liquor, as well as the ill examples of *nominal* Christians; which renders it so unspeakably difficult to treat with them about Christianity.

Forks Of Delaware, *October*, 1745.

Oct. 1. Discoursed to the Indians here, and spent some time in private conferences with them about their souls’ concerns, and afterwards invited them to accompany, or if not, to *follow*, me down to Crossweeksung, as soon as their conveniency would admit; which invitation sundry of them cheerfully accepted.

Crossweeksung, *in New Jersey*, *October*, 1745.

Preached to my people from [John xiv. 1-6](#). The divine presence seemed to be in the assembly. Numbers were affected with divine truths, and it was a season of comfort to some in particular. O what a difference is there between these and the Indians I had lately treated with upon Susquehannah! To be with *those* seemed like being banished from God, and all his people; to be with *these*, like being admitted into his family, and to the enjoyment of his divine presence! How great is the change lately made upon numbers of these Indians, who not many months ago were as thoughtless and averse to Christianity as those upon Susquehannah! and how astonishing is that grace which has made this change!

*Lord’s day*, Oct. 6. Preached in the forenoon from [John x. 7-11](#). There was a considerable melting among my people; the dear young Christians were refreshed, comforted, and strengthened, and one or two persons newly awakened. In the afternoon I discoursed on the story of the jailer, [Acts xvi.](#) and in the evening expounded [Acts xx. 1-12](#). There was at this time a very agreeable melting spread through the whole assembly. I think I scarce ever saw a more desirable affection in any number of people in my life. There was scarce a dry eye to be seen among them, and yet nothing *boisterous* or *unseemly*, nothing that tended to disturb the public worship; but rather to encourage and excite a Christian ardour and spirit of devotion. Those who, I have reason to hope, were savingly renewed, were first affected and seemed to rejoice much, but with brokenness of spirit and godly fear. Their exercises were much the same with those mentioned in my Journal of August 26, evidently appearing to be the genuine effect of a Spirit of adoption.

After public service was over I withdrew, (being much tired with the labours of the day,) and the Indians continued praying among themselves for near two hours together; which continued exercises appeared to be attended with a blessed quickening influence from on high. I could not but earnestly *wish* that numbers of God’s people had been present at this season, to see and hear these things, which I am sure must refresh the heart of every true lover of Zion’s interest. To see those who very lately were savage pagans and idolaters,

“having no hope, and without God in the world,” now filled with a sense of divine love and grace, and worshipping the “Father in spirit and in truth,” as numbers here appeared to do, was not a little affecting; and especially to see them appear so tender and humble, as well as lively, fervent, and devout in the divine service.

Oct. 24. Discoursed from [John iv. 13, 14](#). There was a great attention, a desirable affection, and an unaffected melting in the assembly. It is surprising to see how eager they are of hearing the word of God. I have oftentimes thought they would cheerfully and diligently attend divine worship twenty-four hours together, had they an opportunity so to do.

Oct. 25. Discoursed to my people respecting the *resurrection*, from [Luke xx. 27-36](#). And when I came to mention the blessedness the godly shall enjoy at that season; their final freedom from death, sin, and sorrow; their equality to the *angels* in regard of their nearness to, and enjoyment of, Christ; (some imperfect degree of which they are favoured with in the present life, from whence springs their sweetest comfort;) and their being the *children of God*, openly acknowledged by him *as such*; I say, when I mentioned these things, numbers of them were much affected, and melted with a view of this blessed state.

Oct. 26. Being called to assist in the administration of the Lord’s supper, in a neighbouring congregation, I invited my people to go with me, who in general embraced the opportunity cheerfully, and attended the several discourses of that solemnity with diligence and affection, most of them now understanding something of the English language.

*Lord’s day*, Oct. 27. While I was preaching to a vast assembly of people abroad, who appeared generally easy and secure enough, there was one Indian woman, a stranger, who never heard me preach before, nor ever regarded any thing about religion being now persuaded by some of her friends to come to meeting, though much against her will was seized with pressing concern for her soul, and soon after expressed a great desire of going home, more than forty miles distant, to call her husband, that he also might be awakened to a concern for his soul. Some other of the Indians also appeared to be affected with divine truths this day.

The pious people of the English, numbers of whom I had opportunity to converse with, seemed refreshed with seeing the Indians worship God in that devout and solemn manner with the assembly of his people: and with those mentioned [Acts xi. 18](#). they could not but “glorify God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

Oct. 28. Preached again to a great assembly, at which time some of my people appeared affected; and when public worship was over, were inquisitive whether there would not be another sermon in the evening, or before the *sacramental* solemnity was concluded; being still desirous to hear God’s word.

Crossweeksung,

Oct. 28. Discoursed from [Matt. xxii. 1-13](#). I was enabled to open the Scripture, and adapt my discourse and expressions to the capacities of my people, *I know not how*, in a plain,

easy, and familiar manner, beyond all that I could have done by the utmost study: and this, without any *special* difficulty; yea, with as much freedom as if I had been addressing a common audience, who had been instructed in the doctrine of Christianity all their days.

The word of God at this time seemed to fall upon the assembly with a divine power and influence, especially toward the close of my discourse: there was both a sweet melting and bitter mourning in the audience. The dear Christians were refreshed and comforted, convictions revived in others, and sundry persons newly awakened who had never been with us before; and so much of the divine presence appeared in the assembly, that it seemed “this was no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.” And all that had any savour and relish of divine things were even constrained by the sweetness of that season to say, “Lord, it is good for us to be here!” If ever there was amongst my people an appearance of the New Jerusalem “as a bride adorned for her husband,” there was much of it at this time; and so agreeable was the entertainment where such tokens of the divine presence were, that I could scarce be willing in the evening to leave the place, and repair to my lodgings. I was refreshed with a view of the continuance of this blessed work of grace among them, and its influence upon strangers of the Indians that had of late, from time to time, providentially fallen into these parts.

*Nov. 1.* Discoursed from [Luke xxiv.](#) briefly explaining the whole chapter, and insisting especially upon some particular passages. The discourse was attended with some affectionate concern upon some of the hearers, though not equal to what has often appeared among them.

*Lord's day, Nov. 3.* Preached to my people from [Luke xvi. 17.](#) “And it is easier for heaven and earth,” &c. more especially for the sake of several lately brought under deep concern for their souls. There was some apparent concern and affection in the assembly, though far less than has been usual of late.

Afterwards I baptized *fourteen* persons of the Indians, six adults and eight children: one of these was near *fourscore* years of age, and I have reason to hope God has brought her savingly home to himself. Two of the others were men of *fifty* years old, who had been singular and remarkable, even among the Indians, for their wickedness; one of them had been a *murderer*, and both notorious drunkards, as well as excessively quarrelsome; but now I cannot but hope both are become subjects of God's special grace, especially the worst of them.<sup>418</sup> I deferred their *baptism* for many weeks after they had given evidences of having passed a great change, that I might have more opportunities to observe the fruits of the impressions they had been under, and apprehended the way was now clear. There was not one of the adults I baptized, but what had given me some comfortable grounds to hope, that

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418 The men particularly mentioned in my Journal of August 10th, as being then awakened.

God had wrought a work of special grace in their hearts; although I could not have the same degree of satisfaction respecting one or two of them, as the rest.

Nov. 4. Discoursed from [John xi.](#) briefly explaining most of the chapter. Divine truths made deep impressions upon many in the assembly; numbers were affected with a view of the power of Christ, manifested in his raising the dead; and especially when this instance of his power was improved to show his power and ability to raise dead souls (such as many of them then felt themselves to be) to a spiritual life; as also to raise the dead at the last day, and dispense to them due rewards and punishments.

There were sundry of the persons lately come here from remote places, that were now brought under deep and pressing concern for their souls, particularly one who not long since came half drunk, and railed on us, and attempted by all means to disturb us while engaged in the divine worship was now so concerned and distressed for her soul, that she seemed unable to get any ease without an interest in Christ. There were many tears and affectionate sobs and groans in the assembly in general, some weeping for themselves, others for their friends. And although persons are doubtless much easier affected now, than they were in the beginning of this religious concern, when tears and cries for their souls were things unheard of among them; yet I must say, their affection in general appeared *genuine* and *unfeigned*; and especially this appeared very conspicuous in those newly awakened. So that true and genuine convictions of sin seem still to be begun and promoted in many instances.

Baptized a child this day, and perceived sundry of the baptized persons affected with the administration of this ordinance, as being thereby reminded of their own solemn engagements.

I have now baptized in all *forty-seven* persons of the Indians, *twenty-three* adults, and *twenty-four* children; thirty-five of them belonging to these parts, and the rest to the Forks of Delaware: and, through rich grace, none of them as yet have been left to disgrace their profession of Christianity by any scandalous or unbecoming behaviour.

#### GENERAL REMARKS ON PART FIRST.

I might now justly make *many remarks* on a work of grace so very remarkable as this has been in divers respects; but shall confine myself to a few *general hints* only.

1st, It is remarkable that God began this work among the Indians at a time when I had the least hope, and, to my apprehension, the least rational prospect of, seeing a work of grace propagated amongst them. My bodily strength being then much wasted by a late tedious journey to Susquehannah, where I was necessarily exposed to hardships and fatigues among the Indians: my mind being also exceedingly depressed with a view of the unsuccessfulness of my labours. I had little reason so much as to hope that God had made me instrumental in the saving conversion of any of the Indians, except my interpreter and his wife. Whence



I was ready to look upon myself as a burden to the Honourable Society, that employed and supported me in this business, and began to entertain serious thoughts of giving up my *mission*; and almost resolved I would do so at the conclusion of the present year, if I had then no better prospect of special success in my work than I had hitherto had. I cannot say I entertained these thoughts because I was weary of the labours and fatigues that necessarily attended my present business, or because I had light and freedom in my own mind to turn any other way; but purely through dejection of spirit, pressing discouragement, and an apprehension of its being unjust to spend money consecrated to religious uses, only to civilize the Indians, and bring them to an *external* profession of Christianity. This was all that I could then see any prospect of having effected, while God seemed, as I thought, evidently to frown upon the design of their saving conversion, by withholding the convincing and renewing influences of his blessed Spirit from attending the means I had hitherto used with them for that end.

And in this frame of mind I first visited these Indians at Crossweeksung, apprehending it was my indispensable duty, seeing I had heard there was a number in these parts, to make some attempts for their conversion to God, though I cannot say I had any hope of success, my spirits being now so extremely sunk. And I do not know that my hopes respecting the conversion of the Indians were ever reduced to so low an ebb, since I had any *special* concern for them, as at this time. And yet *this* was the very season that God saw fittest to begin this glorious work in! And thus he “ordained strength out of weakness,” by making bare his almighty arm at a time when *all hopes* and *human probabilities* most evidently appeared to fail. Whence I learn, that *it is good to follow the path of duty, though in the midst of darkness and discouragement.*

2dly, It is remarkable how God providentially, and in a manner almost *unaccountable*, called these Indians together to be instructed in the great things that concerned their souls; and how he seized their minds with the most solemn and weighty concern for their eternal salvation, as fast as they came to the place where his word was preached. When I first came into these parts in June, I found not one man at the place I visited, but only *four* women and a few children, but before I had been here many days they gathered from all quarters, some from more than twenty miles distant; and when I made them a second visit in the beginning of August, some came more than forty miles to hear me. And many came without any intelligence of what was going on here, and consequently without any design of *theirs*, so much as to gratify their curiosity; so that it seemed as if God had summoned them together from all quarters for nothing else but to deliver his message to them; and that he did this, with regard to some of them, without making use of any *human* means; although there were pains taken by some of them to give notice to others at remote places.

Nor is it less surprising that they were one after another affected with a solemn concern for their souls, almost as soon as they came upon the spot where divine truths were taught

them. I could not but think often, that their coming to the place of our public worship, was like Saul and his messengers coming among the prophets; they no sooner came but they prophesied; and these were almost as soon affected with a sense of their sin and misery, and with an earnest concern for deliverance, as they made their appearance in our assembly. After this work of *grace* began with power among them, it was common for *strangers* of the Indians, before they had been with us one day, to be much awakened, deeply convinced of their sin and misery, and to inquire with great solicitude, "What they should do to be saved?"

3dly, It is likewise remarkable how God preserved these poor ignorant Indians from being prejudiced against me, and the truths I taught them, by those means that were used with them for that purpose by ungodly people. There were many attempts made by some ill-minded persons of the *white* people to prejudice them against, or fright them from, Christianity. They sometimes told them, the Indians were well enough already: that there was no need of all this *noise* about Christianity: that if they were Christians, they would be in no better, no safer, or happier state, than *they* were already in, &c.

Sometimes they told them that I was a *knave*, a *deceiver*, and the like: that I daily taught them lies, and had no other design but to impose upon them, &c. And when none of these, and such like suggestions, would avail to their purpose, they then tried another expedient, and told the Indians, "My design was to gather together as large a body of them as I possibly could, and then sell them to England for slaves." Than which nothing could be more likely to terrify the Indians, they being naturally of a jealous disposition, and the most averse to a state of servitude perhaps of any people living.

But all these wicked insinuations, through divine goodness overruling, constantly turned against the *authors* of them, and only served to engage the affections of the Indians more firmly to me: for they being awakened to a solemn concern for their souls, could not but observe, that the persons who endeavoured to imbitter their minds against me, were altogether unconcerned about their own souls, and not only so, but vicious and profane; and thence could not but argue, that if they had no concern for their *own*, it was not likely they should have for the souls of *others*.

It seems yet the more wonderful that the Indians were preserved from once hearkening to these suggestions, inasmuch as I was an utter stranger among them, and could give them no assurance of my sincere affection to and concern for them, by any thing that was past, while the persons that insinuated these things were their old acquaintance, who had frequent opportunities of gratifying their *thirsty appetites* with strong drink, and consequently, doubtless, had the greatest interest in their affections. But from this instance of their preservation from fatal prejudices, I have had occasion with admiration to say, "If God will work, who can hinder?"

4thly, Nor is it less wonderful how God was pleased to provide a *remedy* for my want of skill and freedom in the Indian language, by remarkably fitting my interpreter for, and

assisting him in, the performance of his work. It might reasonably be supposed I must needs labour under a vast disadvantage in addressing the Indians by an interpreter; and that divine truths would unavoidably lose much of the *energy* and *pathos* with which they might at first be delivered, by reason of their coming to the audience from a *second hand*. But although this has often, to my sorrow and discouragement, been the case in times past, when my interpreter had little or no sense of divine things, yet now it was quite otherwise. I cannot think my addresses to the Indians ordinarily since the beginning of this season of grace, have lost any thing of their power of pungency with which they were made, unless it were sometimes for want of pertinent and pathetic terms and expressions in the Indian language; which difficulty could not have been much redressed by my personal acquaintance with their language. My interpreter had before gained some good degree of *doctrinal* knowledge, whereby he was rendered capable of understanding and communicating, without mistakes, the *intent* and *meaning* of my discourses, and that without being confined *strictly*, and obliged to interpret *verbatim*. He had likewise, to appearance, an *experimental* acquaintance with divine things; and it pleased God at this season to inspire his mind with longing desires for the conversion of the Indians, and to give him admirable *zeal* and *fervency* in addressing them in order thereto. And it is remarkable, that when I was favoured with any *special assistance* in any work, and enabled to speak with more than common *freedom*, *fervency*, and *power*, under a *lively* and *affecting sense* of divine things, he was usually affected in the *same manner* almost instantly, and seemed at once quickened and enabled to speak in the *same pathetic* language, and under the same influence that I did. And a *surprising energy* often accompanied the word at such seasons; so that the face of the whole assembly would be apparently changed almost in an instant, and tears and sobs became common among them.

He also appeared to have such a clear doctrinal view of God's usual methods of dealing with souls under a preparatory work of *conviction* and *humiliation* as he never had before; so that I could, with his help, discourse freely with the distressed persons about their *internal* exercises, their fears, discouragements, temptations, &c. He likewise took pains day and night to repeat and inculcate upon the minds of the Indians the truths I taught them daily; and this he appeared to do, not from spiritual pride, and an affectation of setting himself up as a *public teacher*, but from a spirit of faithfulness, and an honest concern for their souls.

His conversation among the Indians has likewise, so far as I know, been savoury, as becomes a Christian and a person employed in his work; and I may justly say, he has been a great comfort to me, and a great instrument of promoting this good work among the Indians: so that whatever be the state of his own soul, it is apparent God has remarkably fitted him for this work. And thus God has manifested that, without bestowing on me the *gift of tongues*, he could find a way wherein I might be as effectually enabled to convey the truths of his glorious gospel to the minds of these poor benighted pagans.

5thly, It is further remarkable, that God has carried on his work here by *such means*, and in *such a manner*, as tended to obviate, and leave no room for, those prejudices and objections that have often been raised against such a work. When persons have been awakened to a solemn concern for their souls, by hearing the more *awful* truths of God's word, and the *terrors* of the divine law, insisted upon, it has usually in such cases been objected by some, that such persons were only *frighted* with a *fearful noise* of hell and *damnation*; and that there was no evidence that their concern was the effect of a divine influence. But God has left no room for this objection in the present case, *this work of grace having been begun and carried on by almost one continued strain of gospel invitation to perishing sinners*. This may reasonably be guessed, from a view of the *passages of Scripture* I chiefly insisted upon in my discourses from time to time; which I have for that purpose inserted in my Journal.

Nor have I ever seen so general an awakening in any assembly in my life as appeared here, while I was opening and insisting upon the parable of the *great supper*, [Luke xiv](#). In which discourse I was enabled to set before my hearers the *unsearchable riches* of gospel-grace. Not that I would be understood here, that I never instructed the Indians respecting their *fallen state*, and the *sinfulness* and *misery* of it: for *this* was what I at first chiefly insisted upon with them, and endeavouring to repeat and inculcate in almost every discourse, knowing that without this *foundation* I should but build upon the *sand*; and that it would be in vain to invite them to Christ, unless I could convince them of their *need* of him, [Mark ii. 17](#).

But still, this great awakening, this surprising concern, was never excited by any *harangues of terror*, but always appeared most remarkable when I insisted upon *the compassions of a dying Saviour*, the *plentiful provisions of the gospel*, and the *free offers of divine grace to needy, distressed sinners*. Nor would I be understood to insinuate, that such a religious concern might *justly* be suspected as not being genuine, and from a divine influence because produced by the preaching of *terror*: for this is perhaps God's more usual way of awakening sinners, and appears entirely agreeable to Scripture, and sound reason. But what I meant here to observe is, that God saw fit to *employ* and bless *milder* means for the effectual awakening of these Indians, and thereby obviated the forementioned objection, which the world might otherwise have had a more *plausible* colour of making.

And as there has been no room for any plausible objection against this work, in regard of the *means*; so neither in regard of the *manner* in which it has been carried on. It is true, persons' concern for their souls has been exceeding great, the convictions of their sin and misery have risen to a *high* degree, and produced many tears, cries, and groans: but then they have not been attended with those *disorders*, either bodily or mental, that have sometimes prevailed among persons under religious impressions. There has here been no appearance of those *convulsions, bodily agonies, frightful screamings, swoonings*, and the like, that have



been so much complained of in some places; although there have been some who, with the jailer, have been made to *tremble* under a sense of their sin and misery, numbers who have been made to cry out from a distressing view of their perishing state, and some that have been, for a time, in a great measure, deprived of their bodily strength, yet without any such *convulsive* appearances.

Nor has there been any appearance of *mental* disorders here, such as *visions*, *trances*, *imaginings* of being under prophetic inspiration, and the like; or scarce any unbecoming disposition to appear remarkably affected either with concern or joy; though I must confess, I observed one or two persons, whose *concern*, I thought, was in a considerable measure affected; and one whose *joy* appeared to be of the same kind. But these workings of *spiritual pride* I endeavoured to crush in their first appearances, and have not since observed any affection, either of joy or sorrow, but what appeared *genuine* and *unaffected*. But,

*6thly*, and *lastly*, The *effects* of this work have likewise been very remarkable. I doubt not but that many of these people have gained more *doctrinal* knowledge of divine truths, since I first visited them in June last, than could have been instilled into their minds by the most diligent use of proper and instructive means for whole *years* together, without such a divine influence. Their pagan notions and *idolatrous* practices seem to be entirely abandoned in these parts. They are regulated, and appear regularly disposed, in the affairs of *marriage*; an instance whereof I have given in my Journal of August 14. They seem generally divorced from *drunkenness*, their darling vice, the “sin that easily besets them;” so that I do not know of more than two or three who have been my *steady hearers*, that have drunk to excess since I first visited them, although before it was common for some or other of them to be drunk almost every day: and some of them seem now to fear this sin in particular more than death itself. A principle of honesty and justice appears in many of them, and they seem concerned to discharge their old debts, which they have neglected, and perhaps scarce thought of, for years past. Their manner of living is much more *decent* and *comfortable* than formerly, having now the benefit of that money which they used to consume upon strong drink. *Love* seems to reign among them, especially those who have given evidences of having passed a saving change: and I never saw any appearance of *bitterness* or *ensoriousness* in these, nor any disposition to “esteem themselves better than others,” who had not received the like mercy.

As their sorrows under *convictions* have been great and pressing, so many of them have since appeared to “rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory;” and yet I never saw any thing *ecstatic* or *flighty* in their joy. Their consolations do not incline them to *lightness*; but, on the contrary, are attended with *solemnity*, and oftentimes with *tears*, and an apparent *brokenness of heart*, as may be seen in several passages of my Journal: and in this respect some of them have been surprised at themselves, and have with concern observed to me,

that “when their hearts have been glad,” (which is a phrase they commonly make use of to express spiritual joy,) ” they could not help crying for all.”

And now, upon the whole, I think I may justly say, here are all the symptoms and evidences of a remarkable work of grace among these Indians, that can reasonably be desired or looked for. May the *great Author* of this work maintain and promote the same *here*, and propagate it *every where*, till “the whole earth be filled with his glory!” Amen.

I have now rode more than three thousand miles, that I have kept an exact account of, since the beginning of March last; and almost the whole of it has been in my own proper business as a *missionary*, upon the design (either immediately or more remotely) of propagating *Christian knowledge* among the Indians. I have taken pains to look out for a *colleague*, or *companion*, to travel with me: and have likewise used endeavours to procure something for his support, among religious persons in New England, which cost me a journey of several hundred miles in length; but have not as yet found any person qualified and disposed for this good work, although I had some encouragement from *ministers* and others, that it was hopeful a maintenance might be procured for one, when *the man* should be found.

I have likewise of late represented to the gentlemen concerned with this *mission*, the necessity of having an English *school* speedily set up among these Indians, who are now willing to be at the pains of gathering together in a body for this purpose. And in order thereto, have humbly proposed to them the collecting of money for the maintenance of a schoolmaster, and defraying of other necessary charges in the promotion of this good work; which they are now attempting in the several congregations of Christians to which they respectively belong.

The several companies of Indians I have preached to in the summer past, live at *great distances* from each other. It is more than *seventy miles* from Crossweeksung in New Jersey, to the Forks of Delaware in Pennsylvania. And from thence to sundry of the Indian settlements I visited on Susquehannah, is more than a hundred and twenty miles. And so much of my time is necessarily consumed in journeying, that I can have but little for *any* of my necessary studies, and consequently for the study of the Indian languages in particular; and especially seeing I am obliged to discourse so frequently to the Indians at each of these places while I am with them, in order to redeem time to visit the rest. I am, at times, almost discouraged from attempting to gain any acquaintance with the Indian languages, they are so very numerous, (some account of which I gave in my Journal of May last,) and especially seeing my other labours and fatigues engross almost the whole of my time, and bear exceeding hard upon my *constitution*, so that my health is much impaired. However, I have taken considerable pains to learn the Delaware language, and propose still to do so, as far as my other business and bodily health will admit. I have already made some proficiency in it, though I have laboured under many and great disadvantages in my attempts of that nature.

And it is but just to observe here, that all the pains I took to acquaint myself with the language of the Indians I spent my first year with, were of little or no service to me here among the Delawares; so that my work, when I came among these Indians, was all to begin anew.

As these poor ignorant pagans stood in need of having “line upon line, and precept upon precept,” in order to their being instructed and grounded in the principles of Christianity; so I preached “publicly, and taught from house to house,” almost every day for *whole weeks* together, when I was with them. And my *public* discourses did not then make up the one half of my work, while there was so many constantly coming to me with that important inquiry, “What must we do to be saved?” and opening to me the various exercises of their minds. And yet I can say, (to the praise of rich grace,) that the apparent success with which my labours were crowned, unspeakably more than compensated for the labour itself, and was likewise a great means of supporting and carrying me through the business and fatigues, which, it seems, my nature would have sunk under, without such an encouraging prospect. But although this success has afforded matter of support, comfort, and thankfulness; yet in this season I have found great need of assistance in my work, and have been much oppressed for want of *one* to bear a *part* of my *labours* and *hardships*. “May the Lord of the harvest send forth *other labourers* into this part of his harvest, that those who sit in darkness may see great light, and that the whole earth may be filled with the knowledge of himself! Amen.”

DAVID BRAINERD.

Nov. 20, 1745.

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## PART II.

FROM A. D. 1745, NOV. 24th, TO JUNE 19th 1746, AT CROSSWEEKSUNG AND FORKS OF DELAWARE

Crossweeksung, in New Jersey, November, 1745.

*Lord's day, Nov. 24.* Preached both parts of the day from the story of Zaccheus, [Luke xix. 1-9](#). In the latter exercise, when I opened and insisted upon the *salvation* that *comes to the sinner*, upon his becoming a *son of Abraham*, or a true believer, the word seemed to be attended with divine power to the hearts of the hearers. Numbers were much affected with divine truths; former convictions were revived; one or two persons newly awakened; and a most affectionate engagement in divine service appeared among them universally. The impressions they were under appeared to be the genuine effect of God's word brought home to their hearts, by the power and influence of the divine Spirit.

*Nov. 26.* After having spent some time in private conferences with my people, I discoursed publicly among them from [John v. 1-9](#). I was favoured with some *special* freedom and fervency in my discourse, and a powerful energy accompanied divine truths. Many wept and sobbed affectionately, and scarce any appeared unconcerned in the whole assembly. The influence that seized the audience appeared gentle, and yet pungent and efficacious. It produced no boisterous commotion of the passions, but seemed deeply to affect the heart; and excite in the persons under convictions of their lost state, heavy groans and tears: and in others who had obtained comfort, a sweet and humble melting. It seemed like the gentle but steady showers that effectually water the earth, without violently beating upon the surface. The persons lately awakened were, some of them, deeply distressed for their souls, and appeared earnestly solicitous to obtain an interest in Christ: and some of them, after public worship was over, in anguish of spirit, said, "They knew not what to do, nor how to get their wicked hearts changed," &c.

*Nov. 28.* Discoursed to the Indians publicly, after having used some private endeavours to instruct and excite some in the duties of Christianity. Opened and made remarks upon the sacred story of our Lord's *transfiguration*, [Luke ix. 28-36](#). Had a principal view, in my insisting upon this passage of Scripture, to the edification and consolation of God's people. And observed some, that I have reason to think are truly such, exceedingly affected with an account of the glory of Christ in his transfiguration; and filled with longing desires of being with him, that they might with *open face* behold his glory.

After public service was over, I asked one of them, who wept and sobbed most affectionately, "What she now wanted?" She replied, "Oh, to be with Christ! she did not know how to stay," &c. This was a blessed refreshing season to the religious people in general. The Lord Jesus Christ seemed to manifest his divine glory to them, as when *transfigured* before

his disciples. And they, with the disciples, were ready universally to say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

The influence of God's word was not *confined* to those who had given evidences of being truly gracious, though at this time I calculated my discourse for, and directed it *chiefly* to, such. But it appeared to be a season of divine power in the whole assembly; so that most were, in some measure, affected. And one aged man in particular, lately awakened, was now brought under a deep and pressing concern for his soul, and was earnestly inquisitive "how he might find Jesus Christ." God seems still to vouch-safe his divine presence and the influence of his blessed Spirit to accompany his word, at least in some measure, in all our meetings for divine worship.

Nov. 30. Preached near night, after having spent some hours in private conference with some of my people about their souls' concerns. Explained and insisted upon the story of the rich man and Lazarus, [Luke xvi. 19-26](#). The word made powerful impressions upon many in the assembly, especially while I discoursed of the blessedness of "Lazarus in Abraham's bosom." *This*, I could perceive, affected them much more than what I spoke of the *rich man's* misery and torments. And thus it has been usually with them. They have almost always appeared much more affected with the *comfortable* than the *dreadful* truths of God's word. And that which has distressed many of them under convictions is, that they found they wanted, and could not obtain, the happiness of the godly; at least they have often appeared to be more affected with *this*, than with the *terrors* of hell. But whatever be the *means* of their awakening, it is plain, numbers are made *deeply sensible* of their sin and misery, the wickedness and stubbornness of their own hearts, their *utter inability* to help themselves, or to come to Christ for help, without divine assistance; and so are brought to see their *perishing* need of Christ to do all for them, and to lie at the foot of *sovereign mercy*.

Lord's day, Dec. 1. Discoursed to my people in the forenoon from [Luke xvi. 27-31](#). There appeared an unfeigned affection in divers persons, and some seemed deeply impressed with divine truths. In the afternoon preached to a number of white people; at which time the Indians attended with diligence, and many of them were able to understand a considerable part of the discourse.

At night discoursed to my people again, and gave them some particular cautions and directions relating to their conduct in divers respects. And pressed them to *watchfulness* in all their deportment, seeing they were encompassed with those that "waited for their halting," and who *stood ready* to draw them into *temptations* of every kind, and then to expose religion for their *missteps*.

Lord's day, Dec. 8. Discoursed on the story of the blind man, [John ix](#). There appeared no remarkable effect of the word upon the assembly at this time. The persons who have lately been much concerned for their souls, seemed now not so affected nor solicitous to

obtain an interest in Christ as has been usual: although they attended divine service with seriousness and diligence.

Such have been the *doings of the Lord* here, in awakening sinners, and affecting the hearts of those who are brought to solid comfort, with a fresh sense of divine things from time to time, that it is now strange to see the assembly sit with *dry* eyes, and without sobs and groans.

Dec. 12. Preached from the parable of the ten virgins, [Matt. xxv](#). The divine power seemed in some measure to attend this discourse, in which I was favoured with *uncommon* freedom and plainness of address, and enabled to open divine truths, and explain them to the capacities of my people, in a manner *beyond myself*. There appeared in many persons an affectionate concern for their souls; although the concern in general seemed not so deep and pressing as it had formerly done. Yet it was refreshing to see many melted into tears and unaffected sobs; some with a *sense* of divine love, and some for *want* of it.

Lord's day, Dec. 15. Preached to the Indians from [Luke xiii. 24-28](#). Divine truths fell with weight and power upon the audience, and seemed to reach the hearts of many. Near night discoursed to them again from [Matt. xxv. 31-46](#). At which season also the word appeared to be accompanied with a divine influence, and made powerful impressions upon the assembly in general, as well as upon divers persons in a very special and particular manner. This was an amazing season of grace! "The word of the Lord," this day, "was quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword," and pierced to the hearts of many. The assembly was greatly affected, and *deeply* wrought upon; yet without so much *apparent* commotion of the passions, as was usual in the beginning of this work of grace. The impressions made by the word of God upon the audience appeared solid, rational, and deep, worthy of the solemn truths by means of which they were produced, and far from being the effects of any *sudden fright*, or *groundless* perturbation of mind.

O how did the hearts of the hearers seem to bow under the weight of divine truths! And how evident did it now appear that they *received* and *felt* them, "not as the word of man, but as the word of God!" None can frame a just idea of the appearance of our assembly at this time, but those who have seen a congregation solemnly *awed*, and *deeply impressed*, by the *special* power and influence of divine truths delivered to them in the name of God.

Dec. 16. Discoursed to my people in the evening from [Luke xi. 1-13](#). After having insisted some time upon the 9th verse, wherein there is a command and encouragement to ask for the divine favours, I called upon them to ask for a *new heart* with utmost importunity, as the man mentioned in the parable I was discoursing upon, pleaded for *loaves of bread* at midnight.

There was much affection and concern in the assembly; and especially one woman appeared in great distress for her soul. She was brought to such an *agony* in seeking after Christ, that the sweat ran off her face for a considerable time together, although the evening was

very cold; and her bitter cries were the most affecting indication of the *inward* anguish of her heart.

Dec. 21. My people having now attained to a considerable degree of knowledge in the principles of Christianity, I thought it proper to set up a *catechetical lecture* among them; and this evening attempted something in *that form*; proposing questions to them agreeable to the Reverend Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*, receiving their answers, and then explaining and insisting as appeared necessary and proper upon each question. After which I endeavoured to make some practical improvement of the whole. This was the method I entered upon. They were able readily and *rationally* to answer many important questions I proposed to them: so that, upon trial, I found their *doctrinal* knowledge to exceed my own expectations. In the improvement of my discourse, when I came to infer and open the blessedness of those who have so great and glorious a God, as had before been spoken of, "for their everlasting friend and portion," sundry were much affected; and especially when I exhorted, and endeavoured to persuade them "to be reconciled to God," through his dear Son, and *thus* to secure an interest in his everlasting favour. So that they appeared to be not only *enlightened and instructed*, but *affected* and engaged in their souls' concern by this method of discoursing.

Lord's day, Dec. 22. Discoursed upon the story of the young man in the gospel, [Matt. ix. 16-22](#). God made it a seasonable word, I am persuaded, to some souls. There were sundry persons of the Indians newly come here, who had frequently lived among Quakers; and being more civilized and conformed to English manners than the generality of the Indians, they had imbibed some of the Quakers' errors, especially this fundamental one, *viz.* That if men will but live soberly and honestly, according to the dictates of their own consciences, (or the *light within*,) there is then no danger or doubt of their salvation, &c. These persons I found much worse to deal with than those who are wholly under pagan darkness, who make no *pretences* to knowledge in Christianity at all, nor have any *self-righteous* foundation to stand upon. However, they all, except one, appeared now convinced, that this *sober, honest life*, of itself, was not sufficient to salvation; since Christ himself had declared it so in the case of the young man. And seemed in some measure concerned to obtain that change of heart, the necessity of which I had been labouring to show them.

This was likewise a season of *comfort* to some souls, and in particular to one, (the same mentioned in my Journal of the 16th instant,) who never before obtained any settled comfort, though I have abundant reason to think she had passed a saving change some days before. She now appeared in a heavenly frame of mind, composed and delighted with the divine will. When I came to discourse particularly with her, and to inquire of her, how she got relief and deliverance from the spiritual distresses she had lately been under, she answered in broken English, <sup>419</sup> "Me try, me try, save myself, last my strength be all gone, (meaning her

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419 In proper English thus, "I tried and tried to save myself, till at last my strength was all gone, and I could not stir any further. Then at last I was forced to let Jesus Christ alone send me to hell if he pleased."

ability to save herself,) could not me stir bit further. Den last, me forced let Jesus Christ alone, send me hell if he please.” I said, But you was not willing to go to hell, was you? She replied, <sup>420</sup> “Could not me help it. My heart he would wicked for all. Could not me make him good;” (meaning she saw it was right she should go to hell because her heart was wicked, and would be so after all she could do to mend it). I asked her, how she got out of this case? She answered still in the same broken language, <sup>421</sup> “By by my heart be grad desperately.” I asked her why her heart was glad? She replied, “Grad my heart Jesus Christ do what he please with me. Den me tink, grad my heart Jesus Christ send me hell. Did not me care where he put me, me lobe him for all,” &c.

And she could not readily be convinced but that she was willing to go to hell, if Christ was pleased to send her there. Though the truth evidently was, her will was so swallowed up in the divine will, that she could not frame any hell in her imagination that would be dreadful or undesirable, provided it was but the will of God to send her to it. Toward night discoursed to them again in the *catechetical* method I entered upon the evening before. And when I came to improve the truths I had explained to them, and to answer that question, “But how shall I know whether God has chosen me to everlasting life,” by pressing them to come and give up their hearts to Christ, and thereby “to make their election sure;” they then appeared much affected: and the persons under concern were afresh engaged in seeking after an interest in him; while some others who had obtained comfort before, were refreshed to find that love to God in themselves, which was an evidence of his *electing* love to them.

*Dec. 25.* The Indians having been used upon Christmas days to drink and revel among some of the *white* people in these parts, I thought it proper this day to call them together, and discourse to them upon divine things: which I accordingly did from the parable of the barren fig-tree, [Luke xiii. 6-9](#). A divine influence, I am persuaded, accompanied the word at this season. The power of God appeared in the assembly, not by producing any remarkable *cries*, but by shocking and rousing at heart, as it seemed, several stupid creatures that were scarce ever moved with any concern before. The power attending divine truths seemed to have the influence of the *earthquake* rather than the *whirlwind* upon them. Their *passions* were not so much alarmed as has been common here in times past, but their *judgments* appeared to be powerfully convinced by the *masterly* and *conquering* influence of divine truths. The impressions made upon the assembly in general, seemed not *superficial*, but *deep* and heart-affecting. O how ready did they now appear universally to embrace and comply with

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420 In plain English thus, “I could not help it. My heart would be wicked for all what I could do. I could not make it good.”

421 “By and by my heart was exceeding glad. My heart was glad that Jesus Christ would do with me what he pleased. Then I thought my heart would be glad although Christ should send me to hell. I did not care where he put me, I should love him for all; i.e. do what he would with me.”



every thing they heard and were convinced was duty! God was in the midst of us of a truth, bowing and melting stubborn hearts! How many tears and sobs were then to be seen and heard among us! What liveliness and strict attention, what eagerness and intensesness of mind, appeared in the whole assembly in the time of divine service! They seemed to watch and wait for the dropping of God's word, as the thirsty earth for the "former and latter rain."

Afterwards I discoursed to them on the duty of husbands and wives, from [Eph. v. 22, 23.](#) and have reason to think this was a word in season. Spent some time further in the evening, in inculcating the truths I had insisted upon in my former discourse respecting the barren fig-tree, and observed a powerful influence still accompany what was spoken.

Dec. 26. This evening I was visited by a person under great spiritual exercise; the most remarkable instance of this kind I ever saw. She was a woman of (I believe) more than *fourscore* years old, and appeared to be much broken and very *childish* through age; so that it seemed impossible for man to instil into her mind any *notions* of divine things, not so much as to give her any *doctrinal* instruction, because she seemed incapable of being taught. She was led by the hand into my house, and appeared in extreme anguish. I asked her what ailed her? She answered, "That her heart was distressed, and she feared she should never find Christ." I asked her when she began to be concerned? with divers other questions relating to her distress. To all which she answered, for substance, to this effect, *viz.* That she had heard me preach many times, but never knew any thing about it, never "felt it in her heart" till the last sabbath; and then it came (she said) "all one as if a needle had been thrust into her heart;" since which time, she had no rest day nor night. She added, that on the evening before Christmas, a number of Indians being together at the house where she was, and discoursing about *Christ*, their talk *pricked her heart*, so that she could not sit up, but fell down on her bed; at which time *she went away*, (as she expressed it,) and felt as if she dreamed, and yet is confident she did not dream. When she was thus *gone*, she saw two paths; one appeared very broad and crooked: and *that* turned to the left hand. The other appeared straight, and very narrow; and *that* went up the hill to the right hand. She travelled, she said, for some time up the narrow right-hand path, till at length something seemed to obstruct her journey. She sometimes called it darkness, and then described it otherwise, and seemed to compare it to a block or bar. She then remembered what she had heard me say about "striving to enter in at the strait gate," (although she took little notice of it, at the time when she heard me discourse upon that subject,) and thought she would climb over this bar. But just as she was thinking of this, she *came back again*, as she termed it, meaning that she came to herself; whereupon her soul was extremely distressed, apprehending she had now turned back and forsaken Christ, and that there was therefore no hope of mercy for her.

As I was sensible that *trances* and *imaginary* views of things, are of *dangerous* tendency in religion, when sought after, and depended upon; so I could not but be much concerned about this exercise, especially at first; apprehending this might be a design of Satan to bring

a blemish upon the work of God here, by introducing *visionary* scenes, imaginary terrors, and all manner of mental disorders and *delusions*, in the room of genuine convictions of sin, and the enlightening influences of the blessed Spirit; mind I was almost resolved to declare that I looked upon this to be one of *Satan's devices*, and to caution my people against it, and the like exercises, *as such*. However, I determined first to inquire into her knowledge, to see whether she had any just views of things, that might be the occasion of her present distressing concern, or whether it was a *mere fright* arising only from *imaginary* terrors. I asked her divers questions respecting man's primitive, and more especially his present, state, and respecting her own heart; which she answered rationally, and to my surprise. And I thought it was next to impossible, if not altogether so, that a pagan who was become a *child* through age, should in that state gain so much knowledge by any mere human instruction, without being remarkably enlightened by a divine influence.

I then proposed to her the provision made in the gospel for the salvation of sinners, and the ability and willingness of Christ "to save to the uttermost all (old as well as young) that come to him." To which she seemed to give a hearty assent. But instantly replied, "Ay, but I cannot come; my wicked heart will not come to Christ; I do not know how to come," &c. And this she spoke in anguish of spirit, striking on her breast with tears in her eyes, and with such *earnestness* in her looks as was indeed piteous and affecting.

She seems to be really convinced of her sin and misery, and her need of a change of heart: and her concern is abiding and constant. So that nothing appears but that this exercise may have a saving issue. And indeed it seems hopeful, seeing she is so solicitous to obtain an interest in Christ, that her heart (as she expresses it) prays day and night.

How far God may make use of the *imagination* in awakening some persons under *these* and such like circumstances, I cannot pretend to determine. Or whether this exercise be from a divine influence, I shall leave others to judge. But this I must say, that its effects hitherto bespeak it to be *such*: nor can it, as I see, be accounted for in a rational way, but from the influence of some *spirit*, either good or evil. For the woman, I am sure, never heard divine things treated of in the *manner* she now viewed them in; and it would seem strange she should get such a *rational* notion of them from the *mere* working of her own fancy, without some superior, or at least foreign, aid. And yet I must say, I have looked upon it as one of the glories of this work of grace among the Indians, and a *special* evidence of its being from a divine influence, that there has, till now, been no appearance of such things, no *visionary* notions, trances, and imaginations, intermixed with those rational convictions of sin, and solid consolations, that numbers have been made the subjects of. And might I have had my desire, there had been no appearance of any thing of this nature at all.

Dec. 28. Discoursed to my people in the *catechetical* method I lately entered upon. And in the improvement of my discourse, wherein I was comparing man's *present* with his *primitive* state; and showing what he had fallen from, and the miseries he is now involved

in and exposed to in his natural estate; and pressing sinners to take a view of their deplorable circumstances without Christ; as also to strive that they might obtain an interest in him; the Lord, I trust, granted a remarkable influence of his blessed Spirit to accompany what was spoken, and a great concern appeared in the assembly: many were melted into tears and sobs, and the impressions made upon them seemed *deep* and heart-affecting. And in particular, there were two or three persons who appeared to be brought to the last exercises of a preparatory work, and reduced almost to extremity; being in a great measure convinced of the impossibility of their helping themselves, or of mending their own hearts; and seemed to be upon the *point* of giving up all hope *in themselves*, and of venturing upon Christ as naked, helpless, and *undone*. And yet were in distress and anguish because they saw no safety in so doing, unless they could *do something* towards saving themselves. One of these persons was the very aged woman above mentioned, who now appeared “weary and heavy laden” with a sense of her sin and misery, and her perishing need of an interest in Christ.

*Lord’s day, Dec. 29.* Preached from [John iii. 1-5](#). A number of white people were present, as is usual upon the sabbath. The discourse was accompanied with power, and seemed to have a *silent*, but *deep* and *piercing* influence upon the audience. Many wept and sobbed affectionately. And there were some tears among the white people, as well as the Indians. Some could not refrain from crying out, though there were not many so exercised. But the impressions made upon their hearts, appeared chiefly by the extraordinary earnestness of their attention, and their heavy sighs and tears.

After public worship was over, I went to my house, proposing to preach again after a short season of intermission. But they soon came in one after another, with tears in their eyes, to know “what they should do to be saved.” And the divine Spirit in such a manner set home upon their hearts what I spoke to them, that the house was soon filled with cries and groans. They all flocked together upon this occasion, and those whom I had reason to think in a Christless state, were almost universally seized with concern for their souls.

It was an amazing season of *power* among them, and seemed as if God had “bowed the heavens, and come down.” So astonishingly prevalent was the operation upon old as well as young, that it seemed as if none would be left in a secure and natural state, but that God was now about to convert *all the world*. And I was ready to think *then*, that I should never again despair of the conversion of any man or woman living, be they *who* or *what* they would.

It is impossible to give a just and lively description of the appearance of things at this season, at least *such* as to convey a bright and adequate idea of the effects of this influence. A number might now be seen rejoicing that God had not taken away the powerful influence of his blessed Spirit from this place. Refreshed to see so many “striving to enter in at the strait gate;” and animated with such concern for them, that they wanted “to push them forward,” as some of them expressed it. At the same time numbers both of men and women,

old and young, might be seen in tears, and some in anguish of spirit, appearing in their very countenances, like condemned malefactors bound towards the place of execution, with a heavy solicitude sitting in their faces: so that there seemed here (as I thought) a lively emblem of the solemn day of accounts; a mixture of heaven and hell, of joy and anguish inexpressible.

The concern and religious affection was *such*, that I could not pretend to have any *formal* religious exercise among them; but spent the time in discoursing to one and another, as I thought most proper, and seasonable for each, and sometimes addressed them all together, and finally concluded with prayer. Such were their circumstances at this season, that I could scarce have *half an hour's* rest from speaking from about half an hour before twelve o'clock, (at which time I began public worship,) till past *seven* at night. There appeared to be four or five persons newly awakened this day and the evening before, some of whom but very lately came among us.

*Dec. 30.* Was visited by four or five *young* persons under concern for their souls, most of whom were very lately awakened. They wept much while I discoursed to them, and endeavoured to press upon them the necessity *flying* to Christ, without delay, for salvation.

*Dec. 31.* Spent some hours this day in visiting my people from house to house, and conversing with them about their spiritual concerns; endeavouring to press upon Christless souls the necessity of a renovation of heart: and scarce left a house, without leaving some or other of its inhabitants in tears, appearing solicitously engaged to obtain an interest in Christ.

The Indians are now gathered together from all quarters to this place, and have built them little cottages, so that more than *twenty* families live within a quarter of a mile of me. A very convenient situations in regard both of public and private instruction..

*Jan. 1, 1746.* Spent some considerable time in visiting my people again. Found scarce one but what was under some serious impressions respecting their spiritual concerns.

*Jan. 2.* Visited some persons newly come among us, who had scarce ever heard any thing of Christianity before, except the empty name. Endeavoured to instruct them, *particularly* by the first principles of religion, in the most easy and familiar manner I could. There are strangers from remote parts almost continually dropping in among us, so that I have occasion repeatedly to open and inculcate the *first principles* of Christianity.

*Jan. 4.* Prosecuted my *catechetical* method of instructing. Found my people able to answer questions with propriety, beyond what could have been expected from persons so lately brought out of heathenish darkness. In the improvement of my discourse, there appeared some concern and affection in the assembly: and especially those of whom I entertained hopes as being truly gracious, at least divers of them, were much affected and refreshed.

*Lord's day, Jan. 5.* Discoursed from [Matt. xii. 10-13](#). There appeared not so much liveliness and affection in divine service as usual. The same truths that have often produced many tears and sobs in the assembly, seemed now to have no *special* influence upon any in it.

Near night I proposed to have proceeded in my usual method of catechising. But while we were engaged in the first prayer, the power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly in such a remarkable manner, and so many appeared under pressing concern for their souls, that I thought it much more expedient to insist upon the plentiful provision made by divine grace for the redemption of perishing sinners, and to press them to a *speedy* acceptance of the *great salvation*, than to ask them questions about *doctrinal* points. What was most *practicable*, seemed most *seasonable* to be insisted upon, while numbers appeared so extraordinarily solicitous to obtain an interest in the great Redeemer. Baptized two persons this day; one adult (the woman particularly mentioned in my Journal of Dec. 22) and one child.

This woman has discovered a very sweet and heavenly frame of mind, from time to time, since her first reception of comfort. One morning in particular she came to see me, discovering an unusual joy and satisfaction in her countenance; and when I inquired into the reason of it, she replied, "That God had made her feel that it was *right* for him to do what he pleased with all things; and that it would be right if he should cast her husband and son both into hell; and she saw it was so right for God to do what he pleased with them, that she could not but rejoice if God should send them into hell; "though it was apparent she loved them dearly. She moreover inquired, whether I was not sent to preach to the Indians, by some good people a great way off. I replied, Yes, by the good people in Scotland. She answered, that her heart loved those good people so, the evening before, "that she could scarce help praying for them all night, her heart would go to God for them," &c. So that "the blessing of those ready to perish" is like to come upon those pious persons who have communicated of their substance to the propagation of the gospel.

*Jan. 11.* Discoursed in a *catechetical* method, as usual of late. And having opened our *first parent's* primitive apostasy from God, and our fall *in him*: I proceeded to improve my discourse, by showing the *necessity* we stood in of an Almighty Redeemer, and the *absolute* need every sinner has of an interest in his merits and mediation. There was some tenderness and affectionate concern apparent in the assembly.

*Lord's day, Jan. 12.* Preached from *Isa. lv. 6*. The word of God seemed to fall upon the audience with a divine weight and influence, and evidently appeared to be "not the word of man." The blessed Spirit, I am persuaded, accompanied what was spoken to the hearts of many. So that there was a powerful revival of conviction in numbers who were under spiritual exercise before.

Towards night catechised in my usual method. Near the close of my discourse, there appeared a great concern, and much affection in the audience. Which increased while I continued to invite them to come to an all-sufficient Redeemer for eternal salvation. The Spirit of God seems, from time to time, to be striving with numbers of souls here. They are

so frequently and repeatedly roused, that they seem unable at present to lull themselves asleep.

*Jan.* 13. Was visited by divers persons under deep concern for their souls; one of whom was newly awakened. It is a most agreeable work to treat with souls who are solicitously inquiring “what they shall do to be saved.” And as we are never to “be weary in well-doing,” so the obligation seems to be peculiarly strong when the work is so very desirable. And yet I must say, my health is so much impaired, and my spirits so wasted with my labours, and solitary manner of hiving, (there being no human creature in the house with me,) that their repeated and almost incessant application to me for help and direction, are sometimes exceeding burdensome, and so exhaust my spirits, that I become fit for nothing at all, entirely unable to prosecute any business sometimes for days together. And what contributes much toward this difficulty is, that I am obliged to spend *much* time in communicating a *little* matter to them; there being oftentimes many things necessary to be premised, before I can speak directly to what I principally aim at; which things would readily be taken for granted, where there was a competency of doctrinal knowledge.

*Jan.* 14. Spent some time in private conference with my people, and found some disposed to take comfort, as I thought, upon slight grounds. They are now generally awakened, and it is become so disgraceful, as well as terrifying to the conscience, to be destitute of religion, that they are in imminent danger of taking up with any *appearances* of grace, rather than to live under the fear and disgrace of an unregenerate state.

*Jan.* 18. Prosecuted my catechetical method of discoursing. There appeared a great solemnity, and some considerable affection in the assembly. This method of instructing I find very profitable. When I first entered upon it, I was exercised with fears, lest my discourses would unavoidably be so *doctrinal*, that they would tend only to enlighten the *head*, but not to *affect* the *heart*. But the *event* proves quite otherwise; for these exercises have hitherto been remarkably blessed in the *latter* as well as the *former* respects.

*Lord's day, Jan.* 19. Discoursed to my people from *Isa. lv. 7*. Towards night catechised in my ordinary method. And this appeared to be a powerful season of grace among us. Numbers were much affected. Convictions were powerfully revived; and divers of the Christians refreshed and strengthened; and one weary, *heavy-laden* soul, I have abundant reason to hope, brought to true rest and solid comfort in Christ, who afterwards gave me such an account of God's dealing with his soul, as was abundantly *satisfying* as well as *refreshing* to me.

He told me he had often heard me say, that persons must *see* and *feel* themselves utterly helpless and *undone*: that they must be emptied of a dependence upon themselves, and of all hope of saving themselves by their *own doings*, in order to their coming to Christ for salvation. And he had long been striving after this view of things supposing this would be an excellent frame of mind, to be thus emptied of a dependence upon his own goodness;

that God would have respect to *this* frame, would *then* be well pleased with him, and bestow eternal life upon him. But when he came to feel himself in this helpless *undone* condition, he found it quite contrary to all his thoughts and expectations; so that it was not the *same* frame, nor indeed any thing *like* the frame, he had been seeking after. Instead of its being a *good* frame of mind, he now found nothing but *badness* in himself, and saw it was for ever impossible for him to make himself any better. He wondered, he said, that he had ever hoped to mend his own heart. He was amazed he had never *before* seen that it was utterly impossible for him, by all his contrivances and endeavours, to do any thing *that way*, since the matter *now* appeared to him in so clear a light. Instead of imagining now, that God would be pleased with him for the sake of this frame of mind, and this view of his *undone* estate, he saw clearly, and felt, it would be just with God to send him to eternal misery; and that there was *no goodness* in what he then felt; for he could not help seeing that he was naked, sinful, and miserable, and there was nothing in such a sight to deserve God's love or pity.

He saw these things in a manner so clear and convincing, that it seemed to him, he said, he could convince every body of their utter *inability* ever to help themselves, and their *unworthiness* of any help from God. In *this* frame of mind he came to public worship this evening, and while I was inviting sinners to come to Christ naked and empty, without *any* goodness of *their own* to recommend them to his acceptance; then he thought with himself, that he had often tried to come and give up his heart to Christ, and he used to hope, that some time or other he should be *able* to do so. But now he was convinced *he could not*, and it seemed utterly vain for him ever to try *any more*: and he could not, he said, find a heart to make any further attempt, because he saw it would signify *nothing at all*: nor did he now hope for a better opportunity, or more *ability* hereafter, as he had formerly done, because he saw, and was fully convinced, his own strength would for ever fail.

While he was musing in this manner, he saw, he said, with his heart (which is a common phrase among them) something that was unspeakably good and lovely, and what he had never seen before; and "this stole away his heart whether he would or no." He did not, he said, know what it was he saw. He did not say, "this is Jesus Christ;" but it was such glory and beauty as he never saw before. He did not now give away his heart *so* as he had formerly intended and attempted to do, but it *went away of itself* after that glory he then discovered. He used to try to make a bargain with Christ, to give up his heart to him, that he might have eternal life *for it*. But now he thought nothing about himself, or what would become of him hereafter; but was pleased, and his mind wholly taken up, with the unspeakable excellency of what he then beheld. After some time he was wonderfully pleased with the way of salvation by Christ: so that it seemed unspeakably better to be saved altogether by the *mere free grace* of God in Christ, than to have *any hand* in saving himself. And the consequence of this exercise is, that he appears to retain a sense and relish of divine things, and to maintain a life of seriousness and true religion.

Jan. 28. The Indians in these parts have, in times past, run themselves in debt by their excessive drinking; and some have taken the advantage of them, and put them to trouble and charge by arresting sundry of them; whereby it was supposed their hunting lands, in great part, were much endangered, and might speedily be taken from them. Being sensible that they could not subsist together in these parts, in order to their being a Christian congregation, if these lands should be taken, which was thought very likely, I thought it my duty to use my utmost endeavours to prevent so unhappy an event. And having acquainted the gentlemen concerned with this *mission* of the affair, according to the best information I could get of it, they thought it proper to expend the money they had been, and still were, collecting for the *religious* interest of the Indians, (at least a part of it,) for discharging their debts, and securing these lands, that there might be no entanglement lying upon them to hinder the settlement and hopeful enlargement of a *Christian congregation* of Indians in these parts. And having received orders from them, I answered, in behalf of the Indians, *eighty-two pounds five shillings*, New Jersey currency, at *eight shillings* per ounce; and so prevented the danger of difficulty in this respect.

As God has wrought a wonderful *work of grace* among these Indians, and now inclines others from remote places to fall in among them almost continually; and as he has opened a door for the prevention of the difficulty now mentioned, which seemed greatly to threaten their religious interests, as well as worldly comfort; it is *hopeful* that he designs to establish a *church* for himself among them, and hand down true religion to their *posterity*.

Jan. 30. Preached to the Indians from [John iii. 16, 17](#). There was a solemn attention and some affection visible in the audience; especially divers persons who had long been concerned for their souls, seemed afresh excited and engaged in seeking after an interest in Christ. And one, with much concern, afterwards told me, "his heart was so pricked with my preaching, he knew not where to turn, nor what to do."

Jan. 31. This day the person I had made choice of and engaged for a *schoolmaster* among the Indians, arrived among us, and was heartily welcomed by my people universally. Whereupon I distributed several dozen of *primers* among the children and young people.

Feb. 1, 1746. My schoolmaster entered upon his business among the Indians. He has generally about thirty children and young persons in his school in the day-time, and about *fifteen* married people in his evening-school. The number of the latter sort of persons being less than it would be, if they could be more constant at home, and spare time from their necessary employments for an attendance upon these instructions.

In the evening catechised in my usual method. Towards the close of my discourse a surprising power seemed to attend the word, especially to some persons. One man, considerably in years, who had been a remarkable drunkard, a conjurer, and murderer, that was awakened some months before, was now brought to great extremity under his spiritual distress, so that he trembled for hours together, and apprehended himself just dropping



into hell, without any power to rescue or relieve himself. Divers others appeared under great concern as well as he, and solicitous to obtain a saving change.

*Lord's day, Feb. 2.* Preached from [John v. 24, 25](#). There appeared (as usual) some concern and affection in the assembly. Toward night proceeded in my usual method of catechising. Observed my people more ready in answering the questions proposed to them than ever before. It is apparent they advanced daily in *doctrinal* knowledge. But what is still more desirable, the Spirit of God is yet operating among them, whereby *experimental*, as well as *speculative*, knowledge is propagated in their minds.

*Feb. 5.* Discoursed to a considerable number of the Indians in the evening; at which time divers of them appeared much affected and melted with divine things.

*Feb. 8.* Spent a considerable part of the day in visiting my people from house to house, and conversing with them about their souls' concerns. Divers persons wept while I discoursed to them, and appeared concerned for nothing so much as for an interest in the great Redeemer. In the evening catechised as usual. Divine truths made some impression upon the audience, and were attended with an affectionate engagement of soul in some.

*Lord's day, Feb. 9.* Discoursed to my people from the story of the blind man, [Matt. x. 46-52](#). The word of God seemed weighty and powerful upon the assembly at this time, and made considerable impressions upon many; divers in particular who have generally been remarkably stupid and careless under the means of grace, were now awakened, and wept affectionately. And the most earnest attention, as well as tenderness and affection, appeared in the audience universally.

Baptized *three* persons, two adults and one child. The adults, I have reason to hope, were both truly pious. There was a considerable melting in the assembly, while I was discoursing particularly to the persons, and administering the ordinance. God has been pleased to own and bless the administration of *this*, as well as of his other *ordinances*, among the Indians. There are some here that have been powerfully awakened at seeing others baptized. And some that have obtained relief and comfort, just in the season when this ordinance has been administered.

Toward night catechised. God made this a powerful season to some. There were many affected. Former convictions appeared to be powerfully revived. There was likewise one, who had been a vile drunkard, remarkably awakened. He appeared to be in great anguish of soul, wept and trembled, and continued so to do till near midnight. There was also a poor *heavy laden* soul, who had been long under spiritual distress, as constant and pressing as ever I saw, that was now brought to a comfortable *calm*, and seemed to be bowed and reconciled to divine *sovereignty*; and told me, "She now saw and felt it was right God should do with her as he pleased. And her heart felt pleased and satisfied it should be so." Although of late she had often found her heart rise and quarrel with God because he would, *if he pleased*, send her to hell after all she had done or could do to save herself, &c. And added,

that the *heavy burden* she had lain under, was now removed: that she had tried to recover her concern and distress again, (fearing that the Spirit of God was departing from her, and would leave her wholly careless,) but that she could not recover it: that she felt she never could do any thing to save herself, but must perish for ever if Christ did not *do all* for her: that she did not deserve he should help her; and that it would be *right* if he should leave her to perish. But Christ could save her, though she could *do nothing* to save herself, &c. And here she seemed to rest.

Forks Of Delaware, in *Pennsylvania*, Feb. 1746.

*Lord's day*, Feb. 16. Knowing that divers of the Indians in those parts were obstinately set against Christianity, and that some of them had refused to hear me preach in times past, I thought it might be proper and beneficial to the Christian interest here, to have a number of my religious people from *Crossweeksung* with me, in order to converse with them about religious matters; hoping it might be a means to convince them of the truth and importance of Christianity, to see and hear some of their own nation discoursing of divine things, and manifesting earnest desires that others might be brought out of heathenish darkness, as themselves were.

And having taken *half a dozen* of the most serious and knowing persons for this purpose, I this day met with them and the Indians of this place, (sundry of whom probably could not have been prevailed upon to attend the meeting, had it not been for these religious Indians that accompanied me here,) and preached to them. Some of them who had, in times past, been extremely averse to Christianity, now behaved soberly, and some others laughed and mocked. However the word of God fell with such weight and power, that sundry seemed to be stunned, and expressed a willingness to "hear me again of these matters."

Afterwards prayed with, and made an address to the white people present, and could not but observe some visible effects of the word, such as tears and sobs, among them. After public worship, spent some time and took pains to convince those that mocked, of the truth and importance of what I had been insisting upon; and so endeavoured to awaken their attention to divine truths. And had reason to think, from what I observed then and afterwards, that my endeavours took considerable effect upon one of the worst of them.

Those few Indians then present, who used to be my hearers in these parts, (some having removed from hence to *Crossweeksung*,) seemed somewhat kindly disposed toward, and glad to see me again. They had been so much attacked by some of the opposing pagans, that they were almost ashamed or afraid to manifest their friendship.

*Feb. 17.* After having spent much time in discoursing to the Indians in their respective houses, I got them together, and repeated and inculcated what I had before taught them. Afterwards discoursed to them from [Acts viii. 5-8](#). A divine influence seemed to attend the word. Sundry of the Indians here appeared to be somewhat awakened, and manifested a concern of mind, by their earnest attention, tears and sobs. My people from *Crossweeksung*

continued with them day and night, repeating and inculcating the truths I had taught them: and sometimes prayed and sung psalms among them; discoursing with each other, in their hearing, of the great things God had done for *them*, and for the Indians from whence they came: which seemed (as my people told me) to take more effect upon them, than when they directed their discourses immediately to them.

*Feb.* 18. Preached to an assembly of Irish people near fifteen miles distant from the Indians.

*Feb.* 19. Preached to the Indians again, after having spent considerable time in conversing with them more privately. There appeared a great solemnity, and some concern and affection, among the Indians belonging to these parts, as well as a sweet melting among those who came with me. Divers of the Indians here seemed to have their prejudices and aversion to Christianity removed, and appeared well disposed and inclined to hear the word of God.

*Feb.* 20. Preached to a small assembly of High-Dutch people, who had seldom heard the gospel preached, and were (some of them at least) very ignorant; but divers of them have lately been put upon inquiry after the way of salvation, with some thoughtfulness. They gave wonderful attention, and some of them were much affected under the word, and afterwards said, (as I was informed,) that they never had been so much enlightened about the way of salvation in their whole lives before. They requested me to tarry with them, or come again and preach to them. And it grieved me that I could not comply with their request, for I could not but be affected with their circumstances; they being as “sheep not having a shepherd,” and some of them appearing under some degree of soul-trouble, standing in peculiar need of the assistance of an *experienced* spiritual guide.

*Feb.* 21. Preached to a number of people, many of them Low-Dutch. Sundry of the fore-mentioned High-Dutch attended the sermon, though *eight* or *ten* miles distant from their houses. Divers of the Indians also belonging to these parts came of their own accord with my people (from *Crossweeksung*) to the meeting. And there were two in particular, who, though the last sabbath they opposed and ridiculed Christianity, now behaved soberly. *May the present encouraging appearance continue.*

*Feb.* 22. Preached to the Indians. They appeared more free from prejudice, and more cordial to Christianity, than before. And some of them appeared affected with divine truths.

*Lord's day, Feb.* 23. Preached to the Indians from [John vi. 35-37](#). After public service, discoursed particularly with sundry of them, and invited them to go down to *Crossweeksung*, and tarry there at least for some time; knowing they would then be free from the scoffs and temptations of the opposing pagans, as well as *in the way* of hearing divine truths discoursed of, both in public and private. And got a promise of some of them, that they would speedily pay us a visit, and attend some further instructions. They seemed to be considerably enlightened, and much freed from their prejudices against Christianity. But it is much to be feared their prejudices will revive again, unless they could enjoy the means of instruction

here, or be removed where they might be under such advantages, and out of the way of their pagan acquaintance.

Crossweeksung, in *New Jersey, March, 1746*.

*March 1.* Catechised in my ordinary method. Was pleased and refreshed to see them answer the questions proposed to them with such remarkable readiness, discretion, and knowledge. Toward the close of my discourse, divine truths made considerable impressions upon the audience, and produced tears and sobs in some under concern; and more especially a sweet and humble melting in sundry that, I have reason to hope, were truly gracious.

*Lord's day, March 2.* Preached from [John xv. 1-6](#). The assembly appeared not so lively in their attention as usual, nor so much affected with divine truths in general as has been common. Some of my people, who went up to the *Forks of Delaware* with me, being now returned, were accompanied by two of the Indians belonging to the Forks, who had promised me a speedy visit. *May the Lord meet with them there.* They can scarce go into a house now, but they will meet with Christian conversation, whereby, it is hopeful, they may be both instructed and awakened.

Discoursed to the Indians again in the afternoon, and observed among them some liveliness and engagement in divine service, thought not equal to what has often appeared here. I know of no assembly of Christians, where there seems to be so much of the presence of God, where brotherly love so much prevails, and where I should take so much delight in the public worship of God, in the general, as in my *own congregation*: although not more than *nine months* ago, they were worshipping *devils* and *dumb idols* under the power of pagan darkness and superstition. Amazing change this! effected by nothing less than divine power and grace! "This is the doing of the Lord, and it is justly marvellous in our eyes!"

*March 5.* Spent some time just at evening in prayer, singing, and discoursing to my people upon divine things; and observed some agreeable tenderness and affection among them. Their present situation is so compact and commodious, that they are easily and quickly called together with only the sound of a conk-shell, (a shell like that of a periwinkle,) so that they have frequent opportunities of attending religious exercises publicly; which seems to be a great means, under God, of keeping alive the impressions of divine things in their minds.

*March 8.* Catechised in the evening. My people answered the questions proposed to them well. I can perceive their knowledge in religion increases daily. And what is still more desirable, the divine influence that has been so remarkable among them appears still to *continue* in some good measure. The divine presence seemed to be in the assembly this evening. Some, who I have good reason to think are Christians *indeed*, were melted with a sense of the divine goodness, and their own barrenness and ingratitude, and seemed to *hate themselves*, as one of them afterwards expressed it. Convictions also appeared to be revived

in several instances; and divine truths were attended with such influence upon the assembly in general, that it might justly be called “an evening of divine power.”

*Lord’s day, March 9.* Preached from [Luke x. 38-42](#). The word of God was attended with power and energy upon the audience. Numbers were affected and concerned to obtain the *one thing needful*. And sundry that have given good evidences of being truly gracious, were much affected with a sense of their want of spirituality; and saw the need they stood in of *growing in grace*. And most that had been under any impressions of divine things in times past, seemed now to have those impressions *revived*.

In the afternoon proposed to have catechised in my usual method. But while we were engaged in the first prayer in the Indian language, (as usual,) a great part of the assembly was so much moved, and affected with divine things, that I thought it seasonable and proper to omit the proposing of questions for that time, and insist upon the most practical truths. And accordingly did so; making a further improvement of the passage of Scripture I discoursed upon in the former part of the day.

There appeared to be a powerful divine influence in the congregation. Sundry that I have reason to think are truly pious, were so deeply affected with a sense of their own *barrenness*, and their unworthy treatment of the blessed Redeemer, that they *looked on him as pierced by themselves, and mourned*, yea, some of them were in *bitterness as for a first-born*. Some poor awakened sinners also appeared to be in anguish of soul to obtain an interest in Christ. So that there was *a great mourning* in the assembly; many heavy groans, sobs, and tears! and one or two persons newly come among us, were considerably awakened.

Methinks it would have refreshed the heart of any who truly love Zion’s interest, to have been in the midst of this divine influence, and seen the effects of it upon saints and sinners. The place of divine worship appeared both *solemn* and *sweet!* and was so endeared by a display of the divine presence and grace, that those who had any relish of divine things, could not but cry, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!” After public worship was over, numbers came to my house, where we sang and discoursed of divine things: and the presence of God seemed here also to be in the midst of us.

While we were singing, there was one (the woman mentioned in my Journal of Feb. 9) who, I may venture to say, if I may be allowed to say so much of any person I ever saw, was “filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory,” and could not but burst forth in prayer and praises to God before us all, with many tears, crying sometimes in English and sometimes in Indian, “O blessed Lord, do come, do come! O do take me away, do let me die and go to Jesus Christ! I am afraid if I live I shall sin again! O do let me die now! O dear Jesus, do come! I cannot stay, I cannot stay! O how can I live in this world! do take my soul away from this sinful place! O let me never sin any more! O what shall I do, what shall I do! dear Jesus, O dear Jesus,” &c. In this ecstasy she continued some time, uttering these and such

like expressions incessantly. And the grand argument she used with God to take her away immediately, was, that “if she lived, she should sin against him.”

When she had a little recovered herself, I asked her, if Christ was not now sweet to her soul? Whereupon, turning to me with tears in her eyes, and with all the tokens of deep humility I ever saw in any person, she said, “I have many times heard you speak of the goodness and the sweetness of Christ, that he was better than all the world. But O! I knew nothing what you meant, I never believed you! I never believed you! But now I know it is true!” or words to that effect. I answered, And do you see enough in Christ for the greatest of sinners? She replied, “O! enough, enough! for all the sinners in the world if they would but come.” And when I asked her, if she could not tell them of the goodness of Christ; turning herself about to some poor Christless souls who stood by, and were much affected, she said, “Oh! there is enough in Christ for you, if you would but come! O strive, strive to give up your hearts to him!” &c. And upon hearing something of the glory of heaven mentioned, that there was no sin in that world, &c. she again fell into the same ecstasy of joy, and desire of Christ’s coming; repeating her former expressions, “O dear Lord, do let me go! O what shall I do, what shall I do! I want to go to Christ! I cannot live! O do let me die!” &c.

She continued in this sweet frame for more than two hours, before she was well able to get home. I am very sensible there may be great joys, arising even to an ecstasy, where there is still no substantial evidence of their being well-grounded. But in the present case there seemed to be no evidence wanting, in order to prove this joy to be divine, either in regard of its *preparatives, attendants, or consequents*.

Of all the persons I have seen under spiritual exercise, I scarce ever saw one appear more bowed and broken under convictions of sin and misery (or what is usually called a *preparatory work*) than this woman. Nor scarce any who seemed to have a greater acquaintance with her own heart than she had. She would frequently complain to me of the hardness and rebellion of her heart. Would tell me, her heart rose and quarrelled with God, when she thought he would do with her as he pleased, and send her to hell notwithstanding her prayers, good frames, &c. That her heart was not willing to come to Christ for salvation, but tried every where else for help.

And as she seemed to be remarkably sensible of her stubbornness and contrariety to God, under conviction, so she appeared to be no less remarkably bowed and reconciled to divine *sovereignty* before she obtained any relief or comfort. Something of which I have before noticed in my Journal of Feb. 9. Since which time she has seemed constantly to breathe the spirit and temper of the new creature: crying after Christ, not through fear of *hell as* before, but with strong desires after him as her only satisfying *portion*; and has many times wept and sobbed bitterly, because (as she apprehended) she did not and could not love him. When I have sometimes asked her, Why she appeared so sorrowful, and whether it was because she was afraid of hell? She would answer, “No, I be not distressed about *that*; but my

heart is so wicked I *cannot love* Christ;” and thereupon burst out into tears. But although this has been the habitual frame of her mind for several weeks together, so that the exercise of grace appeared evident to *others*, yet *she* seemed wholly insensible of it herself, and never had any remarkable comfort and sensible satisfaction till this evening.

This sweet and surprising ecstasy appeared to *spring* from a true *spiritual* discovery of the glory, ravishing beauty, and excellency of Christ: and not from any *gross* imaginary notions of his human nature; such as that of seeing him in *such* a place or posture, as hanging on the cross, as bleeding, dying, as gently smiling, and the like; which delusions some have been carried away with. Nor did it rise from *sordid*, *selfish* apprehensions of *her* having any benefit whatsoever conferred on her, but from a view of his *personal* excellency, and *transcendent* loveliness, which drew forth those vehement desires of enjoying him she now manifested, and made her long “to be absent from the body that she might be present with the Lord.”

The *attendants* of this ravishing comfort, were such as abundantly discovered its spring to be divine, and that it was truly a “joy in the Holy Ghost.” Now she viewed divine truths as *living realities*; and could say, “I know these things are so, I feel they are true!” Now her soul was resigned to the divine will in the most tender points; so that when I said to her, What if God should take away your <sup>422</sup> husband from you, (who was then very sick,) how do you think you could bear that? She replied, “He belongs to God, and not to me; he may do with him just what he pleases.” Now she had the most tender sense of the evil of sin, and discovered the utmost aversion to it; longing to die that she might be delivered from it. Now she could freely trust her *all* with God for time and eternity. And when I questioned her, how she could be willing to die, and leave her little infant; and what she thought would become of it in that case? She answered, “God will take care of it. It belongs to him, he will take care of it.” Now she appeared to have the most humbling sense of her own meanness and unworthiness, her weakness and inability to preserve herself from sin, and to persevere in the way of holiness, crying, “If I live, I shall sin.” And I then thought I had never seen such an appearance of *ecstasy* and *humility* meeting in any one person in all my life before.

The *consequents* of this joy are no less desirable and satisfactory than its attendants. She since appears to be a most tender, broken-hearted, affectionate, devout, and humble Christian, as exemplary in life and conversation as any person in my congregation. May she still “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ.”

*March 10.* Toward night the Indians met together of their own accord, and sang, prayed, and discoursed of divine things among themselves. At which time there was much affection among them. Some who are hopefully gracious, appeared to be melted with divine things. And some others seemed much concerned for their souls. Perceiving their engagement and

422 The man particularly mentioned in my Journal of January 19.

affection in religious exercises, I went among them, and prayed, and gave a word of exhortation; and observed two or three somewhat affected and concerned, who scarce ever appeared to be under any religious impressions before. It seemed to be a day and evening of divine power. Numbers retained the warm impressions of divine things that had been made upon their minds the day before.

*March 14.* Was visited by a considerable number of my people, and spent some time in religious exercises with them.

*March 15.* In the evening catechised. My people answered the questions put to them with surprising readiness and judgment. There appeared some warmth and feeling sense of divine things among those, who, I have reason to hope, are *real* Christians, while I was discoursing upon “peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” *These* seemed quickened and enlivened in divine service, though there was not so much appearance of concern among those I have reason to think in a Christless state.

*Lord’s day, March 16.* Preached to my congregation from [Heb. ii. 1-3](#). Divine truths seemed to have some considerable influence upon many of the hearers; and produced many tears, as well as heavy sighs and sobs, among both those who have given evidences of being real Christians, and others also. And the impressions made upon the audience appeared in general *deep* and heart-affecting, not superficial, *noisy*, and affected.

Toward night discoursed again on the *great salvation*. The word was again attended with some power upon the audience. Numbers wept affectionately, and to appearance, *unfeignedly*; so that the Spirit of God seemed to be *moving upon the face* of the assembly. Baptized the *woman* particularly mentioned in my Journal of last Lord’s day; who now, as well as then, appeared to be in a devout, humble, and excellent frame of mind.

My house being thronged with my people in the evening, I spent the time in religious exercises with them till my nature was almost spent. They are so unwearied in religious exercises, and insatiable in their thirsting after *Christian knowledge*, that I can sometimes scarce avoid labouring so as greatly to exhaust my strength and spirits.

*March 19.* Sundry of the persons that went with me to the *Forks of Delaware* in February last, having been detained there by the *dangerous* illness of one of their company, returned home but this day. Whereupon my people generally met together of their own accord, in order to spend some time in religious exercises; and especially to give thanks to God for his preserving goodness to those who had been absent from them for several weeks, and recovering mercy to him who had been sick; and that he had now returned them all in safety. I being then absent, they desired my schoolmaster to assist them in carrying on their religious solemnity; who tells me they appeared engaged and affectionate in repeated prayer, singing, &c.

*March 22.* Catechised in my usual method in the evening. My people answered questions to my great satisfaction. There appeared nothing very remarkable in the assembly, consid-



ering what has been common among us. Although I may justly say, the strict attention, the tenderness and affection, the many tears and heart-affecting sobs, appearing in numbers in the assembly, would have been *very remarkable*, were it not that God has made these things *common* with us, and even with *strangers* soon after their coming among us, from time to time. I am far from thinking that every *appearance*, and particular instance of affection, that has been among us, has been truly genuine, and *purely* from a divine influence. I am sensible of the contrary; and doubt not but that there has been some *corrupt mixture*, some chaff as well as wheat, especially since religious concern became so common and prevalent here.

*Lord's day, March 23.* There being about fifteen *strangers*, adult persons, come among us in the *week* past divers of whom had never been in any religions meeting till now I thought it proper to discourse this day in a manner peculiarly suited to *their* circumstances and capacities: and accordingly attempted it from [Hos. xiii. 9](#). "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," &c. In the forenoon I opened, in the plainest manner I could, man's apostasy and ruined state, after having spoken some things respecting the being and perfections of God, and his creation of man in a state of uprightness and happiness. In the afternoon endeavoured to open the glorious provision God has made for the redemption of apostate creatures, by giving his own dear Son to suffer for them, and satisfy divine justice on their behalf. There was not that affection and concern in the assembly that has been common among us, although there was a desirable attention appearing in general, and even in most of the *strangers*.

Near sun-set I felt an uncommon concern upon my mind, especially for the poor *strangers*, that God had so much withheld his presence, and the powerful influence of his Spirit, from the assembly in the exercises of the day; and thereby denied them of that matter of conviction which I hoped they might have had. And in this frame I visited sundry houses, and discoursed with some concern and affection to divers persons particularly; but without much appearance of success, till I came to a house where divers of the *strangers* were; and there the solemn truths I discoursed of appeared to take *effect*, first upon some *children*, then upon divers *adult* persons that had been somewhat awakened before, and afterwards upon several of the pagan *strangers*.

I continued my discourse, with some fervency, till almost every one in the house was melted into tears; and divers wept aloud, and appeared earnestly concerned to obtain an interest in Christ. Upon this, numbers soon gathered from all the houses round about, and so thronged the place, that we were obliged to remove to the house where we usually meet for public worship. And the congregation gathering immediately, and many appeared remarkably affected, I discoursed some time from [Luke xix. 10](#). "For the Son of man is come to seek," &c. Endeavouring to open the mercy, compassion, and concern of Christ for *lost*, *helpless*, and *undone* sinners. There was much visible concern and affection in the assembly; and I doubt not but that a divine influence accompanied what was spoken to the hearts of

many. There were five or six of the *strangers*, men and women, who appeared to be considerably awakened. And in particular one very rugged young man, who seemed as if nothing would move him, was now brought to tremble like the jailer, and weep for a long time.

The pagans that were awakened seemed at once to put off their *savage* roughness and pagan manners, and became sociable, orderly, and *humane* in their carriage. When they first came, I exhorted my religious people to take pains with them (as they had done with other strangers from time to time) to instruct them in Christianity. But when some of them attempted something of that nature, the strangers would soon rise up and walk to other houses, in order to avoid the hearing of such discourses. Whereupon some of the serious persons agreed to disperse themselves into the several parts of the settlement. So that wherever the *strangers* went, they met with some instructive discourse, and warm addresses respecting their souls' concern. But *now* there was no need of using policy in order to get an opportunity of conversing with some of them about their spiritual concerns; for they were so far touched with a sense of their perishing state, as made them *tamely* yield to the *closest* addresses that were made them, respecting their sin and misery, their need of an acquaintance with, and interest in, the great Redeemer.

*March 24.* Numbered the Indians, to see how many souls God had gathered together here, since my coming into these parts; and found there was now about a *hundred and thirty* persons together, old and young. Sundry of those that are my stated hearers, perhaps to the number of *fifteen* or *twenty*, were absent at this season. So that if all had been together, the number would now have been very considerable: especially considering how *few* were together at my first coming into these parts, the whole number not amounting to *ten* persons at that time.

My people went out this day upon the design of clearing some of their land, above fifteen miles distant from this settlement, in order to their settling there in a compact form; where they might be under advantages of attending the public worship of God, of having their children taught in a school, and at the same time have a conveniency for planting, &c.; their land in the place of our *present* residence being of little or no value for that purpose. And the design of their settling thus in a body, and cultivating their lands, (which they have done very little in their pagan state,) being of such necessity and importance to their religious interest, as well as worldly comfort, I thought it proper to call them together, and show them the duty of labouring with faithfulness and industry: and that they must not now "be slothful in business," as they had ever been in their pagan state. I endeavoured to press the importance of their being laborious, diligent, and vigorous in the prosecution of their business, especially at the present juncture, (the season of planting being now near,) in order to their being in a capacity of living together, and enjoying the means of grace and instruction. And having given them directions for their work, which they very much wanted, as well as for their behaviour in divers respects, I explained, sang, and endeavoured to inculcate upon them *Ps.*

[cxxvii](#). common metre, Dr. Watts's version. And having recommended them, and the design of their going forth, to God, by prayer with them, I dismissed them to their business.

In the evening read and expounded to those of my people who were yet at home, and the *strangers* newly come, the substance of the third chapter of the Acts. Numbers seemed to melt under the word, especially while I was discoursing upon [ver. 19](#). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted," &c. Sundry of the *strangers* also were affected. When I asked them afterwards, whether they did not now feel that their *hearts* were *wicked*, as I had taught them? One replied, "Yes, she felt it now." Although before she came here upon hearing that I taught the Indians their hearts were all bad by nature, and needed to be changed and made good by the power of God she had said, "Her heart was not wicked, and she never had done any thing that was bad in her life." And *this* indeed seems to be the case with them, I think, universally in their pagan state. They seem to have no *consciousness* of sin and guilt, unless they can charge themselves with some *gross acts* of sin contrary to the commands of the *second table*.

*March 27*. Discoursed to a number of my people in one of their houses in a more private manner. Inquired particularly into their spiritual states, in order to see what impressions of a religious nature they were under. Laid before them the marks and tokens of a *regenerate*, as well as *unregenerate*, state: and endeavoured to suit and direct my discourse to them severally, according as I apprehended their states to be. There was a considerable number gathered together before I finished my discourse; and divers seemed much affected, while I was urging the necessity and infinite importance of getting into a renewed state. I find particular and close dealing with souls in private, is often very successful.

*March 29*. In the evening catechised as usual upon Saturday. Treated upon the "benefits which believers receive from Christ at death." The questions were answered with great readiness and propriety. And those who, I have reason to think, are the dear people of God, were sweetly melted almost in general. There appeared such a liveliness and vigour in their attendance upon the word of God, and such eagerness to be made partakers of the *benefits* then mentioned, that they seemed to be not only "looking for, but hasting to, the coming of the day of God." Divine truths seemed to distil upon the audience with a gentle but melting efficacy, as the refreshing "showers upon the new-mown grass." The assembly in general, as well as those who appear truly religious, were affected with some brief account of the blessedness of the godly at death: and *most* then discovered an affectionate inclination to cry, "Let me die the death of the righteous," &c. although many were not duly engaged to obtain the change of heart that is necessary in order to that blessed end.

*Lord's day, March 30*. Discoursed from [Matt. xxv. 31-40](#). There was a very considerable moving and affectionate melting in the assembly. I hope there were some real, deep, and abiding impressions of divine things made upon the minds of many. There was one aged man, newly come among us, who appeared to be considerably awakened, that never was

touched with any concern for his soul before. In the evening catechised. There was not that tenderness and melting engagement among God's people that appeared the evening before, and many other times. They answered the *questions* distinctly and well, and were devout and attentive in divine service.

*March 31.* Called my people together, as I had done the Monday morning before, and discoursed to them again on the necessity and importance of their labouring industriously, in order to their living together, and enjoying the means of grace, &c. And having engaged in solemn prayer to God among them, for a blessing upon their attempts, I dismissed them to their work. Numbers of them, both men and women, seemed to offer themselves willingly to this service; and some appeared affectionately concerned that God might go with them, and begin their *little town* for them; that by his blessing it might be a place comfortable for them and theirs, in regard both of procuring, the necessaries of life, and of attending the worship of God.

*April 5.* Catechised towards evening. There appeared to be some affection and fervent engagement in divine service through the assembly in general; especially towards the conclusion of my discourse. After public worship, a number of those I have reason to think are truly religious, came to my house, and seemed eager for some further entertainment upon divine things. And while I was conversing with them about their spiritual exercises, observing to them, that God's work in the hearts of all his children was, for substance, the same; and that their trials and temptations were also alike; and showing the obligations *such* were under to *love* one another in a peculiar manner; they seemed to be melted into tenderness and affection toward each other: and I thought that particular token of their being the *disciples* of Christ, *viz.* of their "having love one toward another," had scarce ever appeared more evident than at this time.

*Lord's day, April 6.* Preached from [Matt. vii. 21 23](#). "Not every one that saith unto me," &c. There were considerable effects of the word visible in the audience, and *such* as were very desirable: an earnest attention, a great solemnity, many tears and heavy sighs, which were modestly suppressed in a considerable measure, and appeared unaffected, and without any indecent commotion of the passions. Divers of the religious people were put upon serious and close examination of their spiritual states, by hearing that "not every one that saith to Christ, Lord, Lord, shall enter into his kingdom." And some of them expressed fears lest they had deceived themselves, and taken up a false hope, because they found they had done so little of the "will of his Father who is in heaven." There was one man brought under very great and pressing concern for his soul; which appeared more especially after his *retirement* from public worship. And that which, he says, gave him his great uneasiness, was, not so much any particular sin, as that he had never done the will of God at *all*, but had sinned continually, and so had no claim to the kingdom of heaven.

In the afternoon I opened to them the *discipline* of Christ in his church, and the method in which *offenders* are to be dealt with. At which time the religious people were much affected, especially when they heard, that the offender continuing obstinate, must finally be esteemed and treated “as a heathen man,” as a pagan, that has no part nor lot among God’s visible people. Of *this* they seemed to have the most awful apprehensions; a state of heathenism, out of which they were so lately brought, appearing very dreadful to them. After public worship I visited sundry houses to see how they spent the remainder of the sabbath, and to treat with them solemnly on the great concerns of their souls: and the Lord seemed to smile upon my private endeavours, and to make these particular and *personal* addresses more effectual upon some, than my public discourses.

*April 7.* Discoursed to my people in the evening from [1 Cor. xi. 23-26](#). “For I have received of the Lord,” &c. And endeavoured to open to them the institution, nature, and ends of the Lord’s supper, as well as the qualifications and preparations necessary to the right participation of that ordinance. Sundry persons appeared much affected with the love of Christ manifested in his making this provision for the comfort of his people, at a season when himself was just entering upon his sharpest sufferings.

*Lord’s day, April 20.* Discoursed both forenoon and afternoon from [Luke xxiv.](#) explaining most of the chapter, and making remarks upon it. There was a desirable attention in the audience, though there was not so much appearance of affection and tenderness among them as has been usual. Our meeting was very full, there being sundry *strangers* present, who had never been with us before.

In the evening catechised. My people answered the questions proposed to them readily and distinctly; and I could perceive they advanced in their knowledge of the *principles* of Christianity. There appeared an affectionate melting in the assembly at this time. Sundry who, I trust, are truly religious, were refreshed and quickened, and seemed by their discourse and behaviour, after public worship, to have their “hearts knit together in love.” This was a sweet and blessed season, like many others that my poor people have been favoured with in months past. God has caused *this little fleece* to be repeatedly wet with the blessed *dews* of his divine grace, while all the earth around has been comparatively dry.

*April 25.* Of late I apprehended that a number of persons in my congregation were proper subjects of the ordinance of the *Lord’s supper*, and that it might be *seasonable* speedily to administer it to them: and having taken advice of some of the reverend *correspondents* in this solemn affair; I accordingly proposed and appointed the next Lord’s day, with leave of Divine Providence, for the administration of this ordinance; and this day, as preparatory thereto, was set apart for solemn *fasting* and *prayer*. The design of this preparatory solemnity was to implore the blessing of God upon our renewing covenant with him and with one another, to walk together in the fear of God, in love and Christian fellowship: and to entreat that his presence might be with us in our designed approach to his table; as well as to humble

ourselves before God on account of the apparent withdrawalment (at least in a measure) of that blessed influence which has been so prevalent upon persons of all ages among us; as also on account of the rising appearance of carelessness, vanity, and vice among some, who, some time since, appeared to be touched and affected with divine truths, and brought to some sensibility of their miserable and perishing state by nature. And that we might also importunately pray for the peaceable *settlement* of the Indians together in a body, that they might be a commodious congregation for the worship of God; and that God would blast and defeat all the attempts that were or might be made against that pious design.<sup>423</sup>

The solemnity was observed and seriously attended, not only by those who proposed to communicate at the Lord's table, but by the whole congregation universally. In the former part of the day, I endeavoured to open to my people the nature and design of a *fast*, as I had attempted more briefly to do before, and to instruct them in the duties of such a solemnity. In the afternoon, I insisted upon the special reasons there were for our engaging in these solemn exercises at this time; both in regard of the need we stood in of divine assistance, in order to a due preparation for that sacred ordinance some of us were proposing, with leave of Divine Providence, speedily to attend upon; and also in respect of the manifest *decline* of God's work here, as to the effectual conviction and conversion of sinners, there having been few of late deeply awakened out of a state of security. The worship of God was attended with great solemnity and reverence, with much tenderness and many tears, by those who appear to be truly religious: and there was some appearance of divine power upon those who had been awakened some time before, and who were still under concern.

After repeated prayer and attendance upon the word of God, I proposed to the religious people, with as much brevity and plainness as I could, the substance of the doctrine of the *Christian faith*, as I had formerly done, previous to their *baptism*, and had their renewed cheerful assent to it. I then led them to a solemn renewal of their *baptismal covenant*, wherein they had explicitly and publicly given up themselves to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, avouching him to be their God; and at the same time renouncing their heathenish vanities, their *idolatrous* and *superstitious* practices, and solemnly engaging to take the word of God, so far as it was, or might be, made known to them, for the *rule of their lives*, promising to walk together in love, to watch over themselves, and one another; to lead lives of seriousness and devotion, and to discharge the *relative* duties incumbent upon them respectively, &c. This solemn transaction was attended with much gravity and seriousness; and at the same

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423 There being at this time a terrible clamour raised against the Indians in various places in the country, and insinuations as though I was training them up to cut people's throats. Numbers wishing to have them banished out of these parts, and some giving out great words, in order to fright and deter them from settling upon the best and most convenient track of their own lands, threatening to molest and trouble them in the law, pretending a claim to these lands themselves, although never purchased of the Indians.

time with utmost readiness, freedom, and cheerfulness; and a religious union and harmony of soul seemed to crown the whole solemnity. I could not but think in the evening, that there had been manifest tokens of the divine presence with us in all the several services of the day; though it was also manifest there was not that concern among Christless souls that has often appeared here.

*April 26.* Toward noon prayed with a *dying* child, and gave a word of exhortation to the by-standers to prepare for death, which seemed to take effect upon some. In the afternoon discoursed to my people from [Matt. xxvi. 26-30.](#) of the *author*, the *nature*, and *design* of the Lord's supper; and endeavoured to point out the *worthy* receivers of that ordinance.

The religious people were affected, and even melted with divine truths, with a view of the dying love of Christ. Sundry others who had been for some months under convictions of their perishing state, appeared now to be much moved with concern, and afresh engaged in seeking after an interest in Christ; although I cannot say "the word of God" appeared "so quick and powerful," so sharp and piercing to the assembly, as it had sometimes formerly done. Baptized *two* adult persons, both serious and exemplary in their lives, and, I hope, truly religious. One of them was the man particularly mentioned in my Journal of the 6th instant; who, although he was then greatly distressed, because "he had never done the will of God," has since, it is hoped, obtained spiritual comfort upon good grounds.

In the evening I catechised those that were designed to partake of the Lord's supper the next day, upon the institution, nature, and end of that ordinance; and had abundant satisfaction respecting their doctrinal knowledge and fitness in *that* respect for an attendance upon it. They likewise appeared, in general, to have an affecting sense of the solemnity of this sacred ordinance, and to be humbled under a sense of their own unworthiness to approach to God in it; and to be earnestly concerned that they might be duly prepared for an attendance upon it. Their hearts were full of love one toward another, and *that* was the frame of mind they seemed much concerned to maintain, and bring to the Lord's table with them. In the singing and prayer, after catechising, there appeared an agreeable tenderness and melting among them, and such tokens of brotherly love and affection, that would even constrain one to say, "Lord, it is good to be here;" it is good to dwell where such a heavenly influence distils.

*Lord's day, April 27.* Preached from [Tit. ii. 14.](#) "Who gave himself for us," &c. The word of God at this time was attended with some appearance of divine power upon the assembly; so that the attention and gravity of the audience was *remarkable*; and especially towards the conclusion of the exercise, divers persons were much affected.

Administered the *sacrament* of the Lord's supper to *twenty-three* persons of the Indians, (the number of men and women being near equal,) divers others, to the number of *five* or *six*, being now absent at the Forks of Delaware, who would otherwise have communicated with us. The ordinance was attended with great solemnity, and with a most desirable tender-

ness and affection. And it was remarkable, that in the season of the performance of the *sacramental* actions, especially in the distribution of the *bread*, they seemed to be affected in a most lively manner, as if “Christ had been” really “crucified before them.” And the words of the institution, when repeated and enlarged upon in the season of the administration, seemed to meet with the same reception, to be entertained with the *same full* and *firm* belief and affectionate engagement of soul, as if the Lord Jesus Christ himself had been present, and had *personally* spoken to them. The affections of the communicants, although considerably raised, were notwithstanding agreeably *regulated*, and kept within proper bounds. So that there was a sweet, gentle, and affectionate melting, without any *indecent* or boisterous commotion of the passions.

Having rested some time after the administration of the *sacrament*, (being extremely tired with the necessary prolixity of the work,) I walked from house to house, and conversed particularly with most of the *communicants*, and found they had been almost universally refreshed at the Lord’s table “as with new wine.” And never did I see such an appearance of *Christian love* among any people in all my life. It was so remarkable, that one might well have cried with an agreeable surprise, “Behold how they love one another!” I think there could be no greater tokens of mutual affection among the people of God in the early days of Christianity, than what now appeared here. The sight was so desirable, and so well *becoming* the gospel, that nothing less could be said of it, than that it was “the doing of the Lord,” the genuine operations of him “who is love!”

Toward night discoursed again on the forementioned [Tit. ii. 14.](#) and insisted on the immediate end and design of Christ’s death, *viz.* “That he might redeem his people from all iniquity,” &c. This appeared to be a season of divine power among us. The religious people were much refreshed, and seemed remarkably tender and affectionate, full of love, joy, peace, and desirous of being completely “redeemed from all iniquity;” so that some of them afterwards told me “they had never felt the like before.” Convictions also appeared to be revived in many instances; and divers persons were awakened whom I had never observed under any religious impressions before.

*Such* was the influence that attended our assembly, and so unspeakably desirable the frame of mind that many enjoyed in the divine service, that it seemed almost grievous to conclude the public worship. And the congregation when dismissed, although it was then almost dark, appeared loth to leave the place and employments that had been rendered *so dear* to them by the benefits enjoyed, while a blessed quickening influence distilled upon them. And upon the whole, I must say, I had great satisfaction relative to the administration of this ordinance in divers respects. I have abundant reason to think, that those who came to the Lord’s table, had a good degree of *doctrinal* knowledge of the *nature* and *design* of the ordinance; and that they acted *with understanding* in what they did.



In the preparatory services I found, I may justly say, uncommon freedom in opening to their understandings and capacities, the *covenant of grace*, and in showing them the *nature* of this ordinance as a *seal* of that covenant. Although many of them knew of no such thing as a *seal* before my coming among them, or at least of the use and design of it in the common affairs of life. They were likewise thoroughly sensible that it was no more than a *seal* or *sign*, and not the *real* body and blood of Christ. That it was designed for the refreshment and edification of the *soul*, and not for the *feasting* of the *body*. They were also acquainted with the *end* of the ordinance, that they were therein called to *commemorate* the dying love of Christ, &c.

And this competency of doctrinal knowledge, together with their grave and decent attendance upon the ordinance, their affectionate melting under it, and the sweet and Christian frame of mind they discovered consequent upon it, gave me great satisfaction respecting my administration of it to them. And O what a sweet and blessed season was this! God himself, I am persuaded, was in the midst of his people, attending his own ordinances. And I doubt not but many in the conclusion of the day, could say, with their whole hearts, “Verily, a day thus spent in God’s house, is better than a thousand elsewhere.” There seemed to be but *one heart* among the pious people. The sweet union, harmony, and endearing love and tenderness subsisting among them, was, I thought, the most lively emblem of the heavenly world I had ever seen.

*April 28.* Concluded the sacramental solemnity with a discourse upon [John xiv. 15](#). “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” At which time there appeared a very agreeable tenderness in the audience in general, but especially in the *communicants*. O how free, how engaged, and affectionate did *these* appear in the service of God! they seemed willing to have their “ears bored to the door-posts of God’s house,” and to be his servants for ever.

Observing numbers in this excellent frame, and the assembly in general affected, and that by a divine influence, I thought it proper to improve this advantageous season, as Hezekiah did the desirable season of his great *passover*, ([2 Chron. xxxi.](#)) in order to promote the blessed reformation begun among them; and to engage those that appeared serious and religious to persevere therein; and accordingly proposed to them, that they should *renewedly* enter into covenant before God, that they would watch over themselves and one another, lest they should dishonour the name of Christ by falling into sinful and unbecoming practices. And especially that they would watch against the sin of *drunkenness*, (the sin that easily besets them,) and the temptations leading thereto; as well as the appearance of evil in that respect. They cheerfully complied with the *proposal*, and *explicitly* joined in that covenant; whereupon I proceeded in the most solemn manner I was capable of, to call God to *witness* respecting their sacred engagement; and minded them of the greatness of the guilt they would contract to themselves in the violation of it; as well as observed to them, that God would be a terrible

witness against those who should presume to do so, in the “great and notable day of the Lord.”

It was a season of amazing solemnity! and a *divine awe* appeared upon the face of the whole assembly in this transaction! Affectionate sobs, sighs, and tears, were now frequent in the audience: and I doubt not but that many silent cries were then sent up to the *fountain* of grace, for supplies of grace sufficient for the fulfilment of these solemn engagements. Baptized six children this day.

*Lord's day, May 4.* My people being now removed to their *lands*, mentioned in my Journal of March 24, where they were then, and have since been, making provision for a *compact settlement*, in order to their more convenient enjoyment of the gospel, and other means of instruction, as well as the comforts of life; I this day visited them, (being now obliged to board with an English family at some distance from them,) and preached to them in the forenoon from [Mark iv. 5](#). “And some fell on stony ground,” &c. Endeavoured to show them the reason there was to fear lest many promising appearances and hopeful beginnings in religion, might prove abortive, like the “seed dropped upon stony places.”

In the afternoon discoursed upon [Rom. viii. 9](#). “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” I have reason to think this discourse was peculiarly seasonable, and that it had a good effect upon some of the hearers. Spent some hours afterwards in private conferences with my people, and laboured to regulate some things I apprehended amiss among some of them.

*May 5.* Visited my people again, and took care of their *worldly* concerns, giving them directions relating to their business. I daily discover more and more of what importance it is like to be to their *religious* interests, that they become laborious and industrious, acquainted with the affairs of *husbandry*, and able, in a good measure, to raise the necessaries and comforts of life *within themselves*; for their present method of living greatly exposes them to temptations of various kinds.

*May 9.* Preached from [John v. 40](#). “And ye will not come to me,” &c. in the open wilderness; the Indians having as yet no house for public worship in this place, nor scarce any *shelters* for themselves. Divine truths made considerable impressions upon the audience, and it was a season of solemnity, tenderness, and affection.

Baptized one man this day, (the conjurer, murderer, &c. mentioned in my Journal of August 8, 1745, and February 1, 1746,) who appears to be such a remarkable instance of divine grace, that I cannot omit some brief account of him here. He lived near, and sometimes attended my meeting in, the *Forks of Delaware* for more than a year together; but was, like many others of them, extremely attached to strong drink, and seemed to be no ways reformed by the means I used with them for their instruction and conversion. At this time he likewise *murdered* a likely young Indian; which threw him into some kind of *horror* and *desperation*, so that he kept at a distance from me, and refused to hear me preach for several months

together, till I had an opportunity of conversing freely with him, and giving him encouragement, that his sin might be forgiven for Christ's sake. After which he again attended my meeting some times.

But that which was the worst of all his conduct, was his *conjunction*. He was one of them who are sometimes called *powows* among the Indians: and notwithstanding his frequent attendance upon my preaching, he still followed his old *charms* and juggling tricks, "giving out that himself was some great one, and to him they gave heed," supposing him to be possessed of a *great power*. So that when I have instructed them respecting the *miracles* wrought by Christ in healing the sick, &c. and mentioned them as evidences of his *divine* mission, and the truth of his doctrine, they have quickly observed the wonders of that kind which this man had performed by his *magic charms*. Whence they had a high opinion of him, and his superstitious notions, which seemed to be a fatal obstruction to some of them in regard of their receiving the gospel. And I have often thought it would be a great favour to the design of gospellizing these Indians, if God would take that wretch out of the world; for I had scarce any hope of his ever coming to good. But God, "whose thoughts are not as man's thoughts," has been pleased to take a much more desirable method with him; a method agreeable to his own merciful nature, and, I trust, advantageous to his own interest among the Indians, as well as effectual to the salvation of this poor soul. *To God be the glory of it.*

The first genuine concern for his soul that ever appeared in him, was excited by seeing my interpreter and his wife baptized at the *Forks of Delaware*, July 21, 1745. Which so prevailed upon him, that with the invitation of an Indian, who was a friend to Christianity, he followed me down to *Crossweeksung* in the beginning of August following, in order to hear me preach, and there continued for several weeks in the season of the most remarkable and powerful awakening among the Indians; at which time he was more effectually awakened, and brought under great concern for his soul. And then, he says, upon his "feeling the word of God in his heart," as he expresses it, his spirit of conjunction left him entirely; that he had no more power of that nature since, than any other man living. And declares that he does not now so much as know *how* he used to *charm* and conjure; and that he could not do any thing of that nature if he was never so desirous of it.

He continued under convictions of his sinful and perishing state, and a considerable degree of concern for his soul, all the fall and former part of the winter past, but was not so deeply exercised till some time in January; and then the word of God took such hold upon him, that he was brought into great distress, and knew not what to do, nor where to turn himself. He then told me, that when he used to hear me preach from time to time in the fall of the year, my preaching pricked his heart and made him very *uneasy*, but did not bring him to so *great* distress, because he still hoped he could do *something* for his own relief: but now, he said, I drove him up into "such a sharp corner," that he had no way to turn, and could not avoid being in distress.

He continued constantly under the heavy burden and pressure of a *wounded spirit*, till at length he was brought into the acute anguish and utmost *agony of soul*, mentioned in my Journal of Feb. 1, which continued that night, and part of the next day. After this, he was brought to the utmost calmness and composure of mind, his trembling and heavy burden was removed, and he appeared perfectly sedate; although he had, to his apprehensions, scarce any hope of salvation.

I observed him to appear remarkably composed, and thereupon asked him how he did? He replied, "It is done, it is done, it is all done now." I asked him what he meant? He answered, "I can never do any more to save myself; it is all done for ever, I can do no more." I queried with him, whether he could not do a *little* more rather than to go to hell. He replied, "My heart is dead, I can never help myself." I asked him, what he thought would become of him then? He answered, "I must go to hell." I asked him if he thought it was right that God should send him to hell? He replied, "O it is right. The devil has been in me ever since I was born." I asked him if he felt this when he was in such great distress the evening before? He answered, "No, I did not then think it was right. I thought God would send me to hell, and that I was then dropping into it; but my heart quarrelled with God, and would not say it was *right* he should send me there. But now I know it is right, for I have always served the devil, and my heart has no goodness in it now, but is as bad as ever it was," &c. I thought I had scarce ever seen any person more effectually brought off from a dependence upon his own contrivances and endeavours for salvation, or more apparently to lie at the foot of *sovereign* mercy, than this man now did under these views of things.

In this frame of mind he continued for several days, passing sentence of condemnation upon himself, and constantly owning, that it would be right he should be damned, and that he expected this would be his portion for the greatness of his sins. And yet it was plain he had a secret hope of mercy, though imperceptible to himself, which kept him not only from despair, but from any pressing distress: so that instead of being sad and dejected, his very countenance appeared pleasant and agreeable.

While he was in this frame, he sundry times asked me "When I would preach again?" and seemed desirous to hear the word of God every day. I asked him why he

wanted to hear me preach, seeing "his heart was dead, and all was done?" That "he could never help himself, and expected that he must go to hell?" He replied, "I love to hear you speak about Christ for all." I added, But what good will that do you, if you must go to hell at last? using now his own language with him; having before, from time to time, laboured in the best manner I could, to represent to him the excellency of Christ, his all-sufficiency and willingness to save lost sinners, and persons just in his case; although to no purpose, as to yielding him any special comfort. He answered, "I would have others come to Christ, if I must go to hell myself." It was remarkable, that he seemed to have a great love to the people of God, and nothing affected him so much as the thoughts of being separated from them.

This seemed to be a very dreadful part of the hell to which he thought himself doomed. It was likewise remarkable, that in this season he was most diligent in the use of all means for his soul's salvation; although he had the clearest view of the *insufficiency* of means to afford him help. And would frequently say, "That all he did signified nothing at all;" and yet was never more constant in doing, attending secret and family prayer daily, and surprisingly diligent and attentive in hearing the word of God: so that he neither despaired of mercy, nor yet presumed to hope upon his own doings, but used means because appointed of God in order to salvation; and because he would wait upon God in his own way.

After he had continued in this frame of mind more than a *week*, while I was discoursing publicly he seemed to have a lively soul-refreshing view of the excellency of Christ, and the way of salvation by him, which melted him into tears, and filled him with admiration, comfort, satisfaction, and praise to God. Since then he has appeared to be an humble, devout, and affectionate Christian; serious and exemplary in his conversation and behaviour, frequently complaining of his barrenness, his want of spiritual warmth, life, and activity, and yet frequently favoured with quickening and refreshing influences. And in all respects, so far as I am capable to judge, he bears the marks and characters of one "created anew in Christ Jesus to good works."

His zeal for the cause of God was pleasing to me when he was with me at the *Forks of Delaware* in February last. There being an old Indian at the place where I preached, who threatened to *bewitch* me and my religious people who accompanied me there; *this* man presently challenged him to do his worst, telling him that himself had been as great a *conjurer* as he, and that notwithstanding, as soon as he felt that word in his heart which these people loved, (meaning the word of God,) his power of conjuring immediately left him. And so it would you, said he, if you did but once feel it in your heart; and you have no power to hurt them, nor so much as to touch one of them, &c. So that I may conclude my account of him by observing, (in allusion to what was said of St. Paul,) that he now zealously defends, and practically "preaches, the faith which he once destroyed," or at least was instrumental of obstructing. *May God have the glory of the amazing change he has wrought in him!*

*Lord's day, May 18.* Discoursed both parts of the day from *Rev. iii. 20*. "Behold, I stand at the door," &c. There appeared some affectionate melting towards the conclusion of the forenoon exercise, and one or two instances of fresh awakening. In the intermission of public worship, I took occasion to discourse to numbers in a more private way, on the *kindness* and *patience* of the blessed Redeemer in *standing* and *knocking*, in continuing his gracious calls to sinners, who had long neglected and abused his grace; which seemed to take some effect upon sundry.

In the afternoon divine truths were attended with solemnity, and with some tears, although there was not that powerful, awakening, and quickening influence, which in times past has been common in our assemblies. The appearance of the audience under divine

truths was comparatively discouraging: and I was ready to fear that God was about to withdraw the blessed influence of his Spirit from us.

May 19. Visited and preached to my people from [Acts xx. 18, 19](#). “And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day,” &c. and endeavoured to rectify their notions about *religious affections*; showing them, *on the one hand*, the *desirableness* of religious affection, tenderness, and fervent engagement in the worship and service of God, when such affection flows from a *true spiritual* discovery of divine glories, from a justly affecting sense of the transcendent excellency and perfections of the blessed God, a view of the glory and loveliness of the great Redeemer: and that such views of divine things will *naturally* excite us to “serve the Lord with many tears,” with much affection and fervency, and yet” with all humility of mind:” And, *on the other hand*, observing the *sinfulness* of seeking after high affections *immediately*, and for their own sakes, that is, of making them the object of our eye and heart, is *nextly* and *principally* set upon, when the glory of God ought to be so. Showed them that if the heart be *directly* and *chiefly* fixed on God, and the soul engaged to glorify him, some degree of religious affection will be the effect and attendant of it. But to seek after affection *directly* and *chiefly*, to have the heart *principally* set upon *that*, is to place it in the room of God and his glory. If it be sought, that others may take notice and admire us for our spirituality and forwardness in religion, it is then abominable *pride*: if for the sake of feeling the pleasure of being affected, it is then *idolatry* and self-gratification. Laboured also to expose the *disagreeableness* of those affections that are sometimes wrought up in persons by the power of fancy and their own attempts for that purpose, while I still endeavoured to recommend to them *that* religious affection, fervency, and devotion which ought to attend all our religious exercises, and without which religion will be but an *empty* name and *lifeless* carcass.

This appeared to be a seasonable discourse, and proved very satisfactory to some of the religious people, who before were exercised with some difficulties relating to this point. Afterwards took care of, and gave my people directions about, their *worldly* affairs.

May 24. Visited the Indians, and took care of their *secular* business, which they are not able to manage themselves, without the constant care and advice of others. Afterwards discoursed to some particularly about their spiritual concerns.

*Lord's day*, May 25. Discoursed both parts of the day from [John xii. 44-48](#). “Jesus cried and said, he that believeth on me,” &c. There was some degree of divine power attending the word of God. Sundry wept and appeared considerably affected: and one who had long been under spiritual trouble, now obtained clearness and comfort, and appeared to “rejoice in God her Saviour.” It was a day of grace and divine goodness; a day wherein something I trust was done for the cause of God among my people: a season of sweetness and comfort to divers of the religious people, although there was not that powerful influence upon the congregation which was common some months ago.

*Lord's day, June 1, 1746.* Preached both forenoon and afternoon from [Matt. xi. 27, 28.](#) The presence of God seemed to be in the assembly, and numbers were considerably melted and affected under divine truths. There was a desirable appearance in the congregation in general, an earnest attention and agreeable tenderness, and it seemed as if God designed to visit us with further showers of divine grace. I then baptized *ten* persons, five adults and five children, and was not a little refreshed with this "addition made to the church of such as, I hope, shall be saved."

I have reason to hope that God has lately (at and since our celebration of the Lord's supper) brought home to himself sundry souls who had long been under spiritual trouble and concern; although there have been few instances of persons lately awakened out of a state of security. And those comforted of late seem to be brought in in a more *silent* way, neither their concern nor consolation being so powerful and *remarkable* as appeared among those more suddenly wrought upon in the beginning of this work of grace.

*June 6.* Discoursed to my people from part of [Isa. liii.](#) The divine presence appeared to be amongst us in some measure. Divers persons were much melted and refreshed; and one man in particular, who had long been under concern for his soul, was now brought to see and feel, in a very lively manner, the impossibility of his doing any thing to help himself, or to bring him into the favour of God, by his tears, prayers, and other religious performances; and found himself *undone* as to any power or goodness of his own, and that there was no way left him, but to leave himself with God to be disposed of as he pleased.

*June 7.* Being desired by the Rev. Mr. William Tennent to be his *assistant* in the administration of the Lord's supper; my people also being invited to attend the *sacramental* solemnity, they cheerfully embraced the opportunity, and this day attended the preparatory services with me.

*Lord's day, June 8.* Most of my people who had been *communicants* at the Lord's table before, being present at this sacramental occasion, communicated with others in this holy ordinance at the desire, and I trust, to the satisfaction and comfort, of numbers of God's people who had longed to see *this day*, and whose hearts had rejoiced in *this* work of grace among the Indians, which prepared the way for what appeared so agreeable at this time. Those of my people who communicated seemed in general agreeably affected at the Lord's table, and some of them considerably melted with the love of Christ; although they were not so remarkably refreshed and feasted at this time as when I administered this ordinance to them in our own congregation only.

Some of the *by-standers* were affected with seeing these who had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise," who of all men had lived "without hope, and without God in the world," now brought *near to God* as his professing people, and sealing covenant with him, by a solemn and devout attendance upon this sacred ordinance. And as numbers of God's people were refreshed with this sight, and

thereby excited to bless God for the enlargement of his kingdom in the world, so some others, I was told, were awakened by it, apprehending the danger they were in of being themselves finally *cast out*, while they saw others, “from the east and west,” preparing, and hopefully prepared in some good measure, to “sit down in the kingdom of God.”

At this season others of my people also, who were not *communicants*, were considerably affected; convictions were revived in divers instances; and one (the man particularly mentioned in my Journal of the 6th instant) obtained comfort and satisfaction; and has since given me such an account of his spiritual exercises, and the *manner* in which he obtained relief, as appears very hopeful. It seems as if he “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,” had now “shined in his heart, and given him the light of,” and experimental “knowledge of, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

*June 3.* A considerable number of my people met together early in the day in a *retired* place in the *woods*, and prayed, sang, and conversed of divine things; and were seen by some religious persons of the white people, to be affected and engaged, and divers of them in tears, in these religious exercises.

Afterwards they attended the concluding exercises of the sacramental solemnity, and then returned home, divers of them “rejoicing for all the goodness of God” they had seen and felt; so that this appeared to be a profitable, as well as a comfortable season, to numbers of my congregation. And their being present at this occasion, and a number of them communicating at the Lord’s table with others of God’s people, was, I trust, for the honour of God and the interest of religion in these parts, as numbers, I have reason to think, were quickened by means of it.

*June 13.* Preached to my people upon the new creature, from *2 Cor. v. 17*. “If any man be in Christ,” &c. The presence of God appeared to be in the assembly. It was a sweet and agreeable meeting, wherein the people of God were refreshed and strengthened, beholding their faces in the glass of God’s word, and finding in themselves the *marks* and *lineaments* of the *new creature*. Some sinners under concern were also renewedly affected, and afresh engaged for the securing of their eternal interests.

Baptized *five* persons at this time, three adults and two children. One of these was the very *aged woman*, of whose exercise I gave an account in my Journal of Dec. 26. She now gave me a very punctual, rational, and satisfactory account of the remarkable change she experienced some months after the beginning of her concern, which, I must say, appeared to be the genuine operations of the divine Spirit, so far as I am capable of judging. And although she was become so childish through old age, that I could do nothing in a way of *questioning* with her, nor scarce make her understand any that I asked her; yet when I let her alone to go on with her own story, she could give a very distinct and particular relation of the many and various exercises of soul she had experienced; so deep were the impressions left upon her mind by that influence, and that exercise she had been under! And I have great



reason to hope, she is *born anew* in her old age, she being, I presume, upwards of *fourscore*. I had good hopes of the other adults, and trust they are such as God will own “in the day when he makes up his jewels.”

*June 19.* Visited my people with two of the reverend correspondents. Spent some time in conversation with some of them upon spiritual things; and took some care of their worldly concerns.

This day makes up a complete year from the first time of my preaching to these Indians in New Jersey. What amazing things has God wrought in this space of time for these poor people! What a surprising change appears in their tempers and behaviour! How are morose and savage pagans in this short space of time transformed into agreeable, affectionate, and humble Christians! and their drunken and pagan howlings turned into devout and fervent prayers and praises to God! They “who were sometimes darkness, are now become light in the Lord. May they walk as children of the light, and of the day. And now to him that is of power to stablish them according to the gospel, and the preaching of Christ To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever! Amen.”

**FIRST APPENDIX**

*TO*

**MR. BRAINERD'S JOURNAL:**

**CONTAINING HIS GENERAL REMARKS ON THE DOCTRINES PREACHED,**

*THEIR EXTRAORDINARY EFFECTS, &c.*



SECT. I.

The doctrine preached to the Indians.

Before I conclude the present Journal, I would make a few *general remarks* upon what to me appears worthy of notice, relating to the continued work of grace among my people. And, first, I cannot but take notice, that I have, in the general, ever since my first coming among these Indians in New Jersey, been favoured with that assistance, which to me is *uncommon*, in preaching *Christ crucified*, and making him the *centre* and *mark* to which all my discourses among them were directed.

It was the principal scope and drift of all my discourses to this people, for several months together, (after having taught them something of the *being* and *perfections* of God, his creation of man in a state of rectitude and happiness, and the obligations mankind were thence under to love and honour him,) to lead them into an acquaintance with their deplorable state by nature, *as fallen creatures*: their *inability* to extricate and deliver themselves from it: the *utter insufficiency* of any *external* reformation and amendments of life, or of any religious performances, *they* were capable of, while in this state, to bring them into the favour of God, and interest them in his eternal mercy.—And thence to show them their *absolute* need of Christ to redeem and save them from the misery of their fallen state. To open his *all-sufficiency* and willingness to save the chief of sinners. The *freeness* and *riches* of divine grace, proposed “without money, and without price,” to all that will accept the offer. And thereupon to press them *without delay*, to betake themselves to him, under a sense of their misery and *undone* state, for relief and everlasting salvation. And to show them the abundant encouragement the gospel proposes to needy, perishing, and helpless sinners, in order to *engage* them so to do. These things I repeatedly and largely insisted upon from time to time.

And I have oftentimes remarked with admiration, that whatever subject I have been treating upon, after having spent time sufficient to explain and illustrate the truths contained therein, I have been *naturally* and *easily* led to Christ as the *substance* of every subject. If I treated on the being and glorious perfections of God, I was thence *naturally* led to discourse of Christ as the only “way to the Father.” If I attempted to open the deplorable misery of our fallen state, it was natural from thence to show the necessity of Christ to undertake for us, to atone for our sins, and to redeem us from the power of them. If I taught the commands of God, and showed our violation of them, this brought me in the most *easy* and natural way, to speak of and recommend the Lord Jesus Christ, as one who had “magnified the law” we had broken, and who was “become the end of it for righteousness, to every one that believes.” And never did I find so much freedom and assistance in making all the various lines of my discourses meet together, and centre in Christ, as I have frequently done among these Indians.

Sometimes when I have had thoughts of offering but a few words upon some particular subject, and saw no occasion, nor indeed much room, for any considerable enlargement, there has at unawares appeared such a fountain of gospel-grace shining forth in, or *naturally* resulting from, a just explication of it, and Christ has seemed in such a manner to be pointed out as the *substance* of what I was considering and explaining, that I have been drawn in a way not only *easy* and *natural*, *proper* and *pertinent*, but almost *unavoidable*, to discourse of him, either in regard of his undertaking, incarnation, satisfaction, admirable fitness for the work of man's redemption, or the infinite need that sinners stand in of an interest in him; which has opened the way for a continual strain of gospel-invitation to perishing souls, to come *empty* and *naked*, *weary* and *heavy laden*, and cast themselves upon them.

And as I have been remarkably influenced and assisted to dwell upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him, in the general current of my discourses here, and have been at times surprisingly furnished with pertinent *matter* relating to him, and the design of his incarnation; so I have been no less assisted oftentimes in regard of an advantageous *manner* of opening the mysteries of divine grace, and representing the infinite excellencies and "unsearchable riches of Christ," as well as of recommending him to the acceptance of perishing sinners. I have frequently been *enabled* to represent the divine glory, the infinite preciousness and transcendent loveliness of the great Redeemer; the suitability of his person and purchase to supply the wants, and answer the utmost desires, of immortal souls: to open the infinite riches of his grace, and the wonderful encouragement proposed in the gospel to unworthy, helpless sinners: to call, invite, and beseech them to come and give up themselves to him, and be reconciled to God through him: to expostulate with them respecting their neglect of one so infinitely lovely, and freely offered: and *this* in *such a manner*, with *such* freedom, pertinency, pathos, and application to the conscience, as, I am sure, I never could have made myself master of by the most assiduous application of mind. And frequently at such seasons I have been surprisingly helped in adapting my discourses to the *capacities* of my people, and bringing them down into such easy and familiar methods of expression, as has rendered them intelligible even to pagans.

I do not mention these things as a recommendation of my own performances; for I am sure I found, from time to time, that I had no skill or wisdom for my great work; and knew not how "to choose out acceptable words" proper to address poor benighted pagans with. But thus God was pleased to help me, "not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Thus I was *enabled* to show them their *misery* without him, and to represent his complete *fitness* to redeem and save them.

And *this* was the preaching God made use of for the awakening of sinners, and the propagation of this “work of grace among the Indians.” And it was remarkable, from time to time, that when I was favoured with any *special* freedom, in discoursing of the “ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners,” and “the need they stood in of such a Saviour,” there was then the greatest appearance of divine power in awakening numbers of secure souls, promoting convictions begun, and comforting the distressed.

I have sometimes formerly, in reading the apostle’s discourse to Cornelius, ([Acts x.](#)) wondered to see him so quickly introduce the Lord Jesus Christ into his sermon, and so entirely dwell upon him through the whole of it, observing him in this point very widely to differ from many of our *modern* preachers: but latterly this has not seemed strange, since Christ has appeared to be the *substance* of the gospel, and the *centre* in which the several lines of divine revelation meet. Although I am still sensible there are many things necessary to be spoken to persons under pagan darkness, in order to make way for a proper introduction of the name of Christ, and his undertaking in behalf of fallen man.



SECT. II.

Morality, sobriety, and external duties, promoted by preaching Christ crucified.

It is worthy of remark, secondly, that numbers of these people are brought to a strict compliance with the rules of *morality* and *sobriety*, and to a conscientious performance of the *external duties* of Christianity, by the *internal* power and influence of divine truths the peculiar doctrine of grace upon their minds; without their having these *moral duties* frequently repeated and inculcated upon them, and the contrary vices particularly exposed and spoken against. What has been the general *strain* and *drift* of my preaching among these Indians; what were the truths I principally insisted upon, and how I was influenced and enabled to dwell from time to time upon the peculiar doctrine of grace; I have already observed in the preceding remarks. Those doctrine, which had the most direct tendency to humble the *fallen* creature, to show him the misery of his *natural* state, to bring him down to the foot of *sovereign mercy*, and to exalt the great Redeemer discover his transcendent excellency and infinite preciousness, and so to recommend him to the sinner's acceptance were the subject-matter of what was delivered in public and private to them, and from time to time repeated and inculcated upon them.

And God was pleased to give these divine truths such a powerful influence upon the minds of these people, and so to bless them for the effectual awakening of numbers of them, that their lives were quickly reformed, without my insisting upon the *precepts of morality*, and spending time in repeated harangues upon *external duties*. There was indeed no room for any kind of discourses but those that respected the *essentials* of religion, and the *experimental* knowledge of divine things, whilst there were so many inquiring daily not how they should regulate their *external* conduct, for *that* persons, who are honestly disposed to comply with duty, when known, may, in ordinary cases, be easily satisfied about, but how they should escape from the wrath they feared, and felt a desert of, obtain an *effectual change of heart*, get an interest in Christ, and come to the enjoyment of eternal blessedness? So that my *great work* still was to lead them into a further view of their *utter undoneness* in themselves, the total depravity and corruption of their hearts; that there was no manner of goodness in them; no good dispositions nor desires; no love to God, nor delight in his commands: but, on the contrary, hatred, enmity, and all manner of wickedness reigning in them: and at the same time to open to them the glorious and complete remedy provided in Christ for helpless, perishing sinners, and offered freely to those who have no goodness of their own, no "works of righteousness which they have done," to recommend them to God.

This was the continued strain of my preaching; this my great concern and constant endeavour, so to enlighten the mind, as thereby duly to affect the *heart*, and, as far as possible, give persons a *sense* and *feeling* of these precious and important doctrine of grace, at least, so far as means might conduce to it. And these were the doctrine, this the method of

preaching, which were blessed of God for the awakening, and, I trust, the saving conversion of numbers of souls, and which were made the means of producing a remarkable reformation among the hearers in general.

When these truths were felt *at heart*, there was now no vice unreformed, no external duty neglected. Drunkenness, the darling vice, was broken off from, and scarce an instance of it known among my hearers for months together. The abusive practice of *husbands* and *wives* in putting away each other, and taking others in their stead, was quickly reformed; so that there are three or four couple who have voluntarily dismissed those they had wrongfully taken, and now live together again in love and peace. The same might be said of all other vicious practices. The reformation was general; and all springing from the *internal* influence of divine truths upon their hearts; and not from any *external* restraints, or because they had heard these vices particularly exposed, and repeatedly spoken against. Some of them I never so much as mentioned; particularly, that of the parting of men and their wives, till some, having their conscience awakened by God's word, came, and *of their own accord* confessed themselves guilty in that respect. And when I did at any time mention their wicked practices, and the sins they were guilty of contrary to the *light of nature*, it was not with design, nor indeed with any hope, of working an effectual reformation in their external manners by this means, for I knew, that while the *tree* remained *corrupt*, the *fruit* would *naturally* be so; but with design to lead them, by observing the wickedness of their *lives*, to a view of the corruption of their *hearts*, and so to convince them of the necessity of a renovation of nature, and to excite them with utmost diligence to seek after that great change, which, if once obtained, I was sensible, would of course produce a reformation of external manners in every respect.

And as all vice was reformed upon their *feeling* the power of these truths upon their hearts, so the *external* duties of Christianity were complied with, and conscientiously performed, from the same *internal* influence; family prayer set up, and constantly maintained, unless among some few more lately come, who had felt little of this divine influence. This duty was constantly performed, even in some families where there were none but *females*, and scarce a prayerless person to be found among near a hundred of them. The Lord's day was seriously and religiously observed, and care taken by parents to keep their children orderly upon that sacred day, &c. And this, not because I had driven them to the performance of these duties by a frequent inculcating of them, but because they had *felt* the power of God's word upon their hearts, were made sensible of their sin and misery, and thence could not but pray, and comply with every thing they knew was duty, from what they felt *within* themselves. When their hearts were touched with a sense of their eternal concerns, they could pray with great freedom, as well as fervency, without being at the trouble first to learn *set forms* for that purpose. And some of them who were suddenly awakened at their first coming among us, were brought to pray and cry for mercy with utmost importunity, without

ever being instructed in the duty of prayer, or so much as once directed to a performance of it.

The happy effects of these peculiar doctrine of grace, which I have so much insisted upon with this people, plainly discover, even to demonstration, that instead of their opening a door to licentiousness, as many vainly imagine, and slanderously insinuate, they have a direct contrary tendency: so that a close application, a *sense* and *feeling* of them, will have the most powerful influence toward the renovation, and *effectual* reformation, both of heart and life.

And happy experience, as well as the word of God, and the example of Christ and his apostles, has taught me, that the very method of preaching which is best suited to awaken in mankind a sense and lively apprehension of their depravity and misery in a *fallen state*, to excite them earnestly to seek after a change of heart, and to *fly for refuge* to free and sovereign grace in Christ, as the only *hope set before them*, is like to be most *successful* toward the reformation of their *external* conduct. I have found that close addresses, and solemn applications of divine truth to the conscience, tend directly to strike death to the root of all vice; while smooth and plausible harangues upon *moral virtues* and *external duties*, at best are like to do no more than lop off the *branches* of corruption, while the *root* of all vice remains still untouched.

A view of the blessed effect of honest endeavours to bring home divine truths to the conscience, and duly to affect the heart with them, has often minded me of those words of our Lord, (which I have thought might be a proper exhortation for ministers in respect of their treating with others, as well as for persons in general with regard to themselves,) "Cleanse first the inside of the cup and platter, that the outside may be clean also." Cleanse, says he, the inside, *that* the outside may be clean. As if he had said, The only effectual way to have the outside clean, is to begin with *what is within*; and if the fountain be purified, the streams will *naturally* be pure. And most certain it is, if we can awaken in sinners a lively sense of their inward pollution and depravity their need of a change of heart and so engage them to seek after *inward* cleansing, their *external* defilement will *naturally* be cleansed, their vicious ways of *course* be reformed, and their conversation and behaviour become regular.

Now, although I cannot pretend that the reformation among my people does, in every instance, spring from a saving change of heart; yet I may truly say, it flows from some *heart-affecting* view and sense of divine truths that all have had in a greater or less degree. I do not intend, by what I have observed here, to represent the preaching of *morality*, and pressing persons to the *external* performance of duty, to be altogether unnecessary and useless *at any time*; and especially at times when there is less of divine power attending the means of grace; when, for want of *internal* influences, there is need of *external* restraints. It is doubtless among the things that "ought to be done," while "others are not to be left un-



done.” But what I principally designed by this remark, was to discover plain matter of fact, *viz.* That the reformation, the sobriety, and external compliance with the rules and duties of Christianity, appearing among my people, are not the effect of any *mere* doctrinal instruction, or *merely* rational view of the beauty of *morality*, but from the internal power and influence that divine truths (the soul-humbling doctrine of grace) have had upon their hearts.

SECT. III.

Continuance, renewal, and quickness of the work.

IT is remarkable, thirdly, that God has so *continued* and *renewed* showers of his grace here: so *quickly* set up his visible kingdom among these people; and so *smiled* upon them in relation to their acquirement of knowledge, both divine and human. It is now near a year since the beginning of this gracious outpouring of the divine Spirit among them: and although it has often seemed to decline and abate for some short space of time as may be observed by several passages of my *Journal*, where I have endeavoured to note things just as they appeared to me yet the shower has seemed to be *renewed*, and the work of grace *revived* again. So that a divine influence seems still apparently to attend the means of grace, in a greater or less degree, in most of our meetings for religious exercises; whereby religious persons are refreshed, strengthened, and established, convictions revived and promoted in many instances, and some few persons newly awakened from time to time. Although it must be acknowledged, that for some time past, there has, in the general, appeared a more manifest decline of this work, and the divine Spirit has seemed, in a considerable measure, withdrawn, especially in regard of his *awakening* influence so that the *strangers* who come latterly, are not seized with concern as formerly; and some few who have been much affected with divine truths in time past, now appear less concerned. Yet, blessed be God, there is still an appearance of divine power and grace, a desirable degree of tenderness, religious affection, and devotion in our assemblies.

And as God has continued and renewed the showers of his grace among this people for some time; so he has with uncommon *quickness* set up his visible kingdom, and gathered himself a church in the midst of them. I have now *baptized*, since the conclusion of my last *Journal*, (or the *First Part*,) *thirty* persons, *fifteen* adults and *fifteen* children. Which added to the number there mentioned, makes *seventy-seven* persons; whereof *thirty-eight* are adults, and *thirty-nine* children; and all within the space of *eleven* months past. And it must be noted, that I have baptized no adults, but such as appeared to have a work of special grace wrought in their hearts; I mean such who have had the experience not only of the awakening and humbling, but, in a judgment of charity, of the renewing and comforting, influences of the divine Spirit. There are many others under solemn concern for their souls, who (I apprehend) are persons of sufficient knowledge, and visible seriousness, *at present*, to render them proper subjects of the ordinance of baptism. Yet, since they give no *comfortable evidences* of having as yet passed a saving change, but only appear under convictions of their sin and misery, and having no principle of spiritual life wrought in them, they are liable to lose the impressions of religion they are now under. Considering also, the great propensity there is in this people *naturally* to abuse themselves with strong drink, and fearing lest some, who at present appear serious and concerned for their souls, might lose their concern, and return

to *this* sin, and so, if baptized, prove a scandal to their profession, I have therefore thought proper hitherto to omit the baptism of any but such who give some *hopeful* evidences of a saving change, although I do not pretend to determine positively respecting the states of any.

I likewise administered the Lord's supper to a number of persons, who I have abundant reason to think (as I elsewhere observed) were proper subjects of that ordinance, within the space of *ten months* and *ten days* after my first coming among these Indians in New Jersey. And from the time that, I am informed, some of them were attending an *idolatrous feast* and *sacrifice* in honour to *devils*, to the time they sat down at the Lord's table, (I trust,) to the honour of God, was not more than a *full year*. Surely Christ's little flock here, so suddenly gathered from among pagans, may justly say, in the language of the church of old, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Much of the goodness of God has also appeared in relation to their acquirement of knowledge, both in religion and in the affairs of common life. There has been a wonderful thirst after *Christian knowledge* prevailing among them in general, and an eager desire of being instructed in christian doctrine and manners. This has prompted them to ask many pertinent as well as important questions; the answers to which have tended much to enlighten their minds, and promote their knowledge in divine things. Many of the doctrine I have delivered, they have queried with me about, in order to gain further light and insight into them; particularly the doctrine of *predestination*: and have from time to time manifested a good understanding of them, by their answers to the questions proposed to them in my *catechetical lectures*.

They have likewise queried with me, respecting a proper *method* as well as proper *matter* of prayer, and expressions suitable to be used in that religious exercise; and have taken pains in order to the performance of this duty with understanding. They have likewise taken pains, and appeared remarkably apt, in learning to sing *psalm tunes*, and are now able to sing with a good degree of decency in the worship of God. They have also acquired a considerable degree of useful knowledge in the affairs of common life: so that they now appear like *rational* creatures, fit for human society, free of that savage roughness and brutish stupidity, which rendered them very disagreeable in their pagan state.

They seem ambitious of a thorough acquaintance with the English language, and for that end frequently speak it among themselves; and many of them have made good proficiency in their acquirement of it, since my coming among them; so that most of them can understand a considerable part, and some the substance of my discourses, without an *interpreter*, (being used to my low and vulgar methods of expression,) though they could not well understand other ministers.

And as they are desirous of instruction, and surprisingly apt in the reception of it, so Divine Providence has smiled upon them in regard of *proper means* in order to it. The at-

tempts made for the procurement of a *school* among them have been succeeded, and a kind Providence has sent them a *schoolmaster* of whom I may justly say, I know of “no man like minded, who will naturally care for their state.” He has generally *thirty* or *thirty-five* children in his school: and when he kept an evening school (as he did while the length of the evenings would admit of it) he had *fifteen* or *twenty* people, married and single.

The children learn with *surprising readiness*; so that their *master* tells me, he never had an English school that learned, in general, comparably so fast. There were not above *two* in *thirty*, although some of them were very small, but what learned to know all the *letters* in the *alphabet* distinctly, within three days after his entrance upon his business; and divers in that space of time learned to *spell* considerably: and some of them, since the beginning of February last,<sup>424</sup> (at which time the school was set up,) have learned so much, that they are able to read in a *Psalter* or *Testament*, without spelling.

They are instructed twice a week in the Reverend Assembly’s *Shorter Catechism*, viz. on Wednesday and Saturday. *Some* of them, since the latter end of February, (at which time they began,) have learned to say it pretty distinctly *by heart* considerably more than half through; and *most* of them have made some proficiency in it.

They are likewise instructed in the duty of secret prayer, and most of them constantly attend it night and morning, and are very careful to inform their master if they apprehend any of their little school-mates neglect that religious exercise.

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424 In less than five months, viz. from Feb. 1, to June 19.

## SECT. IV.

But little appearance of false religion.

It is worthy to be noted, fourthly, to the praise of sovereign grace, that amidst *so great* a work of conviction so much concern and religious affection there has been no *prevalency*, nor indeed any considerable *appearance*, of *false religion*, if I may so term it, or heats of imagination, intemperate zeal, and spiritual pride; which corrupt mixtures too often attend the revival and powerful propagation of religion; and that there have been so very few instances of irregular and scandalous behaviour among those who have appeared serious. I may justly repeat what I observed in a *remark* at the conclusion of my last Journal, <sup>425</sup> *viz.* That there has been no appearance of “bodily agonies, convulsions, frightful screaming, swoonings,” and the like: and may now further add, that there has been no *prevalency* of visions, trances, and imaginations of any kind; although there has been *some* appearance of something of that nature since the conclusion of that Journal. An instance of which I have given an account of in my Journal of December 26.

But this *work of grace* has, in the *main*, been carried on with a surprising degree of *purity*, and freedom from *trash* and corrupt mixture. The religious concern that persons have been under, has generally been *rational* and *just*; arising from a *sense* of their sins, and exposedness to the divine displeasure on the account of them; as well as their utter inability to deliver themselves from the misery they felt and feared. And if there has been, in any instances, an *appearance* of irrational concern and perturbation of mind, when the subjects of it knew not why, yet there has been no *prevalency* of any such thing; and indeed I scarce know of any instance of that nature at all. And it is very remarkable, that although the concern of many persons under convictions of their perishing state has been very great and pressing, yet I have never seen any thing like *desperation* attending it in any one instance. They have had the most *lively sense* of their *undoneness* in themselves; have been brought to give up *all hopes* of deliverance from themselves; and their spiritual exercises leading hereto, have been attended with great distress and anguish of soul: and yet in the seasons of the greatest extremity, there has been no appearance of *despair* in any of them, nothing that has discouraged, or in any wise hindered, them from the most diligent use of all proper means for their conversion and salvation; whence it is apparent, there is not that danger of persons being driven into despair under *spiritual trouble*, (unless in cases of deep and habitual melancholy,) that the world in general is ready to imagine.

The *comfort* that persons have obtained after their distresses, has likewise in general appeared solid, well grounded, and scriptural; arising from a spiritual and *supernatural illumination* of mind, a view of divine things in a measure as they are, a complacency of soul

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425 That is, the First Part of the Journal.

in the divine perfections, and a peculiar satisfaction in the *way of salvation* by free *sovereign grace* in the great Redeemer.

Their joys have seemed to rise from a variety of views and considerations of divine things, although for substance the same. Some, who under *conviction* seemed to have the hardest struggles and heart-risings against divine *sovereignty*, have seemed, at the first dawn of their comfort, to rejoice in a peculiar manner in *that* divine perfection, have been delighted to think that themselves, and all things else, were in the hand of God, and that he would dispose of them “just as he pleased.”

Others, who just before their reception of comfort, have been remarkably oppressed with a sense of their *undoneness* and poverty, who have seen themselves, as it were, falling down into remediless perdition, have been at first more peculiarly delighted with a view of the *freeness* and *riches* of divine grace, and the offer of salvation made to perishing sinners “without money, and without price.”

Some have at first appeared to rejoice especially in the *wisdom* of God, discovered in the way of salvation by Christ; it then appearing to them “a new and living way,” a way they had never thought, nor had any just conception of, until opened to them by the *special* influence of the divine Spirit. And some of them, upon a lively *spiritual* view of this way of salvation, have wondered at their past folly in seeking salvation other ways, and have admired that they never saw *this* way of salvation before, which now appeared so *plain* and *easy*, as well as *excellent* to them.

Others again have had a more *general* view of the beauty and excellency of Christ, and have had their souls delighted with an apprehension of his divine glory, as unspeakably exceeding *all* they had ever conceived of before; yet without singling out any one of the divine perfections in particular; so that although their comforts have seemed to arise from a *variety* of views and considerations of divine glories, still they were *spiritual* and *supernatural* views of them, and not groundless fancies, that were the spring of their joys and comforts.

Yet it must be acknowledged, that when this work became so *universal* and *prevalent*, and gained such general credit and esteem among the Indians, that Satan seemed to have little advantage of working against it in his own proper garb; he then *transformed* himself “into an angel of light,” and made some vigorous attempts to introduce turbulent commotions of the passions in the *room* of genuine convictions of sin; imaginary and fanciful notions of Christ, as appearing to the mental eye in a human shape, and being in some particular postures, &c. in the room of *spiritual* and *supernatural* discoveries of his divine glory and excellency; as well as divers other delusions. And I have reason to think, that if these things had met with countenance and encouragement, there would have been a very considerable *harvest* of this kind of *converts* here.

*Spiritual pride* also discovered itself in various instances. Some persons who had been under great affections, seemed very desirous from thence of being thought truly gracious;

who when I could not but express to them my fears respecting their spiritual states, discovered their resentments to a considerable degree upon that occasion. There also appeared in *one* or *two* of them an unbecoming ambition of being *teachers* of others. So that *Satan* has been *a busy adversary* here, as well as elsewhere. But blessed be God, though something of this nature has appeared, yet nothing of it has *prevailed*, nor indeed made any considerable progress at all. My people are now apprised of these things, are made acquainted that *Satan* in such a manner “transformed himself into an angel of light,” in the first season of the great *outpouring* of the divine Spirit in the days of the apostles; and that something of this nature, in a greater or less degree, has attended almost every *revival* and remarkable *propagation* of true religion ever since. And they have learned so to distinguish between the *gold* and *dross*, that the credit of the latter “is trodden down like the mire of the streets:” and it being natural for this kind of *stuff* to die with its *credit*, there is now scarce any *appearance* of it among them.

And as there has been no *prevalency* of irregular heats, imaginary notions, spiritual pride, and satanical delusions among my people; so there has been very few instances of *scandalous* and *irregular* behaviour among those who have made a *profession* or even an *appearance* of seriousness. I do not know of more than three or four *such* persons that have been guilty of any open misconduct since their first acquaintance with Christianity, and *not one* that persists in any thing of that nature. And perhaps the remarkable purity of this work in the *latter* respect, its freedom from frequent instances of scandal, is very much owing to its purity in the *former* respect, its freedom from corrupt mixtures of spiritual pride, wild-fire, and delusion, which naturally lay a foundation for scandalous practices.

“ May this blessed work in the power and purity of it prevail among the poor Indians here, as well as spread elsewhere, till their remotest tribes shall see the salvation of God! Amen.” <sup>426</sup>

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426 Money collected and expended for the Indians. As mention has been made in the preceding Journal, of an English school erected and continued among these Indians, dependent entirely upon charity: and as collections for defraying other charges that have necessarily arisen in the promotion of the religious interests of the Indians, it may be satisfactory, and perhaps will be thought by some but a piece of justice to the world, that an exact account be here given of the money already received by way of collection for the benefit of the Indians, and the manner in which it has been expended. The following is therefore a just account of this matter:—Money received since October last, by way of public collection, for promoting the religious interests of the Indians in New Jersey, viz. £ s. d. From New York 23 10 2 Jamaica on Long Island 3 Elizabeth-town 7 5 Elizabeth-town farms 1 18 9 Newark 4 5 7 Woodbridge 2 18 2 Morris-town 1 5 3 Freehold 12 11 Freehold Dutch congregation. 4 14 3 Shrewsbury and Shark river 3 5 Middle-town Dutch congregation 2 Carried forward £ 66 13 2 £ s. d. Brought forward 66 13 2 The Dutch congregation in and about New Brunswick 3 5 King’s-town 5 11 Neshaminy, and places adjacent in Pennsylvania 14 5 10 Abington & New Providence, by the hand of The Reverend Mr. Treat 10 5 The whole amounting to £ 100 Money paid out since October last for promoting the religion interests of the Indians in

## SECOND APPENDIX

TO

MR. BRAINERD'S JOURNAL:

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF HIS

METHOD OF LEARNING THE INDIAN LANGUAGE, AND OF INSTRUCTING  
THE INDIANS;

TOGETHER

WITH THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH LIE IN THE WAY OF THEIR CONVERSION.

## INTRODUCTION.

I should have concluded what I had at present to offer, upon the affairs respecting my *mission*, with the preceding account of the money collected and expended for the *religious interests* of the Indians, but that I have not long since received from the reverend president of the correspondents, the copy of a letter directed to him from the Honourable Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, dated at Edinburgh, March 21, 1745. Wherein I find it is expressly enjoined upon their missionaries, "That they and *seasonably*, which I am sensible they have not in general done, by reason of their falling into the hands of the enemy, although I have been at the pains of sending two copies of every Journal, for more than two years past, lest one might miscarry in the passage. But with relation to the *latter* of these particulars, I have purposely omitted saying any thing considerable, and that for these two reasons. *First*, because I could not oftentimes give any tolerable account of the *difficulties* I met with in my work, without speaking somewhat particularly of the *causes* of them, and the *circumstances* conducing to them, which would necessarily have rendered my Journals very tedious. Besides, some of the causes of my difficulties I thought more fit to be concealed than divulged. And, *secondly*, because I thought a frequent mentioning of the difficulties attending my work, might appear as an unbecoming complaint under my burden; or as if I would rather be thought to be endowed with a singular measure of self-denial, constancy, and holy resolution, to meet and confront so many difficulties, and yet to hold on and go forward amidst them all. But since the Honourable Society are pleased to require a more *exact* and *particular* account of these things, I shall cheerfully endeavour something for their satisfaction in rela-




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New Jersey, viz. Upon the occasion mentioned in my Journal Of January 28 82 5 For the building of a School-house 3 5 To the schoolmaster as a part of his reward For his present year's service 17 10 For books for the children to learn in 3 The whole amounting to £ 106 DAVID BRAINERD



tion to each of these particulars: although in regard of the latter I am ready to say, *Infandum jubes renovare dolorem*.

SECT. I.

Method of learning the Indian language.

The most successful *method* I have taken for instructing myself in any of the Indian languages, is, to translate English discourses by the help of an interpreter or two, into their language as near verbatim as the sense will admit of, and to observe strictly how they use words, and what construction they will bear in various cases; and thus to gain some acquaintance with the root from whence particular words proceed, and to see how they are thence varied and diversified. But here occurs a very great difficulty; for the interpreters being unlearned, and unacquainted with the rules of language, it is impossible sometimes to know by them what part of speech some particular word is of, whether *noun*, *verb*, or *participle*; for they seem to use *participles* sometimes where we should use *nouns*, and sometimes where we should use *verbs* in the English language.

But I have, notwithstanding many difficulties, gained some acquaintance with the grounds of the Delaware language, and have learned most of the *defects* in it; so that I know what English words can, and what cannot, be translated into it. I have also gained some acquaintance with the particular phraseologies, as well as *peculiarities* of their language, one of which I cannot but mention. Their language does not admit of their speaking any word denoting relation, such as, father, son, &c. *absolutely*; that is, without prefixing a pronoun-passive to it, such as *my*, *thy*, *his*, &c. Hence they cannot be baptized in their own language in the name of *the* Father, and *the* Son, &c.; but they may be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and *his* Father, &c. I have gained so much knowledge of their language, that I can understand a considerable part of what they say, when they discourse upon divine things, and am frequently able to correct my interpreter, if he mistakes my sense. But I can do nothing to any purpose at *speaking* the language myself.

And as an apology for this defect, I must renew, or rather enlarge, my former complaint, *viz.* That “while so much of my time is necessarily consumed in journeying,” while I am obliged to ride four thousand miles a year, (as I have done in the year past,) “I can have little left for any of my necessary studies, and consequently for the study of the Indian languages.” And this, I may venture to say, is the great, if not the only, reason why the Delaware language is not familiar to me before this time. And it is impossible I should ever be able to speak it without close application, which, at present, I see no prospect of having time for. To preach and catechise frequently; to converse privately with persons that need so much instruction and direction as these poor Indians do; to take care of all their *secular* affairs, as if they were a company of children; to ride abroad frequently in order to procure collections for the support of the *school*, and for their help and benefit in other respects; to hear and decide all the petty differences that arise among any of them; and to have the constant oversight and management of all their affairs of every kind, must needs engross most of my time, and

leave me little for application to the study of the Indian languages. And when I add to this, the time that is necessarily consumed upon my Journals, I must say I have little to spare for other business. I have not (as was observed before) sent to the Honourable Society less than two copies of every Journal, for more than two years past; most of which, I suppose, have been taken by the French in their passage. And a third copy I have constantly kept by me, lest the others should miscarry. This has caused me not a little labour, and so straitened me for time, when I have been at liberty from other business, and had opportunity to sit down to write, which is but rare, that I have been obliged to write twelve and thirteen hours in a day; till my spirits have been extremely wasted, and my life almost spent, to get these writings accomplished. And after all; after diligent application to the various parts of my work, and after the most industrious improvement of time I am capable of, both early and late, I cannot oftentimes possibly gain two hours in a week for reading or any other studies, unless just for what appears of absolute necessity *for the present*. And frequently when I attempt to redeem time, by sparing it out of my sleeping hours, I am by that means thrown under bodily indisposition, and rendered fit for nothing. This is truly my present state, and is like to be so, for aught I can see, unless I could procure an *assistant* in my work, or quit my present business.

But although I have not made that proficiency I could wish to have done, in learning the Indian languages; yet I have used all endeavours to instruct them in the English tongue, which perhaps will be more advantageous to the Christian interest among them, than if I should preach in their own language; for that is very defective, (as I shall hereafter observe,) so that many things cannot be communicated to them without introducing English terms. Besides, they can have no *books* translated into their language, without great difficulty and expense; and if still accustomed to their own language only, they would have no advantage of hearing other ministers occasionally, or in my absence. So that my having a perfect acquaintance with the Indian language would be of no great importance with regard to this congregation of Indians in New Jersey, although it might be of great service to me in treating with the Indians elsewhere.

## SECT. II.

Method of instructing the Indians.

The method I am taking to instruct the Indians in the principles of our holy religion, are, to preach, or open and improve some particular points of doctrine; to expound particular paragraphs, or sometimes whole chapters, of God's word to them; to give historical relations from Scripture of the most material and remarkable occurrences relating to the church of God from the beginning; and frequently to catechise them upon the principles of Christianity. The latter of these methods of instructing I manage in a twofold manner. I sometimes catechise *systematically*, proposing questions agreeable to the Reverend Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*. This I have carried to a considerable length. At other times I catechise upon any important subject that I think difficult to them. Sometimes when I have discoursed upon some particular point, and made it as plain and familiar to them as I can, I then catechise them upon the most material branches of my discourse, to see whether they had a thorough understanding of it. But as I have catechised chiefly in a *systematical* form, I shall here give some specimen of the method I make use of in it, as well as of the propriety and justness of my people's answers to the questions proposed to them.

*Questions upon the benefits believers receive from Christ at death.*

Q. I have shown you, that the children of God receive a great many good things from Christ while they live, now have they any more to receive when they come to die? A. Yes.

Q. Are the children of God then made perfectly free from sin? Yes.

Q. Do you think they will never more be troubled with vain, foolish, and wicked thoughts? A. No, never at all.

Q. Will not they then be like the good angels I have so often told you of? A. Yes.

Q. And do you call *this* a great mercy to be freed from all sin? A. Yes.

Q. Do all God's children count it so? A. Yes, all of them.

Q. Do you think this is what they would ask for above *all things*, if God should say to them, Ask what you will, and it shall be done for you? A. O yes, be sure, this is what they want.

Q. You say the souls of God's people at death are made perfectly free from sin, where do they go then? A. They go and live with Jesus Christ.

Q. Does Christ show them more respect and honour, and make them more happy<sup>427</sup> than we can possibly think of in this world? A. Yes.

Q. Do they go *immediately* to live with Christ in heaven, as soon as their bodies are dead? or do they tarry somewhere else a while? A. They go immediately to Christ.

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427 The only way I have to express their "entering into glory," or being glorified; there being no word in the Indian language answering to that general term.

Q. Does Christ take any care of the bodies of his people when they are dead, and their souls gone to heaven, or does he forget them? A. He takes care of them.

These questions were all answered with surprising readiness, and without once missing, as I remember. And in answering several of them which respected deliverance from sin, they were much affected, and melted with the hopes of that happy state.

*Questions upon the benefits believers receive from Christ at the resurrection.*

Q. You see I have already shown you what good things Christ gives his good people while they live, and when they come to die; now, will he raise their bodies, and the bodies of others, to life again at the last day? A. Yes, they shall all be raised.

Q. Shall they then have the same bodies they now have? A. Yes.

Q. Will their bodies then be weak, will they feel cold, hunger, thirst, and weariness, as they now do? A. No, none of these things.

Q. Will their bodies ever die any more after they are raised to life? A. No.

Q. Will their souls and bodies be joined together again? A. Yes.

Q. Will God's people be more happy then, than they were while their bodies were asleep? A. Yes.

Q. Will Christ then own these to be his people before all the world? A. Yes.

Q. But God's people find so much sin in themselves, that they are often ashamed of themselves, and will not Christ be ashamed to own such for his friends at that day? A. No, he never will be ashamed of them.

Q. Will Christ then show all the world, that he has put away these people's sins,<sup>428</sup> and that he looks upon them as if they had never sinned at all? A. Yes.

Q. Will he look upon them as if they had never sinned, for the sake of any good things they have done themselves, or for the sake of his righteousness accounted to them as if it was theirs? A. For the sake of his righteousness counted to them, not for their own goodness.

Q. Will God's children then be as happy as they can desire to be? Yes.

Q. The children of God while in this world, can but now and then draw near to him, and they are ready to think they can never have enough of God and Christ, but will they have enough there, as much as they can desire? A. O yes, enough, enough.

Q. Will the children of God love him then as much as they desire, will they find nothing to hinder their love from going to him? A. Nothing at all, they shall love him as much as they desire.

Q. Will they never be weary of God and Christ, and the pleasures of heaven, so as we are weary of our friends and enjoyments here, after we have been pleased with them awhile? A. No, never.

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428 The only way I have to express their being openly-acquitted. In like manner, when I speak of justification, I have no other way but to call it God's looking upon us as good creatures.

Q. Could God's people be happy if they knew God loved them, and yet felt at the same time that they could not love and honour him? A. No, no.

Q. Will this then make God's people perfectly happy, to love God above all, to honour him continually, and to feel his love to them? A. Yes.

Q. And will this happiness last for ever? A. Yes, for ever, for ever.

These questions, like the former, were answered without hesitation or missing, as I remember, in any one instance.

*Questions upon the duty which God requires of men.*

Q. Has God let us know any thing of his will, or what he would have us to do to please him? A. Yes.

Q. And does he require us to do his will, and to please him? A. Yes.

Q. Is it right that God should require this of us, has he any business to command us as a father does his children? A. Yes.

Q. Why is it right that God should command us to do what he pleases? A. Because he made us, and gives us all our good things.

Q. Does God require us to do any thing that will hurt us, and take away our comfort and happiness? A. No.

Q. But God requires sinners to repent and be sorry for their sins, and to have their hearts broken; now, does not this hurt them, and take away their comfort, to be made sorry, and to have their hearts broken? A. No, it does them good.

Q. Did God teach man his will at first by writing it down in a book, or did he put it into his heart, and teach him without a book what was right? A. He put it into his heart, and made him know what he should do.

Q. Has God since that time writ down his will in a book? A. Yes.

Q. Has God written his whole will in his book; has he there told us all that he would have us believe and do? A. Yes.

Q. What need was there of this book, if God at first put his will into the heart of man, and made him feel what he should do? A. There was need of it, because we have sinned, and made our hearts blind.

Q. And has God writ down the same things in his book, that he at first put into the heart of man? A. Yes.

In this manner I endeavour to adapt my instructions to the capacities of my people; although they may perhaps seem strange to others who have never experienced the difficulty of the work. And these I have given an account of, are the methods I am from time to time pursuing, in order to instruct them in the principles of Christianity. And I think I may say, it is my great concern that these instructions be given them in such a *manner*, that they may not only be *doctrinally taught*, but *duly affected* thereby, that divine truths may come to

them, “not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost,” and be received “not as the word of man.”

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SECT. III.

Difficulties attending the Christianizing of the Indians First difficulty, the rooted aversion to Christianity that generally prevails among them.



I shall now attempt something with relation to the last particular required by the Honourable Society in their letter, *viz.* To give some account of the “difficulties I have already met with in my work, and the methods I make use of for surmounting the same.” And, in the first instance, *first*, I have met with great difficulty in my work among these Indians, “from the rooted aversion to Christianity that generally prevails among them.” They are not only brutishly stupid and ignorant of divine things, but many of them are obstinately set against Christianity, and seem to abhor even the Christian *name*.

This aversion to Christianity arises partly from a view of the “immorality and vicious behaviour of many who are called Christians.” They observe that horrid wickedness in nominal Christians, which the light of nature condemns in themselves: and not having distinguishing views of things, are ready to look upon all the white people *alike*, and to condemn them *alike*, for the abominable practices of *some*. Hence when I have attempted to treat with them about Christianity, they have frequently objected the scandalous practices of Christians. They have observed to me, that the *white people* lie, defraud, steal, and drink worse than the Indians; that they have taught the Indians these things, especially the latter of them; who before the coming of the English, knew of no such thing as strong drink: that the English have, by these means, made them quarrel and kill one another; and, in a word, brought them to the practice of all those vices that now prevail among them. So that they are now vastly more vicious, as well as much more miserable, than they were before the coming of the white people into the country. These, and such like objections, they frequently make against Christianity, which are not easily answered to their satisfaction; many of them being *facts* too notoriously true.

The only way I have to take in order to *surmount this difficulty*, is to distinguish between *nominal* and *real* Christians; and to show them, that the ill conduct of many of the *former* proceeds not from their being Christians, but from their being Christians only in *name*, not in *heart*, &c. To which it has sometimes been objected, that if all those who will cheat the Indians are Christians only in *name*, there are but few left in the country to be Christians in *heart*. This, and many other of the remarks they pass upon the white people, and their miscarriages, I am forced to own, and cannot but grant, that many *nominal* Christians are more abominably wicked than the Indians. But then I attempt to show them, that there are some who feel the power of Christianity, and that these are not so. I ask them, when they ever saw me guilty of the vices they complain of, and charge Christians in general with? But still the great difficulty is, that the people who live back in the country nearest to them, and the *traders* that go among them, are generally of the most irreligious and vicious sort; and the conduct of one or two persons, be it never so exemplary, is not sufficient to counterbal-



ance the vicious behaviour of so many of the same denomination, and so to recommend Christianity to pagans.

Another thing that serves to make them more averse to Christianity, is a “fear of being enslaved.” They are, perhaps, some of the most jealous people living, and extremely averse to a state of servitude, and hence are always afraid of some design forming against them. Besides, they seem to have no sentiments of generosity, benevolence, and goodness; that if any thing be proposed to them, as being for their good, they are ready rather to suspect, that there is at bottom some design forming against them, than that such proposals flow from good-will to them, and a desire of their welfare. And hence, when I have attempted to recommend Christianity to their acceptance, they have sometimes objected, that the white people have come among them, have cheated them out of their lands, driven them back to the mountains, from the pleasant places they used to enjoy by the sea-side &c.; that therefore they have no reason to think the white people are now seeking their welfare; but rather that they have sent me out to draw them together, under a pretence of kindness to them, that they may have an opportunity to make slaves of them, as they do of the poor negroes, or else to ship them on board their vessels, and make them fight with their enemies, &c. Thus they have oftentimes construed all the kindness I could show them, and the hardships I have endured in order to treat with them about Christianity. “He never would (say they) take all this pains to do us good, he must have some wicked design to hurt us some way or other.” And to give them assurance of the contrary, is not an easy matter, while there are so many who (agreeable to their apprehension) are only “seeking their own,” not the good of others.

To remove this difficulty I inform them, that I am not sent out among them by those persons in *these provinces*, who they suppose have cheated them out of their lands; but by pious people at a great distance, who never had an inch of their lands, nor ever thought of doing them any hurt, &c.

But here will arise so many frivolous and impertinent questions, that it would tire one’s patience, and wear out one’s spirits to hear them; such as, “But why did not *these good people* send you to teach us before, while we had our lands down by the sea-side, &c. If they had sent you then, we should likely have heard you, and turned Christians.” The poor creatures still imagining, that I should be much beholden to them, in case they would hearken to Christianity; and insinuating, that this was a favour they could not now be so good as to show me, seeing they had received so many injuries from the *white* people.

Another spring of aversion to Christianity in the Indians, is, “their strong attachment to their own religious notions, (if they may be called religious,) and the early prejudices they have imbibed in favour of their own frantic and ridiculous kind of worship.” What their notions of God are, in their pagan state, is hard precisely to determine. I have taken much pains to inquire of my Christian people, whether they, before their acquaintance with Christianity, imagined there was a *plurality* of great invisible powers, or whether they sup-

posed but *one* such being, and worshipped him in a variety of forms and shapes: but cannot learn any thing of them so distinct as to be fully satisfying upon the point. Their notions in that state were so prodigiously dark and confused, that they seemed not to know what they thought themselves. But so far as I can learn, they had a notion of a plurality of invisible *deities*, and paid some kind of homage to them promiscuously, under a great variety of forms and shapes. And it is certain, that those who yet remain pagans pay some kind of superstitious reverence to beasts, birds, fishes, and even reptiles; that is, some to one kind of animal, and some to another. They do not indeed suppose a divine power *essential* to, or *inhering* in, these creatures, but that some invisible beings I cannot learn that it is always *one* such being only, but divers; not distinguished from each other by certain names, but only notionally communicate to those animals a *great power* (either one or other of them, just as it happens, or perhaps sometimes all of them,) and so make these creatures the immediate authors of good to certain persons. Whence such a creature becomes *sacred* to the persons to whom he is supposed to be the immediate author of good, and through him they must worship the invisible powers, though to others he is no more than another creature. And perhaps another animal is looked upon to be the immediate author of good to *another*, and consequently *he* must worship the invisible powers in *that* animal. And I have known a pagan burn fine tobacco for incense, in order to appease the anger of that invisible power which he supposed presided over *rattle-snakes*, because one of these animals was killed by an other Indian near his house.

But after the strictest inquiry respecting their notions of the Deity, I find, that in ancient times, before the coming of the white people, some supposed there were *four* invisible powers, who presided over the four corners of the earth. Others imagined the *sun* to be the *only* deity, and that all things were made by him. Others, at the same time, have a confused notion of a certain *body or fountain of deity*, somewhat like the *anima mundi*, so frequently mentioned by the more learned ancient heathens, diffusing itself to various animals, and even to inanimate things, making them the immediate authors of good to certain persons, as before observed, with respect to *various* supposed deities. But after the coming of the white people, they seemed to suppose there were three deities, and three only, because they saw people of three different kinds of complexion, *viz.* English, Negroes, and themselves.

It is a notion pretty generally prevailing among them, that it was not the *same God* made them, who made us; but that they were made after the white people: which further shows, that they imagine a plurality of divine powers. And I fancy they suppose their god gained some special skill by seeing the white people made, and so made *them* better: for it is certain they look upon themselves, and their methods of living, (which, they say, their god expressly prescribed for them,) vastly preferable to the white people, and their methods. And hence will frequently sit and laugh at them, as being good for nothing else but to plough and fatigue themselves with hard labour; while *they* enjoy the satisfaction of stretching themselves on

the ground, and sleeping as much as they please; and have no other trouble but now and then to chase the deer, which is often attended with pleasure rather than pain. Hence, by the way, many of them look upon it as disgraceful for them to become Christians, as it would be esteemed among Christians for any to become pagans. And now although they suppose our religion will do well enough for us, because prescribed by *our* God, yet it is no ways proper for them, because not of the same make and original. This they have sometimes offered as a reason why they did not incline to hearken to Christianity.

They seem to have some confused notion about a future state of existence, and many of them imagine that the *chichung*, (*i. e.* the shadow,) or what survives the body, will at death go *southward*, and in an unknown but curious place, will enjoy some kind of happiness, such as, hunting, feasting, dancing, and the like. And what they suppose will contribute much to their happiness in that state, is that they shall never be weary of those entertainments. It seems by this notion of their going *southward* to obtain happiness, as if they had their course into these parts of the world from some very cold climate, and found the further they went *southward* the more comfortable they were; and thence concluded, that perfect felicity was to be found further towards the same point.

They seem to have some faint and glimmering notion about *rewards* and *punishments*, or at least *happiness* and *misery*, in a future state, that is, some that I have conversed with, though others seem to know of no such thing. Those that suppose this, seem to imagine that most will be happy, and that those who are not so, will be punished only with *privation*, being only excluded the walls of that good world where happy souls shall dwell.

These rewards and punishments they suppose to depend entirely upon their conduct with relation to the duties of the *second* table, *i. e.* their behaviour towards mankind, and seem, so far as I can see, not to imagine that they have any reference to their *religious* notions or practices, or any thing that relates to the worship of God. I remember I once consulted a very ancient but intelligent Indian upon this point, for my own satisfaction; and asked him whether the Indians of old times had supposed there was any thing of the man that would survive the body? He replied, Yes. I asked him, where they supposed its abode would be? He replied, "It would go southward." I asked him further, whether it would be happy there? He answered, after a considerable pause, "that the souls of *good* folks would be happy, and the souls of *bad* folks miserable." I then asked him, who he called *bad* folks? His answer (as I remember) was, "Those who lie, steal, quarrel with their neighbours, are unkind to their friends, and especially to aged parents, and, in a word, such as are a plague to mankind." These were his *bad* folks; but not a word was said about their neglect of divine worship, and their badness in that respect.

They have indeed some kind of religious worship, are frequently offering *sacrifices* to some supposed invisible powers, and are very ready to impute their calamities in the *present* world, to the neglect of these sacrifices; but there is no appearance of reverence and devotion

in the homage they pay them; and what they do of this nature, seems to be done only to appease the supposed anger of their deities, to engage them to be placable to themselves, and do them no hurt, or at most, only to invite these *powers* to succeed them in those enterprises they are engaged in respecting the *present* life. So that in offering these sacrifices, they seem to have no reference to a future state, but only to present comfort. And this is the account my interpreter always gives me of this matter. "They sacrifice (says he) that they may have success in hunting and other affairs, and that sickness and other calamities may not befall them, which they fear in the present world, in case of neglect; but they do not suppose God will ever punish them in the *coming* world for neglecting to sacrifice," &c. And indeed they seem to imagine, that those whom they call *bad folks*, are excluded from the company of good people in that state, not so much because God remembers, and is determined to punish them for their sins of any kind, either immediately against himself or their neighbour, as because they would be a *plague* to society, and would render others unhappy if admitted to dwell with them. So that they are excluded rather of *necessity*, than by God acting as a *righteous judge*.

They give much heed to *dreams*, because they suppose these invisible powers give them directions at such times about certain affairs, and sometimes inform them what *animal* they would choose to be worshipped in. They are likewise much attached to the traditions and fabulous notions of their fathers, who have informed them of divers miracles that were anciently wrought among the Indians, which they firmly believe, and thence look upon their ancestors to have been the best of men. They also mention some wonderful things which, they say, have happened since the memory of some who are now living. One I remember affirmed to me, that himself had once been dead four days, that most of his friends in that time were gathered together to his funeral, and that he should have been buried, but that some of his relations at a great distance, who were sent for upon that occasion, were not arrived, before whose coming he came to life again. In this time, he says, he went to the place where the sun *rises*, (imagining the earth to be plain,) and directly over that place, at a great height in the air, he was admitted, he says, into a great house, which he supposes was several miles in length, and saw many wonderful things, too tedious as well as ridiculous to mention. Another person, a woman, whom I have not seen, but been credibly informed of by the Indians, declares, that she was dead several days, that her soul went *southward*, and feasted and danced with the happy spirits, and that she found all things exactly agreeable to the Indian notions of a future state.

These superstitious notions and traditions, and this kind of ridiculous worship I have mentioned, they are extremely attached to, and the prejudice they have imbibed in favour of these things, renders them not a little averse to the doctrine of Christianity. Some of them have told me, when I have endeavoured to instruct them, "that their fathers had taught them already, and that they did not want to learn now."

It will be too tedious to give any considerable account of the methods I make use of for surmounting this difficulty. I will just say, I endeavour, as much as possible, to show them the *inconsistency* of their own notions, and so to confound them out of their own mouths. But I must also say, I have sometimes been almost nonplussed with them, and scarce knew what to answer them: but never have been more perplexed with them, than when they have pretended to yield to me as knowing more than they, and consequently have asked me numbers of impertinent, and yet difficult questions, as, "How the Indians came first into this part of the world, away from all the white people, if what I said was true," *viz.* that the same God made them who made us? "How the Indians became *black*, if they had the same original parents with the *white* people?" And numbers more of the like nature. These things, I must say, have been not a little difficult and discouraging, especially when withal some of the Indians have appeared angry and malicious against Christianity.

What further contributes to their aversion to Christianity is, the influence that their *powows* (*conjurers* or *diviners*) have upon them. These are a sort of persons who are supposed to have a power of *foretelling future events*, or *recovering the sick*, at least oftentimes, and of *charming, enchanting*, or *poisoning persons to death* by their *magic* divinations. And their spirit, in its various operations, seems to be a Satanical imitation of the spirit of prophecy that the church in early ages was favoured with. Some of these diviners are endowed with the spirit in infancy; others in adult age. It seems not to depend upon their own will, nor to be acquired by any endeavours of the person who is the subject of it, although it is supposed to be given to children sometimes in consequence of some means the parents use with them for that purpose; one of which is to make the child swallow a small living frog, after having performed some superstitious rites and ceremonies upon it. They are not under the influence of this spirit always alike, but it comes upon them at times. And those who are endowed with it, are accounted singularly favoured.

I have laboured to gain some acquaintance with this affair of their *conjunction*, and have for that end consulted and queried with the man mentioned in my Journal of May 9, who, since his conversion to Christianity, has endeavoured to give me the best intelligence he could of this matter. But it seems to be such a *mystery of iniquity*, that I cannot well understand it, and do not know oftentimes what ideas to affix to the terms he makes use of; and, so far as I can learn, he himself has not any clear notions of the thing, now his spirit of divination is gone from him. However, the manner in which he says he obtained this spirit of divination was this; he was admitted into the presence of a *great wan*, who informed him, that he loved, pitied, and desired to do him good. It was not in this world that he saw the great man, but in a world *above* at a vast distance from this. The great man, he says, was clothed with the day; yea, with the brightest day he ever saw; a day of many years, yea, of everlasting continuance! this whole world, he says, was drawn upon him, so that *in* him, the earth, and all things in it, might be seen. I asked him, if rocks, mountains, and seas were

drawn upon, or appeared in him? He replied, that every thing that was beautiful and lovely in the earth was upon him, and might be seen by looking on him, as well as if one was on the earth to take a view of them there. By the side of the great man, he says, stood his *shadow* or spirit; for he used (*chichung*) the word they commonly use to express that of the man which survives the body, which word properly signifies a *shadow*. This shadow, he says, was as lovely as the man himself, and filled *all places*, and was most agreeable as well as wonderful to him. Here, he says, he tarried some time, and was unspeakably entertained and delighted with a view of the great man, of his shadow or spirit, and of all things *in him*. And what is most of all astonishing, he imagines all this to have passed before he was born. He never had been, he says, in this world at that time. And what confirms him in the belief of this, is, that the great man told him, that he must come down to earth, be born of *such* a woman, meet with *such* and *such* things, and in particular, that he should once in his life be guilty of *murder*. At this he was displeased, and told the great man, he would never murder. But the great man replied, "I have said it, and it shall be so." Which has accordingly happened. At this time, he says, the great man asked him what he would choose in life. He replied, First to be a *hunter*, and afterwards to be a *powow* or *diviner*. Whereupon the great man told him, he should have what he desired, and that his *shadow* should go along with him down to earth, and be with him for ever. There was, he says, all this time no words spoken between them. The conference was not carried on by any *human* language, but they had a kind of mental intelligence of each other's thoughts, dispositions, and proposals. After this, he says, he saw the great man no more; but supposes he now came down to earth to be born, but the spirit or shadow of the great man still attended him, and ever after continued to appear to him in dreams and other ways, until he felt the power of God's word upon his heart; since which it has entirely left him.

This spirit, he says, used sometimes to direct him in dreams to go to such a place and hunt, assuring him he should there meet with success, which accordingly proved so. And when he had been there some time, the spirit would order him to another place. So that he had success in hunting, according to the great man's promise made to him at the time of his choosing this employment.

There were some times when this spirit came upon him in a *special* manner, and he was full of what he saw in the great man; and then, he says, he was *all light*, and not only *light* himself, but it was light all *around him*, so that he could see through men, and knew the thoughts of their hearts, &c. These *depths of Satan* I leave to others to fathom or to dive into as they please, and do not pretend, for my own part, to know what ideas to affix to such terms, and cannot well guess what conceptions of things these creatures have at these times when they call themselves *all light*. But my interpreter tells me, that he heard one of them tell a certain Indian the secret thoughts of his heart, which he had never divulged. The case was this, the Indian was bitten with a snake, and was in extreme pain with the bite.

Whereupon the *diviner* (who was applied to for his recovery) told him, that at *such a time* he had promised, that the next deer he killed, he would sacrifice it to some *great power*, but had broken his promise. And now, said he, that great power has ordered this snake to bite you for your neglect. The Indian confessed it was so, but said he had never told any body of it. But as *Satan*, no doubt, excited the Indian to make that promise, it was no wonder he should be able to communicate the matter to the conjurer.

These things serve to fix them down in their *idolatry*, and to make them believe there is no safety to be expected, but by their continuing to *offer such sacrifices*. And the influence that these *powows* have upon them, either through the esteem or fear they have of them, is no small hinderance to their embracing Christianity.

To remove this difficulty, I have laboured to show the Indians, that these diviners have no power to recover the sick, when the God whom Christians serve, has determined them for death; and that the supposed *great power* who influences these *diviners* has himself no power in this case: and that if they seem to recover any by their *magic charms*, they are only such as the God I preached to them, had determined should recover, and who would have recovered without their conjurations, &c. And when I have apprehended them afraid of embracing Christianity, lest they should be enchanted and poisoned, I have endeavoured to relieve their minds of this fear, by asking them, Why their *powows* did not enchant and poison me, seeing they had as much reason to hate me for preaching to and desiring them to become Christians, as they could have to hate them in case they should actually become such? And that they might have an evidence of the power and goodness of God engaged for the protection of Christians, I ventured to bid a challenge to all their *powows* and *great powers* to do their worst on me first of all, and thus laboured to tread down their influence.

Many things further might be offered upon this head, but thus much may suffice for a representation of their aversion to and prejudice against Christianity, the springs of it, and the difficulties thence arising.

SECT. IV.

Second difficulty in converting the Indians, viz. To convey divine truths to their understanding, and to gain their assent.

Another great difficulty I have met with in my attempts to Christianize the Indians, has been to “convey divine truths to their understandings, and to gain their assent to them as such.”

In the first place, I laboured under a very great disadvantage for want of an interpreter, who had a good degree of *doctrinal* as well as *experimental* knowledge of divine things: in both which respects my present interpreter was very defective when I first employed him, as I noted in the account I before gave of him. And it was sometimes extremely discouraging to me, when I could not make him understand what I designed to communicate; when truths of the last importance appeared *foolishness to him* for want of a spiritual understanding and relish of them; and when he addressed the Indians in a lifeless indifferent manner, without any heart-engagement or fervency; and especially when he appeared heartless and irresolute about making attempts for the conversion of the Indians to Christianity, as he frequently did. For although he had a desire that they should conform to Christian manners, (as I elsewhere observed,) yet being abundantly acquainted with their strong attachments to their own superstitious notions, and the difficulty of bringing them off, and having no sense of divine power and grace, nor dependence upon an Almighty arm for the accomplishment of this work, he used to be discouraged, and tell me, “It signifies nothing for us to try, they will never turn,” &c. So that he was a distressing weight and burden to me. And here I should have sunk, scores of times, but that God in a remarkable manner supported me; sometimes by giving me full satisfaction that he himself had called me to this work, and thence a secret hope that sometime or other I might meet with success in it; or if not, that “my judgment should notwithstanding be with the Lord, and my work with my God.” Sometimes by giving me a sense of his almighty power, and that “his hand was not shortened.” Sometimes by affording me a fresh and lively view of some remarkable freedom and assistance I had been repeatedly favoured with in prayer for the ingathering of these heathens some years before, even before I was a missionary, and a refreshing sense of the stability and faithfulness of the divine promises, and that the *prayer of faith* should not fail. Thus I was supported under these trials, and the method God was pleased to take for the removal of this difficulty, (respecting my interpreter,) I have sufficiently represented elsewhere.

Another thing that rendered it very difficult to convey divine truths to the understandings of the Indians, was the *defect* of their language, the want of terms to express and convey ideas of spiritual things. There are no words in the Indian language to answer our English words, “Lord, Saviour, salvation, sinner, justice, condemnation, faith, repentance, justification, adoption, sanctification, grace, glory, heaven,” with scores of the like importance.



The only methods I can make use of for surmounting this difficulty, are, either to describe the things at large designed by these terms, as, if I was speaking of regeneration, to call it the "heart's being changed" by God's Spirit, or the "heart's being made good." Or else I must introduce the English terms into their language, and fix the precise meaning of them, that they may know what I intend whenever I use them.

But what renders it much more difficult to convey divine truths to the understandings of these Indians, is, that "there seems to be no foundation in their minds to begin upon;" I mean no truths that may be taken for granted, as being already known, while I am attempting to instil others. And divine truths having such a necessary connexion with, and dependence upon, each other, I find it extremely difficult in my first addresses to pagans to begin and discourse of them in their proper order and connexion, without having reference to truths not yet known, without taking for granted such things as need first to be taught and proved. There is no point of Christian doctrine but what they are either wholly ignorant of, or extremely confused in their notions about. And therefore it is necessary they should be instructed in every truth, even in those that are the most easy and obvious to the understanding, and which a person educated under gospel-light would be ready to pass over in silence, as not imagining that any rational creature could be ignorant of.

The method I have usually taken in my first addresses to pagans, has been to introduce myself by saying, that I was come among them with a desire and design of teaching them some things which I presumed they did not know, and which I trusted would be for their comfort and happiness if known; desiring they would give their attention, and hoping they might meet with satisfaction in my discourse. And thence have proceeded to observe, that there are two things belonging to every man, which I call the *soul* and *body*. These I endeavour to distinguish from each other, by observing to them, that there is something in them that is capable of joy and pleasure, when their *bodies* are sick and much pained: and, on the contrary, that they find something within them that is fearful, sorrowful, ashamed, &c. and consequently very uneasy, when their bodies are in perfect health. I then observed to them, that this which rejoices in them (perhaps at the sight of some friend who has been long absent) when their bodies are sick and in pain, this which is sorrowful, frighted, ashamed, &c. and consequently uneasy, when their bodies are perfectly at ease, *this* I call the *soul*. And although it cannot be seen like the other part of the man, *viz.* the body, yet it is as real as their thoughts, desires, &c. which are likewise things that cannot be seen.

I then further observe, that this part of the man which thinks, rejoices, grieves, &c. will live after the body is dead. For the proof of this, I produce the opinion of their fathers, who (as I am told by very aged Indians now living) always supposed there was something of the man that would survive the body. And if I can, for the proof of any thing I assert, say, as St. Paul to the Athenians, "As certain also of your own sages have said," it is sufficient. And having established this point, I next observe, that what I have to say to them, respects the

*conscious* part of the man; and that with relation to its state after the death of the body; and that I am not come to treat with them about the things that concern the *present* world.

This method I am obliged to take, because they will otherwise entirely mistake the design of my preaching, and suppose the business I am upon, is something that relates to the present world, having never been called together by the white people upon any other occasion, but only to be treated with about the sale of lands, or some other secular business. And I find it almost impossible to prevent their imagining that I am engaged in the same, or such like affairs, and to beat it into them, that my concern is to treat with them about their *invisible* part, and that with relation to its future state.

But having thus opened the way, by distinguishing between soul and body, and showing the immortality of the former, and that my business is to treat with them in order to their happiness in a future state; I proceed to discourse of the being and perfections of God, particularly of his “eternity, unity, self-sufficiency, infinite wisdom, and almighty power.” It is necessary, in the first place, to teach them, that God is from *everlasting*, and so distinguished from all creatures; though it is very difficult to communicate any thing of that nature to them, they having no terms in their language to signify an eternity a *parte ante*. It is likewise necessary discourse of the divine *unity*, in order to confute the notions they seem to have of a *plurality* of gods. The divine *all-sufficiency* must also necessarily be mentioned, in order to prevent their imagining that God was unhappy while alone, before the formation of his creatures. And something respecting the divine *wisdom* and *power* seems necessary to be insisted upon, in order to make way for discoursing of God’s works.

Having offered some things upon the divine perfections mentioned, I proceed to open the work of *creation* in general, and in particular God’s creation of man in a state of uprightness and happiness, placing them in a garden of pleasure; the means and manner of their apostacy from that state, and loss of that happiness. But before I can give a relation of their fall from God, I am obliged to make a large digression, in order to give an account of the original and circumstances of their tempter, his capacity of assuming the shape of a serpent, from his being a spirit without a body, &c. Whence I go on to show, the *ruins* of our *fallen* state, the mental blindness and vicious dispositions our first parents then contracted to themselves, and propagated to all their posterity; the numerous calamities brought upon them and theirs by this apostacy from God, and the exposedness of the whole human race to eternal perdition. And thence labour to show them the necessity of an almighty Saviour to deliver us from this deplorable state, as well as of a divine *revelation* to instruct us in, and direct us agreeable to, the will of God.

And thus the way, by such an introductory discourse, is prepared for opening the gospel-scheme of salvation through the great Redeemer, and for treating of those doctrine that immediately relate to the soul’s renovation by the divine Spirit, and preparation for a state of everlasting blessedness.

In giving such a relation of things to pagans, it is not a little difficult, as observed before, to deliver truths in their proper order, without interfering, and without taking for granted things not as yet known; to discourse of them in a familiar manner suited to the capacities of heathens; to illustrate them by easy and natural similitudes; to obviate or answer the objections they are disposed to make against the several particulars of it, as well as to take notice of and confute their contrary notions.

What has sometimes been very discouraging in my first discourses to them, is, that when I have distinguished between the *present* and *future* state, and shown them that it was my business to treat of those things that concern the life to come, they have mocked, and looked upon these things of no importance; have scarce had a curiosity to hear, and perhaps walked off before I had half done my discourse. And in such a case no impressions can be made upon their minds to gain their attention. They are not awed by hearing of the anger of God engaged against sinners, of everlasting punishment as the portion of gospel-neglecters. They are not allured by hearing of the blessedness of those who embrace and obey the gospel. So that to gain their attention to my discourses, has often been as difficult as to give them a just notion of the design of them, or to open truths in their proper order.

Another difficulty naturally falling under the head I am now upon, is, that "it is next to impossible to bring them to a rational conviction that they are sinners by nature, and that their hearts are corrupt and sinful," unless one could charge them with some gross acts of immorality, such as the *light of nature* condemns. If they can be charged with behaviour contrary to the commands of the *second table*, with manifest abuses of their neighbour, they will generally own such actions to be wrong; but then they seem as if they thought only the *actions* were sinful, and not their *hearts*. But if they cannot be charged with such scandalous actions, they seem to have no consciousness of sin and guilt at all, as I had occasion to observe in my Journal of March 24. So that it is very difficult to convince them rationally of that which is readily acknowledged (though, alas! rarely felt) in the Christian world, *viz.* "That we are all sinners."

The method I take to convince them "we are sinners by nature," is, to lead them to an observation of their *little children*, how they will appear in a rage, fight and strike their mothers, before they are able to speak or walk, while they are so young that it is plain they are incapable of learning such practices. And the light of nature in the Indians condemning such behaviour in children towards their parents, they must own these tempers and actions to be wrong and sinful. And the children having never learned these things, they must have been in their *natures*, and consequently they must be allowed to be "by nature the children of wrath." The same I observe to them with respect to the sin of *lying*, which their children seem much inclined to. They tell lies without being *taught* so to do, from their own *natural* inclination, as well as against restraints, and after *corrections* for that vice, which proves them sinners *by nature*, &c.

And further, in order to show them their *hearts* are all *corrupted* and *sinful*, I observe to them, that this may be the case, and they not be *sensible* of it through the blindness of their minds. That it is no evidence they are not *sinful*, because they do not know and feel it. I then mention all the vices I know the Indians to be guilty of, and so make use of these sinful *streams* to convince them the *fountain* is corrupt. And this is the end for which I mention their wicked practices to them, not because I expect to bring them to an *effectual* reformation merely by inveighing against their immoralities; but hoping they may hereby be convinced of the corruption of their hearts, and awakened to a sense of the depravity and misery of their *fallen* state.

And for the same purpose, *viz.* “to convince them they are sinners,” I sometimes open to them the great command of “loving God with all the heart, strength, and mind;” show them the reasonableness of *loving him* who has made, preserved, and dealt bountifully with us: and then labour to show them their utter neglect in this regard, and that they have been so far from *loving* God in this manner, that, on the contrary, he has not been “in all their thoughts.”

These, and such like, are the means I have made use of in order to remove this difficulty; but if it be asked after all, “How it was surmounted?” I must answer, God himself was pleased to do it with regard to a number of *these* Indians, by taking his work into his own hand, and making them *feel at heart*, that they were both sinful and miserable. And in the *day of God’s power*, whatever was spoken to them from God’s *word*, served to convince them they were *sinners*, (even the most melting invitations of the *gospel*,) and to fill them with solicitude to obtain a deliverance from that deplorable state.

Further, it is extremely difficult to give them any just notion of the undertaking of Christ in behalf of sinners; of his obeying and suffering in their *room* and *stead*, in order to atone for their sins, and procure their salvation; and of their being justified by his righteousness *imputed* to them. They are in general wholly unacquainted with *civil laws* and proceedings, and know of no such thing as one person being substituted as a *surety* in the *room* of another, nor have any kind of notion of *civil* judicatures, of persons being arraigned, tried, judged, condemned, or acquitted. And hence it is very difficult to treat with them upon any thing of this nature, or that bears any relation to *legal* procedures. And although they cannot but have some dealings with the white people, in order to procure clothing and other necessaries of life, yet it is scarce ever known that any one pays a *penny* for another, but each one stands for himself. Yet this is a thing that may be supposed, though seldom practised among them, and they may be made to understand, that if a friend of theirs pay a debt for them, it is right that upon that consideration they themselves should be discharged.

And this is the only way I can take in order to give them a proper notion of the *undertaking* and *satisfaction of Christ* in behalf of sinners. But here naturally arise two questions. *First*, “What need there was of Christ’s obeying and suffering for us; why God would not

look upon us to be good creatures (to use my common phrase for justification) on account of our own good deeds?" In answer to which I sometimes observe, that a child being never so orderly and obedient to its parents to-day, does by no means satisfy for its contrary behaviour yesterday; and that if it be loving and obedient at *some* times only, and at *other* times cross and disobedient, it never can be looked upon a good child for its own doings, since it ought to have behaved in an obedient manner *always*. This simile strikes their minds in an easy and forcible manner, and serves, in a measure, to illustrate the point. For the *light of nature*, as before hinted, teaches them, that their children ought to be obedient to them, and that at *all times*; and some of them are very severe with them for the contrary behaviour. This I apply in the plainest manner to our behaviour towards God; and so show them, that it is impossible for us, since we have sinned against God, to be justified before him by our own doings, since present and future goodness, *although perfect and constant*, could never satisfy for past misconduct.

A *second* question, is, "If our debt was so great, and if we all deserved to suffer, how one person's suffering was sufficient to answer for the whole?" Here I have no better way to illustrate the infinite value of Christ's obedience and sufferings, arising from the dignity and excellency of his *person*, than to show them the superior value of *gold* to that of baser metals, and that a small quantity of *this* will discharge a greater debt, than a vast quantity of the common *copper pence*. But after all, it is extremely difficult to treat with them upon this great doctrine of "justification by imputed righteousness." I scarce know how to conclude this head, so many things occurring that might properly be added here; but what has been mentioned, may serve for a specimen of the difficulty of conveying divine truths to the understandings of these Indians, and of gaining their assent to them *as such*.

## SECT. V.

A third difficulty in converting the Indians, viz. Their inconvenient situations, savage manners, and unhappy method of living.

Their “inconvenient situations, savage manners, and unhappy method of living,” have been an unspeakable difficulty and discouragement to me in my work. They generally live in the *wilderness*, and some that I have visited, at great distances from the English settlements. This has obliged me to travel much, oftentimes over hideous rocks, mountains, and swamps, and frequently to lie out in the open woods, which deprived me of the common comforts of life, and greatly impaired my health.

When I have got among them in the wilderness, I have often met with great difficulty in my attempts to discourse to them. I have sometimes spent hours with them in attempting to answer their objections, and remove their jealousies, before I could prevail upon them to give me a *hearing* upon Christianity. I have been often obliged to preach in their houses in cold and windy weather, when they have been full of smoke and cinders, as well as unspeakably filthy; which has many times thrown me into violent sick head-aches.

While I have been preaching, their children have frequently cried to such a degree, that I could scarcely be heard, and their pagan mothers would take no manner of care to quiet them. At the same time, perhaps, some have been laughing and mocking at divine truths. Others playing with their dogs, whittleing sticks, and the like. And this, in many of them, not from spite and prejudice, but for want of better manners.

A view of these things has been not a little sinking and discouraging to me. It has sometimes so far prevailed upon me as to render me entirely dispirited, and wholly unable to go on with my work; and given me such a melancholy turn of mind, that I have many times thought I could never more address an Indian upon religious matters.

The solitary manner in which I have generally been obliged to live, on account of their inconvenient situation, has been not a little pressing. I have spent the greater part of my time, for more than three years past, entirely alone, as to any agreeable society; and a very considerable part of it in houses by myself, without having the company of any human creature. Sometimes I have scarcely seen an Englishman for a month or six weeks together; and have had my spirits so depressed with melancholy views of the tempers and conduct of pagans, when I have been for some time confined with them, that I have felt as if banished from all the people of God.

I have likewise been wholly alone in my work, there being no other *missionary* among the Indians in either of these provinces. And other *ministers* neither knowing the *peculiar* difficulties, nor most *advantageous* methods of performing my work, have been capable to afford me little assistance or support in any respect. A feeling of the great disadvantages of being alone in this work, has discovered to me the wisdom and goodness of the great Head of the church, in sending forth his disciples *two and two*, in order to proclaim the sacred

mysteries of his kingdom; and has made me long for a *colleague* to be a *partner* of my cares, hopes, and fears, as well as labours amongst the Indians; and excited to use some means in order to procure such an assistant, although I have not as yet been so happy as to meet with success in that respect.

I have not only met with great difficulty in travelling to, and for some time residing among, the Indians far remote in the wilderness, but also in living with them, in one place and another, more stately. I have been obliged to remove my residence from place to place; having procured, and after some poor fashion, furnished, three houses for living among them, in the space of about three years past. One at *Kaunaumeek*, about twenty miles distant from the city of Albany; one at the *Forks of Delaware*, in Pennsylvania; and one at *Crossweek-sung*, in New Jersey. And the Indians in the latter of these provinces, with whom I have lately spent most of my time, being not long since removed from the place where they lived last winter, (the reason of which I mentioned in my Journal of March 24, and May 4,) I have now no house at all of my own, but am obliged to lodge with an English family at a considerable distance from them, to the great disadvantage of my work among them; they being like *children* that continually need advice and *direction*, as well as *incitement* to their worldly business. The houses I have formerly lived in are at great distances from each other; the two nearest of them being more than *seventy* miles apart, and neither of them within *fifteen* miles of the place where the Indians now live.

The Indians are a very poor and indigent people, and so destitute of the comforts of life, at some seasons of the year especially, that it is impossible for a person who has any pity to them, and concern for the Christian interest, to live among them without considerable expense, especially in time of sickness. If any thing be bestowed on one, (as in some cases it is peculiarly necessary, in order to remove their pagan jealousies, and engage their friendship to Christianity,) others, be there never so many of them, expect the same treatment. And while they retain their pagan tempers, they discover little gratitude, amidst all the kindnesses they receive. If they make any presents, they expect double satisfaction. And Christianity itself does not at *once* cure them of these ungrateful tempers.

They are in general unspeakably indolent and slothful. They have been bred up in idleness, and know little about cultivating land, or indeed of engaging vigorously in any other business. So that I am obliged to *instruct* them in, as well as *press* them to, the performance of their work, and take the oversight of all their secular business. They have little or no ambition or resolution. Not one in a thousand of them has the spirit of a man. And it is next to impossible to make them sensible of the duty and importance of being active, diligent, and industrious in the management of their worldly business; and to excite in them any spirit and promptitude of that nature. When I have laboured to the utmost of my ability to show them of what importance it would be to the Christian interest among them, as well as to their worldly comfort, for them to be laborious and prudent in their business, and to

furnish themselves with the comforts of life; how this would incline the pagans to come among them, and so put them under the means of salvation how it would encourage religious persons of the white people to help them, as well as stop the mouths of others that were disposed to cavil against them; how they might by this means pay others their just dues, and so prevent trouble from coming upon themselves, and reproach upon their Christian *profession* they have indeed *assented* to all I said, but been little *moved*, and consequently have acted *like themselves*, or at least too much so. Though it must be acknowledged, that those who appear to have a sense of divine things, are considerably amended in this respect, and it is to be hoped, that time will make a yet greater alteration upon them for the better.

The concern I have had for the settling of these Indians in New Jersey in a compact form, in order to their being a Christian congregation, in a capacity of enjoying the means of grace; the care of managing their worldly business in order to this end, and to their having a comfortable livelihood; have been more pressing to my mind, and cost me more labour and fatigue, for several months past, than all my other work among them.

Their “wandering to and fro in order to procure the necessaries of life,” is another difficulty that attends my work. This has often deprived me of opportunities to discourse to them; and it has thrown them in the way of temptation; either among pagans further remote where they have gone to hunt, who have laughed at them for hearkening to Christianity; or, among white people more horribly wicked, who have often made them drunk, and then got their commodities such as skins, baskets, brooms, shovels, and the like, with which they designed to have bought corn, and other necessaries of life, for themselves and families for, it may be, nothing but a little strong liquor, and then sent them home empty. So that for the labour perhaps of several weeks, they have got nothing but the satisfaction of being drunk once; and have not only lost their labour, but, which is infinitely worse, the impressions of some divine subjects that were made upon their minds before. But I forbear enlarging upon this head. The few hints I have given may be sufficient to give *thinking* persons some apprehensions of the difficulties attending my work, on account of the *inconvenient situations* and *savage manners* of the Indians, as well as of their *unhappy method of living*.



SECT. VI.

Fourth difficulty in converting the Indians, viz. The designs of evil-minded persons to hinder the work.

The last difficulty I shall mention, as having attended my work, is “what has proceeded from the attempts that some ill-minded persons have designedly made, to hinder the propagation of the gospel, and a work of divine grace, among the Indians.” The Indians are not only of themselves prejudiced against Christianity, on the various accounts I have already mentioned, but, as if this was not enough, there are some in all parts of the country where I have preached to them, who have taken pains industriously to bind them down in pagan darkness; “neglecting to enter into the kingdom of God themselves, and labouring to hinder others.”

After the beginning of the religious concern among the Indians in New Jersey, some endeavoured to prejudice them against me and the truths I taught them, by the most sneaking, unmanly, and false suggestions of things that had no manner of foundation but in their own brains. Some particulars of this kind I formerly took notice of in one of the remarks made upon my Journal concluded the 20th of November last; and might have added more, and of another nature, had not modesty forbidden me to mention what was too obscene. But, through the mercy of God, they were never able, by all their abominable insinuations, flouting jeers, and downright lies, to create in the Indians those jealousies they desired to possess them with, and so were never suffered to hinder the work of grace among them. But when they saw they could not prejudice the Indians against me, nor hinder them from receiving the gospel, they then noised it through the country, that I was undoubtedly a *Roman catholic*, and that I was gathering together, and training up, the Indians in order to serve a popish interest, that I should quickly head them, and cut people’s throats.

What they pretended gave them reason for this opinion, was, that they understood I had a commission from Scotland. Whereupon they could with great assurance say, “All Scotland is turned to the *Pretender*, and this is but a popish plot to make a party for him here,” &c. And some, I am informed, actually went to the *civil* authority with complaints against me, but only laboured under this unhappiness, that when they came, they had nothing to complain of, and could give no colour of reason why they attempted any such thing, or desired the civil authority to take cognizance of me, having not a word to allege against my *preaching* or *practice*, only they *surmised* that because the Indians appeared so very *loving* and *orderly*, they had a design of imposing upon people by that means, and so of getting a better advantage to cut their throats. And *what temper* they would have had the Indians appear with, in order to have given *no occasion*, nor have left any room for such a suspicion, I cannot tell. I presume if they had appeared with the *contrary* temper, it would quickly have been observed of them, that “they were now grown surly,” and in all probability were *preparing* to “cut people’s throats.” From a view of these things, I have had occasion

to admire the wisdom and goodness of God in providing so *full* and *authentic* a commission for the undertaking and carrying on of this work, without which, notwithstanding the charitableness of the design, it had probably met with molestation.

The Indians who have been my hearers in New Jersey, have likewise been sued for debt, and threatened with imprisonment, more since I came among them, as they inform me, than in *seven* years before. The reason of this, I suppose, was, they left frequenting those *tippling* houses where they used to consume most of what they gained by hunting and other means. And these persons, seeing that the hope of future gain was lost, were resolved to make sure of what they could. And perhaps some of them put the Indians to trouble, purely out of spite at their embracing Christianity.

This conduct of theirs has been very distressing to me; for I was sensible, that if they did imprison any *one* that embraced or hearkened to Christianity, the news of it would quickly spread among the pagans, hundreds of miles distant, who would immediately conclude I had involved them in this difficulty; and thence be filled with prejudice against Christianity, and strengthened in their jealousy, that the whole of my design among them, was to insnare and enslave them. And I knew that some of the Indians upon *Susquehannah* had made this objection against hearing me preach, *viz.* That they understood a number of Indians in Maryland, some hundreds of miles distant, who had been uncommonly free with the English, were after a while put in jail, sold, &c. Whereupon they concluded, it was best for them to keep at a distance, and have nothing to do with Christians. The method I took in order to remove this difficulty, was, to press the Indians with all possible speed to *pay their debts*, and to exhort those of them that had *skins* or *money*, and were themselves in a good measure free of debt, to help others that were oppressed. And frequently upon such occasions I have paid money out of my own pocket, which I have not as yet received again.

These are some of the difficulties I have met with from the conduct of *those* who, notwithstanding their actions so much tend to hinder the propagation of Christianity, would, I suppose, be loth to be reputed *pagans*. Thus I have endeavoured to answer the demands of the Honourable Society in relation to *each* of the particulars mentioned in their *letter*. If what I have written may be in any measure agreeable and satisfactory to them, and serve to excite in them, or any of God's people, a spirit of *prayer* and *supplication* for the furtherance of a work of grace among the Indians *here*, and the propagation of it to their *distant tribes*, I shall have abundant reason to rejoice, and bless God in this, as well as in other respects.

DAVID BRAINERD.

June 20, 1746.

P. S. Since the conclusion of the preceding Journal which was designed to represent the operations of *one year* only, from the first time of my preaching to the Indians in New Jersey I administered the *sacrament* of the *Lord's supper* a second time in my congregation, *viz.*

on the 13th of July. At which time there were more than *thirty* communicants of the Indians, although divers were absent who should have communicated: so considerably has God enlarged our number since the former solemnity of this kind, described somewhat particularly in my Journal. This appeared to be a season of divine power and grace, not unlike the former; a season of refreshing to God's people in general, and of awakening to some others, although the divine influence manifestly attending the several services of the solemnity, seemed not so great and powerful as at the former season.

D. BRAINERD.

SECT. VII.

Attestations of divine grace displayed among the Indians.

FIRST ATTESTATION.

Since my dear and reverend brother Brainerd has at length consented to the publication of his Journal, I gladly embrace this opportunity of testifying, that our altogether glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has given such a *display* of his almighty power and sovereign grace, not only in the external *reformation*, but (in a judgment of charity) the saving conversion of a considerable number of Indians, that it is really wonderful to all beholders! though some, alas! notwithstanding sufficient grounds of conviction to the contrary, do join with the devil, that avowed enemy of God and man, in endeavouring to prevent this glorious work, by such ways and means as are mentioned in the aforesaid Journal, to which I must refer the reader for a faithful, though very brief, account of the time when, the place where, the means by which, and manner how, this wished-for work has been begun and carried on, by the great Head of the church. And this I can more confidently do, not only because I am intimately acquainted with the author of the Journal, but on account of my own personal knowledge of the matters of fact recorded in it respecting the work itself. As I live not far from the Indians, I have been much conversant with them, both at their own place, and in my own parish, where they generally convene for public worship in Mr. Brainerd's absence; and I think it my duty to acknowledge, that their conversation hath often, under God, refreshed my soul.

To conclude; it is my opinion, that the change wrought in those *savages*, namely, from the darkness of paganism, to the knowledge of the pure gospel of Christ; from sacrificing to devils, to "present themselves, body and soul, a living sacrifice to God," and that not only from the persuasion of their minister, but from a clear heart-affecting sense of its being their *reasonable service*: this change, I say, is so great, that none could effect it but he "who worketh all things after the good pleasure of his own will." And I would humbly hope, that this is only the first-fruits of a much greater harvest to be brought in from among the Indians, by him, who has promised to give his Son "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession;" who hath also declared, "That the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen and Amen."

I am, courteous reader,  
thy soul's well-wisher,

WILLIAM TENNENT.

Freehold, August 16, 1746.

SECOND ATTESTATION.



AS it must needs afford a sacred pleasure to such as cordially desire the prosperity and advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and interest in the world, to hear, that our merciful and gracious God is in very deed fulfilling such precious promises as relate to the poor heathen, by sending his everlasting gospel among them, which, with concurrence of his Holy Spirit, is removing that worse than Egyptian darkness, whereby the God of this world has long held them in willing subjection; so this narrative will perhaps be more acceptable to the world, when it is confirmed by the testimony of such as were either eye-witness of this glorious dawn of gospel-light among the benighted pagans, or personally acquainted with those of them, in whom, in a judgment of charity, a gracious change has been wrought. Therefore I the more willingly join with my brethren, Mr. Wm. Tennent and Mr. Brainerd, in affixing my attestation to the foregoing narrative; and look upon myself as concerned in point of duty both to God and his people to do so, by reason that I live contiguous to their settlement, and have had frequent opportunities of being present at their religious meetings, where I have, with pleasing wonder, beheld what I am strongly inclined to believe were the effects of God's almighty power accompanying his own truths; more especially on the 8th day of August, 1745. While the word of God was preached by Mr. Brainerd, there appeared an uncommon solemnity among the Indians in general; but I am wholly unable to give a full representation of the surprising effects of God's almighty power that appeared among them when public service was over. While Mr. Brainerd urged upon some of them the absolute necessity of a speedy closure with Christ, the Holy Spirit seemed to be poured out upon them in a plenteous measure, insomuch as the Indians present in the *wigwam* seemed to be brought to the jailer's case, [Acts xvi. 30](#). utterly unable to conceal the distress and perplexity of their souls; this prompted the pious among them to bring the dispersed congregation together, who soon seemed to be in the greatest extremity. Some were earnestly begging for mercy, under a solemn sense of their perishing condition, while others were unable to arise from the earth, to the great wonder of those white people that were present, one of whom is by this means, I trust, savingly brought to Christ since. Nay, so very extraordinary was the concern that appeared among the poor Indians in general, that I am ready to conclude, it might have been sufficient to have convinced an atheist, that the Lord was indeed in the place. I am, for my part, fully persuaded, that this glorious work is true and genuine, whilst with satisfaction I behold several of these Indians discovering all the symptoms of *inward holiness* in their lives and conversation. I have had the satisfaction of joining with them in their service on the 11th of August, 1746, which was a day set apart for imploring the divine blessing on the labours of their minister among other tribes of the Indians at *Susquehannah*, in all which they conducted themselves with a very decent and becoming gravity; and, as far as I am capable of judging, they may be proposed as examples of piety and godliness to all the white people around them, which indeed is justly "marvellous in our eyes," especially considering what they lately had been. O may the glorious God shortly bring about that

desirable time, when our exalted Immanuel shall have “the heathen given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession!”

*Crosswicks, August 29, 1746.*

CHARLES MACNIGHT.

THIRD ATTESTATION.

We whose names are underwritten, being elders and deacons of the presbyterian church in Freehold, do hereby testify, that in our humble opinion, God, even our Saviour, has brought a considerable number of the Indians in these parts to a saving union with himself. This we are persuaded of, from a personal acquaintance with them, whom we not only hear speak of the great doctrine of the gospel with humility, affection, and understanding, but we see them walk, as far as man can judge, soberly, righteously, and godly. We have joined with them at the Lord’s supper, and do from our hearts esteem them as our brethren in Jesus. For “these who were not God’s people, may now be called the children of the living God: it is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.” O that he may go on “conquering and to conquer,” until he has subdued all things to himself! This is and shall be the unfeigned desires and prayers of

Walter Ker, Robert Cummins, David Rhe, John Henderson, John Anderson, Joseph Ker,  
*Elders.*

William Ker, Samuel Ker, Samuel Craig,

*Deacons.*

*Presbyterian Church, Freehold, Aug. 16, 1746.*

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## THIRD APPENDIX

TO

MR. BRAINERD'S JOURNAL:

CONTAINING HIS

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ENDEAVOURS USED  
BY THE MISSIONARIES

OF THE

SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND FOR PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,

TO INTRODUCE THE GOSPEL AMONG THE  
INDIANS ON THE BORDERS OF NEW YORK,  
& C.

The deplorable, perishing state of the Indians in these parts of America, being by several ministers here represented to the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge; the said Society charitably and cheerfully came into the proposal of maintaining *two missionaries* among these miserable pagans, to endeavour their conversion "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;" and sent their *commission* to some ministers and other gentlemen here, to act as their *correspondents*, in providing, directing, and inspecting the said mission.

As soon as the correspondents were authorized by the Society's commission, they immediately looked out for two candidates of the evangelical ministry, whose zeal for the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and whose compassion for poor perishing souls, would prompt them to such an exceeding difficult and self-denying undertaking. They first prevailed with Mr. Azariah Horton to relinquish a call to an encouraging parish, and to devote himself to the Indian service. He was directed to Long Island, in August 1741, at the east end whereof there are two small towns of the Indians, and from the east to the west end of the island, lesser companies settled at a few miles' distance from one another, for the length of above a hundred miles. At his first coming among these, he was well received by the most, and heartily welcomed by some of them. They at the east end of the island, especially, gave diligent and serious attention to his instructions, and many of them put upon solemn inquiries about "what they should do to be saved." A general reformation of manners was soon observable among the most of these Indians. They were careful to attend, and serious and solemn in attendance, upon both public and private instructions. A number of them were



under very deep convictions of their miserable perishing state; and about *twenty* of them give lasting evidences of their saving conversion to God. Mr. Horton has baptized *thirty-five* adults, and *forty-four* children. He took pains with them to teach them to read; and some of them have made considerable proficiency. But the extensiveness of his charge, and the necessity of his travelling from place to place, makes him incapable of giving so constant attendance to their instruction in reading as is needful. In his last letter to the correspondents, he heavily complains of a great *defection* of some of them, from their first reformation and care of their souls; occasioned by strong drink being brought among them, and their being thereby allured to a relapse into their darling vice of *drunkenness*. This is a vice to which the Indians are every where so greatly addicted, and so vehemently disposed, that nothing but the power of divine grace can restrain that impetuous lust, when they have opportunity to gratify it. He likewise complains, that some of them are grown more careless and remiss in the duties of religious worship, than they were when first acquainted with the great things of their eternal peace. But as a number retain their first impressions, and as they generally attend with reverence upon his ministry, he goes on in his work, with encouraging hopes of the presence and blessing of God with him in his difficult undertaking.

This is a general view of the state of the mission upon Long Island, collected from several of Mr. Horton's letters; which is all that could now be offered, we not having as yet a particular account from Mr. Horton himself. It was some time after Mr. Horton was employed in the Indian service, before the correspondents could obtain another qualified candidate for this self-denying mission. At length they prevailed with Mr. David Brainerd, to refuse several invitations unto places where he had a promising prospect of a comfortable settlement among the English, to encounter the fatigues and perils that must attend his carrying the gospel of Christ to these poor miserable savages. A general representation of whose conduct and success in that undertaking is contained in a letter we lately received from himself, which is as follows:

*TO THE REV. MR. EBENEZER PEMBERTON.*

*REV. SIR,*

Since you are pleased to require of me some brief and general account of my conduct in the affair of my mission amongst the Indians; the pains and endeavours I have used to propagate Christian knowledge among them; the difficulties I have met with in pursuance of that great work; and the hopeful and encouraging appearances I have observed in any of them; I shall now endeavour to answer your demands, by giving a brief and faithful account of the most material things relating to that important affair, with which I have been and am still concerned. And this I shall do with more freedom and cheerfulness, both because I apprehend it will be a likely means to give pious persons, who are concerned for the kingdom of Christ, some just apprehension of the many and great difficulties that attend the



propagation of it amongst the poor pagans, and consequently, it is hoped, will engage their more frequent and fervent prayers to God, that those may be succeeded who are employed in this arduous work. Beside, I persuade myself, that the tidings of the gospel spreading among the poor heathen, will be, to those who are waiting for the accomplishment of the “glorious things spoken of the city of our God,” as “good news from a far country;” and that *these* will be so far from “despising the day of small things,” that, on the contrary, the least dawn of encouragement and hope, in this important affair, will rather inspire their pious breasts with more generous and warm desires, that “the kingdoms of this world may speedily become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.” I shall therefore immediately proceed to the business before me, and briefly touch upon the most important matters that have concerned my mission, from the beginning to this present time.

On March 15, 1743, I waited on the correspondents for the Indian mission at New York; and the week following, attended their meeting at Woodbridge in New Jersey, and was speedily dismissed by them with orders to attempt the instruction of a number of Indians in a place some miles distant from the city of Albany. And on the first day of April following, I arrived among the Indians, at a place called by them *Kaunaumeeek*, in the county of Albany, near about twenty miles distant from the city eastward.

The place, as to its situation, was sufficiently lonesome and unpleasant, being encompassed with mountains and woods; twenty miles distant from any English inhabitants; six or seven from any Dutch; and more than two from a family that came, some time since, from the Highlands of Scotland, and had then lived, as I remember, about two years in this wilderness. In this family I lodged about the space of three months, the master of it being the only person with whom I could readily converse in those parts, except my interpreter; others understanding very little English.

After I had spent about three months in this situation, I found my distance from the Indians a very great disadvantage to my work among them, and very burdensome to myself; as I was obliged to travel forward and backward almost daily on foot, having no pasture in which I could keep my horse for that purpose. And after all my pains, could not be with the Indians in the evening and morning, which were usually the best hours to find them at home, and when they could best attend my instructions. I therefore resolved to remove, and live with or near the Indians, that I might watch all opportunities, when they were generally at home, and take the advantage of such seasons for their instruction.

Accordingly I removed soon after; and, for a time, lived with them in one of their *wigwams*; and, not long after, built me a small house, where I spent the remainder of that year entirely alone; my interpreter, who was an Indian, choosing rather to live in a wigwam among his own countrymen. This way of living I found attended with many difficulties, and uncomfortable circumstances, in a place where I could get none of the necessaries and common comforts of life, (no, not so much as a morsel of bread,) but what I brought from

places fifteen and twenty miles distant, and oftentimes was obliged, for some time together, to content myself without, for want of an opportunity to procure the things I needed.

But although the difficulties of this solitary way of living are not the least, or most considerable, (and doubtless are in fact many more and greater to those who *experience*, than they can readily *appear* to those, who only view them at a distance,) yet I can truly say, that the burden I felt respecting my *great work* among the poor Indians, the fear and concern that continually hung upon my spirits, lest they should be prejudiced against Christianity, and their minds imbittered against me, and my labours among them, by means of the insinuations of some who, although they are called *Christians*, seem to have no concern for Christ's *kingdom*, but had rather (as their conduct plainly discovers) that the Indians should remain heathens, that they may with the more ease cheat, and so enrich themselves by them, were much more pressing to me, than all the difficulties that attended the circumstances of my living.

As to the *state* or *temper of mind*, in which I found these Indians, at my first coming among them, I may justly say, it was much more desirable and encouraging than what appears among those who are altogether uncultivated. Their heathenish jealousies and suspicion, and their prejudices against Christianity, were in a great measure removed by the long-continued labours of the Reverend Mr. Sargeant among a number of the same tribe, in a place little more than twenty miles distant. Hence these were, in some good degree, prepared to entertain the truths of Christianity, instead of objecting against them, and appearing almost entirely untractable, as is common with them at first, and as perhaps these appeared a few years ago. Some of them, at least, appeared very well disposed toward religion, and seemed much pleased with my coming among them.

In my labours with them, in order "to turn them from darkness to light," I studied what was most *plain* and *easy*, and best suited to their capacities; and endeavoured to set before them from time to time, as they were able to receive them, the most *important* and *necessary* truths of Christianity; such as most immediately concerned their speedy conversion to God, and such as I judged had the greatest tendency, as means, to effect that glorious change in them. But especially I made it the *scope* and *drift* of all my labours, to lead them into a thorough acquaintance with these two things. *First*, The *sinfulness* and *misery* of the estate they were *naturally* in; the evil of their hearts, the pollution of their natures; the heavy guilt they were under, and their exposedness to everlasting punishment; as also their utter inability to save themselves, either from their sins, or from those miseries which are the just punishment of them; and their unworthiness of any mercy at the hand of God, on account of any thing they themselves could do to procure his favour, and consequently their extreme need of Christ to save them. And, *secondly*, I frequently endeavoured to open to them the *fulness*, *all-sufficiency*, and *freeness* of that *redemption*, which the Son of God has wrought out by his obedience and sufferings, for perishing sinners: how this provision he had made,

was suited to all their wants; and how he called and invited them to accept of everlasting life freely, notwithstanding all their sinfulness, inability, unworthiness, &c.

After I had been with the Indians several months, I composed sundry *forms of prayer*, adapted to their circumstances and capacities; which, with the help of my interpreter, I translated into the Indian language; and soon learned to pronounce their words, so as to pray with them in their own tongue. I also translated sundry *psalms* into their language, and soon after we were able to sing in the worship of God.

When my people had gained some acquaintance with many of the truths of Christianity, so that they were capable of receiving and understanding many others, which at first could not be taught them, by reason of their ignorance of those that were necessary to be previously known, and upon which others depended; I then gave them an *historical* account of God's dealings with his ancient professing people the Jews; some of the rites and ceremonies they were obliged to observe, as their sacrifices, &c.; and what these were designed to represent to them: as also some of the surprising *miracles* God wrought for their salvation, while they trusted in him, and the sore *punishments* he sometimes brought upon them, when they forsook and sinned against him. Afterwards I proceeded to give them a relation of the birth, life, miracles, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; as well as his ascension, and the wonderful effusion of the Holy Spirit consequent thereupon.

And having thus endeavoured to prepare the way by such a general account of things, I next proceeded to read and *expound* to them the Gospel of St. Matthew (at least the substance of it) in course, wherein they had a more distinct and particular view of what they had before some general notion. These expositions I attended almost every *evening*, when there was any considerable number of them at home; except when I was obliged to be absent myself, in order to learn the Indian language with the Rev. Mr. Sargeant. Besides these means of instruction, there was likewise an English *school* constantly kept by my interpreter among the Indians; which I used frequently to visit, in order to give the children and young people some proper instructions, and serious exhortations suited to their age.

The degree of *knowledge* to which some of them attained, was considerable. Many of the truths of Christianity seemed fixed in their minds, especially in some instances, so that they would speak to me of them, and ask such questions about them, as were necessary to render them more plain and clear to their understandings. The children, also, and young people, who attended the *school*, made considerable proficiency (at least some of them) in their learning; so that had they understood the English language well, they would have been able to read somewhat readily in a *psalter*.

But that which was most of all desirable, and gave me the greatest encouragement amidst many difficulties and disconsolate hours, was, that the truths of God's word seemed, at times, to be attended with some *power* upon the hearts and consciences of the Indians. And especially this appeared evident in a few instances, who were awakened to some sense of

their miserable estate by nature, and appeared solicitous for deliverance from it. Several of them came, of their own accord, to discourse with me about their souls' concerns; and some with tears, inquired "what they should do to be saved?" and whether the God that Christians served, would be merciful to those that had been frequently drunk? &c.

And although I cannot say that I have satisfactory evidences of their being "renewed in the spirit of their mind," and savingly converted to God; yet the Spirit of God did, I apprehend, in such a manner attend the means of grace, and so operate upon their minds thereby, as might justly afford matter of encouragement to hope, that God designed good to them, and that he was preparing his way into their souls.

There likewise appeared a *reformation* in the lives and manners of the Indians. Their idolatrous *sacrifices* (of which there was but one or two, that I know of, after my coming among them) were wholly laid aside. And their heathenish custom of *dancing, hallooing, &c.* they seemed in a considerable measure to have abandoned. And I could not but hope, that they were reformed in some measure from the sin of *drunkenness*. They likewise manifested a regard to the *Lord's day*; and not only behaved soberly themselves, but took care also to keep their *children* in order.

Yet, after all, I must confess, that as there were many hopeful appearances among them, so there were some things more *discouraging*. And while I rejoiced to observe any seriousness and concern among them about the affairs of their souls, still I was not without continual fear and concern, lest such encouraging appearances might prove "like a morning-cloud, that passeth away."

When I had spent near a year with the Indians, I informed them that I expected to leave them in the spring then approaching, and to be sent to another tribe of Indians, at a great distance from them. On hearing this, they appeared very sorrowful, and some of them endeavoured to persuade me to continue with them; urging that they had now heard so much about their *souls' concern*, that they could never more be willing to live as they had done, without a *minister*, and further instructions in the way to heaven, &c. Whereupon I told them, they ought to be willing that others also should hear about their souls' concerns, seeing those needed it as much as themselves. Yet further to dissuade me from going, they added, that those Indians, to whom I had thoughts of going, (as they had heard,) were not willing to become *Christians* as *they* were, and therefore urged me to tarry with them. I then told them, that *they* might receive further instructions without me; but the Indians, to whom I expected to be sent, could not, there being no minister near to teach them. And hereupon I advised them, in case I should leave them, and be sent elsewhere, to remove to Stockbridge, where they might be supplied with land, and conveniencies of living, and be under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Sargeant: with which advice and proposal they seemed disposed to comply.

On April 6, 1744, I was ordered and directed by the correspondents for the Indian mission, to take leave of the people, with whom I had then spent a full year, and to go, as soon as conveniently I could, to a tribe of Indians on Delaware river in Pennsylvania.

These orders I soon attended, and on April 29th took leave of my people, who were mostly removed to Stockbridge under the care of the Rev. Mr. Sargeant. I then set out on my journey toward Delaware; and on May 10th met with a number of Indians in a place called *Minnissinks*, about a hundred and forty miles from *Kaunaumeeck*, (the place where I spent the last year,) and directly in my way to Delaware river. With these Indians I spent some time, and first addressed their *king* in a friendly manner; and after some discourse, and attempts to contract a friendship with him, I told him I had a desire (for his benefit and happiness) to instruct them in *Christianity*. At which he laughed, turned his back upon me, and went away. I then addressed another *principal* man in the same manner, who said he was willing to hear me. After some time, I followed the *king* into his house, and renewed my discourse to him: but he declined talking, and left the affair to another, who appeared to be a rational man. He began, and talked very warmly near a quarter of an hour together: he inquired why I desired the Indians to become *Christians*, seeing the Christians were so much worse than the Indians are in their present state. The Christians, he said, would lie, steal, and drink, worse than the Indians. It was *they* first taught the Indians to be drunk: and *they* stole from one another, to that degree, that their rulers were obliged to hang them for it, and that was not sufficient to deter others from the like practice. But the Indians, he added, were none of them ever hanged for stealing, and yet they did not steal half so much; and he supposed that if the Indians should become Christians, they would then be as bad as these. And hereupon he said, they would live as their *fathers* lived, and go where their *fathers* were when they died. I then freely *owned, lamented,* and joined with him in *condemning* the ill conduct of *some* who are called *Christians*: told him, these were not *Christians* in *heart*; that I hated such wicked practices, and did not desire the Indians to become such as these. And when he appeared calmer, I asked him if he was willing: that I should come and see them again? He replied, he should be willing to see me again, as a *friend*, if I would not desire them to become *Christians*. I then bid them farewell, and prosecuted my journey toward Delaware. And May 13th I arrived at a place called by the Indians *Sakhauwotung*, within the Forks of Delaware in Pennsylvania.

Here also, when I came to the Indians, I saluted their *king*, and others, in a manner I thought most engaging. And soon after informed the king of my desire to instruct them in the *Christian religion*. After he had consulted a few minutes with two or three old men, he told me he was willing to hear. I then preached to those few that were present; who appeared very attentive, and well disposed. And the king in particular seemed both to wonder, and at the same time to be well pleased with what I taught them, respecting the Divine Being, &c. And since that time he has ever shown himself friendly to me, giving me free liberty to

preach in his house, whenever I think fit. Here therefore I have spent the greater part of the summer past, preaching usually in the king's house.

The number of Indians in this place is but small; most of those that formerly belonged here, are dispersed, and removed to places farther back in the country. There are not more than ten houses hereabouts, that continue to be inhabited; and some of these are several miles distant from others, which makes it difficult for the Indians to meet together so frequently as could be desired.

When I first began to preach here, the number of my *hearers* was very small; often not exceeding twenty or twenty-five persons: but towards the latter part of the summer, their number increased, so that I have frequently had forty persons, or more, at once; and oftentimes most belonging to those parts came together to hear me preach.

The *effects* which the truths of God's word have had upon some of the Indians, in this place, are somewhat encouraging. Sundry of them are brought to renounce *idolatry*, and to decline partaking of those *feasts* which they used to offer in sacrifice to certain supposed unknown powers. And some few among them have, for a considerable time, manifested a serious concern for their souls' eternal welfare, and still continue to "inquire the way to Zion," with such diligence, affection, and becoming solicitude, as gives me reason to hope, that "God, who, I trust, has begun this work in them," will carry it on, until it shall issue in their saving conversion to himself. These not only detest their old idolatrous notions, but strive also to bring their friends off from them. And as they are seeking salvation for their own souls, so they seem desirous, and some of them take pains, that others might be excited to do the like.

In July last I heard of a number of Indians residing at a place called *Kauksesauchung*, more than thirty miles westward from the place where I usually preach. I visited them, found about thirty persons, and proposed my desire of preaching to them; they readily complied, and I preached to them only twice, they being just then removing from this place, where they only lived for the present, to *Susquehannah river* where they belonged.

While I was preaching they appeared sober and attentive; and were somewhat surprised, having never before heard of these things. There were two or three who suspected that I had some ill design upon them; and urged, that the white people had abused them, and taken their lands from them, and therefore they had no reason to think that they were now concerned for their happiness; but, on the contrary, that they designed to make them slaves, or get them on board their vessels, and make them fight with the people over the water, (as they expressed it,) meaning the French and Spaniards. However, the most of them appeared very friendly, and told me, they were then going directly home to *Susquehannah*, and desired I would make them a visit there, and manifested a considerable desire of farther instruction. This invitation gave me some encouragement in my great work; and made me hope, that



God designed to “open an effectual door to me” for spreading the gospel among the poor heathen farther westward.

In the beginning of October last, with the advice and direction of the correspondents for the Indian mission, I undertook a journey to *Susquehannah*. And after three days’ tedious travel, two of them through a wilderness almost unpassable, by reason of mountains and rocks, and two nights lodging in the open wilderness, I came to an Indian settlement on the side of *Susquehannah*-river, called *Opeholhaupung*; where were twelve Indian houses, and (as nigh as I could learn) about seventy souls, old and young, belonging to them.

Here also, soon after my arrival, I visited the *king*, addressing him with expressions of kindness; and after a few words of friendship, informed him of my desire to teach them the knowledge of Christianity. He hesitated not long before he told me, that he was willing to hear. I then preached; and continued there several days, preaching every day, as long as the Indians were at home. And they, in order to hear me, deferred the design of their general hunting (which they were just then entering upon) for the space of three or four days.

The *men*, I think universally (except one) attended my preaching. Only the *women*, supposing the affair we were upon was of a public nature, belonging only to the men, and not what every individual person should concern himself with, could not readily be persuaded to come and hear: but, after much pains used with them for that purpose, some few ventured to come, and stand at a distance.

When I had preached to the Indians several times, some of them very frankly proposed what they had to object against Christianity; and so gave me a fair opportunity for using my best endeavours to remove from their minds those scruples and jealousies they laboured under: and when I had endeavoured to answer their objections, some appeared much satisfied. I then asked the king if he was willing I should visit and preach to them again, if I should live to the next spring? He replied, he should be heartily willing for his own part, and added, he wished the young people would learn, &c. I then put the same question to the rest: some answered, they should be very glad, and none manifested any dislike to it.

There were sundry other things in their behaviour, which appeared with a comfortable and encouraging aspect; that, upon the whole, I could not but rejoice I had taken that journey among them, although it was attended with many difficulties and hardships. The method I used with them, and the instructions I gave them, I am persuaded were means, in some measure, to remove their heathenish jealousies, and prejudices against Christianity; and I could not but hope, the God of all grace was preparing their minds to receive “the truth as it is in Jesus.” If this may be the happy consequence, I shall not only rejoice in my past labours and fatigues; but shall, I trust, also “be willing to spend and be spent,” if I may thereby be instrumental “to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.”

Thus, *Sir*, I have given you a faithful account of what has been most considerable respecting my mission among the Indians; in which I have studied all convenient brevity. I shall

only now take leave to add a word or two respecting the *difficulties* that attend the Christianizing of these poor pagans.

In the first place, their minds are filled with *prejudices* against Christianity, on account of the *vicious* lives and *unChristian* behaviour of some that are called Christians. These not only set before them the worst examples, but some of them take pains, expressly in words, to dissuade them from becoming Christians; foreseeing, that if these should be converted to God, "the hope of their unlawful gain" would thereby be lost.

Again, these poor heathens are extremely attached to the customs, traditions, and fabulous notions of their fathers. And this one seems to be the foundation of all their other notions, *viz.* that "it was not the same God made them who made the white people," but another, who commanded them to live by hunting, &c. and not conform to the customs of the white people. Hence when they are desired to become Christians, they frequently reply, that "they will live as their fathers lived, and go to their fathers when they die." And if the miracles of Christ and his apostles be mentioned, to prove the truth of Christianity; they also mention sundry miracles, which their fathers have told them were anciently wrought among the Indians, and which Satan makes them believe were so. They are much attached to idolatry; frequently making feasts, which they eat in honour to some *unknown* beings, who, they suppose, speak to them in *dreams*; promising them success in hunting, and other affairs, in case they will sacrifice to them. They oftentimes also offer their sacrifices to the spirits of the dead; who, they suppose, stand in need of favours from the living, and yet are in such a state as that they can well reward all the offices of kindness that are shown them. And they impute all their calamities to the neglect of these sacrifices.

Furthermore, they are much awed by those among themselves, who are called *powows*, who are supposed to have a power of enchanting, or poisoning them to death, or at least in a very distressing manner. And they apprehend it would be their sad fate to be thus enchanted, in case they should become Christians.

Lastly, The *manner of their living* is likewise a great disadvantage to the design of their being Christianized. They are almost continually roving from place to place; and it is but rare that an opportunity can be had with some of them for their instruction. There is scarce any time of the year, wherein the *men* can be found generally at home, except about six weeks before, and in, the season of planting their corn, and about two months in the latter part of summer, from the time they begin to roast their corn, until it is fit to gather in.

As to the *hardships* that necessarily attend a mission among them, the fatigues of frequent journeying in the wilderness, the unpleasantness of a mean and hard way of living, and the great difficulty of addressing "a people of a strange language," these I shall, at present, pass over in silence; designing what I have already said of difficulties attending this work, not for the discouragement of any, but rather for the incitement of *all*, who "love the appearing and kingdom of Christ," to frequent the throne of grace with earnest supplications, that the



heathen, who were anciently promised to Christ “for his inheritance,” may now *actually* and *speedily* be brought into his kingdom of grace, and made heirs of immortal glory.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

DAVID BRAINERD

*From the Forks of Delaware, in Pennsylvania, Nov. 5, 1744.*

P. S. It should have been observed in the *preceding account*, that although the number of Indians in the place I visited on *Susquehannah river*, in October last, is but small, yet their numbers in the adjacent places are very considerable; who, it is hoped, might be brought to embrace Christianity by the example of others. But being at present somewhat more savage, and unacquainted with the English, than these I visited, I thought it not best to make my first attempts among them; hoping I might hereafter be better introduced among them by means of these. Sundry of the neighbouring settlements are much larger than this: so that there are, probably, several hundreds of the Indians not many miles distant. D. B.



**MR. BRAINERD'S REMAINS,**

*CONSISTING OF*

**LETTERS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**LETTERS TO HIS FRIENDS.**

ADVERTISEMENT.

Mr. brainerd had a large acquaintance and correspondence, especially in the latter part of his life, and he did much at writing *letters* to his absent friends; but the most of his acquaintance living at a great distance from me, I have not been able to obtain copies of many that he wrote: however, the greater part of those which I have seen, are such as appear to me of profitable tendency, and worthy of the public view: I have therefore here added a few of his *letters*.

N. B. Several of these which follow, are not published at large, because some parts of them were concerning particular affairs of a private nature.

LETTER I.

To his brother John, then a student at Yale college, New Haven.

dear brother

Kaunaumeeek, April 30, 1743.

I should tell you, "I long to see you," but that my own experience has taught me, there is no happiness, and plenary satisfaction to be enjoyed, in *earthly friends*, though ever so near and dear, or in any enjoyment, that is not God himself. Therefore, if the *God of all grace* would be pleased graciously to afford us each *his presence* and *grace*, that we may perform the work, and endure the trials he calls us to, in a most distressing tiresome wilderness, till we arrive at our journey's end; the local distance, at which we are held from each other at the present, is a matter of no great moment or importance to either of us. But, alas! the presence of God is what I want. I live in the most lonely melancholy *desert*, about eighteen miles from Albany; for it was not thought best that I should go to Delaware river, as I believe I hinted to you in a letter from New York. I board with a poor Scotchman: his wife can talk scarce any English. *My diet* consists mostly of hasty-pudding, boiled corn, and bread baked in the ashes, and sometimes a little meat and butter. *My lodging* is a little heap of straw, laid upon some boards, a little way from the ground; for it is a log-room, without any floor, that I lodge in. *My work* is exceeding hard and difficult: I travel on foot a mile and half, the worst of ways, almost daily, and back again; for I live so far from my Indians. I have not seen an English person this month. These and many other circumstances as uncomfortable attend me; and yet my *spiritual conflicts* and *distresses* so far exceed all these, that I scarce think of them, or hardly mind but that I am entertained in the most sumptuous manner. The Lord grant that I may learn to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ!" As to my *success* here I cannot say much as yet: the Indians seem generally kind, and well-disposed towards me, and are mostly very attentive to my instructions, and seem willing to be taught further. Two or three, I hope, are under some *convictions*: but there seems to be little of the special workings of the divine Spirit among them yet; which gives me many a heart-sinking hour. Sometimes I hope, God has abundant blessings in store for them and me; but at other times, I am so overwhelmed with distress that I cannot see how his dealings with me are consistent with covenant love and faithfulness; and I say, "Surely his tender mercies are clean gone for ever." But however, I see, I *needed* all this *chastisement* already: "It is good for me" that I have endured these trials, and have hitherto little or no apparent success. Do not be discouraged by my distresses. I was under great distress, at Mr. Pomroy's, when I saw you last; but "God has been with me of a truth," since that: he helped me sometimes sweetly at Long Island, and elsewhere. But let us always remember, that we must *through much tribulation* enter into God's eternal kingdom of rest and peace. The righteous are *scarcely* saved: it is an infinite wonder, that we have well-grounded hopes of

being saved at all. For my part, I feel the most vile of any creature living; and I am sure sometimes, there is not such another existing on this side *hell*. Now all you can do for me, is, to pray incessantly, that God would make me humble, holy, resigned, and heavenly-minded, by all my trials. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Let us *run*, *wrestle*, and *fight* that we may win the *prize*, and obtain that complete happiness, to be "holy, as God is holy." So wishing and praying that you may advance in learning and grace, and be fit for special service for God,

I remain

Your affectionate brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.



LETTER II.

*To his brother John, at Yale college, New Haven.*

dear brother

*Kaunaumeeek, Dec. 27, 1743.*

I long to see you, and know how you fare in your journey through a world of inexpressible sorrow, where we are compassed about with “vanity, confusion, and vexation of spirit.” I am more weary of life, I think, than ever I was. The whole *world* appears to me like a huge *vacuum*, a vast empty space, whence nothing desirable, or at least satisfactory, can possibly be derived; and I long *daily* to *die* more and more to it; even though I obtain not that comfort from spiritual things which I earnestly desire. *Worldly* pleasures, such as flow from greatness, riches, honours, and sensual gratifications, are infinitely *worse* than none. May the Lord deliver us more and more from these *vanities*! I have spent most of the fall and winter hitherto in a weak state of body; and sometimes under pressing inward trials, and spiritual conflicts: but “having obtained help from God, I continue to this day;” and am now something better in health than I was some time ago. I find nothing more conducive to a life of *Christianity*, than a diligent, industrious, and faithful improvement of precious *time*. Let us then faithfully perform that business, which is allotted to us by Divine Providence, to the utmost of our bodily strength and mental vigour. Why should we sink, and grow discouraged, with any particular trials and perplexities we are called to encounter in the world? *Death* and *eternity* are just before us; a few tossing billows more will waft us into the world of spirits, and we hope, through infinite grace, into endless pleasures, and uninterrupted rest and peace. Let us then “run with patience the race set before us,” [Heb. xii. 1, 2](#). And oh that we could depend more upon the *living God*, and less upon our own wisdom and strength! Dear brother, may the *God of all grace* comfort your heart, and succeed your studies, and make you an instrument of good to his people in your day. This is the constant prayer of Your affectionate brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

LETTER III.

To his brother Israel, at Haddam.

dear brother

Kaunaumeeek, Jan. 21, 1743-4..

There is but *one* thing that deserves our highest care and most ardent desires; and that is, that we may answer the great *end* for which we were made, *viz.* to *glorify* that God, who has given us our beings and all our comforts, and do all the *good* we possibly can to our *fellow-men*, while we live in the world: and verily life is not worth the having, if it be not improved for this noble end and purpose. Yet, alas, how little is this thought of among mankind! Most men seem to *live to themselves*, without much regard to the glory of God, or the good of their fellow-creatures. They earnestly desire and eagerly pursue after the riches, the honours, and the pleasures of life, as if they really supposed, that wealth, or greatness, or merriment, could make their immortal souls happy. But, alas, what false and delusive *dreams* are these! And how miserable will those ere long be, who are not *awaked* out of them, to see, that all their happiness consists in *living to God*, and becoming “holy, as he is holy!” Oh, may you never fall into the tempers and vanities, the sensuality and folly, of the present world! You are, by Divine Providence, left as it were *alone* in a wide world, to act for yourself: be sure then to remember, it is a world of *temptation*. You have no *earthly parents* to be the means of forming your youth to piety and virtue, by their pious examples, and seasonable counsels; let this then excite you with greater diligence and fervency to look up to the *Father of mercies* for grace and assistance against all the vanities of the world. And if you would glorify God, or answer his just expectations from you, and make your own soul happy in this and the coming world, observe these few *directions*; though not from a father, yet from a brother who is touched with a tender concern for your present and future happiness. And,

First, Resolve upon, and daily endeavour to practise, a life of *seriousness* and strict *sobriety*. The wise man will tell you the great advantage of such a life, [Eccl. vii. 3](#). Think of the life of Christ; and when you can find that *he* was pleased with jesting and vain merriment, then you may indulge it in yourself.

Again, Be careful to make a good *improvement* of precious *time*. When you cease from labour, fill up your time in reading, meditation, and prayer: and while your hands are labouring, let your heart be employed, as much as possible, in divine thoughts.

Further, Take heed that you *faithfully* perform the *business* you have to do in the world; from a regard to the *commands* of God; and not from an ambitious desire of being esteemed better than others. We should always look upon ourselves as God’s servants, placed in God’s world, to do *his* work; and accordingly labour faithfully for *him*; not with a design to grow rich and great, but to glorify God, and do all the good we possibly can.

Again, Never expect any *satisfaction* or *happiness* from the *world*. If you hope for happiness *in* the world, hope for it from God, and not *from* the world. Do not think you shall be more *happy* if you live to such or such a state of life, if you live to be for yourself, to be settled in the world, or if you should gain an estate in it: but look upon it that you shall then be *happy* when you can be constantly employed for God, and not for yourself; and desire to live in this world, only to *do* and *suffer* what God allots to you. When you can be of the spirit and temper of angels who are willing to come down into this lower world to perform what God commands them, though their desires are *heavenly*, and not in the least set on *earthly* things, then you will be of that temper that you ought to have, [Col. iii. 2.](#)

Once more, Never think that you can live to God by *you own* power or strength; but always look to and rely on *him* for assistance, yea, for all strength and grace. There is no greater *truth* than this, that “we can do nothing of ourselves,” ([John xv. 5.](#) and [2 Cor. iii. 5.](#)) yet nothing but our own *experience* can effectually teach it us. Indeed we are a long time in learning, that *all* our strength and salvation is in God. This is a life that I think no *unconverted* man can possibly live; and yet it is a life that every *godly* soul is pressing after in some good measure. Let it then be your great concern, thus to devote yourself and your all to God.

I long to see you, that I may say much more to you than I now can for your benefit and welfare; but I desire to commit you to, and leave you with, the *Father of mercies*, and *God of all grace*; praying that you may be directed safely through an *evil world* to God’s *heavenly kingdom*.

I am your affectionate loving brother,  
DAVID BRAINERD.



## LETTER IV.

*To a special friend.*

*The Forks of Delaware, July 31, 1744.*

Certainly the greatest, the noblest pleasure of intelligent creatures must result from their acquaintance with the blessed God, and with their own rational and immortal souls. And oh how divinely sweet and entertaining is it to look into our own souls, when we can find all our powers and passions united and engaged in pursuit after God, our whole souls longing and passionately breathing after a conformity to him, and the full enjoyment of him! Verily there are no hours pass away with so much divine pleasure, as those that are spent in communing with God and our own hearts. Oh how sweet is a spirit of devotion, a spirit of seriousness and divine solemnity, a spirit of gospel simplicity, love, and tenderness! Oh how desirable, and how profitable to the Christian life, is a spirit of holy watchfulness and godly jealousy over ourselves; when our souls are afraid of nothing so much as that we shall grieve and offend the blessed God, whom at such times we apprehend, or at least hope, to be a *father and friend*; whom we then love and long to *please*, rather than to be *happy* ourselves, or at least we delight to derive our happiness *from* pleasing and glorifying him! Surely this is a pious temper, worthy of the highest ambition and closest pursuit of intelligent creatures and holy Christians. Oh how vastly superior is the pleasure, peace, and satisfaction derived from these divine frames, to that which we, alas! sometimes pursue in things impertinent and trifling! Our own bitter experience teaches us, that “in the midst of such laughter the heart is sorrowful,” and there is no true satisfaction but in God. But, alas! how shall we obtain and retain this sweet spirit of religion and devotion? Let us follow the apostle’s direction, [Phil. ii. 12.](#) and labour upon the encouragement he there mentions, [ver. 13.](#) for it is God only can afford us this favour; and he will be *sought to*, and it is fit we should wait upon him, for so rich a mercy. Oh, may the God of all grace afford us the grace and influences of his divine Spirit; and help us that we may from our hearts esteem it our greatest liberty and happiness, that “whether we live, we may live to the Lord, or whether we die, we may die to the Lord; that in *life* and *death* we may be *his*!

I am in a very poor state of health; I think scarce ever poorer: but through divine goodness I am not discontented under my weakness and confinement to this wilderness. I bless God for this retirement: I never was more thankful for any thing than I have been of late for the necessity I am under of self-denial in many respects. I love to be a *pilgrim* and *stranger* in this wilderness: it seems most fit for such a poor ignorant, worthless, despised creature as I. I would not change my present *mission* for any other business in the whole world. I may tell you freely, without vanity and ostentation, God has of late given me great freedom and fervency in prayer, when I have been so weak and feeble that my nature seemed as if it would speedily dissolve. I feel as if my *all* was lost, and I was undone for this world,

if the poor heathen may not be converted. I feel, in general, different from what I did when I saw you last; at least more *crucified* to all the enjoyments of life. It would be very refreshing to me to see you here in this desert; especially in my weak disconsolate hours: but I think I could be content never to see you or any of my friends again in this world, if God would bless my labours here to the conversion of the poor Indians.

I have much that I could willingly communicate to you, which I must omit, till Providence gives us leave to see each other. In the mean time, I rest

Your obliged friend and servant,

DAVID BRAINERD.

LETTER V.

*To a special friend, a minister of the gospel in New Jersey.*

*The Forks of Delaware, Dec. 24 1744.*

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

I have little to say to you about spiritual *joys*, and those blessed *refreshments* and divine *consolations*, with which I have been much favoured in times past: but this I can tell you, that if I gain experience in no other point, yet I am sure I do in this, *viz.* that the *present world* has nothing in it to *satisfy* an immortal soul: and hence, that it is not to be *desired for itself*, but only because God may be *seen* and *served* in it. And I wish I could be more patient and willing to live in it for *this end*, than I can usually find myself to be. It is no virtue I know to desire death, only to be freed from the miseries of life: but I want that divine hope which you observed when I saw you last, was the very sinews of vital religion. Earth can *do us no good*; and if there be no *hope* of our *doing good on earth*, how can we desire to live in it? And yet we ought to desire, or at least to be resigned, to tarry in it; because it is the will of our all-wise Sovereign. But perhaps these thoughts will appear melancholy and gloomy, and consequently will be very undesirable to you; and therefore I forbear to add. I wish you may not read them in the same circumstances in which I write them. I have a little more to *do* and *suffer* in a dark disconsolate world; and then I hope to be as happy as you are. I should ask you to pray for me were I worth your concern. May the Lord enable us both to “endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ;” and may we “obtain mercy of God to be faithful to the death,” in the discharge of our respective trusts!

I am your very unworthy brother,

And humble servant,

DAVID BRAINERD.

LETTER VI.

*To his brother John, at college.*

*Crossweeksung, New Jersey, Dec. 28, 1745.*

VERY DEAR BROTHER,

I am in one continued, perpetual, and uninterrupted hurry; and Divine Providence throws so much upon me that I do not see it will ever be otherwise. May I “obtain mercy of God to be faithful to the death!” I cannot say I am weary of my hurry; I only want strength and grace to do more for God than I have ever yet done.

My dear brother; *The Lord of heaven*, that has carried me through many trials, *bless you*; bless you for time, and eternity; and fit you to do service for him in his church below, and to enjoy his blissful presence in his church triumphant. My brother; “the time is short:” oh let us fill it up for God; let us “count the sufferings of this present time” as nothing, if we can but “run our race, and finish our course with joy.” Oh, let us strive to live to God. I bless the Lord, I have nothing to do with *earth*, but only to labour honestly in it for God, till I shall “accomplish as an hireling my day.” I think I do not desire to live one minute for any thing that *earth* can afford. Oh, that I could live for none but God, till my dying moment!

I am your affectionate brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

## LETTER VII.

*To his brother Israel, then a student at Yale college, New Haven.*

*Elizabeth-town, New Jersey, Nov. 24, 1746.*

DEAR BROTHER,

I had determined to make you and my other friends in New England a visit this fall: partly from an earnest desire I had to see you and them, and partly with a view to the recovery of my health; which has, for more than three months past, been much impaired. And in order to prosecute this design, I set out from my own people about three weeks ago, and came as far as to this place; where, my disorder greatly increasing, I have been obliged to keep house ever since, until the day before yesterday; at which time I was able to ride about half a mile, but found myself much tired with the journey. I have now no hopes of prosecuting my journey into New England this winter; my present state of health will by no means admit of it. Although I am, through divine goodness, much better than I was some days ago; yet I have not strength now to ride more than ten miles a day, if the season were warm, and fit for me to travel in. My disorder has been attended with several symptoms of a *consumption*; and I have been at times apprehensive that my great *change* was at hand: yet blessed be God, I have never been *affrighted*; but, on the contrary, at times much *delighted* with a view of its approach. Oh, the blessedness of being delivered from the clogs of flesh and sense, from a *body of sin* and spiritual *death*! Oh, the unspeakable sweetness of being translated into a state of complete purity and perfection! Believe me, my brother, a lively view and hope of these things, will make the king of terrors himself appear agreeable. Dear brother, let me entreat you to keep *eternity* in your view, and behave yourself as becomes one that must shortly “give an account of all things done in the body.” That God may be *your* God, and prepare you for his service here, and his kingdom of glory hereafter, is the desire and daily prayer of

Your affectionate loving brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.



## LETTER VIII.

*To his brother Israel, at college: written in the time of his extreme illness in Boston, a few months before his death.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

*Boston, June 30, 1747.*

It is from the sides of *eternity* I now address you. I am heartily sorry that I have so little strength to write what I long so much to communicate to you. But let me tell you, my brother, *eternity* is another thing than we ordinarily take it to be in a healthful state. Oh, how vast and boundless! Oh, how fixed and unalterable! Oh, of what infinite importance is it, that we be prepared for *eternity*! I have been just a dying now for more than a week; and all around me have thought me so. I have had clear views of *eternity*; have seen the blessedness of the *godly*, in some measure; and have longed to share their happy state; as well as been comfortably satisfied, that through grace I shall do so: but oh, what anguish is raised in my mind, to think of an *eternity* for those who are *Christless*, for those who are mistaken, and who bring their false hopes to the grave with them! The sight was so dreadful I could by no means bear it: my thoughts recoiled, and I said, (under a more affecting sense than ever before,) "Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?" Oh, methought, could I now see my friends, that I might warn them to see to it, that they lay their foundation for *eternity* sure. And you, my dear brother, I have been particularly concerned for; and have wondered I so much neglected conversing with you about your spiritual state at our last meeting. Oh, my brother, let me then beseech you now to examine, whether you are indeed a *new creature*? whether you have ever acted above *self*? whether the *glory* of God has ever been the sweetest and highest concern with you? whether you have ever been reconciled to all the perfections of God? in a word, whether God has been your *portion*, and a holy *conformity* to him your chief delight? If you cannot answer positively, consider seriously the frequent breathings of your soul: but do not however put yourself off with a slight answer. If you have reason to think you are *graceless*, oh give yourself and the throne of grace no rest, till God arise and save. But if the case should be otherwise, bless God for his grace, and press after holiness.

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My soul longs that you should be fitted for, and in due time go into, the work of the *ministry*. I cannot bear to think of your going into any other business in life. Do not be discouraged, because you see your elder brothers in the ministry *die early*, one after another. I declare, now I am dying, I would not have spent my life *otherwise* for the whole world. But I must leave this with God.

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429 Mr. Brainerd afterwards had greater satisfaction concerning the state of his brother's soul, by much opportunity of conversation with him before his death.

If this line should come to your hands soon after the date, I should be almost desirous you should set out on a journey to me: it may be, you may see me alive; which I should much rejoice in. But if you cannot come, I must commit you to the grace of God, where you are. May he be your guide and counsellor, your sanctifier and eternal portion!

Oh, my dear brother, flee fleshly *lusts*, and the enchanting *amusements*, as well as corrupt doctrine, of the present day; and strive to *live to God*. Take this as the *last* line from

Your affectionate dying brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

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LETTER IX.

To a young gentleman, a candidate for the work of the ministry, for whom he had a special friendship; also written at the same time of his great illness and nearness to death in Boston.

VERY DEAR SIR,

How amazing it is, that the *living* who *know they must die*, should notwithstanding “put far away the evil day,” in a season of health and prosperity; and live at such an awful distance from a familiarity with the grave, and the great concerns beyond it! and especially it may justly fill us with surprise, that any whose minds have been divinely *enlightened*, to behold the important things of *eternity* as they are, I say, that such should live in this manner. And yet, Sir, how frequently is this the case! how rare are the instances of those who live and act from day to day, as on the verge of *eternity*; striving to fill up all their remaining moments in the service and to the honour of their great *Master*! We insensibly trifle away *time*, while we seem to have enough of it; and are so strangely amused, as in a great measure to lose a sense of the *holiness* and blessed qualifications necessary to prepare us to be inhabitants of the heavenly *paradise*. But oh, dear Sir, a *dying bed*, if we enjoy our reason clearly, will give another view of things. I have now, for more than three weeks, lain under the greatest degree of weakness; the greater part of the time, expecting daily and hourly to enter into the eternal world: sometimes have been so far gone, as to be wholly speechless, for some hours together. And oh, of what vast *importance* has a holy spiritual *life* appeared to me to be at this season! I have longed to call upon all my friends, to make it their business to *live to God*; and especially all that are designed for, or engaged in, the service of the *sanctuary*. O, dear Sir, do not think it enough to live at the rate of *common Christians*. Alas, to how little purpose do they often converse, when they meet together! The *visits* even of those who are called Christians indeed, are frequently extremely barren; and conscience cannot but condemn us for the misimprovement of time, while we have been conversant with them. But the way to enjoy the divine presence, and be fitted for distinguishing service for God, is to live a life of *great devotion* and *constant self-dedication* to him; observing the motions and dispositions of our own hearts, whence we may learn the corruptions that lodge there, and our constant need of help from God for the performance of the least duty. And oh, dear Sir, let me beseech you frequently to attend the great and precious duties of *secret fasting* and *prayer*.

I have a secret thought from some things I have observed, that God may perhaps design *you* for some singular service in the world. On then labour to be prepared and qualified to do much for God. Read Mr. Edwards’s piece on the *affections*, again and again; and labour to *distinguish* clearly upon experiences and affections in religion, that you may make a difference between the *gold* and the shining *dross*. I say, labour here, if ever you would be a *useful minister* of Christ; for nothing has put such a stop to the work of God in the late day as the false religion, and the wild affections that attend it. Suffer me therefore, finally, to entreat you earnestly to “give yourself to prayer, to reading and meditation” on divine truths:



strive to penetrate to the bottom of them, and never be content with a superficial knowledge. By this means, your thoughts will gradually grow weighty and judicious; and you hereby will be possessed of a valuable *treasure*, out of which you may produce “things new and old,” to the glory of God.

And now, “I commend you to the grace of God;” earnestly desiring that a plentiful portion of the divine *Spirit* may rest upon you; that you may *live to God* in every capacity of life, and do abundant service for him in a *public* one, if it be his will; and that you may be richly qualified for the “inheritance of the saints in light.” I scarce expect to see your face any more in the body; and therefore entreat you to accept this as the last token of love, from

Your sincerely affectionate dying friend,

DAVID BRAINERD.

P. S. I am now, at the dating of this letter, considerably recovered from what I was when I wrote it; it having lain by me some time, for want of an opportunity of conveyance; it was written in Boston. I am now able to ride a little, and so am removed into the country: but have no more expectation of recovering than when I wrote, though I am a little better for the present; and therefore I still subscribe myself,

Your dying friend, &c.

D. B.



LETTER X.

To his brother John, at Bethel, the town of Christian Indians in New Jersey; written likewise at Boston, when he was there on the brink of the grave, in the summer before his death.

dear brother,

I am now just on the verge of *eternity*, expecting very speedily to appear in the unseen world. I feel myself no more an inhabitant of *earth*, and sometimes earnestly long to “depart and be with Christ.” I bless God, he has for some *years* given me an abiding conviction, that it is impossible for any rational creature to enjoy true *happiness* without being entirely “devoted to him.” Under the influence of this conviction I have in some measure acted. Oh that I had done more so! I saw both the excellency and necessity of *holiness* in life; but never in such a manner as now, when I am just brought to the sides of the grave. Oh, my brother, pursue after *holiness*; press towards this blessed mark; and let your thirsty soul continually say, “I shall never be satisfied till I awake in thy likeness.” Although there has been a great deal of *selfishness* in my views; of which I am ashamed, and for which my soul is humbled at every view; yet, blessed be God, I find I have really had, for the most part, such a concern for *his glory*, and the advancement of *his kingdom* in the world, that it is a satisfaction to me to reflect upon *these years*.

And now, my dear brother, as I must press you to pursue after *personal* holiness, to be as much in *fasting* and *prayer* as your health will allow, and to live above the rate of *common Christians*; so I must entreat you solemnly to attend to your *public* work; labour to distinguish between *true* and *false* religion; and to that end, watch the motions of God’s *Spirit* upon your own heart. Look to *him* for help; and impartially compare your experiences with his *word*. Read Mr. Edwards on the *Affections*, where the essence and soul of religion is clearly distinguished from false affections.<sup>430</sup> Value religious *joys* according to the *subject matter*

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430 I had at first fully intended, in publishing this and the foregoing letters, to have suppressed these passages wherein my name is mentioned, and my Discourse on Religious Affections recommended: and am sensible, that by my doing otherwise, I shall bring upon me the reproach of some. But how much soever I may be pleased with the commendation of any performance of mine, (and I confess, I esteem the judgment and approbation of such as Mr. Brainerd worthy to be valued, and look on myself as highly honoured by it. ) yet I can truly say, things that governed me is altering my forementioned determinations with respect to these passages, were these two. (1. ) What Mr. Brainerd here says of that discourse, shows very fully and particularly what his notions were of experimental religion, and the nature of true piety, and how far he was from placing it in impressions on the imagination, or any enthusiastical impulses, and how essential in religion he esteemed holy practice, &c. &c. For all that have read that discourse, know what sentiments are there expressed concerning those things. (2. ) I judged, that the approbation of so apparent and eminent a friend and example of inward vital religion, and evangelical piety in the height of it, would probably tend to make that book more serviceable; especially among some kinds of zealous persons, whose benefit was especially aimed at in the book; some of which are prejudiced

of them: there are many who rejoice in their supposed *justification*; but what do these joys argue, but only that they *love themselves*? Whereas, in *true* spiritual joys the soul rejoices in God for what he is *in himself*; blesses God for his holiness, sovereignty, power, faithfulness, and all his perfections; adores God that he is what he is, that he is unchangeably possessed of infinite glory and happiness. Now when men thus rejoice in the *perfections of God*, and in the *infinite excellency of the way of salvation by Christ*, and in the *holy commands of God*, which are a transcript of his holy nature; *these joys* are divine and spiritual. Our joys will stand by us at the hour of *death*, if we can be then satisfied that we have thus acted above *self*; and in a disinterested manner, if I may so express it, rejoiced in the *glory* of the blessed God. I fear you are not sufficiently aware how much *false* religion there is in the world; many serious Christians and valuable ministers are too easily imposed upon by this false *blaze*. I likewise fear, you are not sensible of the *dreadful effects and consequences* of this false religion. Let me tell you, it is the *devil transformed into an angel of light*; it is a *brat of hell*, that always springs up with every revival of religion, and stabs and murders the cause of God, while it passes current with multitudes of well-meaning people for the height of religion. Set yourself, my brother, to crush all appearances of this nature among the Indians, and never encourage any degrees of heat without light. Charge my people in the name of their *dying minister*, yea, in the name of *him who was dead and is alive*, to live and walk as becomes the gospel. Tell them, how great the expectations of God and his people are from them, and now awfully they will wound God's cause, if they fall into vice; as well as fatally prejudice other poor Indians. Always insist, that their experiences are *rotten*, that their joys are *delusive*, although they may have been rapt up into the *third heavens* in their own conceit by them, unless the main tenour of their *lives* be spiritual, watchful, and holy. In pressing these things, "thou shalt both save thyself, and those that hear thee."

God knows, I was heartily willing to have served him *longer* in the work of the ministry, although it had still been attended with all the *labours* and *hardships* of past years, if he had seen fit that it should be so: but as his will now appears otherwise, I am fully content, and can with utmost freedom say, "The will of the Lord be done." It affects me to think of leaving you in a world of sin: my heart pities you, that those storms and tempests are yet before you, which I trust, through grace, I am almost delivered from. But "God lives, and blessed be my Rock:" he is the same Almighty Friend: and will, I trust, be your guide and helper, as he has been mine.

And now, my dear brother, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you inheritance among all them that are sanctified. May you enjoy the divine presence both in private and public; and may "the arms of your hands

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against it, as written in too legal a strain, and opposing some things wherein the height of Christian experience consists, and tending to build men upon their own works.

be made strong, by the right hand of the mighty God of Jacob!" Which are the passionate desires and prayers of Your affectionate dying brother,

DAVID BRAINERD. \_\_\_\_\_

**DETACHED PAPERS.**



FIRST PAPER.

A scheme of a dialogue *between the various powers and affections of the mind, as they are found alternately whispering in the godly soul.* Mentioned in his diary, Feb. 3, 1744.

The *understanding* introduced, (1.) As discovering its own excellency, and capacity of enjoying the most sublime pleasure and happiness. (2.) As observing its desire equal to its capacity, and incapable of being satisfied with any thing that will not fill it in the utmost extent of its exercise. (3.) As finding itself a dependent thing, not self-sufficient; and consequently unable to spin happiness (as the spider spins its web) out of its own bowels. This self-sufficiency observed to be the property and prerogative of God alone, and not belonging to any created being. (4.) As in vain seeking sublime pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness adequate to its nature, amongst created beings. The search and knowledge of the truth in the natural world allowed indeed to be refreshing to the mind; but still failing to afford complete happiness. (5.) As discovering the excellency and glory of God, that he is the fountain of goodness, and well-spring of happiness, and every way fit to answer the enlarged desires and cravings of our immortal souls.

2. The *will* introduced, as necessarily, yet freely, choosing this God for its supreme happiness and only portion, fully complying with the understanding's dictates, acquiescing in God as the best good, his will as the best rule for intelligent creatures, and rejoicing that God is in every respect just what he is; and withal choosing and delighting to be a dependent creature, always subject to this God, not aspiring after self-sufficiency and supremacy, but acquiescing in the contrary.

3. Ardent *love* or *desire* introduced, as passionately longing to please and glorify the Divine Being, to be in every respect conformed to him, and in that way to enjoy him. This love or desire represented as most genuine; not induced by mean and mercenary views; not primarily springing from selfish hopes of salvation, whereby the divine glories would be sacrificed to the idol self: not arising from a slavish fear of divine anger in case of neglect, nor yet from hopes of feeling the sweetness of that tender and pleasant passion of love in one's own breast; but from a just esteem of the beautiful object beloved. This *love* further represented, as attended with vehement longings after the enjoyment of its object, but unable to find by what means.

4. The *understanding* again introduced, as informing, (1.) How God might have been enjoyed, yea, how he must necessarily have been enjoyed, had not man sinned against him; that as there was *knowledge*, *likeness*, and *love*, so there must needs be enjoyment, while there was no impediment. (2.) How he may be enjoyed in some measure now, *viz.* by the same *knowledge*, begetting *likeness* and *love*, which will be answered with returns of *love*, and the smiles of God's countenance, which are better than life. (3.) How God may be perfectly enjoyed, *viz.* by the soul's perfect freedom from sin. This perfect freedom never obtained till death; and then not by any unaccountable means, or in any unheard-of manner;

but the same by which it has obtained some likeness to and fruition of God in this world, viz. a clear manifestation of him.

5. *Holy desire* appears, and inquires why the soul may not be perfectly holy; and so perfect in the enjoyment of God here; and expresses most insatiable thirstings after such a temper, and such fruition, and most consummate blessedness.

6. *Understanding* again appears, and informs, that God designs that those whom he sanctifies in part here, and intends for immortal glory, shall tarry a while in this present evil world, that their own experience of temptations, &c. may teach them how great the deliverance is, which God has wrought for them, that they may be swallowed up in thankfulness and admiration to eternity; as also that they may be instrumental of doing good to their fellow-men. Now if they were perfectly holy, &c. a world of sin would not be a fit habitation for them: and further, such manifestations of God as are necessary completely to sanctify the soul, would be insupportable to the body, so that we cannot *see God and live*.

7. *Holy impatience\** is next introduced, complaining of the sins and sorrows of life, and almost repining at the distance of a state of perfection, uneasy to see and feel the hours hang so dull and heavy, and almost concluding that the temptations, hardships, disappointments, imperfections, and tedious employments of life will never come to a happy period.

8. *Tender conscience* comes in, and meekly reproves the complaints of *impatience*; urging how careful and watchful we ought to be, lest we should offend the Divine Being with complaints; alleging also the fitness of our waiting patiently upon God for all we want, and that in a way of doing and suffering; and at the same time mentioning the barrenness of the soul, how much precious time is misimproved, and how little it has enjoyed of God, compared with what it might have done; as also suggesting how frequently impatient complaints spring from nothing better than self-love, want of resignation, and a greater reverence of the Divine Being.

9. *Judgment* or *sound mind* next appears, and duly weighs the complaints of *impatience*, and the gentle admonitions of *tender conscience*, and impartially determines between them. On the one hand, it concludes, that we may always be impatient with sin; and supposes, that we may be also with such sorrow, pain, and discouragement, as hinder our pursuit of holiness, though they arise from the weakness of nature. It allows us to be impatient of the distance at which we stand from a state of perfection and blessedness. It further indulges *impatience* at the delay of time; when we desire the period of it for no other end, than that we may with angels be employed in the most lively spiritual acts of devotion, and in giving all possible glory to him that lives for ever. Temptations and sinful imperfections, it thinks, we may justly be uneasy with; and disappointments, at least those that relate to our hopes of communion with God, and growing conformity to him. And as to the tedious employments and hardships of life, it supposes some longing for the end of them not inconsistent with a spirit of faithfulness, and a cheerful disposition to perform the one and endure the other: it

supposes, that a faithful servant, who fully designs to do all he possibly can, may still justly long for the evening; and that no rational man would blame his kind and tender spouse, if he perceived her longing to be with him, while yet faithfulness and duty to him might still induce her to yield, for the present, to remain at a painful distance from him. On the other hand, it approves of the caution, care, and watchfulness of *tender conscience*, lest the Divine Being should be offended with impatient complaints; it acknowledges the fitness of our *waiting upon God*, in a way of patient doing and suffering; but supposes this very consistent with ardent desires to *depart, and to be with Christ*. It owns it fit that we should always remember our own barrenness, and thinks also that we should be impatient of it, and consequently long for a state of freedom from it; and this, not so much that we may feel the happiness of it, but that God may have the glory. It grants, that impatient complaints often spring from self-love, and want of resignation and humility. Such as these it disapproves; and determines, we should be impatient only of absence from God, and distance from that state and temper wherein we may most glorify him.

10. *Godly sorrow* introduced, as making her sad moan, not so much that she is kept from the free possession and full enjoyment of happiness, but that God must be dishonoured; the soul being still in a world of sin, and itself imperfect. She here, with grief, counts over past faults, present temptations, and fears from the future.

11. *Hope or holy confidence* appears, and seems persuaded that “nothing shall ever separate the soul from the love of God in Christ Jesus.” It expects divine assistance and grace sufficient for all the doing and suffering work of time, and that death will ere long put a happy period to all sin and sorrow; and so takes occasion to rejoice.

12. *Godly fear, or holy jealousy*, here steps in, and suggests some timorous apprehensions of the danger of deception; mentions the deceitfulness of the heart, the great influence of irregular self-love in a fallen creature; inquires whether itself is not likely to have fallen in with delusion, since the mind is so dark, and so little of God appears to the soul; and queries whether all its hopes of persevering grace may not be presumption, and whether its confident expectations of meeting death as a friend, may not issue in disappointment.

13. Hereupon *reflection* appears, and minds the person of his past experiences; as to the preparatory work of conviction and humiliation; the view he then had of the impossibility of salvation from himself, or any created arm: the manifestation he has likewise had of the glory of God in Jesus Christ: how he then admired that glory, and chose that God for his only portion, because of the excellency and amiableness he discovered in him; not from slavish fear of being damned if he did not, nor from base and mercenary hopes of saving himself; but from a just esteem of that beauteous and glorious object: as also how he had from time to time rejoiced and acquiesced in God, for what he is in himself; being delighted, that he is infinite in holiness, justice, power, sovereignty, as well as in mercy, goodness, and love: how he has likewise, scores of times, felt his soul mourn for sin, for this very reason,



because it is contrary and grievous to God; yea, how he has mourned over one vain and impertinent thought, when he has been so far from fear of the divine vindictive wrath for it, that on the contrary he has enjoyed the highest assurance of the divine everlasting love: how he has, from time to time, delighted in the commands of God, for their own purity and perfection, and longed exceedingly to be conformed to them, and even to be “holy, as God is holy;” and counted it present heaven, to be of a heavenly temper: how he has frequently rejoiced, to think of being for ever subject to and dependent on God; accounting it infinitely greater happiness to glorify God in a state of subjection to and dependence on him, than to be a *god* himself: and how heaven itself would be no heaven to him, if he could not there be every thing that God would have him be.

14. Upon this, *spiritual sensation*, being awaked, comes in, and declares that she now feels and “tastes that the Lord is gracious;” that he is the only supreme good, the only soul-satisfying happiness; that he is a complete, self-sufficient, and almighty portion. She whispers, “Whom have I in heaven but this God,” this dear and blessed portion? “and there is none upon earth I desire besides him.” Oh, it is heaven to please him, and to be just what he would have me be! O that my soul were “holy, as God is holy!” O that it was “pure, as Christ is pure;” and “perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect!” These are the sweetest commands in God’s book, comprising all others; and shall I break them? must I break them? am I under a fatal necessity of it, as long as I live in this world? O, my soul! woe, woe is me, that I am a sinner! because I now necessarily grieve and offend this blessed God, who is infinite in goodness and grace. Oh, me-thinks, should he punish me for my sins, it would not wound my heart so deep as to offend him; but, though I sin continually, he continually repeats his kindness towards me! Oh, methinks, I could bear any suffering; but how can I bear to grieve and dishonour this blessed God! How shall I give ten thousand times more honour to him? What shall I do, to glorify and worship this best of beings? O that I could consecrate myself, soul and body, to his service for ever! O that I could give up myself to him, so as never more to attempt to be my own, or to have any will or affections that are not perfectly conformed to his! But oh, alas, alas! I cannot, I feel I cannot be thus entirely devoted to God: I cannot live and sin not. O ye *angels*, do ye glorify him incessantly: if possible, exert yourselves still more, in more lively and ardent devotion: if possible, prostrate yourselves still lower before the throne of the blessed King of heaven: I long to bear a part with you, and, if it were possible, to help you. Yet when we have done, we shall not be able to offer the ten thousandth part of the homage he is worthy of. While *spiritual sensation* whispered these things, *fear* and *jealousy* were greatly overcome; and the soul replied, “Now I know, and am assured,” &c. and again, it welcomed death as a friend, saying, “O death, where is thy sting!” &c.

15. Finally, *holy resolution* concludes the discourse, fixedly determining to *follow hard after God*, and continually to pursue a life of conformity to him. And the better to pursue this, enjoining it on the soul always to remember, that God is the only source of happiness,

that his will is the only rule of rectitude to an intelligent creature, that earth has nothing in it desirable for itself, or any further than God is seen in it; and that the knowledge of God in Christ, begetting and maintaining love, and mortifying sensual and fleshly appetites, is the way to be holy on earth, and so to be attempered to the complete holiness of the heavenly world.

SECOND PAPER.

*Some gloomy and desponding thoughts of a soul under convictions of sin, and concern for its eternal salvation.*

1. I believe my case is *singular*, that none ever had so many strange and different thoughts and feelings as I.

2. I have been concerned much *longer* than many *others* I have known, or concerning whom I have read, who have been savingly *converted*, and yet I am left.

3. I have *withstood* the power of *convictions* a long time; and therefore I fear I shall be finally left of God.

4. I never shall be converted, without *stronger convictions*, and *greater terrors* of conscience.

5. I do not aim at the *glory* of God in any thing I do, and therefore I cannot hope for mercy.

6. I do not see the evil nature of *sin*, nor the sin of my *nature*; and therefore I am discouraged.

7. The more I *strive*, the more *blind* and *hard* my heart is, and the worse I grow continually.

8. I fear God never showed *mercy* to one so *vile* as I.

9. I fear I am not *elected*, and therefore must perish.

10. I fear the *day* of grace is *past* with me.

11. I fear I have committed the *unpardonable* sin.

12. I am an *old* sinner; and if God had designed mercy for me, he would have called me home to himself before now.

THIRD PAPER.

*Some signs of godliness.*

The distinguishing marks of a *true Christian*, taken from one of my old manuscripts; where I wrote as *I felt* and *experienced*, and not from any considerable degree of doctrinal knowledge, or acquaintance with the sentiments of others in this point.

1. He has a true *knowledge* of the glory and excellency of God, that he is most worthy to be loved and praised for his own divine perfections. [Psalm. cxlv..3.](#)

2. God is his *portion*, [Psal. lxxiii. 25.](#) And God's *glory* his great concern, [Matt. vi. 22.](#)

3. *Holiness* is his *delight*; nothing he so much longs for, as to be holy as God is holy. [Phil. iii. 9-12.](#)

4 *Sin* is his greatest *enemy*. This he hates, for its own nature, for what it is in itself, being contrary to a holy God, [Jer. ii. 1.](#) And consequently he hates all sin, [Rom. vii. 24.](#) [1 John iii. 9.](#)

5. The *laws* of God also are his delight, [Psal. cxix. 97.](#) [Rom. vii. 22.](#) These he observes, not out of constraint, from a servile fear of hell; but they are his choice, [Psal. cxix. 30.](#) The strict observance of them is not his bondage, but his greatest liberty, [ver. 45.](#)

**A S E R M O N**

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P R O V I N C E S O F N E W Y O R K , N E W J E R S E Y , A N D P E N N S Y L V A N I A .**

**B Y E . P E M B E R T O N , A . M .**

*PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.*

[Luke xiv. 23.](#)

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

God erected this visible world as a monument of his glory, a theatre for the display of his adorable perfections. The heavens proclaim his wisdom and power in shining characters, and the whole earth is full of his goodness. Man was in his original creation excellently fitted for the service of God, and for perfect happiness in the enjoyment of the divine favour. But sin has disturbed the order of nature, defaced the beauty of the creation, and involved man, the lord of this lower world, in the most disconsolate circumstances of guilt and misery.

The all-seeing eye of God beheld our deplorable state; infinite pity touched the heart of the Father of mercies; and infinite wisdom laid the plan of our recovery. The Majesty of heaven did not see meet to suffer the enemy of mankind eternally to triumph in his success; nor leave his favourite workmanship irrecoverably to perish in the ruins of the apostacy. By a method, which at once astonishes and delights the sublimest spirits above, he opened a way for the display of his mercy, without any violation of the sacred claims of his justice; in which, the honour of the law is vindicated, and the guilty offender acquitted; sin is condemned, and the sinner eternally saved. To accomplish this blessed design, the beloved Son of God assumed the nature of man, in our nature died a spotless sacrifice for sin; by the atoning virtue of his blood “he made reconciliation for iniquity,” and by his perfect obedience to the law of God, “brought in everlasting righteousness.”

Having finished his work upon earth, before he ascended to his heavenly Father, he commissioned the ministers of his kingdom to “preach the gospel to every creature.” He sent them forth to make the most extensive offers of salvation to rebellious sinners, and by all the methods of holy violence to “compel them to come in,” and accept the invitations of



his grace. We have a lively representation of this in the *parable*, in which our text is contained.

The evident *design* of it is, under the figure of a *marriage-supper*, to set forth the plentiful provision, which is made in our Lord Jesus Christ for the reception of his people, and the freedom and riches of divine grace, which invites the most unworthy and miserable sinners to partake of this sacred entertainment. The first invited guests were the Jews, the favourite people of God, who were heirs of divine love, while the rest of the world were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise:” but these, through the power of prevailing prejudice, and the influence of carnal affections, obstinately rejected the invitation, and were therefore finally excluded from these invaluable blessings.

But it was not the design of infinite wisdom, that these costly preparations should be lost, and the table he had spread remain unfurnished with guests. Therefore he sent forth his servant “into the streets and lanes of the city,” and commanded him to bring in “the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind,” *i. e.* the most necessitous and miserable of mankind; yea, to “go out into the highways and hedges,” to the wretched and perishing Gentiles, and not only invite, but even “compel them to come in, that his house might be filled.”

The words of the text represent to us,

I. The *melancholy state* of the Gentile world. They are described as “in the high-ways and hedges,” in the most perishing and helpless condition.

II. The *compassionate care* which the blessed Redeemer takes of them in these their deplorable circumstances. He “sends out his servants” to them, to invite them to partake of the entertainments of *his house*.

III. The duty of the *ministers* of the gospel, to “compel them to come in,” and accept of his gracious invitation. These I shall consider in their order, and then apply them to the present occasion.

I. I am to consider the *melancholy state* of the heathen world, while in the darkness of nature, and destitute of divine revelation. It is easy to harangue upon the excellency and advantage of the *light of nature*. It is agreeable to the pride of mankind to exalt the powers of human reason, and pronounce it a sufficient guide to eternal happiness. But let us inquire into the records of *antiquity*, let us consult the experience of all ages, and we shall find, that those who had no guide but the light of nature, no instructor but unassisted reason, have wandered in perpetual uncertainty, darkness, and error. Or let us take a view of the *present* state of those countries that have not been illuminated by the gospel; and we shall see, that notwithstanding the improvements of near six thousand years, they remain to this day covered with the grossest darkness, and abandoned to the most immoral and vicious practices.

The beauty and good order every where discovered in the visible frame of nature, evidences, beyond all reasonable dispute, the existence of an infinite and almighty Cause, who first gave being to the universe, and still preserves it by his powerful providence. Says the

apostle to the Gentiles, (Rom. i. 20..) “The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” And yet many, even among the philosophers of the Gentile nations, impiously denied the eternal Deity, from whose hands they received their existence; and blasphemed his infinite perfections, when surrounded with the clearest demonstrations of his power and goodness. Those who acknowledged a Deity, entertained the unworthy conceptions of his nature and attributes, and worshipped *the creature*, in the place of the *Creator*, “who is God blessed for ever.” Not only the illustrious heroes of antiquity, and the public benefactors of mankind, but even the most despicable beings in the order of nature, were enrolled in the catalogue of their gods, and became the object of their impious adoration. Rom. i. 23. “They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things,” Rom. i. 23.



A few of the sublimest geniuses of Rome and Athens had some faint discoveries of the spiritual nature of the human *soul*, and formed some probable conjectures, that man was designed for a future state of existence. When they considered the extensive capacities of the human mind, and the deep impressions of futurity engraven in every breast, they could not but infer, that the soul was immortal, and at death would be translated to some new and unknown state. When they saw the virtuous oppressed with various and successive calamities, and the vilest of men triumphing in prosperity and pleasure, they entertained distant hopes, that, in a future revolution, these seeming inequalities would be rectified, these inconsistencies removed; the righteous distinguishingly rewarded, and the wicked remarkably punished. But after all their inquiries upon this important subject, they attained no higher than probable conjectures, some uncertain expectations. And when they came to describe the nature and situation of these invisible regions of happiness or misery, they made the wildest guesses, and run into the most absurd and vain imaginations. The *heaven* they contrived for the entertainment of the virtuous, was made up of sensual pleasures, beneath the dignity of human nature, and inconsistent with perfect felicity. The *hell* they described for the punishment of the vicious, consisted in ridiculous terrors, unworthy the belief of a rational and religious creature.

Their *practices* were equally corrupt with their principles. As the most extravagant errors were received among the established articles of their faith, so the most infamous vices obtained in their practice, and were indulged not only with impunity, but authorized by the sanction of their laws. They stupidly erected altars to idols of wood and stone; paid divine honours to those, who in their lives had been the greatest monsters of lust and cruelty; yea, offered up their sons and daughters as sacrifices to devils. The principles of honour, the restraints of shame, the precepts of their philosophers, were all too weak to keep their corruptions within any tolerable bounds. The wickedness of their hearts broke through every enclosure, and deluged the earth with rapine and violence, blood and slaughter, and all manner

of brutish and detestable impurities. It is hardly possible to read the melancholy description of the principles and manners of the heathen world given us by St. Paul, without horror and surprise; to think that man, once the “friend of God” and “the lord of this lower world,” should thus “deny the God that made him,” and bow down to *dumb idols*; should thus, by lust and intemperance, degrade himself into the character of the *beast*, “which hath no understanding;” and by pride, malice, and revenge, transform himself into the very image of the *devil*, “who was a murderer from the beginning.”

This was the state of the Gentile nations, when the light of the gospel appeared to scatter the darkness that overspread the face of the earth. And this has been the case, so far as has yet appeared, of all the nations ever since, upon whom the Sun of righteousness has not arisen with healing in his wings. Every new-discovered country opens a new scene of astonishing ignorance and barbarity; and gives us fresh evidence of the universal corruption of human nature.

II. I proceed now to consider the *compassionate care* and *kindness* of our blessed Redeemer towards mankind, in these their deplorable circumstances. He “sends out his servants,” to invite them “to come in,” and accept the entertainments of *his house*.

God might have left his guilty creatures to have eternally suffered the dismal effects of their apostasy, without the least imputation of injustice, or violence of his infinite perfections. The fall was the consequence of man’s criminal choice, and attended with the highest aggravations. The *angels that sinned* were made examples of God’s righteous severity, and are reserved “in chains” of guilt “to the judgment of the great day.” Mercy, that tender attribute of the divine nature, did not interpose in *their* behalf, in order to suspend the execution of their sentence, or to avert God’s threatened displeasure. Their punishment is unalterably decreed, their judgment is irreversible; they are the awful monuments of revenging wrath, and are condemned “to blackness of darkness for ever.” Now justice might have shown the same inflexible severity to rebellious man, and have left the universal progeny of Adam to perish in their guilt and misery. It was unmerited mercy that distinguished the human race, in providing a Saviour for us; and it was the most signal comparison that revealed the counsels of heaven for our recovery.

But though justice did not oblige the Divine Being to provide for our relief, yet the goodness of the indulgent Father of the universe inclined him to show pity to his guilty creatures, who fell from their innocence through the subtlety and malice of seducing and apostate spirits. It was agreeable to the divine wisdom to disappoint the devices of Satan, the enemy of God and goodness, and recover the creatures he had made from their subjection to the powers of darkness.

He therefore gave early discoveries of his designs of mercy to our first parents, and immediately upon the apostasy opened a door of hope for their recovery. He revealed a Saviour to the ancient patriarchs, under dark types and by distant promises; made clearer declarations



of his will, as the appointed time drew near, for the accomplishment of the promises, and the manifestation of the Son of God in human flesh. "And when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

This divine and illustrious person left the bosom of his Father, that he might put on the character of a servant; descended from the glories of heaven, that he might dwell on this inferior earth; was made under the law, that he might fulfil all righteousness; submitted to the infirmities of human nature, to the sorrows and sufferings of an afflicted life, and to the agonies of a painful ignominious death on a cross, that he might destroy the power of sin, abolish the empire of death, and purchase immortality and glory for perishing man.

While our Lord Jesus resided in this lower world, he preached the glad tidings of salvation, and published the kingdom of God; confirming his doctrine by numerous and undoubted miracles, and recommending his instructions by the charms of a spotless life and conversation. He sent forth his apostles to pursue the same gracious design of gospellizing the people, and furnished them with sufficient powers to proselyte the nations to the faith. He also appointed a standing ministry to carry on a treaty of peace with rebellious sinners, in the successive ages of the church; to continue, till the number of the redeemed is completed, and the whole election of grace placed in circumstances of spotless purity and perfect happiness.

These ministers are styled "the servants of Christ," by way of eminence: they are in a peculiar manner devoted to the service of their divine Master: from him they receive their commission; and by him they are appointed to represent his person, preside in his worship, and teach the laws of his kingdom. To assume this character without being divinely called, and regularly introduced into this sacred office, is a bold invasion of Christ's royal authority, and an open violation of that order, which he has established in his church. These not only derive their mission from Christ, but it is *his* doctrine they are to preach, and not the inventions of their own brain; it is *his glory* they are to promote, and not their own interest or honour. Their business is not to propagate the designs of a party, but *the common salvation*, and to "beseech all, in Christ's name, to be reconciled unto God."

The apostles, the primitive heralds of the everlasting gospel, were sent to make the first tender of salvation to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and they were commanded to begin at Jerusalem, the centre of the Jewish commonwealth. But when the Jews obstinately persisted in their impenitence and unbelief, they were commissioned to "preach the gospel to every creature under heaven;" the sinners of the Gentiles were invited to *come in*, and accept of the offers of salvation.

The prophets pointed out a Messiah that was to come, and proclaimed the joyful approach of a Redeemer at the time appointed in the sovereign counsels of heaven. The ministers of the gospel now are sent to declare, that the prophecies are accomplished, the



promise fulfilled, justice satisfied, salvation purchased; and all that will *come in*, shall receive the blessings of the gospel. They are not only freely to invite sinners, of all orders and degrees, of all ages and nations; but to assure them, that “all things are now ready,” and to use the most powerful and persuasive methods, that they may engage them to comply with the heavenly call. Which brings me to the third thing proposed; *viz.*

III. To show, that it is the great duty of the ministers of the gospel “to compel sinners to come in,” and accept of the blessings of the gospel. This is so plainly contained in my text, that I shall not multiply arguments to confirm it. My only business shall be to explain the nature of this compulsion, or show in what manner sinners are to be “compelled to come in” to the Christian church. And sure I am, not by the deceitful methods of fraud and disguise, nor the inhuman practices of persecution and violence. This text indeed has often been alleged by the *persecuting bigots* of all ages, and applied to support the cause of *religious tyranny*; to the infinite scandal of the Christian name, and the unspeakable detriment of the christian interest. By this means the enemies of our most holy faith have been strengthened in their infidelity, the weak have been turned aside from “the truth, as it is in Jesus,” and the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah transformed into a field of blood, a scene of hellish and horrid cruelties. If this were the *compulsion* recommended in the gospel, then absolute unrelenting tyrants would be the proper and most infallible teachers; then racks and tortures would be the genuine and most successful method of propagating the faith. But surely every thing of this kind, every violent and driving measure, is in direct opposition to the precepts and example of our blessed Saviour, and contrary to the very genius of his gospel, which proclaims “Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men.”<sup>431</sup>

The princes of this world exercise a temporal dominion over mankind, and by fines levied on their estates, and punishments inflicted upon their bodies, force men to an outward subjection to their authority and government. But the kingdom of our Lord is of a spiritual nature; he erects his empire in the hearts of men, and reigns over “a willing people in the day of his power.” External violence may necessitate men to an external profession of the truth, and procure a dissembled compliance with the institutions of Christ; but can never enlighten the darkness of the mind, conquer the rebellion of the will, nor sanctify and save the soul. It may transfigure men into accomplished hypocrites; but will never convert them into real saints.

The gospel was originally propagated by the powerful preaching of Christ and his apostles, by the astonishing miracles which they wrought in confirmation of their doctrine, and the exemplary lives by which they adorned their profession and character. Instead of propagating their religion by the destructive methods of fire and sword, they submitted to the rage and cruelty of a malignant world with surprising patience, and sacrificed their very

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431 [Luke ii. 14.](#)

lives in the cause of God, without any intemperate discoveries of anger and resentment. Instead of calling for “fire from heaven” to destroy their opposers, they compassionated their ignorance, instructed them with *meekness*, counselled and exhorted them with “all long-suffering and doctrine,” and even spent their dying breath in praying for their conviction and conversion, that they might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Now, in imitation of these primitive doctors of the Christian church, these wise and successful preachers of the gospel, it is the duty of the ministers of the present day to use the same methods of compassion and friendly violence. A disinterested zeal for the glory of God, a stedfast adherence to the truth, and unshaken fidelity in our Master’s cause, with universal benevolence to mankind, must constantly animate our public discourses, and be conspicuous in our private conversation and behaviour. We must diligently endeavour to convince the understandings, engage the affections, and direct the practice of our hearers. Upon this head, it may not be amiss to descend to a few particulars.

1. Ministers are to “compel sinners to come in,” by setting before them their “guilty and perishing condition by nature.” Sinners are naturally fond of carnal ease and security; they are delighted with their pleasant and profitable sins; they even “drink in iniquity like water,” with great greediness, with insatiable thirst, and incessant gratification, but without fear or remorse. Upon this account, there is the highest necessity to sound an alarm in their ears, that they may be awakened to see and consider their dangerous state; or else they will never be excited to “flee from the wrath to come.” The secure sinner is insensible of his want of a Saviour: “The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.”

To this end, the ministers of the gospel are to set “the terrors of the Lord” in array against the sinner, and let him hear the “thunder of divine curses,” that utter their voice against the unbelieving. They are to represent in the clearest light, and with the most convincing evidence, the evil of sin, and the danger to which it exposes; that “wrath from heaven is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;”<sup>432</sup> that the flaming sword of incensed justice is unsheathed, and the arm of the Almighty ready to destroy such as are “going on still in their trespasses,” impenitent and secure. They are not only thus to show them their danger, but to set before them at the same time their wretched and helpless circumstances; that no human eye can successfully pity them, nor any created arm bring them effectual deliverance; that, while in a state of unregenerate nature, they are destitute of strength to perform any acceptable service to the blessed God, and unable to make any adequate satisfaction to his offended justice; that indeed they can neither avoid the divine displeasure, nor endure the punishment that is due to their crimes. Thus, by a faithful application of the law and its threatenings, we should endeavour, by God’s blessing, to make way for the reception of the gospel and its promises. This was the wise method observed by our blessed

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432 [Rom. i. 18](#)

Saviour, the first preacher of the gospel; and by the apostles, his inspired successors. So John the Baptist, who served as “the morning-star” to usher in the appearance of the “Sun of righteousness,” did thus “prepare the way of the Lord,” by enlightening the minds of men in the knowledge of their guilt and misery, and inciting them to flee from the “damnation of hell.” The three thousand that were converted to the faith at one sermon, in the infancy of the Christian church, were first awakened with a sense of their aggravated guilt, in “crucifying the Lord of glory;” and brought in agony and distress to cry out,<sup>433</sup> “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

This method, I confess, is disagreeable to the sentiments and inclinations of a secure world; and may expose us to the reproach of those “that are at ease in Zion:” but is agreeable to the dictates of an enlightened mind, conformable to the plan laid down in the Sacred Scriptures, and has in all ages approved itself the most successful method of promoting the interests of real and vital religion.

2. They are to “compel sinners to come in,” by a lively representation of the *power* and *grace* of our Almighty Redeemer. Not all the thunder and terror of curses from mount Ebal, not all the tremendous “wrath revealed from heaven against the ungodly,” not all the anguish and horror of a *wounded spirit* in an awakened sinner, are able to produce an unfeigned and effectual compliance with the gospel-terms of mercy. The ministry of the *law* can only give the *knowledge of sin*, rouse the sinner’s conscience, and alarm his fears: it is the dispensation of *grace*, that sanctifies and saves the soul. Nor is the former needful but in order to the latter. So much conviction as gives us a sight of our sin and misery, as inclines us to “flee from the wrath to come,” and disposes us to submit to the gospel-method of salvation “by grace through faith,” by sovereign mercy through the Mediator, so much is necessary; and more is neither requisite, nor useful, nor desirable.

It is not the office of preachers to be perpetually employed in the language of terror, or exhaust their strength and zeal in awakening and distressing subjects. No; but as it is their distinguishing character, that they are *ministers of the gospel*, so it is their peculiar business to “preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.” The person, and offices, and love of the great Redeemer, the merits of his obedience, and purchases of his cross, the victories of his resurrection, the triumphs of his ascension and prevalence of his intercession, the power of his Spirit, the greatness of his salvation, the freeness of his grace, &c.; these are to be the chosen and delightful subjects of their discourses. They are to represent him as one who has completely answered the demands of the law, rendered the Deity propitious to the sinner, and upon this account is able eternally to save us from the vengeance of an offended God; who is clothed with almighty power to subdue the inveterate habits of sin, sanctify our polluted nature, and restore us to spiritual health and purity; who is *Lord of the visible and invisible*

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433 Acts ii. 36, 37.

*worlds*, who knows how to defeat the most artful devices of Satan, and will finally render his people victorious over their most malicious and implacable adversaries; who having “made reconciliation for iniquity” upon the cross, is pleading the merits of his blood in heaven, and powerfully interceding for all suitable blessings in behalf of his people; “who is there exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins;”<sup>434</sup> and is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come to God in and through him;”<sup>435</sup> in fine, who from his illustrious throne in glory stoops to look down with pity upon guilty and perishing sinners, stretches forth the sceptre of grace, and opens the everlasting arms of his mercy to receive them. These peculiar doctrine of the gospel they are frequently to teach, upon these they are to dwell with constant pleasure, that sinners may be persuaded to hearken to the inviting voice of divine love, and put their trust in this almighty and compassionate Saviour. In order to which,

3. They are to show sinners the mighty *encouragement* that the gospel gives them to *accept of Christ*, and *salvation* through his merits and righteousness. As for ignorant *presumers*, these hear the glad tidings of the gospel with a fatal indifference; and say in their hearts, “they shall have peace,” though they go on in their evil way, stupidly “neglecting so great salvation,” and regardless of eternal things. But *awakened* minds are rather apt to draw the darkest conclusions with respect to their case, and to judge themselves excluded from the invitations of the gospel. Sometimes they imagine, that the *number* and *aggravations* of their *sins* exceed the designs of pardoning mercy: at other times, that they have so long resisted the heavenly call, that now the gate of heaven is irrecoverably barred against them: and Satan further suggests, that it would be the height of *presumption* in them to lay claim to the blessings of the gospel, till *better prepared* for the divine reception. Upon such imaginary and false grounds as these, multitudes of the invited guests make *excuses*, and exclude themselves from the “marriage-supper of the Lamb.” It is therefore the business of the servants of Christ to show, that “there is yet room” even for the greatest and vilest sinners to *come in*, and partake of the gospel-festival; that “all things are now ready” for their welcome entertainment; that the *door* is still *open*, and there is free access, not only for those who have escaped the grossest pollutions of the world, but even “for the chief of sinners,” whose guilt is of a *crimson* colour and a *scarlet* dye; that neither the number nor aggravations of their iniquities will exclude them a share in the divine mercy, if now they submit to the sceptre of grace; that whatever their condition and circumstances may be, it is of present obligation upon them to accept the gospel-call, and their instant duty to *come in*; the Master invites them “to come to him, that they may have life;” and “whosoever do so,” the Master of the house assures them, that “he will in no wise cast them out.”<sup>436</sup>

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434 [Acts v. 31.](#)

435 [Heb. vii. 25.](#)

436 [John vi. 37.](#)

4. They are to exhibit the unspeakable *advantages* that will attend a compliance with the gospel-call, I know, indeed, the religion of Jesus is by its enemies often represented in the most frightful and hideous colours; particularly as laying an unreasonable restraint on the liberties of mankind, and sinking them into melancholy enthusiasts. It becomes us, therefore, who are “set for the defence of the gospel,” to endeavour the removing of this groundless prejudice, and to convince mankind by the light of reason and Scripture, that “the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace:” that verily a life of *faith* in the blessed Redeemer is the way to be happy, both here and hereafter.

O what more honourable, than to be “a child of God, an heir of the kingdom of heaven?” What more pleasing, than to look back, and behold our past iniquities all buried in the depths of eternal oblivion; than to look forward, and view our dear Saviour acknowledging us his friends and favourites, and adjudging us to a state of unperishing glory? What more advantageous, than to have the divine favour engaged for our protection, the promises of divine grace for our consolation; and an assured title to “an inheritance undefiled, incorruptible, and eternal?” This is the portion of the true believer. These the privileges that attend a compliance with the gospel-call.

These things are to be represented in such a manner as may tend to captivate the hearts of men, and engage them in a solicitous care and resolution to renounce the degrading servitude of sin, and resign themselves to the power of redeeming grace. Thus by the most effectual and persuasive methods, the ministers of Jesus are to *compel* sinners “to come in, that his house may be filled.”

It was not in my design, to consider the duty of the ministry in its just extent; but only to insist upon those things that more properly belong to my subject, and lie directly in the view of my text. It will now doubtless be expected that I apply my discourse more immediately to the *present occasion*.

And suffer me, dear Sir, in the first place, to address myself to you, who are this day coming under a public consecration to the service of Christ, “to bear his name among the Gentiles; to whom the Master is now sending you forth, to compel them to come in, that his house may be filled.” We trust you are *a chosen vessel*, designed for extensive service in this honourable, though difficult, employment. We adore the God of nature, who has furnished you with such endowments as suit you to this important charge. We adore the great Head of the church for the nobler gifts and graces of his Spirit; by which, we trust, you are enabled to engage in this mission with an ardent love to God, the universal Father of mankind, with a disinterested zeal for the honour of Christ, the compassionate friend of sinners, and with tender concern for the perishing souls of a “people that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death;” who have for so many ages been wandering out of the way of salvation, “without Christ, and without God in the world.”

The work of the ministry, in every place, has its difficulties and dangers, and requires much wisdom, fortitude, patience, and self-denial, to discharge it in a right manner, with an encouraging prospect of success: but greater degrees of prudence, humility, and meekness, mortification to the present world, holy courage, and zeal for the honour of God our Saviour, are necessary where any are called to minister the gospel unto those, who through a long succession of ages have dwelt in the darkness of heathenism, have from their infancy imbibed inveterate prejudices against the Christian faith, and from time immemoria been inured to many superstitious and idolatrous practices, directly opposite to the nature and design of the gospel.

What heavenly *skill* is required, to convey the supernatural mysteries of the gospel into the minds of uninstructed pagans, who are “a people of a strange speech and hard language!” What deep *self-denial* is necessary, to enable you cheerfully to forsake the pleasures of your native country, with the agreeable society of your friends and acquaintance, to dwell among those who inhabit not indeed “the high-ways and hedges,” but uncultivated deserts, and the remotest recesses of the wilderness! What unwearied *zeal* and *diligence*, to proselyte those to the faith of the gospel, who have quenched the light of reason, and by their inhuman and barbarous practices have placed themselves upon a level with the brute creation!

Methinks I hear you crying out, “Who is sufficient for these things?” And indeed, if you had no strength to depend upon but your own, no encouragement but from human assistance, you might justly sink down in despair, and utter the passionate language of Moses, “O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send;” thy servant is insufficient for so great a work. But it is at the command of Christ, the great Head of the church, that you go forth; who by a train of surprising providences, has been preparing your way for this important embassy; and therefore you may be assured, that he will support you in the faithful discharge of your duty, accept your unfeigned desires to promote the interests of his kingdom, and finally reward your imperfect services with his gracious approbation. You have his divine promise for your security and consolation; “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” This will afford you light in every darkness, defence in every danger, strength in every weakness, and a final victory over every temptation. If Christ be with you, “in vain do the heathen rage,” in vain will their confederated tribes unite their forces to obstruct and discourage you. Infinite wisdom will be your guide, almighty power your shield, and God himself “your exceeding great reward.” The presence of your divine Master will make amends for the absence of your dearest friends and relatives. This will transform a wild and uncultivated desert into a paradise of joy and pleasure, and the lonely huts of savages into more delightful habitations than the palaces of princes.

Let not then any difficulties discourage, any dangers affright you. Go forth *in the name* and *strength* of the Lord Jesus, to whom you are now to be devoted in the sacred office of the ministry. “Be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation



to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.” Let zeal for the honour of God, and compassion for the souls of men, animate your public discourses and private addresses to the people committed to your charge. Always remember, that your character is *a minister of Jesus*; and therefore with the inspired doctor of the Gentiles, you “are to know nothing among them, save Christ and him crucified. Frequently consider, that the gospel is a divine discipline to purify the heart, and set up the kingdom of the Redeemer in the souls of men: and therefore it is not sufficient to bring sinners to a profession of the name of Christ, and an outward subjection to the institutions of divine worship: “You are sent to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.” Unless this be effected, (whatever other improvements they gain,) they are left under the dominion of sin, and exposed to the wrath of God; and their superior degrees of knowledge will only serve to light them down to the regions of death and misery. *This* then is to be the principal design of your ministry: for *this* you are to labour with unwearied application, and with incessant importunity to approach the throne of that God, whose peculiar prerogative it is “to teach us to profit;” whose grace alone can make them “a willing people in the day of his power.”

And for your encouragement, I will only add: When I consider the many prophecies, in sacred Scripture, of the triumphant progress of the gospel in the last ages of the world, I cannot but *lift up my head with joy*, in an humble expectation, that the *day draws near*, yea, is *even at hand*, when the promises made to the Son of God shall be more illustriously fulfilled; “when he shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession; when his name shall be great among the Gentiles, and be *honoured and adored* from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.” But if the appointed time is not yet come, and the attempts made to introduce this glorious day fail of desired success, “your judgment will be with the Lord, and your reward with your God.” If the Gentiles “be not gathered” in, you will “be glorious in the eyes of the Lord,” who accepts and rewards his servants according to the sincerity of their desires, and not according to the success of their endeavours.

I shall conclude with a few words to the *body of the people*. God our Saviour, in infinite condescension, hath *sent his servants* to invite you to *come in*, and receive the blessings which infinite wisdom has contrived, and astonishing grace prepared for your entertainment. And surely, my brethren, it is your important duty and incomparable interest, not to despise “the salvation of God sent unto the Gentiles,” nor *make light* of the gospel-message to you.

God has been pleased to employ us the messengers of his grace, men of *like passions* with yourselves, subject to the common infirmities of human nature: but the message comes from him, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; whom you are under the strongest obligations to hear and obey, in point of interest, gratitude, and duty.



What gracious and condescending methods has he taken, to allure and invite you! Has he not descended from heaven to earth, from the boundless glories of eternity to all the sufferings and afflictions of this mortal life, that he might purchase and reveal salvation; that he might engage your love, and persuade you to comply with his saving designs? Does he not send his “ambassadors to beseech you in his stead, to be reconciled to God?”

What excuses have you to make, that will stand the trial of an enlightened conscience, to justify you at the awful tribunal of God? will the vanishing enjoyments of sin and sense, or the perishing riches of this transitory world, make amends for the loss of the divine favour, or support you under the terrors of eternal damnation? Are there any honours comparable to the dignity and character of a child of God, and a title to the privileges of his house and family? Are there any pleasures equal to the smiles of God’s reconciled face, the refreshing visits of his love, and the immortal *joys of his salvation*?

But how deplorable, how desperate will be your case, if you finally refuse the gospel-invitation, and perish in your natural state of guilt and misery! The compassionate Jesus, who now addresses you in the inviting language of love, will then speak to you with the voice of terror, and “swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest, that you shall never taste of his supper,” the rich provision which he has made for the eternal entertainment of his guests. “When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door,” you will in vain *stand without*, and *knock* for admission.

In a word, *Now*, he declares by his servants, that “all things are ready,” and all that are *bidden* shall be welcome, upon their *coming in*, to be *partakers of the benefit*. The blood of Christ is now ready to cleanse you from all your guilt and pollution; his righteousness is now ready to adorn your naked souls with the garment of salvation; his Spirit is now ready to take possession of you, and make you eternal monuments of victorious and redeeming grace. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and whosoever (of the lost and perishing sons of Adam) will, let him come,” and partipate of the blessings of the gospel “freely, without money, and without price.” The arms of everlasting mercy are open to receive you; the treasures of divine grace are open to supply your wants; and every one of you that now sincerely accepts this gracious invitation, shall hereafter be admitted “to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.” For which, God of his infinite mercy prepare us all, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory and dominion world without end. Amen.

SOME REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

ON THE PRECEDING

MEMOIRS, & C.

OF THE

REV. DAVID BRAINERD.

REFLECT. I.

We have here opportunity, as I apprehend, in a very lively *instance*, to see the *nature* of *true religion*; and the *manner* of its *operation* when exemplified in a *high degree* and *powerful exercise*. Particularly it may be worthy to be observed,

SECT. I.

How greatly Mr. Brainerd's religion *differed* from that of some pretenders to the experience of a *clear work* of saving *conversion* wrought on their hearts; who depending and living on that, settle in a *cold, careless, and carnal* frame of mind, and in a neglect of thorough, earnest religion, in the stated practices of it! Although his convictions and conversion were in all respects exceeding clear, and very remarkable; yet how far was he from acting as though he thought he had *got through his work*, when once he had obtained comfort, and satisfaction of his interest in Christ, and title to heaven! On the contrary, that work on his heart, by which he was brought to this, was with him evidently but the *beginning of his work*, his first entering on the great business of religion and the service of God, his first setting out in his race. His obtaining rest of soul in Christ, after earnest striving to enter in at the strait gate, and being violent to take the kingdom of heaven, he did not look upon as putting an end to any further occasion for striving in religion; but these were continued still, and maintained constantly, through all changes, to the very end of life. His work was not finished, nor his race ended, till life was ended; agreeable to frequent *scripture representations* of the Christian life. He continued pressing forward in a constant manner, forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth towards the things that were before. His pains and earnestness in the business of religion were rather increased, than diminished, after he had received comfort and satisfaction concerning the safety of his state. Those divine principles, by which after this he was actuated, love to God, longings and thirstings after holiness, seem to be more effectual to engage him to pains and activity in religion, than fear of hell had been before.



And as his conversion was not the end of *his work*, or of the course of his diligence and strivings in religion; so neither was it the end of the *work of the Spirit* of God on his heart: but on the contrary, the beginning of the work; the beginning of his spiritual discoveries, and holy views; the first dawning of the light, which thenceforth increased more and more; the beginning of his holy affections, his sorrow for sin, his love to God, his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, his longing after holiness. And the powerful operations of the Spirit of God in these things, were carried on from the day of his conversion, in a continued course, to his dying day. His religious experiences, his admiration, his joy, praise, and flowing affections, did not only hold up to a considerable height for a few days, weeks, or months, at first, while hope and comfort were new things with him; and then gradually dwindle and die away, till they came to almost nothing, and so leave him without any sensible or remarkable experience of spiritual discoveries, or holy and divine affections, for months together; as it is with many, who after the newness of things is over, soon come to that pass, that it is again with them very much as it used to be before their supposed conversion, with respect to any present views of God's glory, of Christ's excellency, or of the beauty of divine things; and with respect to any present thirstings for God, or ardent outgoings of their souls after divine objects: but only now and then they have a comfortable reflection on past things, and are somewhat affected with them: and so rest easy, thinking all things are well; they have had a good *clear work*, and their state is *safe*, and they doubt not but they shall go to heaven when they die. How far otherwise was it with Mr. Brainerd, than it is with such persons! His experiences, instead of dying away, were evidently of an increasing nature. His first love, and other holy affections, even at the beginning were very great; but after months and years, became much greater, and more remarkable; and the spiritual exercises of his mind continued exceeding great, (though not equally so at all times, yet usually so,) without indulged remissness, and without habitual dwindling and dying away, even till his decease. They began in a time of general deadness all over the land, and were greatly increased in a time of general reviving of religion. And when religion decayed again, and a general deadness returned, his experiences were still kept up in their height, and his holy exercises maintained in their life and vigour; and so continued to be, in a general course, wherever he was, and whatever his circumstances were, among English and Indians, in company and alone, in towns and cities, and in the howling wilderness, in sickness and in health, living and dying. This is agreeable to scripture descriptions of true and right religion, and of the Christian life. The change wrought in him at his conversion, was agreeable to scripture representations of that change which is wrought in true conversion; a great change, and an abiding change, rendering him a new man, a new creature: not only a change as to hope and comfort, and an apprehension of his own good estate; and a transient change, consisting in high flights of passing affection; but a change of *nature*, a change of the abiding habit and temper of his mind. Not a partial change, merely in point of opinion, or outward reformation; much less a change from one

error to another, or from one sin to another: but an universal change, both internal and external; as from corrupt and dangerous principles in religion, unto the belief of the truth, so from both the habits and the ways of sin, unto universal holiness of heart and practice; from the power and service of Satan unto God.

## SECT. II.

His religion did apparently and greatly *differ* from that of many high pretenders to religion, who are frequently actuated by *vehement emotions* of mind, and are carried on in a course of *sudden* and *strong impressions*, and supposed high *illuminations* and *immediate discoveries*, and at the same time are persons of a virulent “zeal, not according to knowledge.”

His convictions, preceding his conversion, did not arise from any frightful *impressions of his imagination*, or any external images and ideas of fire and brimstone, a sword of vengeance drawn, a dark pit open, devils in terrible shapes, &c. strongly fixed on his mind. His sight of his own sinfulness did not consist in any imagination of a heap of loathsome material filthiness within him; nor did his sense of the hardness of his heart consist in any bodily feeling in his breast of something hard and heavy like a stone, nor in any imaginations whatever of such a nature.

His first discovery of God or Christ, at his conversion, was not any strong idea of any external glory or brightness, or majesty and beauty of countenance, or pleasant voice; nor was it any supposed immediate manifestation of God’s love to *him* in particular; nor any imagination of Christ’s smiling face, arms open, or words immediately spoken to him, as by name, revealing Christ’s love to *him*; either words of Scripture, or any other. But it was a manifestation of God’s glory, and the beauty of his nature, as supremely excellent in itself; powerfully drawing, and sweetly captivating his heart; bringing him to a hearty desire to exalt God, set him on the throne, and give him supreme honour and glory, as the King and Sovereign of the universe: and also a new sense of the infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency of the way of salvation by Christ; powerfully engaging his whole soul to embrace this way of salvation, and to delight in it. His first faith did not consist in believing that Christ loved him, and died for him, in particular. His first comfort was not from any secret suggestion of God’s eternal love to him, or that God was reconciled to him, or intended great mercy for him; by any such texts as these, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Fear not, I am thy God,” &c. or in any such way. On the contrary, when God’s glory was first discovered to him, it was without any thought of salvation as his own. His first experience of the sanctifying and comforting power of God’s Spirit did not begin in some bodily sensation, any pleasant warm feeling in his breast, that some would have called the feeling the love of Christ in him, and being full of the Spirit. How exceeding far were his experiences at his first conversion from all things of such a nature!



And if we look through the whole series of his experiences, from his conversion to his death, we shall find none of this kind. I have had occasion to read his *diary* over and over, and very particularly and critically to review every passage in it; and I find no one instance of a strong impression on his imagination, through his whole life; no instance of a strongly impressed idea of any external glory and brightness, of any bodily form or shape, any beautiful majestic countenance. There is no imaginary sight of Christ hanging on the cross with his blood streaming from his wounds; or seated in heaven on a bright throne, with angels and saints bowing before him; or with a countenance smiling on him; or arms open to embrace him: no sight of heaven, in his imagination, with gates of pearl, and golden streets, and vast multitudes of glorious inhabitants, with shining garments. There is no sight of the book of life opened, with his name written in it; no hearing of the sweet music made by the songs of heavenly hosts: no hearing God or Christ immediately speaking to him; nor any sudden suggestions of words or sentences, either of Scripture or any other, as then immediately spoken or sent to him: no new objective revelations, no sudden strong suggestions of secret facts. Nor do I find any one instance in all the records he has left of his own life, from beginning to end, of joy excited from a supposed *immediate* witness of the Spirit; or inward immediate suggestion, that his state was surely good, that God loved him with an everlasting love, that Christ died for him in particular, and that heaven was his; either with or without a text of Scripture. There is no instance of comfort by a sudden bearing in upon his mind, as though at that very time directed by God to him in particular, any such kind of texts as these; "Fear not, I am with thee; It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom; You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; Before thou wast formed in the belly, I knew thee," &c. There is no supposed communion and conversation with God carried on in this way; nor any such supposed tasting of the love of Christ. But the way he was satisfied of his own good estate, even to the entire abolishing of fear, was by feeling within himself the lively actings of a holy temper and heavenly disposition, the vigorous exercises of that divine love which casteth out fear. This was the way he had full satisfaction soon after his conversion; (see his diary on October 18, and 19, 1740;) and we find no other way of satisfaction through his whole life afterwards: and this he abundantly declared to be the way, the only way, that he had complete satisfaction, when he looked death in the face, in its near approaches.

Some of the pretenders to an *immediate* witness by suggestion, and defenders of it, with an assuming confidence would bear us in hand, that there is no full assurance without it; and that the way of being satisfied by signs, and arguing an interest in Christ from sanctification, if it will keep men quiet in life and health, yet will never do when they come to *die*. Then, they say, men must have *immediate* witness, or else be in a dreadful uncertainty. But Mr. Brainerd's experience is a confutation of this; for in him we have an instance of one that possessed as constant, as unshaken an assurance, through the course of his life, after

conversion, as perhaps can be produced in this age; which yet he obtained and enjoyed without any such sort of *testimony*, and without all manner of appearance of it, or pretence to it; yea, while utterly disclaiming any such thing, and declaring against it. His assurance, we need not scruple to affirm, has as fair a claim, and as just a pretension to truth and genuineness, as any that the pretenders to *immediate witness* can produce. And he is not only an instance of one that had such assurance in *life*, but had it in a constant manner in his last illness; and particularly in the latter stages of it, through those last months of his life wherein *death* was more sensibly approaching, without the least hope of life. He had it too in its *fulness*, and in the height of its exercise, under repeated trials, in this space of time; when brought from time to time to the very brink of the grave, expecting in a few minutes to be in eternity. He had “the full assurance of hope unto the end.” When on the verge of eternity, he then declared his assurance to be such as perfectly excluded all fear. And not only so, but it manifestly filled his soul with exceeding joy; he declaring at the same time, that this his consolation and good hope through grace, arose wholly from the *evidence* he had of his good estate, by what he found of his sanctification, or the exercise of a holy heavenly temper of mind, supreme love to God, &c. and not in the least from any *immediate witness* by suggestion. Yea, he declares that at these very times he saw the awful *delusion* of that confidence which is built on such a foundation, as well as of the whole of that religion which it usually springs from, or at least is the attendant of; and that his soul abhorred those delusions: and he continued in this mind, often expressing it with much solemnity, even till death.

### SECT. III.

Mr. Brainerd’s religion was not *selfish* and *mercenary*: his love to God was primarily and principally for the supreme excellency of his *own nature*, and not built on a preconceived notion that God loved *him*, had received *him* into favour, and had done great things *for him*, or promised great things *to him*. His joy was joy in *God*, and not in *himself*. We see by his *diary* how, from time to time, through the course of his life, his soul was filled with ineffable sweetness and comfort. But what was the spring of this strong and abiding consolation? Not so much the consideration of the sure grounds he had to think that his state was good, that God had delivered him from hell, and that heaven was *his*; or any thoughts concerning his own distinguished happy and exalted circumstances, as a high favourite of Heaven: but the sweet meditations and entertaining views he had of divine things *without himself*; the affecting considerations and lively ideas of God’s infinite glory, his unchangeable blessedness, his sovereignty and universal dominion; together with the sweet exercises of love to God, giving himself up to him, abasing himself before him, denying himself for him, depending upon him, acting for his glory, diligently serving him; and the pleasing prospects or hopes he had of a future advancement of the kingdom of Christ, &c.

It appears plainly and abundantly all along, from his conversion to his death, that the beauty, that sort of good, which was the great object of the new sense of his mind, the new relish and appetite given him in conversion, and thenceforward maintained and increased in his heart, was holiness, conformity to God, living to God, and glorifying him. This was what drew his heart; this was the centre of his soul; this was the ocean to which all the streams of his religious affections tended; this was the object that engaged his eager thirsting desires and earnest pursuits. He knew no true excellency, or happiness, but this; this was what he longed for most vehemently and constantly on *earth*; and this was with him the beauty and blessedness of *heaven*. This made him so much and so often to long for that world of glory: it was to be perfectly holy, and perfectly exercised in the holy employments of heaven; thus, “to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever.”

His religious illuminations, affections, and comfort, seemed, to a great degree, to be attended with *evangelical humiliation*; consisting in a sense of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness; with an answerable disposition and frame of heart. How deeply affected was he almost continually with his great defects in religion; with his vast distance from that spirituality and holy frame of mind that became him; with his ignorance, pride, deadness, unsteadiness, barrenness! He was not only affected with the remembrance of his *former* sinfulness, before his conversion, but with the sense of his *present* vileness and pollution. He was not only disposed to think meanly of himself as *before God*, and in comparison of him; but *amongst men*, and as compared with them. He was apt to think other saints better than he; yea, to look on himself as the meanest and least of saints; yea, very often, as the vilest and worst of mankind. And notwithstanding his great attainments in *spiritual knowledge*, yet we find there is scarce any thing, with a sense of which he is more frequently affected and abased, than his *ignorance*.

How eminently did he appear to be of a *meek* and *quiet* spirit, resembling the lamb-like, dove-like Spirit of Jesus Christ! How full of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness, and mercy! His love was not merely a fondness and zeal for a party, but an universal benevolence; very often exercised in the most sensible and ardent love to his greatest opposers and enemies. His love and meekness were not a mere pretence, and outward profession and show; but they were effectual things, manifested in expensive and painful deeds of love and kindness; and in a meek behaviour; readily confessing faults under the greatest trials, and humbling himself even at the feet of those from whom he supposed he had suffered most; and from time to time very frequently praying for his enemies, abhorring the thoughts of bitterness or resentment towards them. I scarcely know where to look for any parallel instance of self-denial, in these respects, in the present age. He was a person of great zeal; but how did he abhor a bitter zeal, and lament it where he saw it! And though he was once drawn into some degrees of it, by the force of prevailing example, as it were in his childhood; yet how did he go about with a heart bruised and broken in pieces for it all his life after!

Of how *soft* and *tender* a spirit was he! How far were his experiences, hopes, and joys, from a tendency finally to stupify and harden him, to lessen convictions and tenderness of conscience, to cause him to be less affected with present and past sins, and less conscientious with respect to future sins! How far were they from making him more easy, in neglect of duties that are troublesome and inconvenient, more slow and partial in complying with difficult commands, less apt to be alarmed at the appearance of his own defects and transgressions, more easily induced to a compliance with carnal appetites! On the contrary, how tender was his conscience! how apt was his heart to smite him! how easily and greatly was he alarmed at the appearance of moral evil! how great and constant was his jealousy over his own heart! how strict his care and watchfulness against sin! how deep and sensible were the wounds that sin made in his conscience! Those evils that are generally accounted small, were almost an insupportable burden to him; such as his inward deficiencies, his having no more love to God, finding within himself any slackness or dulness in religion, any unsteadiness, or wandering frame of mind, &c. how did the consideration of such things as these oppress and abase him, and fill him with inward shame and confusion! His love and hope, though they were such as cast out a servile fear of hell, yet were attended with, and abundantly cherished and promoted, a reverential filial fear of God, a dread of sin and of God's holy displeasure. His joy seemed truly to be a rejoicing with trembling. His assurance and comfort differed greatly from a false enthusiastic confidence and joy, in that it promoted and maintained mourning for sin. Holy mourning, with him, was not only the work of an hour or a day, at his first conversion; but sorrow for sin was like a wound constantly running; he was a mourner for sin all his days. He did not, after he received comfort and full satisfaction of the forgiveness of all his sins, and the safety of his state, forget his past sins, the sins of his youth, committed before his conversion; but the remembrance of them, from time to time, revived in his heart, with renewed grief. That passage ([Ezek. xvi. 63.](#)) was evidently fulfilled in him, "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame; when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done." And how lastingly did the sins he committed after his conversion affect and break his heart! If he did any thing whereby he thought he had in any respect dishonoured God, and wounded the interest of religion, he had never done with calling it to mind with sorrow and bitterness; though he was assured that God had forgiven it, yet he never forgave himself: his past sorrows and fears made no satisfaction, with him; but still the wound renews and bleeds afresh, again and again. And his present sins, those he daily found in himself, were an occasion of daily sensible and deep sorrow of heart.

His religion did not consist in unaccountable *flights* and vehement *pangs*; suddenly rising, and suddenly falling; at times exalted almost to the third heavens, and then negligent, vain, carnal, and swallowed up with the world, for days and weeks, if not months together. His religion was not like a blazing meteor, or like a flaming comet, (or a wandering star, as



the apostle Jude calls it, [ver. 13.](#)) flying through the firmament with a bright train, and then quickly departing into perfect darkness; but more like the steady lights of heaven, constant principles of light, though sometimes hid with clouds. Nor like a land-flood, which flows far and wide with a rapid stream, bearing down all before it, and then dries up; but more like a stream fed by living springs; which though sometimes increased by showers, and at other times diminished by drought, yet is a *constant stream*.

His religious affections and joys were not like those of some, who have rapture and mighty emotions from time to time in *company*; but have very little affection in *retirement* and secret places. Though he was of a very sociable temper, and loved the company of saints, and delighted very much in religious conversation, and in social worship; yet his warmest affections, and their greatest effects on animal nature, and his sweetest joys, were in his closet devotions, and solitary transactions between God and his own soul: as is very observable through his whole course, from his conversion to his death. He delighted greatly in sacred retirements; and loved to get quite away from all the world, to converse with God alone, in secret duties.

Mr. Brainerd's experiences and comforts were very far from being like those of some persons, which are attended with a spiritual *satiety*, and which put an end to their religious desires and longings, at least to the edge and ardency of them; resting satisfied in their own attainments and comforts, as having obtained their chief end, which is to extinguish their fears of hell, and give them confidence of the favour of God. How far were his religious affections, refreshments, and satisfactions, from such an operation and influence! On the contrary, how were they always attended with longings and thirstings after greater degrees of *conformity* to God! And the greater and sweeter his comforts were, the more vehement were his desires after *holiness*. For it is to be observed, that his longings were not so much after joyful discoveries of God's love, and clear views of his title to future advancement and eternal honours in heaven; as after more of present holiness, greater spirituality, a heart more engaged for God, to love, and exalt, and depend on him. His longings were for ability to serve God better, to do more for his glory, and to do all that he did with more of a regard to Christ as his righteousness and strength; and after the enlargement and advancement of Christ's kingdom in the earth. And his desires were not idle wishings, but such as were powerful and effectual, to animate him to the earnest, eager pursuit of these things, with utmost diligence and unfainting labour and self-denial. His *comforts* never put an end to his seeking after God, and striving to obtain his grace; but, on the contrary, greatly engaged him therein.

#### SECT. IV.

His religion did not consist in *experience* without *practice*. All his inward illuminations, affections, and comforts, seemed to have a direct tendency to practice, and to issue in it:



and this, not merely a practice *negatively* good, free from gross acts of irreligion and immorality; but a practice *positively* holy and Christian, in a serious, devout, humble, meek, merciful, charitable, and beneficent conversation; making the service of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the great business of life, to which he was devoted, and which he pursued with the greatest earnestness and diligence to the end of his days, through all trials. In him was to be seen the right way of being *lively in religion*. His *liveliness* in religion did not consist merely, or mainly, in his being lively with the *tongue*, but in *deed*; not in being forward in profession and outward show, and abundant in declaring his own experiences; but chiefly in being active and abundant in the labours and duties of religion; “not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and serving his generation, according to the will of God.”

By these things, many high pretenders to religion, and professors of extraordinary spiritual experience, may be sensible, that Mr. Brainerd did greatly condemn *their* kind of religion; and that not only in word, but by example, both living and dying; as the whole series of his Christian experience and practice, from his conversion to his death, appears a constant condemnation of it.

It cannot be objected, that the reason why he so much disliked the religion of these pretenders, and why his own so much differed from it, was, that his *experiences* were not *clear*. There is no room to say, they were otherwise, in any respect, in which clearness of experience has been wont to be insisted on; whether it be the clearness of their *nature* or of their *order*, and the method his soul was at first brought to rest and comfort in his conversion. I am far from thinking, and so was he, that clearness of the *order* of experiences is, in any measure, of equal importance with the clearness of their *nature*. I have sufficiently declared in my discourse on *Religious Affections*, (which he expressly approved of and recommended,) that I do not suppose a sensible distinctness of the *steps* of the Spirit’s operation and method of successive convictions and illuminations, is a necessary requisite to persons being received in full charity, as true saints; provided the *nature* of the things they profess be right, and their practice agreeable. Nevertheless, it is observable, (which cuts off all objection from such as would be most unreasonably disposed to object and cavil in the present case,) that Mr. Brainerd’s experiences were not only clear in the latter respect, but remarkably so in the former: so that there is not perhaps one instance in five hundred true converts, that on this account can be paralleled with him.

It cannot be pretended, that the reason why he so much abhorred and condemned the notions and experiences of those whose *first faith* consists in believing that Christ *is theirs*, and that Christ *died for them*; without any previous experience of union of heart to him, for his excellency, as he is in himself, and not for his supposed love to them and who judge of their interest in Christ, their justification, and God’s love to them, not by their sanctification, and the exercises and fruits of grace, but by a supposed *immediate* witness of the Spirit, by inward suggestion was, that he was of a too *legal* spirit; either that he never was dead to the

law, never experienced a thorough work of conviction, was never fully brought off from his own righteousness, and weaned from the *old covenant*, by a thorough *legal* humiliation; or that afterwards, he had no great degree of *evangelical* humiliation, not living in a deep sense of his own emptiness, wretchedness, poverty, and absolute dependence on the mere grace of God through Christ. For his convictions of sin, preceding his first consolations in Christ, were exceeding deep and thorough; his trouble and exercise of mind, by a sense of sin and misery, very great, and long continued; and the light let into his mind at his conversion, and in progressive sanctification, appears to have had its genuine humbling influence upon him, to have kept him low in his own eyes, not confiding in himself, but in Christ, "living by the faith of the Son of God, and looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus to eternal life."

Nor can it be pretended, that the reason why he condemned these and other things, which this sort of people call the very height of vital religion and the power of godliness, was, that he was a *dead Christian*, and lived *in the dark* (as they express themselves); that his experiences, though they might be true, were not great; that he did not live near to God, had but a small acquaintance with him, and had but a dim sight of spiritual things. If any, after they have read the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd's life, will venture to pretend thus, they will only show that *they themselves* are in the *dark*, and do indeed "put darkness for light, and light for darkness."

It is common with this sort of people, if there are any whom they cannot deny to exhibit good evidences of true godliness who yet appear to dislike their notions and who condemn those things wherein they place the height of religion to insinuate, that *they are afraid of the cross*, and have a mind to *curry favour with the world*, and the like. But I presume this will not be pretended concerning Mr. Brainerd, by any one person that has read the preceding account of his life. It must needs appear a thing notorious to such, that he was an extraordinary, and almost unparalleled, instance (in these times, and these parts of the world) of the contrary disposition; and *that*, whether we consider what he has recorded of his inward *experience*, from time to time; or his *practice*, how he in fact took up and embraced the *cross*, and bore it constantly, in his great self-denials, labours, and sufferings for the name of Jesus, and went on without fainting, without repining, to his dying illness: how he did not only, from time to time, relinquish and renounce the *world* secretly, in his heart, with the full and fervent consent of all the powers of his soul; but openly and actually forsook the *world*, with its possessions, delights, and common comforts, to dwell as it were with wild beasts, in a howling wilderness; with constant cheerfulness complying with the numerous hardships of a life of toil and travel there, to promote the kingdom of his dear Redeemer. Besides, it appears by the preceding history, that he never did more condemn the things forementioned, never had a greater sense of their delusion, pernicious nature, and ill tendency, and never was more full of pity to those that are led away with them, than in his last illness, and at times when he had the nearest prospect of death, supposed himself to be on the very brink of

eternity. Surely he did not condemn those things at these seasons, only to *curry favour with the world*.

### SECT. V.

Besides what has been already related of Mr. Brainerd's sentiments in his dying state concerning true and false religion, we have his deliberate and solemn thoughts on this subject, further appearing by his *preface* to Mr. Shepard's diary, before mentioned; which, when he wrote it, he supposed to be (as it proved) one of the *last* things he should ever write. I shall here insert a part of that *preface*, as follows:

“How much stress is laid by many upon some things as being effects and evidences of exalted degrees of religion, when they are so far from being of any importance in it, that they are really irreligious, a mixture of *self-love*, *imagination*, and spiritual *pride*, or perhaps the influence of Satan transformed into an angel of light; I say, how much stress is laid on these things by many, I shall not determine: but it is much to be feared, that while God was carrying on a glorious work of grace, and undoubtedly gathering a harvest of souls to himself, (which we should always remember with thankfulness,) numbers of others have at the same time been fatally deluded by the devices of the devil, and their own corrupt hearts. It is to be feared, that the *conversions* of some have no better foundation than this; *viz.* that after they have been under some concern for their souls for a while, and, it may be, manifested some very great and uncommon distress and agonies, they have on a sudden *imagined they saw Christ*, in some posture or other, perhaps on the cross, bleeding and dying for their sins; or it may be, smiling on them, and thereby signifying his love to them: and that these and the like things, though mere imaginations, which have nothing spiritual in them, have instantly removed all their fears and distresses, filled them with raptures of joy, and made them imagine, that they loved Christ with all their hearts; when the bottom of all was nothing but *self-love*. For when they imagined that Christ had been so good to them as to save them, and as it were to single them out of all the world, they could not but feel some kind of natural gratitude to him; although they never had any spiritual view of his divine glory, excellency, and beauty, and consequently never had any love to him for himself. Or that instead of having some such imaginary view of Christ as has been mentioned, in order to remove their distress, and give them joy, some having had a passage, or perhaps many passages, of *Scripture* brought to their minds *with power*, (as they express it,) such as that, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,” and the like, they have immediately applied these passages to *themselves*, supposing that God hereby manifested his peculiar favour to *them*, as if mentioned by name; never considering, that they are now giving heed to new revelations, there being no such thing revealed in the word of God, as that *this* or *that* particular person has, or ever shall have, his sins forgiven; nor yet remembering, that Satan can, with a great deal of seeming pertinency, (and perhaps also with considerable power,) bring

Scripture to the minds of men, as he did to Christ himself. And thus these rejoice upon having some scripture suddenly suggested to them, or impressed upon their minds, supposing they are now the children of God, just as did the other upon their imaginary views of Christ. And it is said that some speak of seeing a great *light* which filled all the place where they were, and dispelled all their darkness, fears, and distresses, and almost ravished their souls. While others have had it warmly suggested to their minds, not by any passage of Scripture, but as it were by a *whisper* or voice from heaven, "That God loves them, that Christ is theirs," &c. which groundless imaginations and suggestions of Satan have had the same effect upon them, that the delusions before mentioned had on the others. And as is the conversion of this sort of persons, so are their *after experiences*; the whole being built upon imagination, strong impressions, and sudden suggestions made to their minds; whence they are usually extremely confident (as if immediately informed from God) not only of the goodness of their own state, but of their infallible knowledge, and absolute certainty, of the truth of every thing they pretend to, under the notion of religion; and thus all reasoning with some of them is utterly excluded.

"But it is remarkable of these, that they are *extremely deficient* in regard of true poverty of spirit, a sense of exceeding vileness in themselves, such as frequently makes truly gracious souls to *groan, being burdened*; as also in regard of meekness, love, gentleness towards mankind, and tenderness of conscience in their ordinary affairs and dealings in the world. And it is rare to see them deeply concerned about the principles and ends of their actions, and under fears lest they should not eye the glory of God chiefly, but live to themselves; or this at least is the case in their ordinary conduct, whether civil or religious. But if any one of their particular *notions*, which their zeal has espoused, be attacked, they are then so conscientious, they must *burn*, if called to it, for its defence. Yet at the same time, when they are so *extremely deficient* in regard of these precious *divine tempers* which have been mentioned, they are usually full of *zeal*, concern, and fervency in the things of religion, and often *discourse* of them with much warmth and engagement: and to those who do not know, or do not consider, wherein the *essence* of true religion consists *viz.* in being *conformed to the image of Christ*, not in point of zeal and fervency only, but in all divine tempers and practices they often appear like the best of men."

It is common with this sort of people to say, that "God is amongst them, his Spirit accompanies their exhortations, and other administrations, and they are sealed by the Holy Ghost," in the remarkable success they have, in the great affections that are stirred up in God's people, &c. but to insinuate, on the contrary, that "he is not with their opponents;" and particularly, "that God has forsaken the standing ministry; and that the time is come, when it is the will of God that they should be put down, and that God's people should forsake them; and that no more success is to be expected to attend their administrations." But where can they find an instance among all their most flaming *exhorters*, who has been sealed with

so incontestable and wonderful success of his labours, as Mr. Brainerd, not only in quickening and comforting God's children, but also in a work of conviction and conversion, (which they own has in a great measure ceased for a long time among themselves,) with a most visible and astonishing manifestation of God's power? And this was on subjects extremely unprepared, and who had been brought up and lived, some of them to old age, in the deepest prejudices against the very first principles of Christianity; and yet we find the divine power accompanying his labours, producing the most remarkable and abiding change, turning the wilderness into a fruitful field, and causing that which was a desert indeed to bud and blossom as the rose! And this, although he was not only one of their greatest *opponents* in their errors; but also one of those they call the *standing ministry*; first *examined* and *licensed* to preach by *such ministers*, and *sent forth* among the heathen by *such ministers*; and afterwards *ordained* by *such ministers*; always *directed* by them, and *united* with them in their consistories and administrations: and even abhorring the practice of those who give out, that they ought to be renounced, and separated from, and that teachers may be ordained by laymen.

It cannot be pretended by these men that Mr. Brainerd condemned their religion, only because he was *not acquainted with them*, and had not opportunity for full observation of the nature, operation, and tendency of their *experiences*; for he had abundant and peculiar opportunities of such observation and acquaintance. He lived *through* the late extraordinary time of religious commotion, and saw the beginning and end, the good and the bad of it. He had opportunity to see the various operations and effects that were wrought in this season, more *extensively* than any person I know of. His native place was about the middle of Connecticut; and he was much conversant in all parts of that colony. He was conversant in the eastern parts of it, after the religion which he condemned began much to prevail there. He was conversant with the zealous people on Long Island, from one end of the island to the other; and also in New Jersey and Pennsylvania; with people of various nations. He had special opportunities in some places in this province, (*Massachusetts Bay*,) where there has been very much of this sort of religion, and at a time when it greatly prevailed. He had conversed and disputed with abundance of this kind of people in various parts, as he told me; and also informed me, that he had seen something of the same appearances in some of the Indians, to whom he had preached, and had opportunity to see the beginning and end of them. Besides, Mr. Brainerd could speak more feelingly concerning these things, because there was once a time when he was drawn away into an esteem of them, and for a short season had united himself to this kind of people, and partook, in some respects, of their spirit and behaviour. But I proceed to another observation on the foregoing Memoirs.

## REFLECT. II.

This history of Mr. Brainerd's may help us to make *distinctions* among the high religious *affections*, and remarkable *impressions* made on the minds of persons, in a time of great *awakening*, and *revival of religion*; and may convince us, that there are not only distinctions in *theory*, invented to save the credit of pretended revivals of religion, and what is called *the experience of the operations of the Spirit*; but distinctions that do actually take place in the course of *events*, and have a real and evident foundation in *fact*.

Many *do* and *will* confound things, blend all together, and say, "It is all alike; it is all of the same sort." So there are many that say concerning the religion most generally prevailing among the Separatists, and the affections they manifest, "It is the same that was all over the land seven years ago." And some that have read Mr. Brainerd's Journal, giving an account of the extraordinary things that have come to pass among the Indians in New Jersey, say, "It is evidently the same thing that appeared in many places amongst the English, which has now proved naught, and come to that which is worse than nothing." And all the reason they have thus to determine all to be the *same work*, and the *same spirit*, is, that the one manifested high affections, and so do the other; the great affections of the one had some influence on their bodies, and so have the other; the one use the terms *conviction*, *conversion*, *humiliation*, *coming to Christ*, *discoveries*, *experiences*, &c. and so do the other; the impressions on the one are attended with a great deal of zeal, and so it is with the other; the affections of the one dispose them to speak much about things of religion, and so do the other; the one delight much in religious meetings, and so do the other. The agreement that appears in these, and such like things, make them conclude, that surely all is alike, all is the same work. Whereas, on a closer inspection and critical examination, it would appear, that notwithstanding an agreement in such circumstances, yet indeed there is a vast difference, both in *essence* and *fruits*. A considerable part of the religious operations that were six or seven years ago, especially towards the latter part of that extraordinary season, was doubtless of the same sort with the religion of the Separatists; but not all: there were many, whose experiences were, like Mr. Brainerd's, in a judgment of charity, genuine and incontestable.

Not only do the opposers of all religion consisting in powerful operations and affections, thus confound things; but many of the *pretenders* to *such* religion do so. They who have been the subjects of some sort of vehement, but vain operations on their mind, when they hear the relation of the experiences of some real and eminent Christians, say, that *their* experiences are of the same sort: and that they are just like the experiences of eminent Christians in former times, of which we have printed accounts. So, I doubt not, but there are many deluded people, if they should read the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd's life, who, reading without much understanding, or careful observation, would say, without hesitation, that some things which they have met with, are of the *very same kind* with what he expresses:

when the agreement is only in some general *circumstances*, or some particular things that are superficial, and belonging as it were to the profession and outside of religion; but the inward temper of mind, and the fruits in practice, are as opposite and distant as east and west.

Many *honest, good* people also, and *true Christians*, do not very well know how to make a difference. The glistening appearance of false religion dazzles their eyes; and they sometimes are so deluded by it, that they look on some of these impressions, which hypocrites tell of, as the brightest experiences. And though they have experienced no such things themselves, they think, it is because they are vastly lower in attainments, and but babes, in comparison of these flaming Christians. Yea, sometimes from their differing so much from those who make so great a show, they doubt whether they have any grace at all. And it is a hard thing, to bring many well-meaning people to make proper distinctions in this case; and especially to maintain and stand by them. Through a certain weakness under which they unhappily labour, they are liable to be overcome with the glare of outward appearances. Thus, if in a sedate hour they are by reasoning brought to allow such and such distinctions, yet the next time they come in the way of the great show of false religion, the dazzling appearance swallows them up, and they are carried away. Thus the devil by his cunning artifices, easily dazzles the feeble sight of men, and puts them beyond a capacity of a proper exercise of consideration, or hearkening to the dictates of calm thought, and cool understanding. When they perceive the great affection, earnest talk, strong voice, assured looks, vast confidence, and bold assertions, of these empty assuming pretenders, they are overborne, lose the possession of their judgment, and say, "Surely these men are in the right, God is with them of a truth;" and so they are carried away, not with light and reason, but, like children, as it were with a strong wind.

This confounding of all things together, that have a fair show, is but acting the part of a child, that going into a shop, where a variety of wares are exposed to sale all of a shining appearance; vessels of gold and silver; diamonds and other precious stones; toys of little value, which are of some base metal gilt; glass polished and painted with curious colours, or cut like diamonds, &c. should esteem *all alike*, and give as great a price for the *vile* as for the *precious*. Or it is like the conduct of some unskilful, rash person, who, finding himself deceived by some of the wares he had bought at that shop, should at once conclude all he there saw was of no value; and pursuant to such a conclusion, when afterwards he has true gold and diamonds offered him, enough to enrich him and enable him to live like a prince all his days, he should throw it all into the sea.

But we *must* get into another way. The want of distinguishing in things that appertain to experimental religion, is one of the chief miseries of the professing world. It is attended with very many most dismal consequences: multitudes of souls are fatally deluded about themselves, and their own state; and thus are eternally undone. Hypocrites are confirmed



in their delusions, and exceedingly puffed up with pride; many sincere Christians are dreadfully perplexed, darkened, tempted, and drawn aside from the way of duty; and sometimes sadly tainted with false religion, to the great dishonour of Christianity, and hurt of their own souls. Some of the most dangerous and pernicious enemies of religion in the world (though called bright Christians) are encouraged and honoured; who ought to be discountenanced and shunned by every body: and prejudices are begotten and confirmed in vast multitudes, against every thing wherein the power and essence of godliness consists; and in the end deism and atheism are promoted.

### REFLECT. III.

The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life may afford matter of conviction, that there is indeed such a thing as true *experimental religion*, arising from immediate divine influences, supernaturally enlightening and convincing the mind, and powerfully impressing, quickening, sanctifying, and governing the heart; which religion is indeed an amiable thing, of happy tendency, and of no hurtful consequence to human *society*; notwithstanding there having been so many pretences and appearances of what is called experimental, vital religion, that have proved to be nothing but vain, pernicious *enthusiasm*.

If any insist, that Mr. Brainerd's religion was *enthusiasm*, and nothing but a strange heat and blind fervour of mind, arising from strong fancies, &c. I would ask, What were the fruits of his enthusiasm? In him we behold a great degree of honesty and simplicity, sincere and earnest desires and endeavours to know and do whatever is right, and to avoid every thing that is wrong; a high degree of love to God, delight in the perfections of his nature, placing the happiness of life in him; not only in contemplating him, but in being active in pleasing and serving him; a firm and undoubting belief in the Messiah, as the Saviour of the world, the great Prophet of God, and King of God's church; together with great love to him, delight and complacency in the way of salvation by him, and longing for the enlargement of his kingdom; earnest desires that God may be glorified and the Messiah's kingdom advanced, whatever instruments are employed; uncommon resignation to the will of God, and that under vast trials; great and universal benevolence to mankind, reaching all sorts of persons without distinction, manifested in sweetness of speech and behaviour, kind treatment, mercy, liberality, and earnest seeking the good of the souls and bodies of men. And all this we behold attended with extraordinary humility, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and love to enemies; and a great abhorrence of a contrary spirit and practice; not only as appearing in others, but whereinsoever it had appeared in himself; causing the most bitter repentance, and brokenness of heart on account of any past instances of such a conduct. In him we see a modest, discreet, and decent deportment, among superiors, inferiors, and equals; a most diligent improvement of time, and earnest care to lose no part of it; great watchfulness against all sorts of sin, of heart, speech, and action. And this example and these endeavours



we see attended with most happy fruits, and blessed effects on *others*, in humanizing, civilizing, and wonderfully reforming and transforming some of the most brutish savages; idle, immoral, drunkards, murderers, gross idolaters, and wizards; bringing them to permanent sobriety, diligence, devotion, honesty, conscientiousness, and charity. And the foregoing amiable virtues and successful labours, all end at last in a marvellous peace, unmovable stability, calmness, and resignation, in the sensible approaches of death; with longing for the heavenly state; not only for the honours and circumstantial advantages of it, but above all for the *moral perfection*, and holy and blessed employments of it. And these things are seen in a person indisputably of good understanding and judgment. I therefore say, if all these things are the fruits of *enthusiasm*, why should not *enthusiasm* be thought a desirable and excellent thing? For what can true religion, what can the best philosophy, do more? If vapours and whimsy will bring men to the most thorough virtue, to the most benign and fruitful morality; and will maintain it through a course of life attended with many trials, without affectation or self-exaltation, and with an earnest, constant testimony against the wildness, the extravagances, the bitter zeal, assuming behaviour, and separating spirit of enthusiasts; and will do all this more effectually, than any thing else has ever done in any plain known instance that can be produced; what cause then has the world to prize and pray for this *blessed whimsicalness*, and these *benign vapours*?

It would perhaps be a prejudice with some against the whole of Mr. Brainerd's religion, if it had begun in the time of the *late religious commotion*; being ready to conclude, however unreasonable, that nothing good could take its rise from those times. But it was not so; his conversion was *before* those times, in a time of general deadness; and therefore at a season when it was impossible that he should receive a taint from any corrupt notions, examples, or customs, that had birth in those times.

And whereas there are many who are not professed opposers of what is called *experimental religion*, who yet doubt of the reality of it, from the *bad lives* of some professors; and are ready to determine that there is nothing in all the talk about being *born again*, being *emptied of self*, *brought to a saving close with Christ*, &c. because many that pretend to these things, and are thought by others to have been the subjects of them, manifest no abiding alteration in their moral disposition and behaviour; are as careless, carnal, covetous, &c. as ever; yea, some much worse than ever: it is to be acknowledged and lamented, that this is the case with some; but by the preceding account they may be sensible, that it is not so with all. There are some indisputable instances of such a change, as the Scripture speaks of; an abiding great change, a "renovation of the spirit of the mind," and a "walking in newness of life." In the foregoing instance particularly, they may see the abiding influence of such a work of conversion, as they have heard of from the word of God; the fruits of such experiences through a course of years; under a great variety of circumstances, many changes of state, place, and company; and may see the blessed issue and event of it in life and death.

REFLECT. IV.

The preceding history serves to confirm those doctrine usually called *the doctrine of grace*. For if it be allowed that there is truth, substance, or value in the main of Mr. Brainerd's religion, it will undoubtedly follow, that those doctrine are divine: since it is evident, that the whole of it, from beginning to end, is according to that scheme of things; all built on those apprehensions, notions, and views, that are produced and established in the mind by those doctrine. He was brought by doctrine of this kind to his awakening, and deep concern about things of a spiritual and eternal nature; and by these doctrine his convictions were maintained and carried on; and his conversion was evidently altogether agreeable to this scheme, but by no means agreeing with the contrary, and utterly inconsistent with the Arminian notion of conversion or repentance. His conversion was plainly founded in a clear strong conviction, and undoubting persuasion of the truth of those things appertaining to these doctrine, against which Arminians most object, and about which his own mind had contended most. His conversion was no confirming and perfecting of moral principles and habits, by use and practice, and industrious discipline, together with the concurring suggestions and conspiring aids of God's Spirit; but entirely a supernatural work, at once turning him from darkness to marvellous light, and from the power of sin to the dominion of divine and holy principles. It was an effect, in no regard produced by *his* strength or labour, or obtained by *his* virtue; and not accomplished till he was first brought to a full conviction, that all his own virtue, strength, labours, and endeavours, could never avail any thing towards producing or procuring this effect.

A very little while before, his mind was full of the same cavils against the doctrine of God's sovereign grace, which are made by Arminians; and his heart full even of opposition to them. And God was pleased to perform this good work in him, just after a full end had been put to this cavilling and opposition; after he was entirely convinced, that he was dead in sin, and was in the hands of God, as the absolutely sovereign, unobliged, sole disposer and author of true holiness. God showing him mercy at such a time, is a confirmation, that this was a preparation for mercy; and consequently, that these things which he was convinced of, were true. While he opposed, he was the subject of no such mercy; though he so earnestly sought it, and prayed for it with so much care, and strictness in religion: but when once his opposition is fully subdued, and he is brought to submit to the truths, which he before had opposed, with full conviction, then the mercy he sought for is granted, with abundant light, great evidence, and exceeding joy; and he reaps the sweet fruit of it all his life after, and in the valley of the shadow of death.

In his conversion, he was brought to see the glory of that way of salvation by Christ, that is taught in what are called the doctrine *of grace*; and thenceforward, with unspeakable joy and complacency, to embrace and acquiesce in that way of salvation. He was, in his

conversion, in all respects, brought to those views, and that state of mind, which these doctrine show to be necessary. And if his conversion was any real conversion, or any thing besides a mere whim, and if the religion of his life was any thing else but a series of freaks of a whimsical mind, then this one grand principle, on which depends the whole difference between Calvinists and Arminians, is undeniable, *viz.* that the grace or virtue of truly good men not only differs from the virtue of others in *degree*, but even in *nature* and *kind*. If ever Mr. Brainerd was truly turned from sin to God at all, or ever became truly religious, none can reasonably doubt but that his conversion was at the time when he supposed it to be: the change he then experienced, was evidently the greatest moral change that ever he passed under; and he was then apparently first brought to that kind of religion, that remarkable new habit and temper of mind, which he held all his life after. The narration shows it to be different, in *nature* and *kind*, from all that ever he was the subject of before. It was evidently wrought at once, without fitting and preparing his mind, by gradually convincing it more and more of the same truths, and bringing it nearer and nearer to such a temper. For it was soon after his mind had been remarkably full of blasphemy, and a vehement exercise of sensible enmity against God, and great opposition to those truths which he was now brought with his whole soul to embrace, and rest in as divine and glorious; truths, in the contemplation and improvement of which, he placed his happiness. And he himself (who was surely best able to judge) declares, that the dispositions and affections which were then given him, and thenceforward maintained in him, were, most sensibly and certainly, perfectly different in their *nature* from all that ever he was the subject of before, or of which he had ever had any conception. In this he was peremptory, even to his death. He must be looked upon as capable of judging; he had opportunity to know: he had practised a great deal of religion before, was exceeding strict and conscientious, and had continued so for a long time; had various religious affections, with which he often flattered himself, and sometimes pleased himself as being now in a good estate. And after he had those new experiences, that began in his conversion, they were continued to the end of his life; long enough for him thoroughly to observe their nature, and compare them with what had been before. Doubtless he was *compos mentis*; and was at least one of so good an understanding and judgment, as to be pretty well capable of discerning and comparing the things that passed in his own mind.

It is further observable, that his religion all along operated in such a manner as tended to confirm his mind in the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, man's universal and entire dependence on God's power and grace, &c. The more his religion prevailed in his heart, and the fuller he was of divine love, and of clear and delightful views of spiritual things, and the more his heart was engaged in God's service; the more sensible he was of the certainty and the excellency and importance of these truths, and the more he was affected with them, and rejoiced in them. And he declares particularly, that when he lay for a long while on the verge of the eternal world, often expecting to be in that world in a few minutes, yet at the

same time enjoying great serenity of mind, and clearness of thought, and being most apparently in a peculiar manner at a distance from an enthusiastical frame, he “at that time saw clearly the truth of those great doctrine of the gospel, which are justly styled *the doctrine of grace*, and never felt himself so capable of demonstrating the truth of them.”

So that it is very evident, Mr. Brainerd’s religion was wholly correspondent to what is called the *Calvinistical scheme*, and was the effect of those doctrine applied to his heart: and certainly it cannot be denied, that the effect was good, unless we turn atheists, or deists. I would ask, whether there be any such thing, in reality, as *Christian devotion*? If there be, what is it? what is its nature? and what its just measure? should it not be in a great degree? We read abundantly in Scripture of “*loving* God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength; of *delighting* in God, of *rejoicing* in the Lord, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory; the soul magnifying the Lord, thirsting for God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness; the soul breaking for the longing it hath to God’s judgments, praying to God with groanings that cannot be uttered, mourning for sin with a broken heart and contrite spirit,” &c. How full is the book of Psalms, and other parts of Scripture, of such things as these! Now wherein do these things, as expressed by and appearing in Mr. Brainerd, either the things themselves, or their effects and fruits, differ from the scripture representations? These things he was brought to by that strange and wonderful transformation of the man, which he called his conversion. And do not these well agree with what is so often said in the Old Testament and the New, concerning the “giving of a new heart, creating a right spirit, a being renewed in the spirit of the mind, a being sanctified throughout, becoming a new creature?” &c. Now where is there to be found an Arminian conversion or repentance, consisting in so great and admirable a change? Can the Arminians produce an instance, within this age, and so plainly within our reach and view, of such a reformation, such a transformation of a man, to scriptural devotion, heavenly-mindedness, and true Christian morality, in one that before lived without these things, on the foot of *their* principles, and through the influence of their doctrine?

And here is worthy to be considered the effect of Calvinistical doctrine (as they are called) not only on Mr. Brainerd himself, but also on *others*, whom he taught. It is abundantly pretended and asserted of late, that these doctrine tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate and vacate all reasonable motives to the exercise and practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling-blocks before infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrine are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force, and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind. But where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of their doctrine, in bringing infidels, who were at such a distance from all that is civil, sober, rational, and Christian, and so full of inveterate prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise

of reason, self-denial, and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in *morality*: let them bring an instance of their doctrine producing such a transformation of a people in point of *morality*. It is strange, if the all-wise God so orders things in his providence, that reasonable and proper *means*, and *his own* means, which he himself has appointed, should in no known remarkable instance be instrumental to produce so good an effect; an effect so agreeable to his own word and mind, and that very effect for which he appointed these excellent means; that they should not be so successful, as those means which are *not* his own, but very contrary to them, and of a contrary tendency; means that are in themselves very absurd, and tend to root all religion and virtue out of the world, to promote and establish infidelity, and to lay an insuperable stumbling-block before pagans, to hinder their embracing the gospel: I say, if this be the true state of the case, it is certainly wonderful, and an event worthy of some attention.

I know, that many will be ready to say, "It is too soon yet to glory in the work, that has been wrought among Mr. Brainerd's Indians; it is best to wait and see the final event; it may be, all will come to nothing by and by." To which I answer, (not to insist, that it will not follow, according to Arminian principles, they are not now true Christians, really pious and godly, though they *should* fall away and come to nothing,) that I never supposed every one of those Indians, who in profession renounced their heathenism and visibly embraced Christianity, and have had some appearance of piety, will finally prove true converts. If two thirds, or indeed one half of them (as great a proportion as there is in the parable of the *ten virgins*) should persevere; it will be sufficient to show the work wrought among them to have been truly admirable and glorious. But so much of permanence of their religion has already appeared, as shows it to be something else besides an Indian humour or good mood, or any transient effect in the conceits, notions, and affections of these ignorant people, excited at a particular turn, by artful management. For it is now more than *three years* ago, that this work began among them, and a remarkable change appeared in many of them; since which time the number of visible converts has greatly increased: and by repeated accounts, from several hands, they still generally persevere in diligent religion and strict virtue. I think a *letter* from a young gentleman, a candidate for the ministry, one of those before mentioned, appointed by the honourable commissioners in Boston, as missionaries to the heathen of the Six Nations, so called, worthy of insertion here. He, by their order, dwelt with Mr. John Brainerd among these Christian Indians, in order to their being prepared for the business of their mission. The letter was written from thence, to his parents here in Northampton, and is as follows:

bethel, in New Jersey, Jan. 14, 1748.

Honoured and dear Parents,

"After a long and uncomfortable journey, by reason of bad weather, I arrived at Mr. Brainerd's the sixth instant; where I design to stay this winter: and as yet, upon many ac-

counts, am well satisfied with my coming hither. The state and circumstances of the Indians, spiritual and temporal, much exceed what I expected. I have endeavoured to acquaint myself with the state of the Indians in general, with particular persons, and with the school, as much as the short time I have been here would admit of. And notwithstanding my expectations were very much raised, from Mr. David Brainerd's Journal, and from particular informations from him; yet I must confess, that in many respects they are not equal to that which now appears to me to be true, concerning the glorious work of divine grace amongst the Indians.

“The evening after I came to town, I had opportunity to see the Indians together, whilst the Reverend Mr. Arthur preached to them: at which time there appeared a very general and uncommon seriousness and solemnity in the congregation: and this appeared to me to be the effect of an inward sense of the importance of divine truths, and not because they were hearing a stranger; which was abundantly confirmed to me the next sabbath, when there was the same devout attendance on divine service, and a surprising solemnity appearing in the performance of each part of divine worship. And some, who are hopefully true Christians, appear to have been at that time much enlivened and comforted; not from any observable commotions then, but from conversation afterwards: and others seemed to be under pressing concern for their souls. I have endeavoured to acquaint myself with particular persons; many of whom seem to be very humble and growing Christians; although some of them (as I am informed) were before their conversion most monstrously wicked.

“Religious conversation seems to be very pleasing and delightful to many, and especially that which relates to the exercises of the heart. And many here do not seem to be real Christians only, but growing Christians also; as well in doctrinal as experimental knowledge. Besides my conversation with particular persons, I have had opportunity to attend upon one of Mr. Brainerd's catechetical lectures; where I was surprised at their readiness in answering questions to which they had not been used; although Mr. Brainerd complained much of their uncommon deficiency. It is surprising to see this people, who not long since were led captive by Satan at his will, and living in the practice of all manner of abominations, without the least sense even of moral honesty, yet now living soberly and regularly, and not seeking every man his own, but every man, in some sense, his neighbour's good; and to see those, who but a little while past knew nothing of the true God, now worshipping him in a solemn and devout manner; not only in public, but in their families and in secret; which is manifestly the case, it being a difficult thing to walk out in the woods in the morning, without disturbing persons at their secret devotion. And it seems wonderful, that this should be the case, not only with adult persons, but with children also. It is observable here, that many children (if not the children in general) retire into secret places to pray. And, as far as at present I can judge, this is not the effect of custom and fashion, but of real seriousness and thoughtfulness about their souls.

“I have frequently gone into the school, and have spent considerable time there amongst the children; and have been surprised to see, not only their diligent attendance upon the business of the school, but also the proficiency they have made in it, in reading and writing and in their catechisms of divers sorts. It seems to be as pleasing and as natural to these children, to have their books in their hands, as it does for many others to be at play. I have gone into a house where there has been a number of children accidentally gathered together; and observed, that every one had his book in his hand, and was diligently studying it About thirty of these children can answer to all the questions in the Assembly’s Catechism; and the greater part of them are able to do it with the proofs, to the fourth commandment. I wish there were many such schools; I confess, that I never was acquainted with such an one, in many respects. Oh that what God has done here, may prove to be the beginning of a far more glorious and extensive work of grace among the heathen!

“I am your obedient and dutiful son,  
“JOB STRONG.”

“P. S. Since the date of this, I have had opportunity to attend upon another of Mr. Brainerd’s catechetical lectures: and truly I was convinced, that Mr. Brainerd did not complain before of his people’s defects in answering to questions proposed, without reason: for although their answers at that time exceeded my expectations very much; yet their performances at this lecture very much exceeded them.”

Since this we have had accounts from time to time, and some very late, which show that religion still continues in prosperous and most desirable circumstances among these Indians.

#### REFLECT. V.

Is there not much in the preceding memoirs of Mr. Brainerd to teach, and excite to duty, us who are called to the work of the *ministry*, and all that are *candidates* for that great work? What a deep sense did he seem to have of the greatness and importance of that work, and with what weight did it lie on his mind! How sensible was he of his own insufficiency for this work; and how great was his dependence on God’s sufficiency! How solicitous, that he might be fitted for it! and to this end, how much time did he spend in prayer and fasting, as well as reading and meditation; *giving himself to these things!* How did he dedicate his whole life, all his powers and talents, to God; and forsake and renounce the world, with all its pleasing and insnaring enjoyments, that he might be wholly at liberty to serve Christ in this work; and to “please him who had chosen him to be a soldier, under the Captain of our salvation!” With what solicitude, solemnity, and diligence did he devote himself to God our Saviour, and seek his presence and blessing in secret, at the time of his *ordination!* and how did his whole heart appear to be constantly engaged, his whole time employed, and his whole strength spent, in the business he then solemnly undertook, and to which he was publicly set apart! And his history shows us the right way to *success* in the work of the ministry. He



sought it as a resolute soldier seeks victory in a siege or battle; or as a man that runs a race, for a great prize. Animated with love to Christ and souls, how did he “labour always fervently,” not only in word and doctrine, in public and private, but in *prayers* day and night, “wrestling with God” in secret, and “travailing in birth,” with unutterable groans and agonies, “until Christ were formed” in the hearts of the people to whom he was sent! how did he thirst for a blessing on his ministry; and “watch for souls, as one that must give account!” how did he “go forth in the strength of the Lord God;” seeking and depending on a special influence of the *Spirit* to assist and succeed him! And what was the happy fruit at last, though after long waiting, and many dark and discouraging appearances? Like a true son of Jacob, he persevered in wrestling, through all the darkness of the night, until the breaking of the day.

And his example of labouring, praying, denying himself, and enduring hardness, with unfainting resolution and patience, and his faithful, vigilant, and prudent conduct in many other respects, (which it would be too long now particularly to recite,) may afford instruction to *missionaries* in particular.

#### REFLECT. VI.

The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd’s life may afford instruction to *Christians in general*; as it shows, in many respects, the right way of *practising* religion, in order to obtain the *ends* and receive the *benefits* of it; or how Christians should “run the race set before them,” if they would not “run in vain, or run as uncertainly,” but would honour God in the world, adorn their profession, be serviceable to mankind, have the comforts of religion while they live, be free from disquieting doubts and dark apprehensions about the state of their souls, enjoy peace in the approaches of death, and “finish their course with joy.” In general, he much recommended, for this purpose, the *redemption of time*, great *diligence* in the business of the Christian life, *watchfulness*, &c. And he very remarkably exemplified these things.

But particularly, his example and success with regard to one duty, in an especial manner, may be of great use to both ministers and private Christians; I mean the duty of *secret fasting*. The reader has seen, how much Mr. Brainerd recommends this duty, and how frequently he exercised himself in it; nor can it well have escaped observation, how much he was owned and blessed in it, and of what great benefit it evidently was to his soul. Among all the many days he spent in secret fasting and prayer, that he gives an account of in his *diary*, there is scarce an instance of one, but what was either attended or soon followed with apparent success, and a remarkable blessing, in special incomes and consolations of God’s Spirit: and very often, before the day was ended. But it must be observed, that when he set about this duty, he did it in good earnest; “stirring up himself to take hold of God,” and “continuing



instant in prayer," with much of the spirit of Jacob, who said to the angel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

#### REFLECT. VII.

There is much in the preceding account to excite and encourage God's people to earnest prayers and endeavours for the *advancement and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ in the world*. Mr. Brainerd set us an excellent example in this respect; he sought the prosperity of Zion with all his might; he preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy. How did his soul long for it, and pant after it! and how earnestly and often did he wrestle with God for it! and how far did he, in these desires and prayers, seem to be carried beyond all private and selfish views! being animated by a pure love to Christ, an earnest desire of his glory, and a disinterested affection to the souls of mankind.

The consideration of this not only ought to be an *incitement* to the people of God, but may also be a just *encouragement* to them to be much in seeking and praying for a general outpouring of the Spirit of God, and extensive revival of religion. I confess that God giving so much of a spirit of prayer for this mercy to so eminent a servant of his, and exciting him in so extraordinary a manner, and with such vehement thirstings of soul, to agonize in prayer for it from time to time, through the course of his life, is one thing, among others, which gives me great hope, that God has a design of accomplishing something very glorious for the interest of his church before long. One such instance as this, I conceive, gives more encouragement, than the common, cold, formal prayers of thousands. As Mr. Brainerd's desires and prayers for the coming of Christ's kingdom, were very *special* and *extraordinary*; so, I think, we may reasonably hope, that the God who excited those desires and prayers, will answer them with something *special* and *extraordinary*. And in a particular manner do I think it worthy of notice for our encouragement, that he had his heart (as he declared) unusually drawn out in longings and prayers for the flourishing of Christ's kingdom on earth, when he was in the approaches of *death*; and that with his dying breath he breathed out his departing soul into the bosom of his Redeemer, in prayers and pantings after this glorious event; expiring in very great hope, that it would soon begin to be fulfilled. And I wish, that the thoughts which he in his dying state expressed of that explicit agreement, and visible union of God's people, in extraordinary prayer for a general revival of religion, lately proposed in a memorial from Scotland, which has been dispersed among us, may be well considered by those that hitherto have not seen fit to fall in with that proposal. But I forbear to say any more on this head, having already largely published my thoughts upon it, in a discourse written on purpose to promote that affair; which, I confess, I wish that every one of my readers might be supplied with; not that my honour, but that this excellent design, might be promoted.

As there is much in Mr. Brainerd's life to encourage Christians to seek the advancement of Christ's kingdom, in general; so there is, in particular, to pray for the conversion of the Indians on this continent, and to exert themselves in the use of proper means for its accomplishment. For it appears, that he in his unutterable longings and wrestlings of soul for the flourishing of religion, had his mind peculiarly intent on the conversion and salvation of these people, and his heart more especially engaged in prayer for them. And if we consider the degree and manner in which he, from time to time, sought and hoped for an extensive work of grace among them, I think we have reason to hope, that the wonderful things which God wrought among them by him, are but a forerunner of something yet much more glorious and extensive of that kind; and this may justly be an encouragement to well-disposed, charitable persons, to "honour the Lord with their substance," by contributing, as they are able, to promote the spreading of the gospel among them; and this also may incite and encourage gentlemen who are incorporated, and intrusted with the care and disposal of those liberal benefactions, which have already been made by pious persons, to that end; and likewise the missionaries themselves, that are or may be employed; and it may be of direction unto both, as to the proper qualifications of missionaries, and the proper measures to be taken in order to their success.

One thing, in particular, I would take occasion from the foregoing history to mention and propose to the consideration of such as have the care of providing and sending *missionaries* among savages; *viz.* Whether it would not ordinarily be best to send *two* together? It is pretty manifest, that Mr. Brainerd's going, as he did, alone into the howling wilderness, was one great occasion of a prevailing melancholy on his mind; which was his greatest disadvantage. He spoke much of it himself, when he was here in his dying state; and expressed himself to this purpose, that none could conceive of the disadvantage a missionary in such circumstances was under, by being alone; especially as it exposed him to discouragement and melancholy: and spoke of the wisdom of Christ in sending forth his disciples by two and two; and left it as his dying advice to his brother, never to go to Susquehannah, to travel about in that remote wilderness, to preach to the Indians there, as *he* had often done, without the company of a *fellow-missionary*.

#### REFLECT. VIII.

One thing more may not be unprofitably observed in the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd; and that is, the *special* and *remarkable disposal* of Divine Providence, with regard to the *circumstances* of his last *sickness and death*.

Though he had been long infirm, his constitution being much broken by his fatigues and hardships; and though he was often brought very low by illness, before he left *Kaunaumeek*, and also while he lived at the *Forks of Delaware*: yet his life was preserved, till he

had seen that which he had so long and greatly desired and sought, a glorious work of grace among the Indians, and had received the wished-for blessing of God on his labours. Though as it were “in deaths oft,” yet he lived to behold the happy fruits of the long-continued travail of his soul and labour of his body, in the wonderful conversion of many of the heathen, and the happy effect of it in the great change of their conversation, with many circumstances which afforded a fair prospect of the continuance of God’s blessing upon them; as may appear by what I shall presently further observe. Thus he did not “depart, till his eyes had seen God’s salvation.”

Though it was the pleasure of God, that he should be taken off from his labours among that people to whom God had made him a spiritual father, who were so dear to him, and for whose spiritual welfare he was so greatly concerned; yet this was not before they were well initiated and instructed in the Christian religion, thoroughly weaned from their old heathenish and brutish notions and practices, and all their prejudices and jealousies, which tended to keep their minds unsettled, were fully removed. They were confirmed and fixed in the Christian faith and manners, were formed into a church, had ecclesiastical ordinances and discipline introduced and settled; were brought into a good way with respect to the education of children, had a schoolmaster excellently qualified for the business, and had a school set up and established, in good order, among them. They had been well brought off from their former idle, strolling, sottish way of living; had removed from their former scattered, uncertain habitations; and were collected in a town by themselves, on a good piece of land of their own; were introduced into the way of living by husbandry, and begun to experience the benefits of it, &c. These things were but just brought to pass by his indefatigable application and care, and then he was taken off from his work by illness. If this had been but a little sooner, they would by no means have been so well prepared for such a dispensation; and it probably would have been unspeakably more to the hurt of their spiritual interest, and of the cause of Christianity among them.

The time and circumstances of his illness were so ordered, that he had just opportunity to finish his Journal, and prepare it for the press; giving an account of the marvellous display of divine power and grace among the Indians in *New Jersey*, and at the *Forks of Delaware*. His doing this was of great consequence, and therefore urged upon him by the *correspondents*, who have honoured his Journal with a preface. The world being particularly and justly informed of that affair by Mr. Brainerd, before his death, a foundation was hereby laid for a concern in *others* for that cause, and proper care and measures to be taken for maintaining it after his death. As it has actually proved to be of great influence and benefit in this respect; for it has excited and engaged many in those parts, and also more distant parts of America, to exert themselves for upholding and promoting the good and glorious work, remarkably opening their hearts and hands to that end: and not only in America, but in Great Britain, where that Journal (which I have earnestly recommended to my readers) has been an occasion

of some large benefactions, made for the promoting the interest of Christianity among the Indians. If Mr. Brainerd had been taken ill but a little sooner, he had not been able to complete his Journal, and prepare a copy for the press.

He was not taken off from the work of the ministry among his people, till his *brother* was in a capacity and circumstances to *succeed* him in his care of them: who succeeds him in the like spirit, and under whose prudent and faithful care his congregation has flourished, and been very happy, since he left them; and probably could not have been so well provided for otherwise. If Mr. Brainerd had been disabled sooner, his *brother* would by no means have been ready to stand up in his place; having taken his first degree at college but about that very time that he was seized with his fatal consumption.

Though in that winter that he lay sick at Mr. Dickinson's in Elizabeth-town, he continued for a long time in an extremely low state, so that his life was almost despaired of, and his state was sometimes such that it was hardly expected he would live a day; yet his life was spared a while longer: he lived to see his *brother* arrived in New Jersey, being come to succeed him in the care of his Indians; and he himself had opportunity to assist in his examination and introduction into his business; and to commit the conduct of his dear people to one whom he well knew, and could put confidence in, and use freedom with, in giving him particular instructions and charges, and under whose care he could leave his congregation with great cheerfulness.

The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering it, that before his death he should take a journey into New England, and go to Boston; which was, in many respects, of very great and happy consequence to the interest of religion, and especially among his own people. By this means, as before observed, he was brought into acquaintance with many persons of note and influence, ministers and others, belonging both to the town and various parts of the country; and had opportunity, under the best advantages, to bear a testimony for God and true religion, and against those false appearances of it that have proved most pernicious to the interest of Christ's kingdom in the land. And the providence of God is particularly observable in this circumstance of the testimony he there bore for true religion, *viz.* that he there was brought so near the *grave*, and continued for so long a time on the very brink of eternity; and from time to time, looked on himself, and was looked on by others, as just leaving the world; and that in these circumstances he should be so particularly directed and assisted in his thoughts and views of religion, to distinguish between the true and the false, with such clearness and evidence; and that after this he should be unexpectedly and surprisingly restored and strengthened, so far as to be able to converse freely. Then he had an opportunity, and special occasions, to declare the sentiments he had in these, which, to human apprehension, were his dying circumstances; and to bear his testimony concerning the nature of true religion, and concerning the mischievous tendency of its most prevalent counterfeits and false appearances; as things he had a special, clear, distinct view of at that

time, when he expected in a few minutes to be in eternity; and the certainty and importance of which were then, in a peculiar manner, impressed on his mind.

Among the happy consequences of his going to Boston, were those liberal benefactions that have been mentioned, which were made by piously disposed persons, for maintaining and promoting the interest of religion among his people: and also the meeting of a number of gentlemen in Boston, of note and ability, to consult upon measures for that purpose; who were excited by their acquaintance and conversation with Mr. Brainerd, and by the account of the great things God had wrought by his ministry, to unite themselves, that by their joint endeavours and contributions they might promote the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual good of their fellow-creatures, among the Indians in New Jersey, and elsewhere.

It was also remarkable, that Mr. Brainerd should go to Boston at *that time*, after the honourable commissioners there, of the corporation in London for propagating the Gospel in New England and parts adjacent, had received Dr. Williams's legacy for maintaining *two* missionaries among the heathen; and at a time when they, having concluded on a mission to the Indians of the Six Nations, (so called,) were looking out for fit persons to be employed in that important service. This proved an occasion of their committing to him the affair of finding and recommending suitable persons: which has proved a successful means of two persons being found and actually appointed to that business; who seem to be well qualified for it, and to have their hearts greatly engaged in it; one of which has been solemnly ordained to that work in Boston, and is now gone forth to one of those tribes, who have appeared well disposed to receive him; it being judged not convenient for the other to go till the next spring, by reason of his bodily infirmity.<sup>437</sup>

These happy consequences of Mr. Brainerd's journey to Boston would have been prevented, in case he had died when he was brought so near to death in *New Jersey*. Or if, after he came first to *Northampton*, (where he was much at a loss and long deliberating which way to bend his course,) he had determined not to go to *Boston*.

The providence of God was observable in his going to *Boston* at a time when not only the honourable commissioners were seeking missionaries to the Six Nations, but also just after his *Journal*, which gives an account of his labours and success among the Indians, had been received and spread in Boston; whereby his name was known, and the minds of serious people were well prepared to receive his person, and the testimony he there gave for God; to exert themselves for the upholding and promoting the interest of religion in his congreg-

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437 The appointment of these gentlemen to this mission has been hitherto much smiled on by Providence; as in other respects, so particularly in wonderfully opening the hearts of many to contribute liberally to so excellent a design. Besides the benefactions in Boston, a number of persons at Northampton with much cheerfulness have given about 160l. (old tenor); and a particular person in Springfield has devoted a considerable part of his estate to this interest.

ation, and amongst the Indians elsewhere; and to regard his judgment concerning the qualifications of missionaries, &c. If he had gone there the fall before, (when he had intended to have made his journey into *New England*, but was prevented by a sudden great increase of his illness,) it would not probably have been, in any measure, to so good effect: and also if he had not been unexpectedly detained at Boston; for when he went from my house, he intended to make but a very short stay there; but Divine Providence, by his being brought so low there, detained him long; thereby to make way for the fulfilling its own gracious designs.

The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering, that although he was brought so very near the grave in *Boston*, that it was not in the least expected he would ever come alive out of his chamber; yet he was wonderfully revived, and preserved several months longer: so that he had opportunity to see, and fully to converse with, both his younger brothers before he died; which he greatly desired; and especially to see his brother John, with whom was left the care of his congregation; that he might by him be fully informed of their state, and might leave with him such instructions and directions as were requisite in order to their spiritual welfare, and to send to them his dying charges and counsels. And he had also opportunity, by means of this suspension of his death, to find and recommend a couple of persons fit to be employed as *missionaries* to the Six Nations, as had been desired of him.

Thus, although it was the pleasure of a sovereign God, that he should be taken away from his congregation, the people that he had begotten through the gospel, who were so dear to him; yet it was granted him, that before he died he should see them well *provided for* every way. He saw them provided for, with one to instruct them, and to take care of their souls; his own brother, whom he could confide in. He saw a good foundation laid for the support of the school among them; those things that before were wanting in order to it, being supplied. He had the prospect of a *charitable society* being established, of able and well-disposed persons, who seem to make the spiritual interest of his congregation their own; whereby he had a comfortable view of their being well provided for, for the future: and he had also opportunity to leave all his dying charges with his successor in the pastoral care of his people, and by him to send his dying counsels to them. Thus God granted him to see all things happily settled, or in a hopeful way of being so, before his death, with respect to his dear people. And whereas not only his own congregation, but the souls of the Indians in North America in general, were very dear to him, and he had greatly set his heart on the propagating and extending the kingdom of Christ among them; God was pleased to grant him though not to be the immediate instrument of their instruction and conversion, yet that before his death he should see unexpected extraordinary provision made for this also. And it is remarkable that God not only allowed him to *see* such provision made for maintaining the interest of religion among his own people and the propagation of it elsewhere;

but honoured him by making *him* the means or occasion of it. So that it is very probable, however Mr. Brainerd during the last four months of his life, was ordinarily in an extremely weak and low state, very often scarcely able to speak; yet that he was made the instrument or means of much more good in that space of time, than he would have been if well and in full strength of body. Thus *God's power* was manifested in *his weakness*, and the *life of Christ* was manifested in *his mortal flesh*.

Another thing wherein appears the merciful disposal of Providence with respect to his death, was that he did not die in the wilderness among the savages at *Kaunaumeeek*, or the *Forks of Delaware*, or at *Susquehannah*; but in a place where his dying behaviour and speeches might be observed and remembered, and some account given of them for the benefit of survivors: and also where care might be taken of him in his sickness, and proper honours done him at his death.

The providence of God is also worthy of remark in so overruling and ordering the matter, that he did not finally leave absolute orders for the entire suppressing of his *private papers*; as he had intended and fully resolved, insomuch that all the importunity of his friends could scarce restrain him from doing it when sick at *Boston*. And one thing relating to this is peculiarly remarkable, *viz.* that his brother a little before his death should come from the Jerseys unexpected, and bring his *diary* to him, though he had received no such order. So that he had opportunity of access to these his reserved papers, and for reviewing the same; without which, it appears, he would at last have ordered them to be wholly suppressed: but after this he the more readily yielded to the desires of his friends, and was willing to leave them in their hands to be disposed of as they thought might be most for God's glory. By which means, "he being dead, yet speaketh," in these memoirs of his life taken from those private writings: whereby it is to be hoped he may still be as it were the instrument of promoting the interest of religion in this world; the advancement of which he so much desired, and hoped would be accomplished after his death.

If these circumstances of Mr. Brainerd's death be duly considered, I doubt not but they will be acknowledged as a notable instance of God's fatherly care, and covenant-faithfulness towards them that are devoted to him, and faithfully serve him while they live; whereby "he never fails nor forsakes them, but *is with them* living and dying: so that whether they live they live to the Lord; or whether they die, they die to the Lord;" and both in life and death they are owned and taken care of as *his*. Mr. Brainerd himself, as was before observed, was much in taking notice (when near his end) of the merciful circumstances of his death; and said from time to time, that "God had granted him all his desire."

I would not conclude my observations on the merciful circumstances of Mr. Brainerd's death, without acknowledging with thankfulness, the gracious dispensation of Providence to me and my family, in so ordering that he (though the ordinary place of his abode was more than two hundred miles distant) should be brought to my house, in his last sickness,



and should die here. So that we had opportunity for much acquaintance and conversation with him, to show him kindness in such circumstances, to see his dying *behaviour*, to hear his dying *speeches*, to receive his dying *counsels*, and to have the benefit of his dying *prayers*. May God in infinite mercy grant that we may ever retain a proper remembrance of these things, and make a due improvement of the advantages we have had in these respects! The Lord grant also that the foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life and death may be for the great spiritual benefit of all that shall read it, and prove a happy means of promoting the revival of true religion! *Amen* \_\_\_\_\_

**MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS**

ON

**IMPORTANT THEOLOGICAL SUBJECTS.**

**ORIGINAL AND COLLECTED.**



## P R E F A C E .

president edwards has left many manuscript volumes of observations, on almost all subjects in divinity, which either occurred to him from his own meditation, or from the books he read. He wrote these volumes, not with any design they should ever be published in their present form, but that he might retain thoughts which appeared to him worth preserving, both for his own improvement, and for the instruction and edification of others. The judicious author of the life of this great and good man, gave his opinion, that, from these manuscripts, a number of volumes might be published, which, though more imperfect than if the author had prepared them for public view, would afford much new light and entertainment to the church of Christ. The high and well-merited reputation, not only of the books prepared for the press of the President, but of the sermons published since his death, have occasioned many solicitations to his son, Dr. Edwards, of Newhaven, to collect and print such part of those manuscripts as might be generally useful. In compliance with these requests, he has not grudged the labour of transcribing this volume of miscellanies, which, if it prove acceptable, will be followed by more, as the Doctor's health and leisure permit.

Many important and original thoughts occur, on, The evidences of revealed religion Moral and religious knowledge only from revelation Christ and his apostles taught not that the last judgment was near Jesus's prophecies, a proof that he was the Christ, and that he was God Propriety of the general judgment Reasonableness of some particular doctrine Miracles of Jesus not opposed by counterfeit miracles Miracles of Jesus superior to those under the Old Testament Much instruction concisely conveyed by scripture metaphors Excellencies of scripture history The Propriety of gradual improvement in understanding the Scriptures The Propriety of room being left for discovering truth by Scripture consequences The necessity of divine revelation vindicated Jesus proved the Christ, from his destroying heathen idolatry according to scripture prophecy Propagation of Mahometanism not parallel to that of Christianity State of the Jewish nation, an evidence of revealed religion Observations on Christ's miracles. Equally striking and judicious are many of the reflections on the mysteries of revelation On the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. Many therefore, who relish solid reasoning on religious subjects, though not adorned with the beauties of eloquence, will deem themselves much indebted to Dr. Edwards for gathering these fragments, that nothing might be lost.

Some, who have purchased and read Archbishop Tillotson's sermons, Stapferi Theologia Polemica, Bennet's Inspiration of the Scriptures, Grotius de Veritate Religionis Christianæ, Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology, Religion of Jesus Delineated, Deism Revealed, and Jones on the Canon, may possibly wish that the *large quotations* from them had been omitted. But Dr. Edwards was advised to publish them, as they may prove an antidote to the deistical

notions spreading in some parts of America, where these books are in few hands. These passages may lead some to read these books, who otherwise would not have known them. The President's originality of genius, and attachment to Calvinist principles, did not hinder his seeking and finding instruction in their writings, whose system of theology was very opposite to his. It were well, if in this he was imitated by all who possess distinguished talents, and who boast of liberality of sentiment.

**JOHN ERSKINE.**

*Edin. Sept. 30, 1793.*

## ADVERTISEMENT TO THIS EDITION.

the judiciousness of the “advice” given to Dr. Edwards, and with which he complied, may be justly questioned, respecting the “large quotations” referred to by Dr. Erskine, as they greatly swelled the publication, and thereby impeded the circulation of the President’s original and very valuable thoughts. However, in the present edition of his works, it would be extremely improper to insert “long quotations” out of Tillotson, Jones on the Canon, &c. indiscriminately, and without abridgment; not only because these authors are so common in England, compared with America, but also because it will be more satisfactory to the biblical student to consult the originals themselves, and to see the arguments in their proper connexion. This equally applies to the series of “Observations,” and to that of the subsequent “Remarks.” The latter of these were before cast into distinct chapters, and the former are now reduced to their proper heads, by which they acquire a more interesting aspect, and from the circumstance of an easy connexion, an additional persuasive force.

It is certain that many of the original “Observations,” and of the “Remarks on important Theological Controversies,” were inserted in the author’s common-place book prior to the composition of some of his elaborate publications on the same subjects, when his thoughts appear in a more mature state, and in a more connected form. Of course, where the subjects coincided, he would avail himself of the substance of *such adversaria* in those treatises. On these grounds, independent of other considerations and especially from a due regard to the author’s reputation, which is deservedly high it is obviously necessary, that a selection more choice and scrupulous be now made. And it may be confidently asserted that these two series, as they now stand, form a very valuable part of the author’s work.



P A R T I .

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FACTS AND EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY, AND THE OBJECTIONS OF INFIDELS.

CHAP. I.

General observations.

§1. I suppose it will be acknowledged by the deists, that the Christian religion is the most rational and pure that ever was established in any *society of men*; and that they will except only *themselves*, as serving God in a manner more according to his will, than the christian manner. But can any believe that God has so wholly thrown away mankind, that there never yet has been a *society* of men that have rightly paid respect to their Creator?

It is easily proved that the highest end and happiness of man is to *view God's excellency*, to *love* him, and *receive expressions* of his love. This love, including all those other affections which depend upon, and are necessarily connected with it, we express in worship. The highest end of society among men, therefore, must be, to assist and join with each other in this employment. But how comes it to pass, that this end of society was never yet obtained among deists? Where was ever any social worship statedly performed by them. And were they disposed socially to express their love and honour, which way would they go about it? They have nothing from God to direct them. Doubtless there would be perpetual dissensions about it, unless they were disposed to fall in with the Christian model. We may be convinced, therefore, that revelation is necessary to right *social worship*.

§ 2. There never was any religion but that which we profess, and those formed from it, that pretended to inform us of the nature of God, that there is but one God; how the world came into being, and how God governs it. What other religion discovered God's great designs; what is his will, and how he should be served? declared the reward of obedience and punishment of disobedience; the nature of man's happiness, and the end for which he was made? that gave us good moral rules; told us what will become of the world hereafter; explained how we came to be sinful and miserable, and how we may escape sin and misery? gave an account of the great revolutions of the world, and the successions of God's works in the universe; and where his true worshippers have been, and what has befallen them; or informed us how the world came to apostatize from the true worship of God? Christianity is the only religion that ever pretended that there should a time come, when it should be the religion of the world in general.

§ 3. The Jewish religion, as at present professed, most certainly differs from what reason evidently declares to be the essence of religion. It does not state aright the highest end and happiness of man, his chief business and greatest misery, and the true worship of God. Undoubtedly the Messiah was to come to advance the best interest and true happiness of

mankind, which certainly consist in what the gospel declares our Jesus advanced, and not in what the Jews expect the Messiah will do.

§ 4. I think it certain, that seeing the miracles of Christ were done, for three years and a half, so publicly all over Judea; and seeing there was such violent opposition there, so soon after, against the Christians; if the matters of fact had been false, they would have been denied by the Jews generally; and if this had been the case, we should have known it. The Jews afterwards would much more have denied them; which it is evident they did not. If they had, they would have been also denied by the heathens who wrote against the Christians. But they were not denied. It is impossible that the whole world should have turned Christian, in three hundred years after the facts were so publicly done, if they had been generally false. If the Jews had denied the matters of fact at first, they would undoubtedly have denied them at this day, seeing they are so tenacious of the traditions of their fathers. Christ's resurrection was openly published within a few days after his death, on the day of Pentecost. It is undoubted, that the number of the Christians increased every where exceedingly from that time; so that a considerable alteration was speedily made by it in the face of the world. Whether the matters of fact were written or no, they were universally talked of. The conversion of the Roman empire to the Christian religion, was the most remarkable thing that ever happened among the nations of the world; and it would be unaccountable that it should have happened upon the story of a few obscure men, without inquiring into the matters related.

§ 5. I am convinced of the necessity of a revelation, considering how negligent, dull, and careless about a future happiness, I should be, if I was left to discover that happiness by unassisted reason: especially if there were no revelation at all, about what is pleasing to God; how he accepts our services; after what manner he loves his servants; how he will pardon sin, &c.

§ 6. It is certain that Jesus Christ had none of the advantages of education, to get learning and knowledge; and it is also certain, that every where in his speeches, he showed an uncommon insight into things, a great knowledge of the true nature of virtue and morality, and what was most acceptable to God, vastly beyond the rest of the nation take scribes and Pharisees and all. And how did he come by it? how did he get it at Nazareth? Those who have not an education in these days, may get much by books, which are so common: but books of learning were not to be had then. Yea, it is evident that he knew vastly more than any of the philosophers and wise men in the whole world, by those rational descriptions which he gave of God and his attributes; of his government and providence; and of man's nature, business, end, and happiness; of what is pleasing to God; of the immortality of the soul, and a future state. How knew he, so exactly, truths perhaps demonstrable by reason, but never found out before? &c.



§ 7. That Christ was really dead, appears from many considerations. It is very unreasonable to imagine, that he feigned himself dead; for what reason had he to think that he should have success, if he did? or to expect they would take him down before he was quite dead? Or, if he had had such a design, it was impossible that he should act his part so accurately, as not to be discovered or suspected. Besides, if he was not dead when they took him down from the cross, he was very near it; and no doubt but his grievous wounds, the loss of blood, and fasting so long, would have extinguished his life before the third day. And if then he only rose out of a swoon, how came he perfectly sound at once? Doubtless, his hands and feet were much torn by bearing his weight so long on iron spikes driven through them. And if he rose from the dead in no supernatural sense, whither did he go when he rose? What became of him? We have no account of his dying again; nor was he yet to be found after a few weeks.

§ 8. If Christianity was not true, it would never afford so much matter for rational and penetrating minds to be exercised upon. If it were false, such minds would find it empty, and it would be a force upon the intellect to be set upon meditating upon *that* which has no other order, foundation, and mutual dependence to be discovered in its parts, than what is accidental. A strong and piercing mind would feel itself exceedingly bound and hindered. But in fact, there is the like liberty in the study of Christianity, and as much improvement of the mind, as in the study of natural philosophy, or any study whatsoever; yea, a great deal more. And whatever may be said about Mahometan divinity, I cannot be convinced but that a mind that has the faculty and habit of clear and distinct reasoning, would find nothing but chains, fetters, and confusion, if it should pretend to fix its reason upon it.

§ 9. Seeing the beauty of the corporeal world consists chiefly in representing spiritual beauties, and the beauties of minds are infinitely the greatest; we therefore may conclude, that God, when he created the world, showed his own perfection and beauties far the most charmingly and clearly, in the spiritual part of the world. But seeing spiritual beauty consists principally in virtue and holiness; and seeing there is so little of this beauty to be seen now on earth; hence we may fairly conclude, that there has been a great fall and defection in this part of the spiritual world, from its primitive beauty and charms.

*Corollary.* Seeing this is so agreeable to the account that the Christian religion gives of the matter; and seeing it is evident, from many arguments, that God intends not to give over man as lost, but has a merciful intention of restoring him to his primitive beauty; and seeing we are told this, and the manner of it, in the christian religion alone; and seeing the account is so rational; it is a great confirmation of the truth of Christianity.

§ 10. It is a convincing argument for the truth of the Christian religion, and that it stands upon a most sure basis, that none have ever yet been able to prove it false, though there have been many men of all sorts, many fine wits and men of great learning, that have spent themselves, and ransacked the world, for arguments against it, and this for many ages.



§ 11. It is exceedingly improbable, that it should ever enter into the head of any mortal, to invent such a strange system of visions, as that of the Revelation of St. John, of which he himself could give no account of the meaning or design, and did not pretend to it. What design could he have in it? But, if he had a design, the frame of the vision is not a whit like a random invention, without any view or design as to interpretation.

§ 12. It does not seem to me at all likely, that any person among the Jews, so long ago, should have so perfect a knowledge of nature, and the secret springs of human affections, as to be able to feign any thing so perfectly and exquisitely agreeable to nature, as the incidents in Joseph's history, and the other histories of the Bible; particularly the history of Genesis.

§ 13. Such kind of miracles as healing the sick, the blind, the deaf, dumb, lame, &c.; and creating bread and flesh, and turning water into wine, are greater, than those that are so much more pompous, as causing universal darkness, dividing the sea, the shaking and burning of mount Sinai, &c. The healing of the sick and distracted, do more especially manifest divine power, for this cause, that we have reason to conclude mankind especially are subject to God's providence, and that their health and the exercise of their reason, are alone in his hands, and that it is not in the power of any evil spirit to give them and take them at his pleasure, however great power he may be supposed to have over the inanimate creatures.

When a person appears, that has evidently the whole course of nature at all times subject to his command, so that he can alter it how and when he pleases, we have the greatest reason to think *that* person has divine authority, and that the author and upholder of nature favours him, and gives approbation to what he pretends thereby. For we know, that the course of nature is God's established course of acting upon creatures; and we cannot think that he would give power to any evil spirit to alter it when he pleases, for evil purposes. But Christ manifestly had the course of nature so subject to his will and command.

§ 14. It would not have been proper for Christ constantly to dwell among men after his resurrection. Men would be exceedingly apt to fall into idolatry; and, because they *saw* the man Christ Jesus, would be apt to direct their worship to the *human* nature. Therefore we are not to see the man Christ Jesus till we are perfected, and are not liable to temptation on such occasions. For this reason, probably, it was not convenient for Christ to appear in great majesty and glory when on earth, but the contrary; for this reason, Christ endeavoured to hide his transfiguration, and many other miracles, till after he was risen; and for this reason, he did not converse constantly with his disciples after his resurrection, as before. All these things were done in a manner the most wise and fit that can be imagined.

§ 15. If human reason, by any thing that has happened since the creation, be really very much corrupted; and if God is still propitious, and does not throw us off, but reserves us for that end for which he made us; it cannot be imagined that he would leave us to our reason as the only rule to guide us in that business, which is the highest end of life: for it is

not to be depended upon; and yet we exceedingly need something that may be depended upon, in reference to our everlasting welfare. It does not seem to me reasonable to suppose, that if God be merciful after we have forfeited his favour, he will manifest his mercy only in some *mitigations* of that misery into which we have plunged ourselves, leaving us inevitably to endure the rest: but that he will quite restore us, in case of our acceptance of his offered favour.

§ 16. It seems much the most rational to suppose, that the universal law by which mankind are to be governed, should be a *written* law. For if that rule, by which God intends the world shall be regulated, and kept in decent and happy order, be supposed to be expressed no other way than by nature; man's prejudices will render it, in innumerable circumstances, a most uncertain thing. For though "it must be granted, that men who are willing to transgress, may abuse written as well as unwritten laws, and expound them so as may best serve their turn upon occasion; yet it must be allowed, that, in the nature of the thing, revelation is a better guard than a bare scheme of principles without it. For men must take more pains to conquer the sense of a standing, written law, which is ready to confront them upon all occasions. They must more industriously tamper with their passions, and blind their understandings, before they can bring themselves to believe what they have a mind to believe, in contradiction to the words of an express and formal declaration of God Almighty's will, than there can be any pretence or occasion for, when they have no more than their own thoughts and ideas to manage. These are flexible things, and a man may much more easily turn and wind them as he pleases, than he can evade a plain and positive law, which determines the kinds and measures of his duty, and threatens disobedience in such terms as require long practice and experience to make handsome salvos and distinctions to get over." <sup>438</sup> And upon this account also, that it is fit in every case, when the law is made known, that also the sanctions, the rewards and punishments, should be known at the same time. But nature could never have determined these with any certainty.

§ 17. Raising the dead to life, is given in the Old Testament, as a certain proof of the authority and mission of a prophet; and that what he says is the truth. [1 Kings xvii. 24.](#) "And the woman said to Elijah, By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." So that if the Old Testament is the word of God, Jesus was a true prophet.

§ 18. The being of God is evident by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures themselves are an evidence of their own divine authority, after the same manner as the existence of a human thinking being is evident by the motions, behaviour, and speech of a body animated by a rational mind. For we know this no otherwise, than by the consistency, harmony, and concurrence of the train of actions and sounds, and their agreement to all that we can suppose

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to be in a rational mind. These are a clear evidence of understanding and design, which are the original of these actions. There is that universal harmony, consent, and concurrence in the drift, such an universal appearance of a wonderful and glorious design, such stamps every where of exalted wisdom, majesty, and holiness, in matter, manner, contexture, and aim; that the evidence is the same, that the Scriptures are the word and work of a divine mind to one that is thoroughly acquainted with them as that the words and actions of an understanding man are from a rational mind. An infant, when it first comes into the world, sees persons act, and hears their voice, before it has so much comprehension as to see something of their consistence, harmony, and concurrence. It makes no distinction between their bodies, and other things; their motions and sounds, and the motions and sounds of inanimate things. But as its comprehension increases, the understanding and design begin to appear. So it is with men that are as little acquainted with the Scriptures, as infants with the actions of human bodies. They cannot see any evidence of a divine mind, as the original of it; because they have not comprehension enough to apprehend the harmony, wisdom, &c.

§ 19. Were it not for divine revelation, I am persuaded, that there is no one doctrine of that which we call natural religion, which, notwithstanding all philosophy and learning, would not be for ever involved in darkness, doubts, endless disputes, and dreadful confusion. Many things, now they are revealed, seem very plain. It is one thing, to see that a truth is exceedingly agreeable to reason, after we have had it explained to us, and have been told the reasons of it; and another, to find it out, and clearly and certainly to explain it by mere reason. It is one thing, to prove a thing after we are shown how; and another, to find it out, and prove it of ourselves.

If there never had been any revelation, I believe the world would have been full of endless disputes about the very being of a God; whether the world was from eternity or not; and whether the form and order of the world did not result from the mere nature of matter. Ten thousand different schemes there would have been about it And if it were allowed that there was a first cause of all things, there would have been endless disputes, and abundance of uncertainty, to determine what son of a thing that first cause was. Some, it may be, would have thought that it was properly an intelligent mind and a voluntary agent. Others might say, that it was some principle of things, of which we could have no kind of ideas. Some would have called it a voluntary agent; some, a principle exerting itself by a natural necessity. There might have been many schemes contrived about this, and some would like one best, and some another; and amongst those that held, that the original of all things was superior intelligence and will, there probably would have been everlasting doubts and disputes, whether there was one only, or more. Some perhaps would have said, there was but one; some that there were two; the one the principle of good, the other the principle of evil: others, that there was a society, or a world of them. And among those that held that there was but

one mind, there would be abundance of uncertainty what sort of a being he was; whether he was good or evil; whether he was just or unjust; holy or wicked; gracious or cruel; or whether he was partly good, and partly evil; and how far he concerned himself with the world, after he had made it; and how far things were owing to his providence, or whether at all; how far he concerned himself with mankind; what was pleasing to him in them, and what was displeasing; or whether he cared any thing about it, whether he delighted in justice and order or not; and whether he would reward the one, and punish the other; and how, and when, and where, and to what degree. There would have been abundance of doubt and dispute concerning what this mind expected from us, and how we should behave towards him; or whether he expected we should anywise concern ourselves with him: whether we ever ought to apply ourselves to him any way; whether we ought to speak to him, as expecting that he would take any notice of us: how we should show our respect to him; whether we ought to praise and commend him in our addresses; whether we ought to ask that of him which we need; whether or no he would forgive any, after they had offended him; when they had reason to think they were forgiven, and what they should do that they might be forgiven; and whether it is ever worth the while for them that are so often offending, to try for it; whether there were not some sins so great, that God never would upon any terms forgive them, and how great they must be in order to that. Men would be exceedingly at a loss to know when they were in favour with him, and upon what terms they could be in his favour. They would be in a dreadful uncertainty about a future state; whether there be any, and, if there be, whether it is a state of rewards and punishments; and if it is, what kind of state it is, and how men are to be rewarded and punished, to what degree, and how long; whether man's soul be eternal or not; and if it be, whether it is to remain in another world in a fixed state, or change often.

Every man would plead for the lawfulness of this or that practice, just as suited his fancy, and agreed with his interest and appetites; and there would be room for a great deal of uncertainty and difference of opinion among those that were most speculative and impartial. There would be uncertainty, in a multitude of instances, what was just, and what unjust. It would be very uncertain how far self-interest should govern men, and how far love to our neighbour; how far revenge would be right, and whether or no a man might hate his neighbour, and for what causes: what degree of passion and ambition was justifiable and laudable: what sensual enjoyments were lawful, and what not: how far we ought to honour, respect, and submit to our parents, and other superiors: how far it would be lawful to dissemble and deceive. It seems to me, there would be infinite confusion in these things; and that there would hardly be any such thing as conscience in the world.

The world has had a great deal of experience of the necessity of a revelation; we may see it in all ages, that have been without a revelation. In what gross darkness and brutal stupidity have such places, in these matters, always been overwhelmed! and how many, and

how great and foolish mistakes, and what endless uncertainty and differences of opinion, have there been among the most learned and philosophical! Yet there never was a real trial how it would be with mankind in this respect, without having any thing from revelation. I believe that most of those parts of natural religion, that were held by the heathens before Christ, were owing to tradition from those of their forefathers who had the light of revelation. And many of those being most evidently agreeable to reason, were more easily upheld and propagated. Many of their wise men who had influence and rule over them, saw their rectitude and agreeableness to reason better than others. Some of them travelled much, and those things which appeared most agreeable to their reason, they transplanted to their own country. Judea was a sort of light among the nations, though they did not know it. The practice and principles of that country kept the neighbouring nations in remembrance of traditions, which *they* had from their forefathers; and so kept them from degenerating so much as otherwise they would have done. In fact, the philosophers had the foundation of most of their truths, from the ancients, or from the Phœnicians, or what they picked up here and there of the relics of revelation.

How came all the heathen nations to agree in the custom of sacrificing? The light of nature did not teach it them; without doubt they had it from tradition; and therefore, it needs not seem strange, that what of natural religion they had amongst them, came the same way. I am persuaded, that mankind would have been like a herd of beasts, with respect to their knowledge in all important truths, if there never had been any such thing as revelation in the world; and that they never would have risen out of their brutality. We see, that those who live at the greatest distance from revelation, are far the most brutish. The heathens in America, and in some of the utmost parts of Asia and Africa, are far more barbarous than those who formerly lived in Rome, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and Chaldea. Their traditions are more worn out, and they are more distant from places enlightened with revelation. The Chinese, descended probably from the subjects of Noah, that holy man, have held more by tradition from him, than other nations, and so have been a more civilized people. The increase of learning and philosophy in the Christian world, is owing to revelation. The doctrine of revealed religion are the foundation of all useful and excellent knowledge. The word of God leads barbarous nations into the way of using their understandings. It brings their minds into a way of reflecting and abstracted reasoning; and delivers from uncertainty in the first principles, such as, the being of God, the dependence of all things upon him, being subject to his influence and providence, and being ordered by his wisdom. Such principles as these are the basis of all true philosophy, as appears more and more as philosophy improves. Revelation delivers mankind from that distraction and confusion, which discourages all attempts to improve in knowledge. Revelation actually gives men a most rational account of religion and morality, and the highest philosophy, and all the greatest things that belong to learning concerning God, the world, human nature, spirits, providence, time, and eternity.

Revelation not only gives us the foundation and first principles of all learning, but it gives us the *end*, the only end, that would be sufficient to move man to the pursuit.

Revelation redeems nations from a vicious, sinful, and brutish way of living, which will effectually keep out learning. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose, that philosophy might supply the defect of revelation. Knowledge is easy to us that understand by revelation; but we do not know what brutes we should have been, if there never had been any revelation.

§ 20. As Moses was so intimately conversant with God, and so continually under the divine conduct, it cannot be thought, that when he wrote the history of the creation and fall of man, and the history of the church from the creation, he should not be under the divine direction in such an affair.

§ 21. It is certainly necessary, that in the word of God, we should have a history of the life of Christ, of his incarnation, his death, his resurrection, and ascension, and his actions, and of the instructions he gave the world.

If God expects that we shall receive any New Testament at all, we must suppose that God's providence would be concerned in this matter. God took this care with respect to the books of the Old Testament, that no books should be received by the Jewish church, and delivered down in the canon of the Old Testament, but what were his word, and owned by Christ. We may therefore conclude, that he would still take the same care of his church, with respect to the New Testament.

§ 22. It seems to me an unaccountable dulness, that when intelligent men read David's Psalms, and other prayers and songs of the Old Testament, they are not at once convinced, that the Jews had the true worship and communion of the one great and holy God; and that no other nation upon earth had them. It seems as clear as the sun at noon-day; and so indeed from all the histories and prophecies of the Old Testament.

§ 23. We need not wonder at all, that God should so often reveal himself by prophets and miracles, to the Israelitish nation, and that now we should see nothing of this nature; for this way of revealing himself is not at all suitable to the present state of the church. The church was *then* confined to one particular nation, that God chose on purpose to make them the receptacle of his revelation, and the conveyancer of it to the rest of the world. And I can think of no other way that it could be done with any tolerable convenience, but by a chosen peculiar nation, that should alone be God's people, and have the true religion among them. Therefore, it was highly convenient and necessary, that there should be such a manner of communication with such a nation. It was also necessary, in the first *transition* of this revelation from the Jews to the world, as it was in the apostles' times, that the world receiving this revelation from them, might see God still revealing himself; and so might receive it from God, in the same manner as *they* received it. But that God should now reveal himself after that manner to his church, is no way necessary, nor at all suitable to the gospel state of the church, which is not any particular enclosure, but is dispersed through the whole

world. How is it practicable that God should treat with the church now, in such a way as he did with that peculiar nation? Besides, if it were practicable, it would be very inexpedient; for, what need of new revelations to the end of the world? Is it not better that God should give the world a book, that should be the summary of his will, to which all nations in all ages may resort? Prophecy and miracles are nothing without charity; like the shadow without the substance: and seeing the substance is come, what need the shadow should be continued? Seeing the end is come, it would be impertinent still to continue the means. The church now enjoys that glory, in comparison with which all the glory of prophecy and miracles, even those of that extraordinary prophet Moses, is no glory at all, [2 Cor. iii. 10](#).

§ 24. If there be any such thing needful, or at all proper and suitable, that God should reveal himself to mankind; it is perhaps impossible that he should do it in any other way, or with any other kind of evidence, than he has done it. No kind of miracle can be thought of, that would be more evidential, than those by which Christianity has been confirmed.

§ 25. It is no argument against the reality of the incarnation of Jesus Christ whereby God became the same person with a man that there is nothing else like it any where to be seen; because it was evidently God's design to show his wisdom, by doing a thing that was, and for ever would have been, far beyond the thoughts of any creatures. Man's fall was God's opportunity to show how far his contrivance and wisdom was beyond that of all creatures.

§ 26. It was often prophesied among the children of Israel, that the gods of the nations round about should perish from off the earth; and that they should cease to be acknowledged and worshipped: but that the worship and acknowledgment of *their* God should remain for ever, and should, in due time, take place of those others. [Jer. x. 11](#). "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." This came to pass by means of the Christian religion. It is Christ's appearing, and the preaching of his doctrine in the world, that has been the means of it all. It is by means of these that the Mahometan parts of the world came to acknowledge the One God: and it is by these means, that even the deists come to it. Again, it has been only by means of Jesus Christ's appearing and teaching, that the world ever came to have any clear, distinct, and rational notions about a future state; notions every way agreeable to reason.

It is a confirmation that God designed the Christian religion should succeed the Jewish; that, speedily after the introduction of the christian religion, God, in his providence, by the destruction of the temple, and dispersion of the Jewish nation, made that religion impracticable. It was prophesied of old, that God should be acknowledged and worshipped by other nations, and that other nations were to be God's people. Therefore there was a religion to succeed the Jewish, very different as to external worship; because the Jewish religion was not fitted for more than a single nation; nor is it practicable by the world in general. But the Christian religion is exceedingly fitted for universal practice.

§ 27. There are these things remarkable in Christ's raising Lazarus from the dead, [John xi.](#) viz. that he called upon God, before he did it, to do it for him; and thanked him that he had heard him; and told him, that he knew that he heard him always: and when he spake to him he called him Father; and told him that he spake to him for that end, that others that stood by, when they should see that what he asked of him, was granted in such an extraordinary thing, might believe that he sent him. Now, can it be imagined, that God would thus hear an impostor?

§ 28. It is an evidence that the apostles had their doctrine from inspiration of some invisible guide and instructor, that there was such a vast and apparent difference made in them at once after Pentecost. They were illiterate, simple, undesigning, ignorant men before; but afterward, how do they express themselves in their speeches and epistles! they do not speak as being in the least at a loss about the scheme of salvation, and the gospel-mysteries. With what authority do they teach! in how learned and intelligent a manner! How came Saul by his scheme, and by all his knowledge of the Christian doctrine and mysteries, immediately upon his conversion?

§ 29. Christ joined pardoning sins with his healing the sick. When one came to be healed, he first told him, that his sins were forgiven; and when the Jews found fault that he should pretend to forgive sins, then, immediately, he heals the person's disease, that they might believe that he had the power to forgive sins, and tells them that he does it for this end. [Matt. ix. 2.](#) [Mark ii. 3.](#) [Luke v. 18.](#) Now, if Christ were an impostor, can it be believed, that God would so countenance such horrid blasphemy as this would be, to enable him to cure the disease by a word speaking? a work which God appropriates to himself as his own, [Psal. ciii. 3.](#) Would God give an impostor this attestation to a blasphemous lie, when he pretended to do it as an attestation to his divine mission?

§ 30. Christ, by the works which he wrought, showed that he had an absolute and sovereign power over the course of nature, and over the spiritual and invisible world, and over the bodies and souls of men. It was not so with other prophets; they could not work what miracles they pleased, and when they pleased. They could work miracles, only when they were excited and directed to it by a special command or impulse from heaven. But Christ wrought them as of his own power at all times. Men came to him, under the notion that he was able; and Christ required that they should believe in order to it; to which never any prophet pretended. Moses was shut out of the land of Canaan, partly for working a miracle in his own name, and not sanctifying the Lord God. <sup>439</sup> "Must we fetch water out of this rock?" The prophets never pretended that they themselves had properly any power to work miracles; but disclaimed it. God never subjected the course of nature to them, to work miracles by their own word and command upon all occasions. Care was taken in all the miracles

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439 [Num. xx. 10.](#)



wrought by the prophets, that it should be visible, that what was done, was done only by God; and that what they said or did, upon which the miracle was wrought, was by particular revelation from heaven. They who came to Christ, that he might work miracles for them, did it in the faith, that by his own power and holiness he was able to do it for them. The leper said, [Matt. viii. 2.](#) "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." He believed that Christ could work miracles when he would. This Christ approved of. [Matt. viii. 8.](#) "But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." [Matt. ix. 18.](#) "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thine hand on her, and she shall live." [Matt. ix. 28.](#) "Believe ye that I am able to do this? they said unto him, Yea, Lord." [Matt. ix. 21.](#) "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." In [Matt. xvi. 9.](#); Christ reproves his disciples, because they were afraid of wanting bread, not remembering how he had fed multitudes in the wilderness: which implies, that he was able to do the like again when he pleased. He cast out devils as of his own power and authority; [Mark i. 27.](#) "With authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." And Christ, as having power of his own to work miracles, gave power to his disciples, as [Matt. x.](#) [Mark iii. 14.](#) and [vi. 7.](#), &c.; and [Luke ix.](#) and [x.](#) and so miracles were wrought in Christ's name, by the apostles, and many other disciples. Moses did not in the least pretend to any such thing. But Christ did pretend, and he declares himself fellow with God in working; [John v. 17.](#) "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

§ 31. If there must be a revelation, it is convincing, that the Christian revelation is the true one; that it has been by means of this revelation, and this only, that the world has come to the knowledge of the one only true God. Till this came, all the world lay in ignorance of him. But when this came, it was successful to bring the world to the acknowledgment of him. If there be a true revelation in the world, it is not to be supposed, that by a false one, an imposture, the world should come to the knowledge of the true God. If the Christian revelation be not the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of the true God, it is strange that the world, which was before ignorant of him, should be brought to the knowledge of him by it; and no part of it ever be brought to the knowledge of him by any other means.

§ 32. It is an argument for the truth of the Christian revelation, that there is nothing else that informs us, what God designs by that series of revolutions and events that are brought to pass in the world; what end he seeks, and what scheme he has laid out; agreeably to the challenge which God makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the heathen world, [Isa. xli. 22, 23.](#) It is most fit, that the intelligent beings of the world should be made acquainted with it. The thing that is God's great design, is something concerning them; and the revolutions by which it is to be brought to pass, are revolutions among them, and in their state. The state of the inanimate, unperceiving part of the world, is nothing regarded any otherwise, than in a subserviency to the perceiving and intelligent part. And it is most rational to suppose, that God should reveal the design he has been carrying on, to his rational

creatures; that as God has made them capable of it, they may actively fall in with and promote it, acting herein as the subjects and friends of God. The Christian revelation is a design most worthy of an infinitely wise, holy, and perfect being.

§ 33. The doctrine of the general resurrection at the end of the world, upon many accounts, seems to me a most credible doctrine. There are a multitude of resemblances of it in nature and providence, which, I doubt not, were designed to be types of it. It seems credible on this account, that the work of the Redeemer is wholly a restoring work from beginning to end; and that he would repair all the ruins brought on the world by sin.

§ 34. If the New Testament be not a divine revelation, then God never yet has given the world any clear revelation of a future state. But if a revelation be needful upon any account, it is that we may have some certain and distinct knowledge of the future invisible world. If God designed a true revelation, it is not probable that he would suffer that any false revelation should anticipate it, and do the work beforehand. And, upon many other accounts that might be mentioned, it is incredible that the true revelation should still be deferred.

§ 35. It is very unreasonable to make it an objection against the Christian revelation, that it contains some things that are very mysterious and difficult to our understandings, and that seem to us impossible. If God will give us a revelation from heaven of the very truth, concerning his own nature, acts, counsels, and ways, and of the spiritual and invisible world; it is unreasonable to expect any other, than that many things in such a revelation should be utterly beyond our understanding. For, was there ever a time, when, if there had been a revelation of the very truth in philosophical matters concerning created things, which are of a vastly lower nature, and must be supposed more proportioned to our understandings there would not have appeared many things; not only to the vulgar, but to the learned of that age, absurd and impossible? If many of those positions in philosophy, which are now received by the learned world as indubitable truths, had been revealed from heaven to be truths in past ages, they would have seemed as impossible as the most mysterious Christian doctrine do now. I believe, that if, even now, there should come a revelation from heaven of what is the very truth in these matters, without deviating at all to accommodate it to our received notions and principles, there would be many things in it that would seem absurd and contradictory. I now receive principles as certain, which once, if they had been told me, I should have regarded as difficult as any mystery in the Bible. Without doubt, much of the difficulty that we have about the doctrine of Christianity, arises from wrong principles that we receive. We find that those things which are received as principles in one age, and are never once questioned, are yet exploded in another age, as light increases. If God make a revelation to us, he must reveal to us the truth as it is, without accommodating himself to our notions and principles; which would indeed be impossible: for those things which are our received notions in one age, are contrary to what are so in another; and the word of God was not given for any particular age, but for all ages. It surely becomes us to receive



what God reveals to be truth, and to look upon his word as proof sufficient; whether what he reveals squares with our notions or not.

I rather wonder that the word of God contains no more mysteries in it; and I believe it is because God is so tender of us, and reveals only such things as he sees that man, though so weak a creature, if of an humble and an honest mind, can well enough bear. Such tenderness we see in Christ towards his disciples; he had many things to say, but forbore, because they could not bear them yet. Though God does not depart from truth to accommodate himself to our manner of thinking, yet I believe he accommodates himself to our way of understanding, in his manner of expressing and representing things; as we are wont to do, when teaching little children.

§ 36. What can be more reasonable, than to believe a man, when he tells us, that he is sent from God to heal the diseases of our souls, and, in order that we may believe him, heals all sorts of men, of all manner of diseases, by a touch or a word; and plainly shows that he can do it when he will, let the disease be what it will? He tells us, that he will deliver us from spiritual and eternal death; that he will raise us from the dead, and give us eternal life; so that we shall live for ever, and not die: and to prove this, he gives evidence that he has power over men's lives, by restoring them after they are dead; and rises from the dead himself. He tells us, that he will bestow heavenly glory upon us; and will translate us to heaven: and, to confirm us in this belief, tells us, that we shall see himself, after his death, ascend into heaven. What more could we desire? He tells us that he will undertake for us, and appear for us before God; and that we need not doubt, if he pleads for us, he shall procure acceptance, and, that we may see that it is true, he asks of God, concerning a man who had been dead four days, that he may come to life again; and tells God, that he asks it for this end that we may see that he always hears him, and grants what he requests: and accordingly, at his request, the dead man comes to life.

§ 37. "What argument more proper (says Dr. Tillotson) to convince them of another life after this, than to see a man raised from the dead and restored to a new life? What fitter to satisfy a man concerning heaven and the happy state of those there, than to see one visibly taken up into heaven? And what more fit to assure us that the promises of the gospel are real, and shall be made good to us, than to see him who made those promises to us, raise himself from the dead, and go up into heaven, and from thence dispense miraculous gifts abroad in the world, as evidences of the power and authority with which he is invested? All the philosophical arguments which a man can bring for the soul's immortality and another life, will have no force upon vulgar apprehensions, in comparison of these sensible demonstrations, which give an experiment of the thing, and furnish us with an instance of something of the same kind, and of equal difficulty with that which is propounded to our belief."

§ 38. Why was not Christ, after he rose from the dead, during his stay upon earth, with his disciples, as he was before? The very different states that Christ and his disciples were

now in, would not allow of it. Christ, before his death, while in his humiliation, was in a like state with them. He was subject to hunger and thirst, as they were; he needed sleep as they did; he needed the like defence from the weather that they did, and the like: but when he was risen from the dead, the case was exceedingly altered; he then began his exaltation. He put off mortality, and all the infirmities of his body. The nature of his body was different from theirs, as things celestial differ from things terrestrial. Mortal beings are not apt for a cohabitation with immortal; nor terrestrial with celestial; nor corruption with incorruption. God will not thus mix and confound heaven and earth.

§ 39. Much of the Scriptures is apt to seem insipid to us now, as though there were no great matter of instruction in it; because the points of instruction most plainly contained in it, are old to us, and what we have been taught from our infancy. The doctrine are so plain to us now, that there seems to have been no need of a particular revelation of such things; especially of insisting upon them so much. But how exceedingly different would it have seemed if we had lived in those times when the revelation was given, when the things were in a great measure new, at least as to that distinctness and expressiveness of their revelation? If we had an idea of the state of the world, when God gave the revelation, they would appear glorious instructions, bringing great light into the world, and most worthy of God.

§ 40. It was not allowed under the Old Testament, to hate personal enemies, to wish for revenge, or to pray for their hurt; except as speaking in the name of the Lord. So that there is no inconsistency between the religion of the Old Testament and New, in this respect. The apostle Paul himself doth thus imprecate vengeance on his enemies: [2 Tim. iv. 14](#). “Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works.” Revenge, or a desire of it, was forbidden by the law of Moses, [Levit. xix. 18](#).; yea, there, the love of our enemy is implicitly commanded. Doing good to enemies is required, [Exod. xxiii. 4, 5](#). “If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.” And this was agreeable to the sense of the saints of those times, as appears from [Job xxxi. 29](#). “If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him. [Prov. xxiv. 17](#). “Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, nor let thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.” And [xvii. 5](#). “He that is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished.” We cannot think that those imprecations we find in the Psalms and Prophets, were out of their own hearts; for cursing is spoken of as a very dreadful sin in the Old Testament; and David, whom we hear oftener than any other praying for vengeance on his enemies, by the history of his life, was of a spirit very remote from spiteful and revengeful. He himself in the Psalms gives us an account of his wishing well to his enemies, and doing good to them, [Psalm vii. 4](#).; praying for them, and grieving at their calamities, [Psalm xxxv. 13, 14](#). And some of the most terrible imprecations that we find in all the Old Testament, are in the New spoken of as prophetic, even those in the

109th Psalm.; as in Acts i. 20. Jer. xii. 3. We have instances of this kind even in the apostles and the disciples of the Lamb of God, as 2 Tim. iv. 14. Peter says to Simon Magus, “Thy money perish with thee.” They wish them ill, not as personal, but as public, enemies to the church of God. Sometimes what they say is in the name of the church, see Jer. v. 34, 35.; Matt. i. 19. “Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.” This is a remarkable and eminent instance of a Christian spirit; and this verse is an evidence, that *that* meekness, gentleness, forgiveness, and kindness to enemies which the gospel prescribes, were duties under the law, and before Christ came.

§ 41. I once told a boy of about thirteen years of age, that a piece of any matter two inches square, was eight times as large as one of but one inch square; or that it might be cut into eight pieces, all of them as big as that of but one inch square. He seemed at first not to think me in earnest, and to suspect that I only meant to make game of him. But when I had taken considerable pains to convince him that I was in earnest, and that I knew what I said to be true, he seemed to be astonished at my positiveness; and exclaimed about the impossibility and absurdity of it; and would argue, how was it possible for two inches to be eight inches? and all that I could say, did not prevail upon him, to make him believe it. I suppose it seemed to him as great a contradiction, that what was but just twice so long, and twice so broad, and twice so thick, should yet be eight times so big; as that twice one should make eight, or any other absurdity whatsoever. And when I afterwards showed him the truth of it, by cutting out two cubes, one an inch, and another two inches square; and let him examine the measures, and see that the measures were exact, and that there was no deceit; and cut the two inch cube into eight equal parts, and he counted the parts over and over, and took the parts one by one and compared them with the one inch cube, and spent some time in counting and comparing; he seemed to be astonished, as though there were some witchcraft in the case; and hardly to believe it after all. For he did not yet at all see the reason of it. I believe it was a much more difficult mystery to him, than the Trinity ordinarily is to men; and seemed to him more evidently a contradiction, than any mystery of religion to a Socinian or deist.

§ 42. Some may be ready to object against the Christian religion, that there seem to be innumerable difficulties and inconsistencies attending it, but that a multitude of heads have been employed for many ages, till at length such solutions have been found out for many of them, as are in some measure plausible.

To this I answer, That as there has been a long time to answer objections, so there has been a long time to strengthen them. As there have been many ages to solve difficulties, so there have been as many to find out difficulties and inconsistencies. Besides, there has been all this time to make difficulties more plain, and bring out inconsistencies more to the light; and by thorough and exact consideration to make them more manifest and apparent. Time

wonderfully brings truth to light, and wears off by degrees false colourings and disguises. The truth will always have most advantage by time. Appearing inconsistencies, being well founded, will grow plainer and plainer, and difficulties more and more evident. Time will discover more circumstances to strengthen and confirm them, and so pretences of solution will appear more and more evidently absurd and ridiculous, When parties contend by argument and inquiry, time greatly helps that party which has truth on its side, and weakens the contrary. It gradually wears away the sandy foundation, and rots away the building that is not made of substantial materials. The Christian religion has evermore, in all ages, had its enemies, and that among learned men. Yea, it is observable, that there have commonly been some of the most subtle of men to scan the christian scheme, and to discover the objections that lie against it, and have done it with a good will to overthrow it. Thus it was in Judea, in the infancy of the church. The scribes and Pharisees, and the wise men among the Jews, employed all their wisdom against it. Thus, in the first ages of the church, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called. Christianity had the wisdom, learning, and subtlety of the world to oppose it. In latter ages, how many learned and subtle men have done their utmost against Christianity! So that the length of time for persons to strengthen their own side in this controversy, brought as an objection against Christianity, is much more an argument for it, than an objection against it.

§ 43. If there be a revelation from God to the world, it is most reasonable to suppose, and natural to expect, that he should therein make known not only what manner of being he is, but also that he should lead mankind to an understanding of his works of creation and providence. These things the Christian revelation opens to us in such a manner as might be expected. This alone gives any tolerable account of the work of creation, and this reveals to us the scheme of providence, and what is God's main design in the whole, a design worthy of himself. And we are shown how these events all point to this main work of power, wisdom, and grace. We have a particular account how this greatest work has actually been wrought in the fulness of time, as to those great acts which are the main ground of it; and how that was foretold in the several ages of the world.

These things are exceedingly agreeable to a rational supposition, in case God makes a revelation to mankind. But if the Scriptures are not a revelation of God, then man, the principal creature God has made in this world, the only intelligent creature, to whom he has subjected this lower part of the creation, is left wholly and entirely in the dark about God's works both of creation and providence, and has nothing whereby to judge what God's scheme is, in all the great changes he sees come to pass in the world, or what he aims to accomplish. Every thing lies in darkness and confusion before him, without any possibility of his determining any thing, or to direct him what to think of God's works which he beholds, or what affections he should exercise towards the Supreme Governor, on occasion of them.

## CHAP. II.

The objection concerning the apostles' apprehensions of the second coming of Christ answered.

§. 1. with respect to that objection against the truth of the Christian religion, That the apostles seem often to speak of the coming of Christ to judgment, as if they thought it near at hand; I will begin with what the apostle Paul says that may have such appearance. In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, which is reckoned to be the first of his epistles in the order of time; and particularly [chap. iv. 15-17.](#) he says, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we *which are alive*, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep: for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then *we which are alive and remain*, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord." He speaks of those that should then be alive, in the first person plural; and of those that should be asleep, in the third person. Thus it would have been more natural for him to have said, They which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent *us*, who shall then be asleep. And in the [17th verse.](#), Then they which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with *us*.

§ 2. Considering the scope of the apostle in these verses, all that can be inferred from such a manner of speaking, is, that it might, for ought was then revealed, be while they lived. For the scope of the apostle was to comfort the Thessalonians concerning their friends that were already dead, with the consideration, that they should surely meet them again, at the day of the Lord's coming. And therefore, it was most proper and natural for the apostle to speak of them in the third person. And it is but just to suppose, that it was only the uncertainty of the time, that was the ground of the apostle's using such a manner of expression; because he, in this very context, speaks of the time as altogether uncertain; as it follows immediately in the beginning of the next chapter, "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, <sup>440</sup>" &c. The apostle, by the expression he uses, probably had in his mind those words of Christ in [Acts i. 7.](#) "It is not for you to know the *times and seasons*, which the Father hath put in his own power."

§ 3. We have an instance of a like nature with this, in the words of Joseph to his brethren, [Gen. 1. 25.](#) "God will surely visit *you*, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." He does not say, God shall visit your *posterity*, and *they* shall carry up my bones from hence. Yet it cannot be argued, that Joseph concluded that the redemption out of Egypt would be in that generation.

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440 [1 Thess. v. 1.](#)

So the nature and design of the apostle's discourse, necessarily gave him to distinguish between those that should be alive at Christ's coming, and the deceased relations of the Christian Thessalonians. He speaks of them as already dead, and of their now living friends then meeting them risen from the dead. That the apostle did not intend to be understood, as though it were certain that Christ would come while they were living, is evident, from what he himself says, speaking of those very words, and expressly denying that he intended any such thing; or that he supposed it to be certain, that the coming of Christ was at hand, in any such sense. See [2 Thess. ii. 1-3.](#) where he very earnestly warns them not to understand him in any such sense. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," &c.

§ 5. Now it is evident, that the apostle does not thus write to them the *second* time, endeavouring to retract any thing he had written before; but it must be because he really did not intend so at first; for this epistle was written soon after the other, while the same fellow-labourers were with him. And both have been supposed to be written while the apostle abode in Athens, as appears by the postscripts. And if we well observe the contents of this and the foregoing epistle, the principal occasion of the apostle's writing the second so soon after the other, seems to have been an information he had received, that his former epistle had been misunderstood in this particular: and being much concerned about it, and fearing the ill consequences of such a misunderstanding, he writes to guard them from the mischief of such a mistake, and to establish them in it, that it is uncertain when the Lord will come, as he had told them before in his other epistle. And he argues the great uncertainty there was, whether it would be in that age or not, from what the Holy Ghost had revealed about the coming of antichrist.

§ 6. That this apostle did not expect Christ's coming in that generation, may be argued from his speaking as though he expected that those that were then alive, would *rise from the dead* at Christ's second coming, as in [1 Cor. vi. 14.](#) "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also *raise up us* by his own power." And, [2 Cor. iv. 14.](#) "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall *raise up us* also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

§ 7. From what the apostle says in this [second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians.](#), there appears a *necessity*, that those passages in any other of his epistles, that look as though he expected that Christ would come in that age, should be understood in some other sense; and that the apostle really did not mean so, as his words on a cursory view would lead us to suppose. For here the apostle is very express, and full, and earnest in it, that he would by no means be so understood. It is a farther evidence, that those passages in other epistles must be understood in some other sense, that there are passages in this very



epistle, particularly in the first chapter, that we should be ready to think had such a look, were it not that the apostle himself, immediately in the second chapter, denies any such meaning.

§ 8. In this sense we must understand those passages, in which it is spoken of as a duty of Christians, to look and wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus; as, [Titus ii. 13.](#) [1 Cor. i. 7.](#) [Philip. iii. 20.](#) There is a necessity of understanding, in like manner, the following passages which were all written after this to the Thessalonians [Rom. xiii. 11, 12.](#) “And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; *the day is at hand.* Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” We cannot understand this as though the apostle concluded, the day of judgment would come while they lived; because he had before explained himself otherwise: but only that the day of Christ’s kingdom, which is the day of the salvation of the church of Christ, was at hand. And so, [Philip. iv. 5.](#) “Let your moderation be known to all men: *the Lord is at hand.*” And [Heb. x. 25.](#) “Exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see *the day approaching.*”

§ 9. Christ’s coming was indeed at hand in many respects; and in such respects as might well have all that influence upon those to whom the apostle wrote that he intended. The coming of Christ at the overthrow of the heathen empire, might well be said to be at hand; and Christ’s last coming to judgment, might well, considering all things, be said to be at hand, as the apostle Peter observes, though there should be thousands of years between. The apostle Paul speaks of ages to come, [Eph. ii. 7.](#) That it was not to be till many generations were past: yet it was at hand, in a sense agreeable to the common language of the Holy Spirit. So, Christ’s first coming was spoken of as very nigh at hand, of old. [Hag. ii. 6, 7.](#) “For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, *it is a little while,* and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.” Yet there was then above 500 years to it. And when it was about 400 years, it is said, [Mal. iii. 1.](#) “The Lord whom ye seek, shall *suddenly* come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.” And when it was about 700 years to the gospel day, it is said to be but *a very little while.* [Isa. xxix. 17, 18.](#) “Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.” So God represents, as though he would *very quickly* perform all the things prophesied of by Jeremiah, though some of them were not to be fulfilled in many ages; [Jer. i. 10-12.](#) So the time is said to be *at hand*, for the accomplishment of all the prophecies of the book of Revelation, and Christ’s last coming at the conclusion of them, [Rev. i. 3.](#) and [xxii. 7, 10, 12, 20.](#) though the book evidently contains a series of events for many ages.

§ 10. Again, when the apostle Peter says, with respect to Christ's last coming, and its being said to be *at hand*, that "a thousand years in God's sight are but as one day," it is no new conceit of his own, to save reputation; but God's language that he had used of old justifies him in so saying. And the expression that the apostles used about the approach of Christ's coming, did not tend to the disappointment of God's people. For Christ's coming to reward them at death was at hand, when they should have such a comfortable and full prospect of their complete reward at Christ's last coming; so that they shall anticipate, and as it were have a possession of it. Though the time appears long to us in our dim-sighted state, yet it will appear as nothing to them. The second coming of Christ was so nigh at hand, that the church of God might well take all that comfort from what was really to be understood by those expressions. The first coming of Christ was very often spoken of for the comfort of the saints of the Old Testament, under great afflictions, though they were never like to see it in this lifetime. So in the case of Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and Daniel.

§ 11. As to that text of the apostle in [1 Cor. x. 11](#). "And they are written for our admonition, upon whom the *ends of the world* are come;" the connexion of these words with the context, and the drift of the apostle, explain his meaning. For his drift is only this, that what had happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness, happened to them for ensamples, and were written for our sakes, though they happened so long ago, or though we live so long after them, and, with respect to them, in the ends of the world, or in the latter part of the world's duration, called the latter days.

§ 12. As to [1 Pet. iv. 7](#). "The end of all things is *at hand*;" how did this same apostle explain this propinquity? [2 Pet. iii. 7, 8](#). "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And it is to be considered, that the apostle Peter was under no temptation to change his voice in this matter, from any experience of the events failing as yet. He had not lived long enough to prove, but that Christ's words whence any may suppose they might expect Christ's second coming before the generation passed away, and before some that were then present should taste of death might be fulfilled in that sense.

§ 13. That there was no such notion prevailing among the disciples, that Christ should come while most of them lived, is manifest from this, that when the disciples mistook the design of Christ's words, [John xxi. 22](#). "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" and from thence, for a while, entertained a notion that *that* disciple was not to die till Christ came; it seems they, even while under this mistake, looked upon it as the distinguishing privilege of that disciple, which none of the rest were to expect. And it is evident, that John himself concluded no such thing, as that Christ should come in his lifetime, because he speaks of that notion of the other disciples about him as ill-founded.

§ 14. It is a further argument, that, when the apostles used such kind of language as that, “the Lord is at hand,” &c. they did not use it in any such sense, as that it should be in that age or the next; that the apostle John, who was accustomed to their language, uses it still, even after he had prophesied of many great events, which plainly were to have their accomplishment in many successive ages. As [Rev. iii. 11.](#) “Behold, I come *quickly*.” And he uses it repeatedly at the end of the book, after he had given an account of those future events, in the last chapter, [ver. 7.](#) “Behold, I come *quickly*,” [ver. 12.](#) “Behold, I come *quickly*,” and [ver. 20.](#) “He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come *quickly*.” The [17th chapter.](#) of this book alone is sufficient to convince any one, that John could not suppose that his prophecies could be fulfilled, but in several successive ages.

§ 15. It is an argument, that such a nearness of Christ’s last coming as the objection supposes, was not the doctrine that the apostles so much insisted upon; that the church prevailed still, when they saw that Christ did not come. Such a disappointment would have been a dreadful blow to Christianity, if this had been the universal expectation of Christians, and it had been raised by the abundant promises of Christ and his apostles. They probably, upon it, would have exceedingly lost ground, and shrunk away. But the fact was very much the contrary.

§ 16. Christ often speaks of his last coming, as that which would be long delayed; [Matt. xxv. 5.](#) “While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.” [Luke xx. 9.](#) “A certain man planted a vineyard;” [ver. 19.](#) “After *a long time*, the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them.” [Matt. xxiv. 48.](#) “My Lord delayeth his coming.” So [Luke xvii. 22.](#)

§ 17. It is evident, that when Christ speaks of his coming; of his being revealed; of his coming in his kingdom, or his kingdom coming; he has respect to his appearing in those great works of his power, justice, and grace, which should be in the destruction of Jerusalem, and other extraordinary providences which should attend it. So, in [Luke xvii. 22.](#), to the end, with [chap. xviii. 1-8.](#) Christ speaks of *the kingdom of God coming; of the coming of the days of the Son of man being revealed; and of the Son of man coming.* But yet, it is evident he has respect to the destruction of Jerusalem, by [chap. xvii. 37.](#) “And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? and he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” See also [chap. xix. 13-15.](#) So, when the disciples had been observing the magnificence of the temple, and Christ had said to them, “Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down,<sup>441</sup>” having respect to the destruction of Jerusalem the disciples asked him, when these things should be? and what should be the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world? By Christ’s *coming*, they have plainly a respect to that time of the destruction of the temple, which Christ had spoken of; and therefore, their question is thus expressed by St. Mark,

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441 [Matt. xxiv. 2.](#)

chap. xiii. 4. "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" And in like manner by St. Luke, chap. xxi. 7.; and Christ has many things in his answer agreeable to this sense of this question. He warns them to beware of others that should come in his stead, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. Then he proceeds to tell them what will precede the *end*, *i. e.* the end of the world, which the disciples inquired after, and tells them what shall be signs of its approach; Matt. xxiv. 6-16. And then speaks of the desolation of Jerusalem, and of the land, as that *end* and that *coming* of his which *they* inquired after; Matt. xxiv. 15-21, 28.; and more plainly, Luke xxi. 20-24.

From these things, it follows,

§ 18. That when Christ speaks of his coming, his coming in his kingdom, &c. as being in *that generation*, and before some who were then alive should taste of death, there is no need of understanding him of his coming to the *last judgment*; but it may well be understood of his coming at the *destruction of Jerusalem*, which, as has been shown, he calls by these names, and which he also distinguishes from his coming to the last judgment, and consummation of all things. Yea,

§ 19. It is evident, that he did not suppose his coming to the last judgment, and the consummation of all things, would be till a long time after the destruction of Jerusalem. The calling of the Gentiles, instead of the Jews, is spoken of as what should be principally after the destruction of Jerusalem; Matt. xxi. 41, 43. Luke xx. 15, 16. Matt. xxii. 7-10. But this Christ himself speaks of as a gradual work, in the parables of the grain of mustard seed, and of the leaven hid in three measures of meal; Matt. xiii. 31-33. Luke xiii. 19-21. Mark iv. 26-32. And it is very manifest, that Christ did not suppose the consummation of all things to take place, till long after the destruction of Jerusalem, Luke xxi. 24. where it is said of the Jews, that they should be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

### CHAP. III.

Jesus's prophecies a proof that he was the Christ, and a divine person.

§ 1. AS Christ wrought miracles in a very different manner from the prophets, acting therein in his own name, and as doing what he did of his own power and will; so, also, he uttered prophecies in a way very diverse from that of the ancient prophets. The ancient prophets, when they uttered their predictions, were wont to introduce them after this manner, *Hear ye the word of the Lord*; or, *Thus saith the Lord*; showing, that they did not speak of their own knowledge, but by special revelation and direction from God. Christ foretold things to come in a remarkably different manner and style, introducing his predictions, not with a *Thus with the Lord*, but, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*; as, Matt. xxiii. 36. xxiv. 34, 35. xxvi. 13, and 21. Mark xiv. 30. Luke xxi. 31, 32.; John xiii. 38. xiv. 12. xvi. 20, 21, 22. The following place is very remarkable, showing what great authority Christ attributed

to his own word in his predictions, [Matt. xxiv. 34, 35](#). “Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my words* shall not pass away.” These words are annexed to the chief prophecies that Christ ever uttered, which are contained in the [24th chapter of Matthew](#). See the same, [Luke xxi. 31, 32](#).

§ 2. Christ foretold future events, and those to be accomplished after his death, not only as what he knew by his own knowledge, but what he himself would bring to pass; both future blessings to his church and people, and future calamity and destruction to those persons and people that were his enemies.

§ 3. *First*, He foretold great events for the *benefit* of his church that he would bring to pass; [John xiv. 12-14](#). “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, he shall do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” [John xvi. 7-11](#). “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, *I will send him unto you*. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” And [ver. 20-22](#). “Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful. But your sorrow shall be turned into joy. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” See the whole [xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters of John](#):. and [Luke xxi. 15-18](#). “For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish.” [Luke xxiv. 49](#). “And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” So he foretold his own resurrection from the dead, as what he himself would bring to pass by his own power; [John ii. 19](#). “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” [John x. 17, 18](#). “I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” [Mark xvi. 17, 18](#). “And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

§ 4. *Secondly*, He foretold many great events implying awful calamity and destruction to his enemies, as what he himself would bring to pass. Thus he speaks of that mighty destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, as that from which he would have protected

them if they had believed on him. [Matt. xxiii. 36-38](#). “Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come on this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” This destruction is spoken of as what he would bring upon them, as a punishment for their rejection and contempt of him. [Luke xix. 12-14](#). “He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.” [With verse 27](#). “But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay before me.”

§ 5. Christ not only foretold things future, as having ability in himself to accomplish them, but he promised to *give others ability* to foretell future events by his Spirit, and hereby should honour him, as having, in his foreknowledge of future things, the same honour with the Father. [John xvi. 7](#). “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” [Verse 13-15](#). “When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine. Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you.”

§ 6. It is observable, that never any prophet gave such great and manifold opportunity for proof and trial, whether he was a true prophet or not, in the multitude of predictions of events to be fulfilled in his lifetime, and during that generation after his death: and also in the plainness of his predictions; most of them being delivered not in visionary mystical representations, but in a manner intelligible to all.

§ 7. Therefore the supposition that, if Christ were an impostor, God would so order it, that all these predictions many of them so strange and wonderful, and in themselves so exceedingly unlikely should exactly come to pass; and that God’s providence should so wonderfully confirm his words, beyond those of any other prophet that ever had been in the world, is extremely unreasonable; especially considering the following things:

§ 8. *1st*, That God had of old given this as a sign, by which his people might know a true prophet; *viz.* the coming to pass of the things foretold by him. And this rule is annexed by Moses to that great promise which God gave of the Messiah, [xviii. 15](#). &c. “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among

their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shall not be afraid of him.” Now, therefore, since Jesus professed to be the Messiah, and the great Prophet foretold and promised by God in this place, and uttered so many great and wonderful prophecies; it might be expected, if he was a mere pretender, and spake presumptuously, and uttered what the Lord had not spoken, that God should not have confirmed his prophecies in his providence; but in that case, would have given his people opportunity to refute by this rule his pretences.

§ 9. *2nd*, That foretelling future events is spoken of by God, as one great thing wherein the Messiah should differ from the false gods and false prophets, and vain pretenders of the heathens. In that great prophecy of the kingdom of the Messiah, beginning with the fortieth chapter of Isa. to the end of the book, the foretelling of future events, in such a manner as to show that the person who foretells, does foresee, and has a view of futurity, is often mentioned as a divine prerogative, and therefore as a good evidence, that he that does so is a divine person, or speaks by divine authority. Therefore the prophets and gods of the heathens are often challenged on this head, and the proof of their authority often put upon this issue: [Isa. xli. 21-28.](#) [xlii. 8, 9.](#) [xliii. 9-12.](#) [xliv. 6-8.](#) [xlv. 3, and 21.](#) [xlvi. 10.](#) [xlviii. 14.](#) In this prophecy it is declared, that herein the Messiah should differ from all vain pretenders; (see [chap. xli. 27.](#) and [xlii.](#) at the beginning; compared with [chap. xli. 21-29.](#)) Now therefore, is it credible, that God would so order it, that one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, should, in so high a degree, have this honour, which God had mentioned as the great and distinguishing honour which he would put on the true Messiah, as his elect, in whom his soul delighted?

§ 10. *3d*, That the foretelling of future events, as by his own knowledge, and as events that are to be accomplished by his own power, is spoken of by God as his great prerogative, and as a good and sure evidence of the divinity of the person who can do thus; and God speaks thus, in those very places in which he is foretelling the coming of the Messiah. [Isa. xli. 21-23.](#) “Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth, and show us what shall happen. Show the things that are to come hereafter, *that we may know that ye are gods.*” [Ver. 26.](#) “Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and before-time, that we may say, He is righteous? Yea, there is none that showeth; yea, there is none that declareth; yea, there is none that

heareth your words.” Then, in the next words, God promises the Messiah, [ver. 27](#). “The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings;” *i. e.* that foreshows glorious future things which God is about to do for his people.

§ 11. Therefore, since God mentions the foretelling of future events in this manner, as a certain note of divinity, and a distinguishing honour that he would put on the Messiah, his elect in whom his soul delighteth, is it *credible*, that God would put this honour, in so great a degree, on one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, and the beloved of God? And especially, when he pretended, in this respect, to have the same honour which belongs to God; as [John xvi. 13-15](#). “He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.” He also speaks of his knowledge of divine secrets, and future events, as the effect of the peculiar love that God had to him; [John v. 20](#). “The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doth.”

§ 12. Great changes in kingdoms and nations, coming to pass according to God’s predictions, is often spoken of by God himself as a great evidence of his being the only true God. The foretelling of the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus, is greatly insisted on by God, as a great evidence of his being the true God, and as most clearly and greatly distinguishing him from all pretenders to divinity. See [chap. xli. 21-27](#). see also [chap. xliv. 25](#). to the end, and [xlvi. 10](#). But Jesus was one that professed divinity, and foretold revolutions of nations as great and strange as this, yea, far more wonderful. He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, which had been the holy city, and of the nation of Jews, who had been God’s own people, and whose protector he had in a special manner been, and towards whom he exercised a most peculiar providence. He also foretold the deliverance of the Christians who were in Jerusalem. It was a greater thing, and less to be expected, that such a city and such a nation should be destroyed, than that destruction should befall a nation of aliens. Therefore, to foretell this destruction, with the various circumstances of it, as they actually took place, is a greater evidence of divine foreknowledge, than to foretell the destruction of a nation of aliens.

§ 13. The turning of the wilderness into a fruitful field, is spoken of by God as a peculiar work of God, and a certain sign of a divine hand; [Isa. xli. 18, 19, 20](#). “I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree. I will set in the desert, the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this.” It is evident this is not intended in a literal sense, but signifies the happy change in the state of mankind, from a state wherein men are represented as barren, as briars and thorns, and as wild beasts, to a morally excellent and happy



state. This might be proved by the frequent use of such figures in the prophecies of Scripture. But it is manifest, that this, according to Christ's prediction, was effected, in a remarkable manner, by Christ himself, and his apostles and followers, in the turning of the world from heathenism, to the knowledge and worship of the true God, to just apprehensions of his moral government, and from all manner of vice, to virtue.

§ 14. It is remarkable that it is foretold, [Isa. xlii.](#) that the Messiah should set judgment in the earth, and his law or religion among the nations, particularly *the isles*, or Europe, against strong opposition, and through great sufferings, under which his church should seem ready to be extinguished or crushed, like smoking flax, or a bruised reed: but that, finally, judgment should be brought forth to victory.

#### CHAP. IV.

The propriety of a general judgment, and a future state.

§ 1. the doctrine taught in the Scriptures, that at the end of the world all mankind shall stand together before the judgment-seat of the supreme Lawgiver and Judge, to have all things visibly set to rights and justice made visibly to take place with respect to all the persons, actions, and affairs of the moral world, by the infinitely wise, holy, and just Head of it is a most *reasonable* doctrine, and much commends itself to our belief, from the reason of the thing, on the supposition of a moral government maintained over the world by him who created it. For this implies, that he governs the world as its lawgiver and judge, and will treat men as accountable creatures. God's moral government not only requires, that there should be divine laws, and an execution of them in rewards and punishments; but also that both should be made *visible*. It is requisite that the subject should have proper means of knowing what the laws are, by which he is obligated, and the grounds of the obligation; and that others who are his fellow-subjects should also know his obligations. For, as men are made to dwell in society, this cannot well be, without knowing each other's obligations, and being able to judge of the good or evil of each other's actions. It is likewise requisite that the subject of the laws should have proper means of knowing the grounds of the rewards or punishments of which he is the subject, in the execution of the laws; and that it should be made manifest, to the conscience of him who is rewarded or punished, what he is rewarded or punished for, and the ground on which the Judge assigns such a retribution; and, if he see others punished or acquitted, that the ground of it should be manifested to him, that he may see the justice of it. That there should be some judicial proceeding in which that should take place, seems absolutely necessary, in order to a proper manifestation of the grounds of the subject's reward or punishment, and a display of the justice of his judge to his own conscience; which must be if the subject be dealt with as a rational moral agent.

§ 2. Hence it is of necessity, that every one of mankind must be the subject of such a dispensation of God towards him, which may fitly be called an appearing before the judg-

ment-seat of God. And it is most reasonable to suppose, that this judicial proceeding will not be secret; that each individual will not be judged so, that the transaction with respect to him will be out of the sight and knowledge of all others; but that truth and righteousness will be made visibly to take place, after a prevalence of wrong, wickedness, and confusion, in the violations of a divine law, which was public, and the law of their union and regulation in society; many of those violations are of course visible to others, and others are concerned in them, either in being united in the wickedness, and accessory to it, or a party concerned in suffering the injury done by that wickedness.

§ 3. Reasonable creatures are the eye of the world; they are capable of beholding the beauty and excellency of the Creator's workmanship, and those displays of himself, which he has made in his works: and therefore it is requisite, that the beauty and excellency of the world, as God hath constituted it, should not be hid or kept secret. But the beauty of God's constitution of the world, consists mainly, without doubt, in the intelligent part of the world, which is the head and end of all the rest, *et instar omnium*. But the beauty and order of God's constitution of this, consists chiefly in his moral regulation of it. Now, therefore, since God has made the beauty and regularity of the natural world so publicly visible to all; it is much more requisite, that the moral beauty and regularity of his disposals in the intelligent world, should be publicly visible. For the beauty of God's works consists a thousand times more in this, than in the other. It is reasonable to suppose, that these will be as publicly visible as the brightness and beautiful order and motions of the heavenly bodies, and the regular successions of the various seasons of the year, and the beauties of nature in the air and on the face of the earth. The moral deformity and confusion of the world, is most public; it stands forth continually in view through all ages. It is therefore fit, that the rectifying of this deformity and disorder, and the bringing of light out of darkness, should also be made publicly visible to those creatures, that are made to be the eye of the creation, to behold its beauty, and the glory of the Creator in it. God has given man a nature, which, if it be under the influence of true virtue, desires above all things to behold this kind of order and beauty. When man sees a great and horrid crime committed, as some nefarious act of injustice, cruelty, &c. the nature of the reasonable creature has something in it, which desires and makes it requisite, that he should see justice done, and right take place, with respect to such an act. The mind or heart, as it were, fails in such a case, if it neither sees this, nor hopes to see it.

§ 4. If it be requisite that judgment should be public, and that many should stand together before the judgment-seat; on the same account, it will appear most reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should appear together in one great assembly, before the judgment-seat. The whole world is one commonwealth and kingdom, all made of one blood, all under one moral head, one law, and one government; and all parts of it are joined in communication one with another. All are sinners, and yet God appears placable to all, &c. All dwell in one

habitation, *viz.* this earth, under the same roof of the visible heavens, having the same sun to enlighten them, &c. Besides, many of the causes and controversies to be decided by the Supreme Judge of the world, are of the most public nature; as causes between princes and heads of great kingdoms and monarchies, and their people; and causes between one nation and another. Yea, there are many causes which the Supreme Judge must bring to an issue, wherein the greater part of the world is concerned. And when the cause and controversy between these two is judged, it is requisite that both parties should appear together before the judgment-seat. The Roman emperors had to do with other nations that were without the limits of the empire, to the utmost ends of the earth; as with the Scythians, the Persians, the Arabians, the Indians, the Chinese, the Germans, Cimbrians, and Africans. So that it is requisite, when they appear to be judged, that not only the people of the Roman empire should appear with them, but also those other nations. Thus, all the nations of Europe have dealings one with another continually; and these European nations have some dealings with almost all other nations upon earth, in Asia, Africa, and America.

§ 5. It is therefore necessary, that all nations should be gathered together before the judgment-seat of the Supreme Lawgiver and Judge, that he may determine between them, and settle all things by his wise, righteous, and infallible decision. And many of the good and evil acts that are done, though the world is not properly concerned in them as a party interested, yet are public through the world. They are done in the sight of the world, and greatly draw the attention of mankind. It is fit, therefore, that they should be as publicly judged. And, it is to be observed, that the longer the world stands, the more and more communication have the different parts of it together. So that, at the end of the world, there probably will be the highest reason, in this respect, that all nations that shall then be found upon the earth, should be called together before the judgment-seat of God.

§ 6. As it is requisite, that all who dwell on the face of the earth at the same time, should appear together before the judgment-seat; so it is also requisite, that all generations that have succeeded one another, appear together. Many of the moral acts, both good and bad, not only are public in this respect, that they are known over great part of the race of the earth, in or near the time of them; but also they are made public to all following generations, by tradition and history. And if the actions of one generation be not visible to all, yet the actions of one generation are very visible to the generation immediately following, and theirs to the next; and so, all, in this sense, are very visible one to another. And as all nations of the world are morally concerned one with another, though not so as each one immediately concerned with every other nation; yet all are mutually concerned by concatenation. One nation is concerned with the next, and that with the next, and so on: so that there is need that all should appear together to be judged.

§ 7. All generations of men, from the beginning to the end of the world, are morally concerned one with another. The first generation is concerned with the next, and that with

the next, and so on to the end of the world. Therefore it is requisite that all should appear together to be judged. Parents may injure their children, and children may injure their parents; and so they are two parties in one cause which must be decided by the Supreme Judge. Therefore it is needful, that they, as parties, should appear together, when their cause is judged. Parents and children, or a younger generation and an older, may be accessary to each other's crimes, or united in each other's virtuous deeds; and therefore it is requisite that they should be judged together. Yea, the present generation may become accessary to an injury committed by their ancestors ages ago. For, in many things, they stand in the stead of those ancestors, and act for them, and have power to continue the injury, or to remove it.

§ 8. Posterity is concerned in the actions of their ancestors or predecessors, in families, nations, and most communities of men, as standing in some respect in their stead. And some particular persons may injure, not only a great part of the world contemporary with them, but may injure and undo all future generations of many individuals, families, or larger communities. So that men who live now, may have an action against those who lived a thousand years ago; or there may be a cause which needs to be decided by the Judge of the world, between some of the present generation, and some who lived a thousand years ago. Princes who, by rapine and cruelty, ruin nations, are answerable for the poverty, slavery, and misery of the posterity of those nations. So, as to those who broach and establish opinions and principles, which tend to the overthrow of virtue, and propagation of vice, and are contrary to the common rights and privileges of mankind. Thus, Mahomet has injured all succeeding posterity, and is answerable, at least in a degree, for the ruin of the virtue of his followers in many respects, and for the rapine, violence, and terrible devastations which his followers have been guilty of toward the nations of the world, and to which they have been instigated by the principles which he taught them. And, whoever they were, who first drew away men from the true religion, and introduced and established idolatry, they have injured all nations that have to this day partaken of the infection.

§ 9. In like manner, persons, by their virtue, may be great benefactors to mankind, through all succeeding generations. Without doubt, the apostle Paul, and others who assisted him, and following generations, may properly become the subjects of a judicial proceeding, with respect to that great religious change and revolution in the nations subject to the Roman empire, in abolishing heathenish idolatry, and setting up Christianity in the room of it.

§ 10. The end of the divine judgment is the manifestation of the divine justice: and how fit is it, that the justice of the universal and supreme Head and Judge of all mankind, in governing his kingdom, should be most publicly manifested, and exhibited to his whole kingdom! This doctrine of the day of judgment, exceedingly becomes the universal moral Head of the world, who rules through all generations.

§ 11. If there shall ever come a time, wherein the Lawgiver and Judge of the world will publicly regulate the moral state of all generations, the end of the world, when there shall be a final period to all farther probation, seems to be a proper time for it. If ever, by divine wisdom and righteousness, there be brought about a righteous, holy, and glorious issue of the confused state of the world, it will be, when this world shall have come to an end. As the proper time for judging a particular person, is, when the probationary state of that person is at an end; so the proper time for the public judgment of the world, is, when the probationary world comes to an end.

§ 12. There is all reason to think, that the wicked will hereafter be punished together, having a place of punishment assigned for them, where they shall suffer divine vengeance in sight of one another; and that the righteous will also be rewarded together. If so, it is most requisite that their judgment should be together; that they might understand the ground and reason of the punishment, and of that reward, which they shall see in each other.

§ 13. It is most agreeable to reason, that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, wherein God will reward and make happy good men, and make wicked men miserable. And if there be a future state of happiness to God's favourites, it is rational to suppose, that this should be eternal: because, otherwise, God's greatest favourites, to whom he gives the greatest rewards in another world, would, in one respect, have most to torment them; to wit, the dreadful and eternal end of that sweet happiness. The sweeter and more happy life is, the more terrible are death and the thoughts and expectations of it. It is not likely that God would add such a sting to the sweetest enjoyments and rewards of his greatest favourites. It is rational, therefore, to suppose, that the life he gives them after death, is life eternal; life that is not to come to an end by another worse death, consisting not only in the destruction of the body, but the abolition of the soul. God has not made them like the brutes, who cannot contemplate futurity, and therefore have no allay to present enjoyment by the prospect of an end by death. And if it be so, that there be an eternal state of happiness in another world, set before us to be sought after; then, how rational are the Christian doctrine and precepts, of placing our affections on heavenly objects; of weanedness from the world; of behaving as pilgrims and strangers on the earth; of not laying up treasure on the earth, but in heaven; of selling all for the kingdom of heaven; of not looking at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal! Hence, also, the reasonableness of the Christian precepts of patience under sufferings, seeing these afflictions are but for a moment, in comparison with the duration of the future weight of glory.

§ 14. The doctrine of the gospel concerning an invisible world, to which good men are to be transferred, and where they are to have their inheritance and fixed abode, is most rational on this account, that this visible world is corruptible in its own nature. Such is the nature and constitution of it, that it must come to an end. And it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Creator would leave it gradually to perish, languishing in a decayed, broken,

miserable state, through thousands of ages, gradually growing more and more wretched, before it is quite destroyed. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose, that there will be a time wherein its Creator will immediately interpose, to put the world to an end, and destroy it suddenly. And at that time, all the living inhabitants of the world, that are not taken from it and translated to some other abode, must perish, and be destroyed in a very awful manner, by the immediate hand of God, with most inexpressible manifestations of his mighty power and great majesty. And who can believe, that at that time, when God in this manner immediately interposes, he will make no distinction between the virtuous and his enemies? that this awful destruction and wrath shall come upon all alike? There will be no necessity of it from the course of nature. For at that time, by the supposition God will put an end to the course of nature. God will immediately and miraculously interpose. The whole affair shall be miraculous, and by God's immediate hand; and therefore, a miraculous deliverance of the good will not be at all beside God's manner of operation at this time. He can as easily, and, without departing any more from the stated course of things, miraculously deliver the virtuous, as he can miraculously destroy the wicked.

§ 15. Therefore we may well suppose, that at that time, when God is about to put an end to the frame of this visible universe, the virtuous will be translated into some other world, beyond the limits of the visible one. And if God designs thus to deal with all the good that shall be found alive on the earth at that time, how rational is it to suppose, that he deals in like manner with the good in all generations? That they are all translated into that distant invisible world? Without doubt, the world into which God will receive his favourites, when this corruptible world shall perish, shall be incorruptible. He will not translate them from one corruptible world to another. He will not save them from one world that is to perish, to carry them to another world that is to perish. Therefore, they shall be immortal, and have eternal life; and, doubtless, that world will be unspeakably better than this, and free from all that destruction, that fleeting, fading, perishing, empty nature, that attends all the things of this world; and their bodies shall be immortal, and as secure from perishing as the world is to which they are translated.

§ 16. This makes it most reasonable to suppose, that good men, in all ages, are translated to that world. For why should so vast a difference be made, between the virtuous that shall be of the last generation, and the virtuous of all preceding generations? Seeing there is a far distant and invisible world provided for some of the virtuous inhabitants of this world, it is reasonable to suppose, that all the good shall have their habitation and inheritance together there, as one society, partaking of the same reward: as they were of the same race of mankind, and loved and served God, and followed him in the same state here below, in the performance of the same duties, the same work, and under like trials and difficulties.

§ 17. It is also, hence, rational to suppose, that there should be a resurrection of the bodies of the saints of all past generations. For, from what has been observed before, the

bodies of the saints of the last generation will be preserved from perishing with the world, and will be translated. And, doubtless, if all the good of all generations are to have a like reward, and are to dwell together in the same world in one society, they shall be in a like state, partaking of a like reward.

§ 18. The reasonableness of the doctrine of the resurrection will appear, if we suppose, that union with a body is the most rational state of perfection of the human soul: which may be argued from the consideration, that this was the condition in which the human soul was created at first; and that its separation from the body is no improvement of its condition, being an alteration brought on by sin, and was inflicted under the notion of evil, and expressly as punishment, upon the forfeiture of a privilege. From whence we must conclude, that the former state of union to the body, was a better state than the disunion which was threatened. Sin introduced that death that consists in the separation of body and soul. The state of innocence was embodied: the state of guilt was disembodied.<sup>442</sup> Therefore, as Christ came to restore from all the calamities which came from sin, it is most reasonable to suppose, that he will restore the union of soul and body.

#### CHAP. V.

The miracles of Jesus not counterfeited by his enemies, and superior to those under the Old Testament.

§ 1. it adds to the evidence which is given to the truth of Christianity by the multitude of miracles wrought by Christ, his apostles and followers in the first century, that there were no pretences of inspiration, or miracles, among the Jews (at least none worth notice) in Judea, or any other part of the world. If all that multitude, and that long-continued series of miracles, recorded to be wrought in confirmation of Christianity, were fictions, vain pretences, or enthusiastic imaginations; why were there no pretences or imaginations of the same sort, on the other side, among the Jews, in opposition to these? Those of the Jews that were opposed to Christianity, were vastly the greater part of the nation. And they had as high an opinion of the honourableness of those gifts of prophecy and miracles, as Christians. They had as much in their notions and tempers, to lead them to a fondness for the claim of such an honour to their party. They were exceedingly proud of their special relation to God, and of their high privilege as the peculiar favourites of heaven; and, in this respect, were exalted far above all the world: which is a temper of mind, (as we see abundantly,) above all others, leading men to pretences of this nature.

§ 2. There could be nothing peculiar in the constitution of the first Christians, tending to enthusiasm, beyond the rest of the Jews: for they were of the same blood, the same, race and nation. Nor could it be because they wanted zeal against Christianity, and a desire to oppose and destroy it; or wanted envy and virulent opposition of mind to any pretences in

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442 Winder's History of Knowledge, p. 59, 60.

the Christians to excel them in the favour of God, or excellency of any gifts or privileges whatsoever. They had such zeal and such envy, even to madness and fury.

§ 3. The true reason, therefore, why so vast a multitude of miracles were said, and believed, to be openly wrought among Christians for so long a time, even for a whole age, and none among the Jews, must be, that such was the state of things in that age, that it was not possible to palm false pretences of such a kind upon the world; and that those who were most elated with pride, and most ambitious of such an honour, could see no hope of succeeding in any such pretences; and because the Christians indeed were inspired, and were enabled to work miracles, and did work them, as was pretended and believed, in great multitudes, and this continually for so long a time. But God never favoured their adversaries with such a privilege.

§ 4. When Moses objected ([Exod. iv.](#)) that perhaps the people would not believe his mission, God directed him to work two miracles to convince them: first, the transmutation of his rod to and from a serpent; and, secondly, the making his hand leprous, and healing the leprosy. And it is to be noted, that the preference is given to the last miracle, as being especially what might well be regarded as a good evidence of Moses's divine mission; [ver. 8](#). "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign." By which it is manifest, that such a sort of miracles as Christ wrought, and which he most abounded in, *viz.* his healing the bodies of men when diseased, were a proper and good evidence of a divine mission.<sup>443</sup>

§ 5. Moses tells Pharaoh, [Exodus viii. 10](#). "The frogs shall be removed, that thou mayest know that there is none like the Lord our God." The magicians could bring up frogs, but not remove them. They brought plagues, but took away none. But if the driving out the frogs was such an evidence of the distinguishing power of the Almighty; how much more the driving out devils from the bodies and souls of men, silencing their oracles, turning them out of their temples, and out of those who used curious arts, as at Ephesus, and afterwards abolishing their worship through the Roman empire! For the gods that were worshipped in the heathen world, were devils, [Psal. cvi. 37](#). [Deut. xxxii. 17](#). [Lev. xvii. 7](#). Christ, by the prevailing of the Christian religion, cast out those devils out of the very land of Egypt. And which was the greatest work, to drive the frogs out of Egypt, or to drive out the impure spirits that were the gods of Egypt? It is spoken of, [Isa. xix. 1](#). as a glorious manifestation of the majesty of God, that he should ride on a swift cloud, and should come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt should be moved at his presence. See also [Jeremiah xliii. 12](#). But when Christ came into Egypt, in the preaching of his gospel, he moved, dispossessed, and banished the idols of Egypt, and abolished them out of the world. And not only did Christ thus drive away the devils, the false gods, out of Egypt, but out of all the nations round about Canaan,

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443 See Kidder's Demonstration, part ii. p. 5.



that were known by the Israelites, even to the utmost extent of the then known heathen world. These gods were by Christ dispossessed of their ancient tenements, which they had holden age after age, time out of mind. They were utterly abolished; so that they have had no worshippers now for a great many ages, no temples, no sacrifices, no honours done them. They are old, obsolete things now, utterly disregarded in the world. It is abundantly spoken of in the Old Testament as a future glorious work of God, greatly manifesting his power and majesty, and that he should prevail against and destroy the gods of the heathens, and abolish their worship. But our Jesus has the honour of this glorious work.

§ 6. Again, when Korah and his company charged Moses and Aaron with taking too much upon them, Moses says, [Numbers xvi. 5](#). “To-morrow, the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy, and will cause him to come near unto him; even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him.” And again, [ver. 28, 29, 30](#). “Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind: if these men die the common death of all men,” &c. If the miraculous taking away of men’s lives be so great an evidence of Moses and Aaron’s divine mission, and of their being holy, and chosen and appointed of God, how much more is raising men from the dead an evidence of the same work! Which is the greatest work, to take away men’s lives, or to restore them to life after they are dead; or, indeed, miraculously to save them from death, when they are sick with mortal diseases? Again; God’s causing the earth to open and swallow up those wicked men, is no more an evidence of a divine hand, than Christ’s preventing the sea from swallowing up those that were in the ship, by immediately quieting the winds and sea by a word speaking, when the ship was even covered with waves, through the violence of the tempest: at another time, upholding Peter from sinking and being swallowed up by the tempestuous sea, when walking on the water. Elisha’s causing iron to swim, is mentioned in the Old Testament as a great miracle. But this was not greater than Christ’s walking on the water, and causing Peter to walk upon it. When Elijah had restored to life the widow’s son, she says, [1 Kings xvii. 24](#). “By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.” But this sort of miracles Christ wrought, besides rising from the dead himself.

§ 7. Moses speaks of God’s stilling the tempest in Egypt, and causing the thunder and hail to cease, as that which will convince Pharaoh, that the earth was the Lord’s, [Exod. ix. 29](#). Then, by parity of reason, Christ’s stilling the tempest, and causing the winds and seas to obey him, is an evidence, that the seas and earth were his. Moses, to convince the people of his divine mission, took some of the water of the river, and poured it out on the dry land, and it was turned to blood; [Exod. vii. 17-20](#). But this was not a greater work, nor so glorious, as Christ’s turning water into wine.

§ 8. Abraham’s conquering the four kings and their armies, with his armed servants and confederates, greatly affected Melchisedek, king of Salem, and convinced him, that

Abraham was God's chosen friend; chosen, that he and his posterity might be blessed as God's people. But what is this to Jesus's conquering the world in its greatest strength; and, when united under that, which by the prophet Daniel is represented, as the greatest, and by far the strongest monarchy, by his handful of poor, weak, illiterate disciples?

§ 9. Christ's victory over the false gods of the nations, in this conquest, was far more conspicuous, as the opposition was to them; the strife was more directly with them; the thing professedly sought and aimed at by Christ in the conflict, was the utter destruction of these false gods, the entire rooting of them out, and the abolition of their worship out of the world: and such a victory was obtained; those false gods were forsaken, their oracles silenced, their temples destroyed, their images every where burnt, and their remembrance made to cease; so that now, for many ages, they have not been remembered, any otherwise, than as instances of the great blindness and folly of their votaries.

§ 10. How often are the miracles wrought in Egypt spoken of as clear evidences, that he that wrought them, was the Supreme God, and the only true God; [Exod. vii. 3, 4, 5.](#); [chap. viii. 10, 19, 22.](#)

§ 11. The work of Gideon in conquering the Midianites and the multitudes that were joined with them, by three hundred men, with the light of lamps and sound of trumpets, is celebrated as a great work of God's power, [Judges vi. 14.](#) and [vii. 2, 7.](#) But this is but a mere type of Christ's conquering the world by the preaching of the gospel. This victory over Midian is spoken of in the Scripture, as representing the conquests of the Messiah, [Isa. ix. 4.](#)

## CHAP. VI.

Observations on the Scriptures; their authority and necessity.

§ 1. some may ask, why the Scripture expresses things so unintelligibly? It tells us of Christ's living in us, of our being united to him, of being the same spirit, and uses many other such like expressions. Why doth it not call directly by their intelligible names, those things that lie hid under these expressions? I answer, Then we should have a hundred pages to express what is implied in these words, "ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost;" neither would it after all be understood by the one fourth part of mankind. Whereas, as it is expressed, it serves as well to practice, if we will believe what God says, that, some way or other, we are inhabited by the Holy Ghost as a temple, and therefore we ought to keep ourselves holy and pure. And we are united to Christ as much as members are to the head; and therefore ought to rejoice, seeing we know that this union proceeds from his love to us; and that the effects of it are joy, happiness, spiritual and eternal life, &c. By such similitudes, a vast volume is represented to our minds in three words; and things that we are not able to behold directly, are presented before us in lively pictures.

§ 2. There is a strange and unaccountable kind of enchantment, if I may so speak, in scripture history, which although it is destitute of all rhetorical ornaments, makes it vastly more pleasant, agreeable, easy, and natural than any other history whatever. It shines bright with the amiable simplicity of truth. There is something in the relation, that, at the same time, very much pleases and engages the reader, and evidences the truth of the fact. It is impossible to tell fully what I mean, to any that have not taken notice of it before. One reason doubtless is this: The Scripture sets forth things just as they happened, with the minute circumstances of time, place, situation, gesture, habit, &c. in such a natural method, that we seem to be actually present; and we insensibly fancy, not that we are readers, but spectators, yea, actors in the business. These little circumstances wonderfully help to brighten the ideas of the more principal parts of the history. And, although the Scripture goes beyond other histories, in mentioning such circumstances; yet no circumstances are mentioned, but those that wonderfully brighten the whole. So the story is told very fully, and without in the least crowding things together, before one has fully taken up what was last related; and yet told in much less room than any one else could tell it. Notwithstanding the minute circumstances mentioned, which other historians leave out, it leads along our ideas so naturally and easily, that they seem to go neither too fast nor too slow. One seems to know as exactly how it is from the relation, as if he saw it. The mind is so led on, that sometimes we seem to have a full, large, and particular history of a long time: so that if we should shut the book immediately, without taking particular notice, we should not suppose the story had been told in half so little room; and yet a long train of ideas is communicated. The story is so narrated, that our mind, although some facts are not mentioned, yet naturally traces the whole transaction. And although it be thus skilfully contrived, yet things are told in such a simple, plain manner, that the least child can understand them. This is a perfection in the sacred writers, which no other authors can equal.

§ 3. It is an argument with me, that the world is not yet very near its end, that the church has made no greater progress in understanding the mysteries of the Scriptures. The Scriptures, in all their parts, were made for the use of the church here on earth; and it seems reasonable to suppose that God will, by degrees, unveil their meaning to his church. It was made mysterious, in many places having great difficulties, that his people might have exercise for their pious wisdom and study, and that his church might make progress in the understanding of it, as the philosophical world makes progress in the understanding of the book of nature, and in unfolding its mysteries. A divine wisdom appears in ordering it thus. How much better is it to have divine truth and light break forth in this way, than it would have been, to have had it shine at once to every one, without any labour or industry of the understanding? It would be less delightful, and less prized and admired, and would have had vastly less influence on men's hearts, and would have been less to the glory of God.

§ 4. It seems to be evident, that the church is not as yet arrived to that perfection in understanding the Scripture, which we can imagine is the highest that God ever intended the church should come to. There are a multitude of things in the Old Testament, which the church then did not understand, but were reserved to be unfolded in the Christian church, such as most of their types, and shadows, and prophecies, which make up the greatest part of the Old Testament. So I believe there are now many truths that remain to be discovered by the church, in the glorious times that are approaching.

§ 5. Another thing from which we may draw the same conclusion, is, that it is the manner of God, to keep his church on earth in hope of a still more glorious state: and so their prayers are enlivened, when they pray that the interest of religion may be promoted, and God's kingdom may come. God kept the church, under the Old Testament, in hope of the times of the Messiah. The disciples of Christ were kept in hope of the conversion of the Roman empire, which was effected about three hundred years after. But it seems to me, not likely, that the church, from that time, should have no more to hope for from God's word, no higher advancement, till the consummation of all things. Indeed, there will be a great but short apostacy, a little before the end of the world; but then, it is probable, the thing that the church will hope and long for, will be Christ's last coming, to advance his church to its highest and its everlasting glory; for that will then appear to be the only remedy: for the church will expect no more from the clear light and truth which will have been so gloriously displayed already, under the millennium. Another end of thus keeping his church in hope is, to quicken and enliven their endeavours to propagate religion, and to advance the kingdom of Jesus. It is a great encouragement to such endeavours, to think, that such times are coming, wherein Christianity shall prevail over all enemies. And it would be a great discouragement to the labours of nations, or pious magistrates and divines, to endeavour to advance Christ's kingdom, if they understood that it was not to be advanced. And indeed, the keeping alive such hopes in the church, has a tendency to enliven all piety and religion in the general, amongst God's people.

§ 6. When we inquire, whether or no we have scripture grounds for any doctrine, the question is, Whether or no the Scripture exhibits it any way to the eye of the mind, or to the eye of reason? We have no grounds to assert, that it was God's intent, by the Scripture, in so *many terms*, to declare every doctrine that he would have us believe. There are many things the Scripture may suppose that we know already. And if what the Scripture says, together with what is plain to reason, leads to believe any doctrine, we are to look upon ourselves as taught that doctrine by the Scripture. God may reveal things in Scripture, which way he pleases. If by what he there reveals, the thing is any way clearly discovered to the understanding, or eye of the mind, it is our duty to receive it as his revelation.

§ 7. The greatest part of Christians were very early agreed what books were canonical, and to be looked upon as the rule of their faith. It is impossible, in the nature of things, but

some churches must receive the books long after others, as they lay at a greater distance from the places where they were written, or had less convenience of communication with them. Besides, as Christianity, for a long time, laboured under the disadvantages of continual persecution, no general councils could be convened, and so there could be no public notification of universal agreement in this matter. But notwithstanding all these things, it is yet discoverable, that, as soon as can be supposed, after the writing the books, the Christians, in all countries, remarkably agreed in receiving them as canonical.

§ 8. Several of the first writers of Christianity, have left us, in their works, *catalogues* of the sacred books of the New Testament, which, though made in countries at a vast distance from each other, do very little differ. Great were the pains and care of those early Christians, to be well assured what were the genuine writings of the apostles, and to distinguish them from all pretended revelations of designing men, and the forgeries they published under sacred titles. Thus, when a presbyter of Asia had published a spurious piece, under the name of Paul, he was immediately convicted, and notice of the forgery was soon conveyed to Carthage and the churches of Africa.

§9. Hence it follows, that the primitive Christians are proper judges to determine what book is canonical, and what not. For nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, in those early ages, an agreement so universal, without good and solid foundation: or, in other words, it is next to impossible, either that so great a number of men should agree in a cheat, or be imposed upon by a cheat. But there are some particular circumstances that make the inference more clear as to the Christian books, than others; such as, the prodigious esteem the books at first were received with; the constant use that was made of them in their religious assemblies; the translations made of them very early into other languages, &c. <sup>444</sup>

§ 10. The omission of a book in some one or two particular catalogues, cannot, with any reason, be urged against its canonical authority, if it be found in all, or most of the others, and any good reason can be assigned for the omission, where it occurs. Thus, for instance, the Revelation is omitted, either perhaps because it was not known to the author, or its credit was not sufficiently established in the country where he lived; or perhaps, which may be as probable as the other, because it being so full of mysteries, few or none were judged proper or able to read it to any purpose. This was certainly the case in England: this book being, for this reason, omitted in the public calendar for reading the Scriptures, though it be received into the canon. If, therefore, these, or any such good reasons, can be assigned for the omission of a book in a particular catalogue, it will be very unfair to infer that such book is apocryphal, especially when it is to be found in many or most other catalogues.

§ 11. The catalogues drawn up by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, (A. D. 315,) by Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, (A. D. 370,) by Jerome, of Dalmatia, (A. D. 382,) by Ruffin,

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444 See Jones's canon of the New Testament, part i. chap. 5.

presbyter of Aquilegium, (A. D. 390,) by Augustine, bishop of Hippo, (A. D. 394,) by forty-four bishops, assembled in the 3d council of Carthage, (A. D. 416,) were perfectly the same with ours now received. <sup>445</sup>

§ 12. It is exceedingly natural to suppose, that these two things together, would soon lead the apostles to write some history of the acts, and doctrine, and sufferings of Christ, their great Lord, and the head of the Christian church; *viz. first*, Their unavoidable experience of the need of such a thing; and, *secondly*, The example of the penmen of the Old Testament, in writing the history of Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and others, whose persons and actions they esteemed of vastly less importance than those of the Son of God, who was greater than Jonas, or David, or Solomon, or Moses, or Abraham.

§ 13. It is a great argument, that there were some genuine gospels, or authentic histories of Christ's life and death, that the Christian church had under the name of gospels, that there were such a multitude of forged fabulous accounts, or histories, of Christ, all under the same name of gospels. These fictions are evidently counterfeits or imitations of something that was looked on by all as true and undoubted. And, that there should be such a multitude of counterfeits and imitations of these gospels, shows not only that there were genuine gospels, but also shows the great value and importance of these genuine gospels, and the high repute they had in the Christian churches. Mr. Jones mentions the following spurious gospels, now not extant, mentioned by the writers of the primitive church: By the writers of the second century, the gospel of Judas Iscariot; the gospel of Truth; the gospel of the Egyptians; the gospel of Valentinus; the gospel of Marcion. By writers of the third century, the gospel of the Twelve Apostles; the gospel of Basilides; the gospel of Thomas; the gospel of Matthias. By writers of the fourth century, the gospel of Scythianus; the gospel of Bartholomew; the gospel of Apelles; the gospel of Lucianus; the gospel of Hesychius; the gospel of Perfection; the gospel of Eve; the gospel of Philip; the gospel of the Ebionites; the gospel of Jude; the gospel of the Encratites; the gospel of Cerinthus; the gospel of Merinthus; the gospel of Thaddeus; the gospel of Barnabas; the gospel of Andrew. And some he mentions besides, that are now extant; as, the gospel of our Saviour's infancy; the gospel of Nicodemus.

§ 14. Public societies cannot be maintained without trials and witnesses: and if witnesses are not firmly persuaded, that he who holds the supreme power over them, is omniscient, just, and powerful, and will revenge falsehood, there will be no dependence on their oaths, or most solemn declarations. God therefore must be the supreme magistrate; society depends absolutely on him; and all kingdoms and communities are but provinces of his universal kingdom, who is King of kings, Lord of lords, and Judge of judges. Thus, as mankind cannot subsist out of society, nor society itself subsist without religion; I mean, without faith in the infinite power, wisdom, and justice of God, and a judgment to come; religion cannot be a

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445 See Jones's canon of the New Testament, part i. chap. 8.

falsehood. It is not credible, that all the happiness of mankind, the whole civil world, and peace, safety, justice, and truth itself, should have nothing to stand on but a lie: it is not to be supposed that God would give the world no other foundation. So that religion is absolutely necessary, and must have some sure foundation. But there can be no good, sure foundation of religion, without mankind having a right idea of God, and some sure and clear knowledge of him, and of our dependence on him. Lord Shaftesbury himself owns, that wrong ideas of God will hurt society as much, if not more, than ignorance of him can do.

§ 15. Now, the question is, “Whether nature and reason alone can give us a right idea of God, and are sufficient to establish among mankind a clear and sure knowledge of his nature, and the relation we stand in to him, and his concern with us? It may well be questioned, whether any man hath this from the mere light of nature. Nothing can seem more strange, than that the wisest and most sagacious of all men, I mean the philosophers, should have searched with all imaginable candour and anxiety for this, and searched in vain, if the light of nature alone is sufficient to give it to, and establish it among, mankind in general.” There never was a man known or heard of, who had an idea of God, without being taught it. Whole sects of philosophers denied the very being of God; and some have died martyrs to Atheism, as, *Vaninus, Jordanus, Bruno, Cosimir, Lszinsai, and Mahomet Effendi*. A man, confined to a dungeon all his days, and deprived of all conversation with mankind, probably would not so much as once consider who made him, or whether he was made or not, nor entertain the least notion of God. There are many instances of people born absolutely deaf and blind, who never showed the least sense of religion or knowledge of God.

§ 16. It is one thing, to work out a demonstration of a point, when once it is proposed; and another, to strike upon the point itself. I cannot tell whether any man would have considered the works of creation as effects, if he had never been told they had a cause. We know very well, that, even after the being of such a cause was much talked of in the world, and believed by the generality of mankind; yet many and great philosophers held the world to be eternal; and others ascribed, what we call the works of creation, to an eternal series of causes. If the most sagacious of the philosophers were capable of doing this, after hearing so much of a first cause and a creation, what would they have done, and what would the gross of mankind, who are inattentive and ignorant, have thought of the matter, if nothing had been taught concerning God and the origin of things; but every single man left solely to such intimation as his own senses and reason could have given him? We find, the earlier ages of the world did not trouble themselves about the question, whether the being of God could be proved by reason; but either never inquired into the matter, or took their opinions, upon that head, merely from tradition. But, allowing that every man is able to demonstrate to himself, that the world, and all things contained therein, are effects, and had a beginning, which I take to be a most absurd supposition, and look upon it to be almost impossible for unassisted reason to go so far; yet, if effects are to be ascribed to similar causes, and a good

and wise effect must suppose a good and wise cause, by the same way of reasoning, all the evil and irregularity in the world must be attributed to an evil and unwise cause. So that either the first cause must be both good and evil, wise and foolish, or else there must be two first causes, an evil and irrational, as well as a good and wise principle. Thus, man left to himself, would be apt to reason, " If the cause and the effects are similar and conformable, matter must have a material cause; there being nothing more impossible for us to conceive, than how matter should be produced by spirit, or any thing else but matter." The best reasoner in the world, endeavouring to find out the causes of things, by the things themselves, might be led into the grossest errors and contradictions, and find himself, at the end, in extreme want of an instructor.

§ 17. In all countries we are acquainted with, knowledge bears an exact proportion to instruction. Why does the learned and well educated reason better than the mere citizen? why the citizen better than the boor? why the English boor better than the Spanish? why the Spanish better than the Moorish? why the Moorish better than the Negro? and why he better than the Hottentot? If, then, reason is found to go hand in hand, and step by step, with education; what would be the consequence, if there were no education? There is no fallacy more gross, than to imagine reason, utterly untaught and undisciplined, capable of the same attainments in knowledge, as reason well refined and instructed: or to suppose, that reason can as easily find in itself principles to argue from, as draw the consequences, when once they are found; I mean, especially in respect to objects not perceivable by our senses. In ordinary articles of knowledge, our senses and experience furnish reason with ideas and principles to work on: continual conferences and debates give it exercise in such matters; and that improves its vigour and activity. But, in respect to God, it can have no right idea nor axiom to set out with, till he is pleased to reveal it.

§ 18. What instance can be mentioned, from any history, of any one nation under the sun, that emerged from atheism or idolatry, into the knowledge or adoration of the one true God, without the assistance of revelation? The Americans, the Africans, the Tartars, and the ingenious Chinese, have had time enough, one would think, to find out the true and right idea of God; and yet, after above five thousand years' improvements, and the full exercise of reason, they have, at this day, got no further in their progress towards the true religion, than to the worship of stocks and stones and devils. How many thousand years must be allowed to these nations, to reason themselves into the true religion? What the light of nature and reason could do to investigate the knowledge of God, is best seen by what they have already done. We cannot argue more convincingly on any foundation, than that of known and incontestable facts.

§ 19. Le Compte and Duhald assure us, the Chinese, after offering largely to their gods, and being disappointed of their assistance, sometimes sue them for damages, and obtain decrees against them from the Mandarin. This ingenious people, when their houses are on



fire, to the imminent peril of their wooden gods, hold them to the flames, in hopes of extinguishing them by it. The Tyrians were a wise people; and therefore, when Alexander laid siege to their city, they chained Apollo to Hercules, to prevent his giving them the slip.

§ 20. Revenge and self-murder were not only tolerated, but esteemed heroic, by the best of the heathen. I know not, in all profane history, six more illustrious characters, than those of Lycurgus, Timoleon, Cicero, Cato Uticensis, Brutus, and Germanicus. The first encouraged tricking and stealing, by an express law. The second, upon principle, murdered his own brother. Cicero, with all his fine talk about religion and virtue, had very little of either; as may appear by what he says, (I think it is in a letter to Atticus,) on the death of his daughter Tullia, "I hate the very gods, who hitherto have been so profuse in their favours to me;" and by deserting his friends and his country, and turning a servile flatterer to Caesar. Brutus concludes all his mighty heroism with this exclamation: "Virtue, I have pursued thee in vain, and found thee to be but an empty name;" and then kills himself. Cato's virtue was not strong enough to hinder his turning a public robber and oppressor; (witness his Cyprian expedition;) nor to bear up against the calamities of life: and so he stabbed himself, and ran away, like a coward, from his country and the world. Germanicus, who exceeded all men in his natural sweetness of temper, at the approach of death, called his friends about him, and spent his last moments in pressing them to take revenge of Piso and Plancina, for poisoning or bewitching him; in directing them how this might be best done; and in receiving their oaths for the performance of his request. His sense of religion he thus expressed on that occasion: "Had I died by the decree of fate, I should have had just cause of resentment against the gods, for hurrying me away from my parents, my wife and my children, in the flower of my youth, by an untimely death."

§ 21. Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, who were more inclined to the belief of a future existence, than the other philosophers, plead for it with arguments of no force: speak of it with the utmost uncertainty; and therefore, are afraid to found their system of duty and virtue on the expectation of it. Their notions of morality were of a piece with their religion, and had little else for a foundation than vain-glory. Tully, in his treatise of Friendship, says, that virtue proposes glory as its end, and hath no other reward. Accordingly, he maintains, that wars undertaken for glory, are not unlawful, provided they are carried on without the usual cruelty. Diogenes, and the sect of the Cynics, held, that parents have a right to sacrifice and eat their children; and that there is nothing shameful in committing the grossest acts of lewdness publicly, and before the faces of mankind. The virtuous sentiments discovered by the philosophers on some occasions, will neither palliate these execrable principles, nor suffer us to think those who could abet them, fit instructors for mankind. Zeno, Cleombrotus, and Menippus, committed murder on themselves: the last, because he had lost a considerable sum of money, which, as he was an usurer, went a little too near his heart. That I do not charge the philosophers with worse principles and practices, than they themselves maintain,

and their own pagan historians ascribe to them, any one may satisfy himself, who will consult Diogenes, Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, Lucian, Plutarch, and the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero.

§ 22. Thus, it is plain, whether we consider what the human understanding could do, or what it actually did, that it could not have attained to a sufficient knowledge of God, without revelation; so that the demonstration brought in favour of some religion, ends in a demonstration of the revealed. When we attentively consider the nature of man, we find it necessary he should have some religion. When we consider the nature of God, we must conclude he never would have made a falsehood necessary to the happiness of his rational creatures; and that therefore there must be a true religion. And when we consider, that, by our natural faculties, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a right idea of God, till he reveals it to us; that all the Gentile world hath run into the grossest theological errors, and, in consequence of these, into the most enormous customs and crimes; and that no legislator ever founded his scheme of civil government on any supposed religious dictates of nature, but always on some real or pretended revelations: we cannot help ascribing all the true religion in the world to divine instruction; and all the frightful variety of religious errors to human invention, and to that dark and degenerate nature, by the imaginary light of which, deists suppose the right idea of God may be easily and universally discovered.

§ 23. Socrates, who never travelled out of Greece, had nothing to erect a scheme of religion or morality on, but the scattered fragments of truth, handed down from time immemorial among his countrymen, or imported by Pythagoras, Thales, and others, who had been in Egypt and the East. These he picked out from a huge heap of absurdities and errors, under which they were buried; and, by the help of a most prodigious capacity, laying them together, comparing them with the nature of things, and drawing consequences from them, he found reason to question the soundness of the Grecian theology and morality. But this is all the length he seems to have gone. He reasoned extremely well against the prevailing errors of his time; but was able to form no system of religion or morality. This was a work above the strength of his nature, and the lights he enjoyed. He taught his disciples to worship the gods, and to ground the distinction between right and wrong on the laws of their country; in the latter of which he followed the saying of his master Archelaus, who taught, that what is just or dishonest, is defined by law, not by nature.

§ 24. The notions of Plato concerning the divine nature, were infinitely more sublime and nearer the truth, than those of his master Socrates. He did not content himself merely with removing errors: he ventured on a system; and maintained, that virtue is a science, and that God is the object and source of duty; that there is but one God, the fountain of all being, and superior to all essence; that he hath a Son, called The World; that there is a judgment to come by which the just who have suffered in this life, shall be recompensed in the other, and the wicked punished eternally; that God is omnipresent; and consequently, that the



wicked, if he were to dive into the deepest caverns of the earth, or should get wings, and fly into the heavens, would not be able to escape from him; that man is formed in the image of God; and that, in order to establish laws and government, relations made by true traditions and ancient oracles are to be consulted. These points, so much insisted on by Plato, are far from being the growth of Greece, or his own invention, but derived from Eastern traditions, which we know he travelled for, at least as far as Egypt. He was wiser than his teacher, (who was a much greater man,) because his lights were better: but, as they were not sufficient, he ran into great errors, speaking plainly as if he believed in a plurality of gods; making goods, women, and children, common, &c.

§ 25. The natural faculties of men, in all nations, are alike; and did nature itself furnish all men with the means and materials of knowledge, philosophy need never turn traveller, either in order to her own improvement, or to the communication of her lights to the world. How came it to pass that Scythia did not produce so many, so great philosophers, as Greece? I think it very evident, that the great difference between these countries as to learning and instruction, arose from this: the latter had the benefit of commerce with the Phoenicians, from whence they came by the knowledge of letters, and probably of navigation; and with the Egyptians, from whom they learned the greater part of their theology, policy, arts, and sciences. Such advantages the Scythians wanted; and therefore, although their natural talents were as good as those of the Grecians, they were not able to make any improvements in philosophy. Why are the Asiatic Scythians at this day as ignorant as ever, while the European Scythians are little inferior to the other nations of Europe in arts and politeness? And how does it come to pass, that we, at this day, take upon us to approve the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, rather than that of Epicurus and Aristippus? The Grecians were divided in this matter; some followed the notions of the former, and others those of the latter. Why did not reason put the matter out of question in those times, or at least immediately after? The infinite contradictions and uncertainties among the ancient philosophers produced the sects of the sceptics. In respect to religion, Socrates and Plato either were, or pretended to be, sceptics, beating down the absurd notions of others, but seldom building up any thing of their own; or, when they did, building on mere conjectures, or arguments suspected by themselves.

§ 26. If it be said, the finding out of truth by the light of nature, is a work of time; time hath taught the Tartars, Africans, and Americans, little or nothing of true theology or morality, even yet. Time of itself can search nothing. It was the Christian religion that opened the eyes of the polite nations of Europe, and even of the deists of this age, wherein their eyes are still open, and they have any true principles by which they are able to examine the philosophy of the ancients, and, by comparing their several opinions one with another, and with the truths derived from the Christian revelation, to decide in favour of some against the rest.

§ 27. As to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; it is certain nothing can be more agreeable to reason, when once the doctrine is proposed and thoroughly canvassed; while, at the same time, there is no one probable opinion in the world which mankind, left entirely to themselves, would have been more unlikely to have started. Who, if he was not assured of it by good authority, would ever take it into his head to imagine, that man, who dies, and rots, and vanishes for ever, like all other animals, still exists? It is well, if this, when proposed, can be believed; but, to strike out the thought itself, is somewhat, I am afraid, too high and difficult for the capacity of men. The only natural argument of any weight, for the immortality of the soul, takes its rise from this observation, that justice is not extended to the good, nor executed upon the bad, man in this life; and that, as the Governor of the world is just, man must live hereafter to be judged. But as this only argument that can be drawn from mere reason, in order either to lead us to a discovery of our own immortality, or to support the opinion of it when once started, is founded entirely on the knowledge of God and his attributes; and as we have already seen, that such knowledge is almost unattainable by the present light of nature, the argument itself, which, before the fall, could not possibly have been thought of, is, since the fall, clogged with all the difficulties mere reason labours under, in finding out a right idea of God. And besides, this argument in itself is utterly inconclusive, on the principles of the deists of our age and nation; because they insist that virtue fully rewards, and vice fully punishes itself. It is no wonder that many heathen nations believed a future state, as they received it by tradition from their ancestors. But yet, there is this evidence that mankind had not this doctrine merely from the easy and plain dictates of reason and nature, that many did not believe it.

§ 28. Socrates, in the Phædon of Plato, says, most men were of opinion, that the soul, upon its separation from the body, is dissipated and reduced to nothing. And Tully, in his first Tusculan question, says, Pherecydes Syrus, preceptor to Pythagoras, was the first person known to the learned world, who taught the immortality of the soul. The other arguments brought by Plato and Cicero for the immortality of the soul, besides that already mentioned, are very inconclusive. They themselves thought so. The former, in his Phædon, makes Socrates speak with some doubt concerning his own arguments, and introduces Simias saying to Socrates, after having listened to his principal reasonings, “We ought to lay hold of the strongest arguments for this doctrine, that either we ourselves, or others, can suggest to us. If both ways prove ineffectual, we must however put up with the best proofs we can get, till some *promise* or *revelation* shall clear up the point to us.” One of Plato’s arguments for the immortality of the soul, is this: “Every cause produces an effect contrary to itself; and that, therefore, as life produces death, so death shall produce life.” Cicero, to prove that the soul will exist after it is separated from the body, endeavours to prove that it existed before it was joined to it; and to that end he insists, “that what we call aptness in children to learn, is nothing more than memory.” Another argument of Plato is this: “That alone which moves



itself, inasmuch as it is never deserted by itself, never ceases to move: but the mind moves itself, and borrows not its motion from any thing else, and therefore must move, and consequently exist, for ever.”

The wisdom of Socrates and Plato united, produce such arguments for a most favourite opinion, as they themselves are dissatisfied with, and therefore call for more than human help.

§ 29. Cicero being so fond of this opinion, that, as he says, he would rather err with Plato in holding it, than think rightly with those who deny it, poorly echoes the arguments of Plato; adds little to them himself; and, at the conclusion, in a manner giving up the point, with all the arguments brought to support it, endeavours to comfort himself and others against the approach of death, by proving death to be no evil, even supposing the soul to perish with the body. And this great philosopher, with all his knowledge, gives but one lot to the good and evil in another life. It was his opinion, *If the soul is immortal, it must be happy: if it perishes with the body, it cannot be miserable*. This consolation he administers alike to all men, without making any distinction, and consequently leaves moral obligation on a mere temporal footing, which, in effect, is not a whit better than downright atheism. But in his dream of Scipio, when he does not reason nor seem to inculcate any particular doctrine, he indeed introduces the elder Scipio telling the younger, by way of dream, that those who served their country, and cultivated justice and the other virtues, should go to heaven after death: but that the souls of those that had violated the laws of the gods and men, should, after leaving their bodies, be tossed about on the earth, and not return to heaven for many ages. Now, if a person of Cicero’s abilities and learning could, from the light of nature, work out no better scheme than this, which renders futurity almost useless to moral obligation, how much farther from truth and reason must we suppose the bulk of mankind to stray, if each ignorant person is to be left entirely to his own thoughts and discoveries, in respect to the future rewards of virtue, and punishments of vice?

§ 30. Thus, upon considering the extent and strength of human faculties, we have found them at present utterly incapable of attaining to any competent notion of a divine law, if left wholly to themselves. This is vastly confirmed by experience; from which it appears, that mankind, instead of being able, through a long series of ages, by the mere light of nature, to find out a right idea of God and his laws; on the contrary after having, without doubt, been well acquainted at first with both gradually, and at length almost universally, lost sight of both; insomuch, that idolatry as bad as atheism, and wickedness worse than brutality, were established for religion and law in all countries. The philosophers who lived in the most knowing countries, and sought for religion and moral truth, but sought in vain, as the wisest of them confess, render this argument still more cogent and conclusive.

§ 31. As the apostle Paul observes in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, men did not like to retain God in their knowledge; and, professing themselves to be wise, they

became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Thus were their foolish hearts darkened; upon which God gave them over to a reprobate mind, and gave them up to uncleanness, to sins of all kinds, even such as were utterly against nature. St. Chrysostom, in his descant on this passage, says, "The Gentiles fell into a kind of madness, insomuch, that having deprived themselves of the light, and involved their minds in the darkness of their own thoughts, their attempt to travel towards heaven ended in a miserable shipwreck, as his must do, who, in a dark night, undertakes a voyage by sea." Being guided by conceit, and too great an attachment to sensible things, they entered upon a wrong way; so that, still the longer they travelled, the farther they wandered from the knowledge of the true God, and right religion. The doctrine of St. Paul, concerning the blindness into which the Gentiles fell, is so confirmed by the state of religion in Africa, America, and even China, where, to this day, no advances towards the true religion have been made, that we can no longer be at a loss to judge of the insufficiency of unassisted reason, to dissipate the prejudices of the heathen world, and open their eyes to religious truths.

§ 32. The starting of a proposition is one thing, and the proof of it quite another. Every science has its proofs in the nature of things. Yet all sciences require to be taught; and those require it most, the first principles of which lie a little out of the reach of ordinary capacities. The first principles of religion, being of a high and spiritual nature, are harder to be found out than those of any other science; because the minds of men are gross and earthly, used to objects of sense; and all their depraved appetites and corrupt dispositions, which are by nature opposite to the true religion, help to increase the natural weakness of their reason, and clip the wings of their contemplation, when they endeavour, by their own strength, to soar towards God and heavenly things. No man in his, nor hardly in any other time, knew better how to catch at the evidence of divine truths discovered in the works of creation, nor had better opportunities, than Plato. Yet, with all the help he derived from foreign and domestic instruction, he finds himself on every occasion at a loss. When he speaks of God and divine matters, he relies on oracles, traditions, and revelations; and having got a little taste of this kind of instruction, is every now and then confessing his want of more, and wishing for it with the greatest anxiety. And, not thinking the traditions which he was acquainted with sufficient, he talks of a future instructor to be sent from God, to teach the world a more perfect knowledge of religious duties. "The truth is," (says he, speaking in his first book *De Legibus*, concerning future rewards and punishments,) "to determine or establish any thing certain about these matters, in the midst of so many doubts and disputations, is the work of God only." In his *Phædon*, one of the speakers says to Socrates concerning the *immortality of the soul*, "I am of the same opinion with you, that in this life, it is either absolutely impossible, or extremely difficult, to arrive at a clear knowledge in this matter." In the apology he wrote for Socrates, he puts these words into his mouth, on the subject of reformation of

manners: "You may pass the remainder of your days in sleep, or despair of finding out a sufficient expedient for this purpose, if God, in his providence, doth not send you some other instructor." And in his *Epinomis* he says, "Let no man take upon him to teach, if God do not lead the way."

§ 33. In the book *De Mundo*, ascribed to Aristotle, we have a remarkable passage to this effect: "It is an old tradition, almost universally received, that all things proceeded from God, and subsist through him; and that no nature is self-sufficient, or independent of God's protection and assistance." In his *Metaphysics*, he ascribes the belief of the gods, and of this, that the Deity compasses and comprehends all nature, to a traditionary habit of speaking, handed down from the first men to after-ages. Cicero, in his treatise concerning the nature of the gods, introduces Cotta blaming those who endeavoured, by argumentation, to prove there are gods, and affirming that this only served to make the point doubtful, which, by the instructions and traditions of their forefathers, had been sufficiently made known to them, and established. Plutarch, speaking of the worship paid to a certain ideal divinity, which his friend had called in question, says, "It is enough to believe pursuant to the faith of our ancestors, and the instructions communicated to us in the country where we were born and bred; than which, we can neither find out, nor apply, any argument more to be depended on."

§ 34. It will be further useful to observe, that the thoughts of men, with regard to any internal law, will be always mainly influenced by their sentiments concerning the *chiefgood*. Whatsoever power or force may do in respect to the outward actions of a man, nothing can oblige him to think or act, as often as he is at liberty, against what he takes to be his chief good or interest. No law, nor system of laws, can possibly answer the end and purpose of a law, till the grand question, what is the chief happiness and end of man, be determined, and so cleared up, that every man may be fully satisfied about it. Before our Saviour's time, the world was infinitely divided on this important head. The philosophers were miserably bewildered in all their researches after the chief good. Each sect, each subdivision of a sect, had a chief good of its own, and rejected all the rest. They advanced, as Varro tells us, no fewer than 288 opinions in relation to this matter; which shows, by a strong experiment, that the light of nature was altogether unable to settle the difficulty. Every man, if left to the particular bias of his own nature, chooses out a chief good for himself, and lays the stress of all his thoughts and actions on it. Now, if the supposed chief good of any man should lead him, as it often does, to violate the laws of society, to hurt others, and act against the general good of mankind, he will be very unfit for society; and consequently, as he cannot subsist out of it, an enemy to himself.

§ 35. If Christianity came too late into the world, what is called natural religion came full as late; and there are no footsteps of natural religion, in any sense of the words, to be found at this day, but where Christianity hath been planted. In every place else, religion



hath no conformity with reason or truth. So far is the light of nature from lending sufficient assistance. It is strange, that the natural light should be so clear, and yet the natural darkness so great, that in all unassisted countries the most monstrous forms of religion, derogatory to God, and prejudicial to man, should be contrived by some, and swallowed by the rest, with a most voracious credulity. I could wish most heartily, that all nations were Christians; yet, since it is otherwise, we derive this advantage from it, that we have a standing and contemporary demonstration of that which nature, left to herself, can do. Had all the world been Christians for some ages past, our present libertines would insist that Christianity had done no service to mankind; that nature could have sufficiently directed herself; and that all the stories told, either in sacred or profane history, of the idolatry and horrible forms of religion in ancient times, were forged by Christian priests, to make the world think revelation necessary, and natural reason incapable of dictating true and right notions of religion. But, as the case stands at present, we have such proofs of the insufficiency of unassisted reason in this behalf, as all the subtlety of libertines is unable to evade.

§ 36. All that the Grecians, Romans, and present Chinese, know of true religion, they were taught traditionally. As to their corrupt notions and idolatries, they were of their own invention. The Grecians, who were by far the most knowing people of the three, were as gross idolaters as the rest, till Plato's time. He travelled into the East, and ran higher towards truth in his sentiments of religion, than others; but still worshipped the gods of his country, and durst not speak out all he knew. However, he formed a great school, and, both through his writings and scholars, instructed his countrymen in a kind of religious philosophy, that tended much more directly and strongly to reformation of manners, than either the dictates of their own reason, or of their other philosophers. All the philosophy of the Gentile nations, excepting that of Socrates and Plato, was derived from the source of self-sufficiency. Only these two acknowledge the blindness of human nature, and the necessity of a divine instructor. No other heathen philosopher founded his morality on any sense of religion, or ever dreamt of an inability in man to render himself happy.<sup>446</sup>

## CHAP. VII.

The insufficiency of reason as a substitute for revelation.

§ 1. by reason, I mean that power or faculty an intelligent being has to judge of the truth of propositions; either immediately, by only looking on the propositions, which is judging by intuition and self-evidence; or by putting together several propositions, which are already evident by intuition, or at least whose evidence is originally derived from intuition.

Great part of Tindal's arguing, in his *Christianity as old as the Creation*, proceeds on this ground, That since reason is the judge whether there be any revelation, or whether any

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446 From § 14 - § 36 is chiefly out of "Deism Revealed;" second edition.



pretended revelation be really such; therefore reason, *without* revelation, or *undirected* by revelation, must be the judge concerning each doctrine and proposition contained in that pretended revelation. This is an unreasonable way of arguing. It is as much as to say, that seeing reason is to judge of the truth of any *general* proposition, therefore, in all cases, reason alone, without regard to that proposition, is to judge separately and independently of each particular proposition implied in, or depending and consequent upon, that general proposition. For, whether any supposed or pretended divine revelation be indeed such, is a general proposition: and the particular truths delivered in and by it, are particular propositions implied in, and consequent on, that general one. Tindal supposes each of these truths must be judged of by themselves, independently of our judging of that general truth, that the revelation that declares them is the word of God; evidently supposing, that if each of these propositions, thus judged of particularly, cannot be found to be agreeable to reason; or if reason alone will not show the truth of them, then, that general proposition on which they depend, *viz.* That the word which declares them is a divine revelation, is to be rejected: which is most unreasonable, and contrary to all the rules of common sense, and of the proceeding of all mankind, in their reasoning and judging of things in all affairs whatsoever. For this is certain, that a proposition may be evidently true, or we may have good reason to receive it as true, though the particular propositions that depend upon it, and follow from it, may be such, that our reason, independent of it, cannot see the truth, or can see it to be true by no other means, than, by first establishing that other truth on which it depends. For otherwise, there is an end of all use of our reasoning powers; an end of all arguing one proposition from another; and nothing is to be judged true, but what appears true by looking on it directly and immediately, without the help of another proposition first established, on which the evidence of it depends. For therein consists all reasoning or argumentation whatsoever; *viz.* in discovering the truth of a proposition, whose truth does not appear to our reason immediately, or when we consider it alone, but by the help of some other proposition on which it depends.

§ 2. If this be not allowed, we must believe nothing at all, but self-evident propositions, and then we must have done with all such things as arguments; and all argumentation whatsoever, and all Tindal's argumentations in particular, are absurd. He himself, throughout his whole book, proceeds in that very method which this principle explodes. He argues, and attempts to make evident, one proposition, by another first established. There are some general propositions, the truth of which can be known only by reason, from whence an infinite multitude of other propositions are inferred, and reasonably and justly determined to be true, and rested in as such, on the ground of the truth of that general proposition from which they are inferred by the common consent of all mankind, being led

thereto by the common and universal sense of the human mind. And yet not one of those propositions can be known to be true by reason, if reason consider them by themselves, independently of that general proposition.

Thus, for instance, what numberless truths are known only by consequence from that general proposition, that the testimony of our senses may be depended on! The truth of numberless particular propositions, cannot be known by reason, considered independently of the testimony of our senses, and without an implicit faith in that testimony. That general truth, that the testimony of our memories is worthy of credit, can be proved only by reason; and yet, what numberless truths are there, which we know no other way, and cannot be known to be true by reason, considering the truths in themselves, or any otherwise than by testimony of our memory, and an implicit faith in this testimony! That the agreed testimony of all we see, and converse with continually, is to be credited, is a general proposition, the truth of which can be known only by reason. And yet, how infinitely numerous propositions do men receive as truth, that cannot be known to be true by reason, viewing them separately from such testimony; even all occurrences, and matters of fact, persons, things, actions, works, events, and circumstances, that we are told of in our neighbourhood, in our own country, or in any other part of the world that we have not seen ourselves!

§ 3. That the testimony of history and tradition is to be depended on, when attended with such and such credible circumstances, is a general proposition, whose truth can be known only by reason. And yet, how numberless are the particular truths concerning what has been before the present age, that cannot be known by reason, considered in themselves, and separately from this testimony, which yet are truths on which all mankind do, ever did, and ever will rely?

That the experience of mankind is to be depended on; or, that those things which the world finds to be true by experience, are worthy to be judged true; is a general proposition, of which none doubt. By what the world finds true by experience can be meant nothing else, than what is known to be true by one or other of those forementioned kinds of testimony, *viz.* the testimony of history and tradition; the testimony of those we see and converse with; the testimony of our memories; and the testimony of our senses. I say, all that is known by the experience of mankind, is known only by one or more of these testimonies; excepting only the existence of that idea, or those few ideas, which are at this moment present in our minds, or are the immediate objects of present consciousness. And yet, how unreasonable would it be to say, that we must first know those things to be true by reason, before we give credit to our experience of the truth of them? Not only are there innumerable truths, that are reasonably received as following from such general propositions as have been mentioned, which cannot be known by reason, if they are considered by themselves, or otherwise than as inferred from these general propositions; but also, many truths are reasonably received, and are received by the common consent of the reason of all rational persons, as undoubted



truths, whose truth not only would not otherwise be discoverable by reason, but when they are discovered by their consequence from that general proposition, appear in themselves not easy, and reconcilable to reason, but difficult, incomprehensible, and their agreement with reason not understood. So that men, at least most men, are not able to explain or conceive of the manner in which they are agreeable to reason.

§ 4. Thus, for instance, it is a truth, which depends on that general proposition, that credit is to be given to the testimony of our senses, that our souls and bodies are so united, that they act on each other. But it is a truth which reason otherwise cannot discover, and, now that it is revealed by the testimony of our senses, reason cannot comprehend, that what is immaterial, and not solid nor extended, can act upon matter. Or, if any choose to say, that the soul is material, then other difficulties arise as great. For reason cannot imagine any way, that a solid mass of matter, whether at rest or in motion, should have perception, should understand, and should exert thought and volition, love, hatred, &c. And if it be said that spirit acts on matter, and matter on spirit, by an established law of the Creator, which is no other than a fixed method of his producing effects; still the manner how it is possible to be, will be inconceivable. We can have no conception of any way or manner, in which God, who is a pure Spirit, can act upon matter, and impel it

There are several things in mechanics and hydrostatics, that by the testimony of our senses are true in fact, not only that reason never first discovered before the testimony of sense declared them, but, now they are declared, are very great paradoxes, and, if proposed, would seem contrary to reason, at least to the reason of the generality of mankind, and such as are not either mathematicians, or of more than common penetration, and what they cannot reconcile to their reason. But God has given reason to the common people, to be as much their guide and rule, as he has to mathematicians and philosophers.

§ 5. Even the very existence of a sensible world, which we receive for certain from the testimony of our senses, is attended with difficulties and seeming inconsistencies with reason, which are insuperable to the reason at least of most men. For, if there be a sensible world, that world exists either *in* the mind only, or *out* of the mind, independent of its imagination or perception. If the *latter*, then that sensible world is some material substance, altogether diverse from the ideas we have by any of our senses as *colour*, or *visible* extension and figure, which is nothing but the quantity of colour and its various limitation, which are sensible qualities that we have by *sight*; and *solidity*, which is an idea we have by *feeling*; and *extension* and *figure*, which is only the quantity and limitation of these; and so of all other qualities. But that there should be any substance entirely distinct from any or all of these, is utterly inconceivable. For, if we exclude all colour, solidity, or conceivable extension, dimension, and figure, what is there left, that we can conceive of? Is there not a removal in our minds of all existence, and a perfect emptiness of every thing?

But if it be said, that the sensible world has no existence, but only *in the mind*, then the sensories themselves, or the organs of sense, by which sensible ideas are let into the mind, have no existence but only in the mind; and those organs of sense have no existence, but what is conveyed into the mind by themselves; for they are a part of the sensible world. And then it will follow, that the organs of sense owe their existence to the organs of sense, and so are prior to themselves, being the causes or occasions of their own existence; which is a seeming inconsistency with reason, that, I imagine, the reason of all men cannot explain and remove.

§ 6. There are innumerable propositions, that we reasonably receive from the testimony of experience, all depending on the truth of that general proposition, “that experience is to be relied on,” (what is meant by *experience* has been already explained,) that yet are altogether above reason. They are paradoxes attended with such seeming inconsistencies, that reason cannot clearly remove, nor fully explain, the mystery.

By experience we know that there is such a thing as thought, love, hatred, &c. But yet this is attended with inexplicable difficulties. If there be such a thing as thought and affection, where are they? If they exist, they exist in some place or no place. That they should exist, and exist in no place, is above our comprehension. It seems a contradiction, to say they exist, and yet exist nowhere. And, if they exist in some place, then they are not in other places, or in all places; and therefore must be confined, at one time, to one place, and that place must have certain limits; from whence it will follow, that thought, love, &c. have some figure, either round, or square, or triangular; which seems quite disagreeable to reason, and utterly inconsonant to the nature of such things as thought and the affections of the mind.

§ 7. It is evident, by experience, that *something now is*. But this proposition is attended with things that reason cannot comprehend, paradoxes that seem contrary to reason. For, if something now *is*, then either something was from all eternity; or, something began to be, without any cause or reason of its existence. The *last* seems wholly inconsistent with natural sense: and the *other*, *viz.* That something has been from all eternity, implies, that there has been a duration past, which is without any beginning, which is an infinite duration: which is perfectly inconceivable, and is attended with difficulties that seem contrary to reason. For we cannot conceive how an infinite duration can be made greater, any more than how a line of infinite length can be made longer. But yet we see that past duration is continually added to. If there were a duration past without beginning a thousand years ago, then that past-infinite duration has now a thousand years added to it: and if so, it is greater than it was before by a thousand years; because the whole is greater than a part. Now the past duration consists of two parts, *viz.* that which was before the last thousand years, and that which is since. Thus here are seeming contradictions involved in this supposition of an infinite duration past.

And moreover, if something has been from eternity, it is either an endless succession of causes and effects, as for instance, an endless succession of fathers and sons, or something equivalent; but the supposition is attended with manifold apparent contradictions: or, there must have been some eternal self-existent being, having the reasons of his existence within himself; or, he must have existed from eternity without reason of his existence; both which are inconceivable. That a thing should exist from eternity without any reason why it should be so, rather than otherwise, is altogether inconceivable, and seems quite repugnant to reason. And why a being should be self-existent, and have the reason of his existence within himself, seems also inconceivable, and never, as I apprehend, has yet been explained. If there has been any thing from eternity, then that past eternity is either an endless duration of successive parts, as successive hours, minutes, &c. or it is an eternal duration without succession. The latter seems repugnant to reason, and incompatible with any faculty of understanding that we enjoy; and the other, an infinite number of successive parts, involves the very same contradictions with the supposition of an eternal succession of fathers and sons.

That the world has existed *from eternity without a cause* seems wholly inconsistent with reason, in the first place, it is inconsistent with reason that it should exist without a cause. For it is evident that it is not a thing, the nature and manner of which is necessary in itself; and therefore it requires a cause or reason out of itself, why it is so, and not otherwise. And in the next place, if it exists from eternity, then succession has been from eternity; which involves the forementioned contradictions. But if it be without a cause, and does not exist from eternity, then it has been created out of nothing; which is altogether inconceivable, and what reason cannot show to be possible; and many of the greatest philosophers have supposed it plainly inconsistent with reason. Many other difficulties might be mentioned as following from that proposition, "that something now is," that are insuperable to reason.

§ 8. It is evident by *experience* that *great evil*, both moral and natural, *abounds in the world*. It is manifest that great injustice, violence, treachery, perfidiousness, and extreme cruelty to the innocent, abound in the world; as well as innumerable extreme sufferings, issuing finally in destruction and death, are general all over the world in all ages. But this could not *otherwise* have been known by reason; and even now is attended with difficulties which the reason of many, yea, most, of the learned men and greatest philosophers that have been in the world, have not been able to surmount. That it should be so ordered or permitted in a world absolutely and perfectly under the care and government of an infinitely holy and good God, discovers a seeming repugnancy to reason, that few, if any, have been able fully to remove.

§ 9. That *men are to be blamed or commended for their good or evil voluntary actions*, is a general proposition received with good reason, by the dictates of the natural, common, and universal moral sense of mankind in all nations and ages: which moral sense is included in what Tindal means by reason and the law of nature. And yet many things attend this

truth that appear difficulties and seeming repugnancies to reason, which have proved altogether insuperable to the reason of many of the greatest and most learned men in the world.

§ 10. I observe further, that when any general proposition is recommended to us as true, by any testimony or evidence, that considered by itself seems sufficient, without contrary testimony or evidence to countervail it; and difficulties attend that proposition; if these difficulties are no greater, and of no other sort, than what might reasonably be expected to attend true propositions of that kind, then these difficulties are not only no valid or sufficient objection against that proposition, but they are no objection at all.

Thus there are many things that I am told concerning the effects of electricity, magnetism, &c. and many things that are recorded in the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society, which I have never seen, and are very mysterious; but being well attested, their mysteriousness is no manner of objection against my belief of the accounts; because from what I have observed and do know, such a mysteriousness is no other than is to be expected in a particular exact observation of nature, and a critical tracing of its operations. It is to be expected, that the farther it is traced the more mysteries will appear. To apply this to the case in hand: if the difficulties which attend that which is recommended by good proof or testimony to our reception, as a divine revelation, are no greater, nor of any other nature, than such as, all things considered, might reasonably be expected to attend a revelation of such a sort, of things of such a nature, and given for such ends and purposes, and under such circumstances; these difficulties not only are not of weight sufficient to balance the testimony or proof that recommends it, but they are of no weight at all as objections against the revelation. They are not reasonably to be looked upon as of the nature of arguments against it; but on the contrary, may, with good reason, be looked upon as confirmations, and of the nature of arguments in its favour.

§ 11. This is very evident, and the reason of it very plain. For certainly, whatever is reasonably expected to be found in a truth when we are seeking it, cannot be an objection against that truth, when we have found it. If it be reasonably expected in truth beforehand, then reason unites it with truth as one property of that sort of truth: and if so, then reason unites it with the truth after it is found. Whatever reason determines to be a property of any kind of truth, that is properly looked upon in some degree as a mark of truths of that sort, or as belonging to the marks and evidences of it; for things are known by their properties. Reason determines truth by things which reason determines to be the properties of truth. And if we do not find such things belonging to supposed truth, that were before reasonably expected in truth of that kind, this is an objection against it, rather; than the finding of them. The disappointment of reason is rather an objection with reason, than something to induce its acceptance and acquiescence. If the expectation be reasonable, then the not answering of it must so far appear unreasonable, or against reason, and so an objection in the way of reason.

Thus if any one that is in search for things of a certain kind reasonably expects beforehand, that if he be successful in finding the thing of the kind and quality that he is in search of, he shall find it possessed of certain properties; when he hath actually found something with all those properties and circumstances that he expected, he receives it, and rests in it so much the more entirely, as the very thing that he was in quest of. And surely it would be no argument with him that his invention is right, that some things that he reasonably expected are wanting; but on the contrary, this would rather be an objection with his reason.

§ 12. In order to judge what sort of difficulties are to be expected in a revelation made to mankind by God, such as Christians suppose the Scriptures to be, we must remember that it is a revelation of what God knows to be the very truth concerning his own nature: of the acts and operations of his mind with respect to his creatures; of the grand scheme of infinite wisdom in his works, especially with respect to the intelligent and moral world; a revelation of the spiritual and invisible world; a revelation of that invisible world which men shall belong to after this life; a revelation of the greatest works of God, the manner of his creating the world, and of his governing of it, especially with regard to the higher and more important parts of it; a revelation delivered in ancient languages.

Difficulties and incomprehensible mysteries are reasonably to be expected in a declaration from God, of the precise truth as he knows it, in matters of a spiritual nature; as we see things that are invisible, and not the objects of any of the external senses, are very mysterious, involved much more in darkness, attended with more mystery and difficulty to the understanding, than others; as many things concerning even the nature of our own souls themselves, that are the nearest to us, and the most intimately present with us, and so most in our view of any spiritual things whatsoever.

The further things are from the nature of what language is chiefly formed to express, *viz.* things appertaining to the common business and vulgar affairs of life things obvious to sense and men's direct view and most vulgar observation, without speculation, reflection, and abstraction, the more difficult it is clearly to express them in words. Our expressions concerning them, will be attended with greater abstruseness, difficulty, and seeming inconsistency; language not being well fitted to express these things; words and phrases not being prepared for that end. Such a reference to sensible and vulgar things, is unavoidably introduced, that naturally confounds the mind, and involves it in darkness.

§ 13. If God gives a revelation of religious things, it must be mainly concerning the affairs of the moral and intelligent universe: which is the grand system of spirits: it must be chiefly about himself and intelligent creatures. It may well be supposed, that a revelation concerning another and an invisible world, a future state that we are to be in when separated from the body, should be attended with much mystery. It may well be supposed, that the things of such a world, are of an exceeding different nature from the things of this world, the things of sense, and all the objects and affairs which earthly language was made to express; and



that they are not agreeable to such notions, imaginations, and ways of thinking that grow up with us, and are connatural to us, as we are from our infancy formed to an agreeableness to the things which we are conversant with in this world. We could not conceive of the things of *sense*, if we had never had these external senses. And if we had only some of these senses and not others; as, for instance, if we had only a sense of feeling, without the senses of seeing and hearing, how mysterious would a declaration of things of these last senses be! Or, if we had feeling and hearing, but had been born without eyes or optic nerves, the things of light, even when declared to us, would many of them be involved in mystery, and would appear exceedingly strange to us.

§14. Thus, persons without the sense of seeing, but who had the other senses, might be informed by all about them, that they can perceive things at a distance, and perceive as plainly, and in some respects more plainly, than by touching them; yea, that they could perceive things at so great a distance, that it would take up many ages to travel to them. They might be informed of many things concerning colours, that would all be perfectly incomprehensible, and yet might be believed; and it could not be said that nothing at all is proposed to their belief, because they have no idea of colour.

They might be told that they perceive an extension, a length and breadth of colour, and terminations and limits, and so a figure of this kind of extension; and yet, that it is nothing that can be felt. This would be perfectly mysterious to them, and would seem an inconsistency, as they have no ideas of any such things as length, breadth, and limits, and figure of extension, but only certain ideas they have by touch. They might be informed, that they could perceive *at once* the extent and shape of a thing so great and multiform as a tree, without touch: this would seem very strange and impossible. They might be told that, to those who see, some things appear a thousand times as great as some others, which yet are made up of more visible parts than those others: which would be very mysterious, and seem quite inconsistent with reason. These, and many other things, would be attended with unsearchable mystery to them, concerning objects of sight; and, concerning which, they could never fully see how they can be reconciled to reason; at least, not without very long, particular, gradual, and elaborate instruction; and which, after all, they would not fully comprehend, so as clearly to see how the ideas connected in these propositions do agree. And yet I suppose, in such a case, the most rational persons would give full credit to things that they know not by reason, but only by the revelation of the word of those that see. I suppose, a person born blind in the manner described, would nevertheless give full credit to the united testimony of the seeing world, in things which they said about light and colours, and would entirely rest on their testimony.

§ 15. If God give us a revelation of the truth, not only about spiritual beings, in an unseen state; but also concerning a spiritual being or beings of a superior kind, (and so of an unexperienced nature,) entirely diverse from any thing we now experience in our present state



and from any thing that we can be conscious of in any state whatsoever then, especially, may mysteries be expected in such a revelation.

The truth concerning any kind of percipient being, of a different nature from our own, though of a kind inferior, might well be supposed to be attended with difficulty, by reason of its diversity from what we are conscious of in ourselves; but much more so, when the nature and kind is superior. For a superior perceptive nature may well be supposed, in some respects, to include and comprehend what belongs to an inferior, as the greater comprehends the less, and the whole includes a part; and therefore, what the superior experiences may give him advantage to conceive of concerning the nature of the inferior. But, on the contrary, an inferior nature does not include what belongs to a superior. When one of an inferior nature considers what concerns beings of a nature entirely above his own, there is something belonging to it that is over and above all that the inferior nature is conscious of.

A very great superiority, even in beings of the same nature with ourselves, sets them so much above our reach, that many of their affairs become incomprehensible, and attended with inexplicable intricacies. Thus many of the affairs of adult persons are incomprehensible, and appear inexplicably strange, to the understandings of little children: and many of the affairs of learned men, and great philosophers and mathematicians, things with which they are conversant, and well acquainted, are far above the reach of the vulgar, and appear to them not only unintelligible, but absurd and impossible, and full of inconsistencies. But much more may this be expected, when the superiority is not only in the degree of improvement of faculties and properties of the same kind of beings, but also in the nature itself. So that if there be a kind of creative perceptive beings in their nature vastly superior to the human, which none will deny to be possible, and a revelation should be given us concerning the nature, acts, and operations of this kind of creatures; it would be no wonder, if such a revelation should contain some things very much out of our reach, attended with great difficulty to our reason, being things of such a kind, that no improvement of our minds, that we are capable of, will bring us to an experience of any thing like them. But, above all, if a revelation be made to us concerning that Being who is uncreated and self-existent, who is infinitely diverse from and above all others, in his nature, and so infinitely above all that any advancement of our nature can give us any consciousness of; in such a revelation, it would be very strange indeed, if there should not be some great mysteries, quite beyond our comprehension, and attended with difficulties which it is impossible for us fully to solve and explain.

§16. It may well be expected, that a revelation of truth, concerning an infinite Being, should be attended with mystery. We find that the reasonings and conclusions of the best metaphysicians and mathematicians, concerning infinities, are attended with paradoxes and seeming inconsistencies. Thus it is concerning infinite lines, surfaces, and solids, which are

things external. But much more may this be expected in infinite spiritual things; such as, infinite thought, infinite apprehension, infinite reason, infinite will, love, and joy, infinite spiritual power, agency, &c.

Nothing is more certain, than that there *must* be an unmade and unlimited being; and yet, the very notion of such a being is all mystery, involving nothing but incomprehensible paradoxes, and seeming inconsistencies. It involves the notion of a being self-existent and without any cause, which is utterly inconceivable, and seems repugnant to all our ways of conception. An infinite spiritual being, or infinite understanding and will and spiritual power, must be omnipresent, without extension; which is nothing but mystery and seeming inconsistency.

The notion of an infinite eternal, implies absolute immutability. That which is in all respects infinite, absolutely perfect to the utmost degree, and at all times, cannot be in any respect variable. And this immutability being constant from eternity, implies duration without succession, and is wholly a mystery and seeming inconsistency. It seems as much as to say, an infinitely great or long duration all at once, or all in a moment; which seems to be saying, an infinitely great in an infinitely little; or an infinitely long line in a point without any length.

§ 17. Infinite Understanding, which implies an understanding of all things past, present, and future; and of all truth, and all reason, and argument, implies infinite thought and reason. But how this can be absolutely without mutation, or succession of acts, seems mysterious and absurd. We can conceive of no such thing as thinking, without successive acting of the mind about ideas. Perfect knowledge of all things, even of all the things of external sense, without any sensation, or any reception of ideas from without, is an inconceivable mystery. Infinite knowledge, implies a perfect comprehensive view of a whole future eternity; which seems utterly impossible. For how can there be any reaching of the whole of this, to comprehend it, without reaching to the utmost limits of it? But this cannot be, where there is no such thing as utmost limits. And again, if God perfectly views an eternal succession or chain of events, then he perfectly sees every individual part of that chain, and there is no one link of it hid from his sight. And yet there is no one link that has not innumerable links beyond it; from which it would seem to follow, that there is a link beyond all the links that he sees, and consequently, that there is one link, yea, innumerable links, that he sees not; inasmuch as there are innumerable links beyond every one that he sees. And many other such seeming contradictions might be mentioned, which attend the supposition of God's omniscience.

If there be an absolute immutability in God, then there never arises any new act in God, or new exertion of himself; and yet there arise new effects: which seems an utter inconsistency. And so innumerable other such like mysteries and paradoxes are involved in the notion of an infinite and eternal intelligent being. Insomuch, that if there had never been any *revelation*,

by which God had made known himself by his word to mankind; the most speculative persons would, without doubt, have for ever been exceedingly at a loss concerning the nature of the Supreme Being and First Cause of the universe. And that some of the ancient philosophers and wiser heathens had so good notions of God as they had, seems to be much more owing to tradition, which originated from divine revelation, than from their own invention; though human reason served to keep those traditions alive in the world, and led the more considerate to embrace and retain the imperfect traditions which were to be found in any parts remaining, as they appeared, when once suggested and delivered, agreeable to reason.

§ 18. If a revelation be made of the principal scheme of the supreme and infinitely wise Ruler, respecting his moral kingdom, wherein his all-sufficient wisdom is displayed, in the case of its greatest trial; ordering and regulating the said moral kingdom to its great ends, when in the most difficult circumstances; extricating it out of the most extreme calamities, in which it had been involved by the malice and subtlety of the chief and most crafty of all God's enemies, should we expect *no* mysteries? If it be the principal of all the effects of the wisdom of Him, the depth of whose wisdom is unsearchable and absolutely infinite; his deepest scheme, by which mainly the grand design of the universal, incomprehensibly complicated system of all his operations, and the infinite series of his administrations, is most happily, completely, and gloriously attained; the scheme in which God's wisdom is mainly exercised and displayed: it may reasonably be expected, that such a revelation will contain *many* mysteries.

We see that to be the case, even as to many works of human wisdom and art. They appear strange, paradoxical, and incomprehensible, by those that are vastly inferior in sagacity, or are entirely destitute of that skill or art. How are many of the effects of human art attended with many things that appear strange and altogether incomprehensible by children, and many others seeming to be beyond and against nature; and, in many cases, the effect produced not only seems to be beyond the power of any visible means, but inconsistent with it, being an effect contrary to what would be expected: the means seem inconsistent with the end.

§19. If God reveal the exact truth in those things which, in the language of the heathen sages, are matters of philosophy, especially things concerning the nature of the Deity, and the nature of man as related to the Deity, &c. it may most reasonably be expected, that such a revelation should contain many mysteries and paradoxes, considering how many mysteries the doctrine of the greatest and best philosophers, in all ages, concerning these things, have contained; or, at least, how very mysterious, and seemingly repugnant, they are to the reason of the vulgar, and persons of less understanding; and considering how mysterious the principles of philosophers, even concerning matters far inferior to these, would have appeared in any former age, if they had been revealed to be true, which however are now received as the most undoubted truths.

If God gives mankind his word in a large book, consisting of a vast variety of parts, many books, histories, prophecies, prayers, songs, parables, proverbs, doctrine, promises, sermons, epistles, and discourses of very many kinds, all connected together, all united in one grand drift and design; and one part having a various and manifold respect to others; so as to become one great work of God, and one grand system; as is the system of the universe, with its vast variety of parts, connected in one grand work of God: it may well be expected that there should be mysteries, things incomprehensible and exceeding difficult to our understanding; analogous to the mysteries that are found in all the other works of God, as the works of creation and providence: and particularly such as are analogous to the mysteries that are observable in the system of the natural world, and the frame of man's own nature.

§ 20. If it be still objected, that it is peculiarly unreasonable that mysteries should be supposed in a revelation given to mankind; because, if there be such a revelation, the direct and principal design of it must be, to teach mankind, and to inform their understandings, which is inconsistent with its delivering things to man which he cannot understand; and which do not inform, but only puzzle and confound his understanding: I answer,

1<sup>st</sup>, Men are capable of understanding as much as is pretended to be revealed; though they cannot understand all that *belongs* to the things revealed. For instance, God may reveal, that there are three who have the same nature of the Deity, whom it is most proper for us to look upon as three persons; though the particular *manner* of their distinction, or how they differ, may not be revealed. He may reveal that the Godhead was united to man, so as to be properly looked upon as the same person; and yet not reveal *how* it was effected.

2<sup>d</sup>, No allowance is made in the objection, for what may be understood of the word of God in future ages, which is not now understood. And it is to be considered, that divine revelation is not given only for the present or past ages.

3<sup>d</sup>, The seeming force of this objection, lies wholly in this, that we must suppose whatever God does, tends to answer the end for which he does it; but that those parts of a revelation which *we* cannot understand, do not answer the end, inasmuch as informing *our* understandings is the very end of a revelation, if there be any such thing.

§ 21. But this objection is no other, than just equivalent to an objection which may be made against many parts of the *creation*, particularly of this lower world. It is apparent, the most direct and principal end of this lower world was, to be for the habitation, use, and benefit of mankind, the head of this lower world. But there are some parts of it that seem to be of no use to man, but are rather inconvenient and prejudicial to him; as, the innumerable stones and rocks that overspread so great a part of the earth, which, as to any thing known, are altogether useless, and oftentimes are rather an inconvenience than benefit.

Thus, it is reasonable to expect, that, in such a revelation, there should be many things plain and easy to be understood; and that the revelation should be most intelligible, wherein it is most necessary for us to understand it, in order to our guidance and direction in the

way to our happiness; but that there should also be many incomprehensible mysteries in it, many things understood in part, but yet that room should be left for vast improvement in the knowledge of them, to the end of the world. It is reasonable to expect, that the case should actually be the same as concerning the works of nature; that many things which were formerly great and insuperable difficulties, unintelligible mysteries, should now, by further study and improvement, be well cleared up, and cease longer to remain difficulties; and that other difficulties should be considerably diminished, though not yet fully cleared up.

It may be expected that, as in the system of nature so in the system of revelation, there should be many parts whose use is but little understood, and many that should seem wholly useless, yea, and some that should seem rather to do hurt than good. I might further observe, that if we have a revelation given in ancient languages, used among a people whose customs and phraseology are but very imperfectly understood, many difficulties will arise from hence. And, in a very concise history, in which only some particular facts and circumstances that concern the special purposes of that revelation, are mentioned and innumerable others are omitted that would be proper to be mentioned, if the main design were to give a full, clear, connected, continued history of such a people, or such affairs as the history mentions it is no wonder that many doubts and difficulties arise.

§ 22. Tindal's main argument against the need of any revelation, is, that the *law of nature is absolutely perfect*. But how weak and impertinent is this arguing, that because the *law of nature* (which is no other than natural rectitude and obligation) is perfect, therefore the *light of nature* is sufficient. To say that the law of nature is perfect, yea, absolutely perfect, is no more than to say, that what is naturally fit and right in itself, is indeed right; and that what is in itself, or in its own nature, perfectly and absolutely right, is absolutely right. But this is an empty, insipid kind of doctrine. It is an idle way of spending time, ink, and paper, to spend them in proving, that what is in its own nature perfectly true, is perfectly true; and what is in its nature perfectly good, is perfectly good; or that what is, is, and is as it is. But this is all that can be meant by the law of nature being perfect.

And how far is this from having any reference to that question, whether we have by mere nature, without instruction, all that light and advantage that we need, clearly and fully to know what is right, and all that is needful for us to be and to do, in our circumstances as sinners, &c. in order to the forgiveness of sin, the favour of God, and our own happiness! What, according to the nature of things, is fittest and best, may be most perfect; and yet our natural knowledge of this may be most imperfect.

If Tindal, or any other deist, would assert, and urge it upon mankind as an assertion that they ought to believe, that the light of nature is so sufficient to teach all mankind what they *ought*, or in any respect *need*, to be, and to believe and practise for their good, that any additional instruction is needless and useless: then, all instruction in families and schools is needless and useless; all instruction of parents, tutors, and philosophers; all that has been

said to promote any such knowledge as tends to make men good and happy by word of mouth, or by writing and books; all that is written by ancient and modern philosophers and learned men. And then, also, all the pains the deists take in talking and writing to enlighten mankind, is wholly needless and vain.

§ 23. When it is asserted that the light of nature, or the means and advantages which all mankind have by pure nature, to know the way of their duty and happiness, are absolutely sufficient, without any additional means and advantages; one of these two things must be meant by it, if it has any meaning: either that they are sufficient in order to a mere possibility of obtaining all needful and useful knowledge in these important concerns; or that these natural means have a sufficient tendency actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or at least in a prevailing degree, according as the state of mankind may be.

If the former of these be meant, *viz.* that the means of understanding these things, which all mankind have by mere nature, is sufficient, in order to a bare possibility of obtaining this knowledge; even that, should it be allowed, will not at all prove, that farther light is not extremely needed by mankind. A bare *possibility* may be; and yet there may be no tendency or *probability* that ever the effect (however necessary, and however dreadful the consequence of its failing) will be reached, in one single instance, in the whole world of mankind, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, though it should stand millions of ages.

But if by the sufficiency of these natural means be meant, a *sufficiency of tendency* actually to reach the effect either universally, or in a prevailing degree, considering all things belonging to the state and circumstances of mankind it is the very same thing as to say, that it *actually* does obtain the effect. For if the tendency, all things considered, be sufficient actually to obtain the effect, doubtless it does actually obtain it. For what should hinder a cause from actually obtaining the effect that it has a sufficient tendency to obtain, all things considered? So that here, what we have to inquire, is, whether that effect be actually obtained in the world? whether the world of mankind be actually brought to all necessary or very important knowledge of these things, merely by the means they have by nature? History, observation, and experience, are the things which must determine the question.

§ 24. In order the more clearly to judge of this matter, of the sufficiency of the light of nature to know what is necessary to be known of religion in order to man's happiness, we must consider what are the things that must be known in order to this; which are these two: *1st*, The religion of nature, or the religion proper and needful, considering the state and relations we stand in as creatures: *2d*, The religion of a sinner, or the religion and duties proper and necessary for us, considering our state as depraved and guilty creatures, having incurred the displeasure of our Creator.

As to the former, it is manifest from *fact*, that nature alone is not sufficient for the discovery of the religion of nature, in the *latter* sense of sufficiency: that is, no means we have by mere nature, without instruction, bring men to the knowledge of the nature of God, and

our natural relation to and dependence on him, and the consequent relations we stand in to our fellow-creatures, and the duties becoming these relations, sufficient actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or in any prevailing degree. No; nor does it appear to have proved sufficient so much as in a single instance. A sufficiency to see the reasonableness of these things, when pointed out, is not the same thing as a sufficiency to find them out. None but either mere dunces, or those who are incorrigibly wilful, will deny that there is a vast difference.

And as to the latter, *viz.* the religion of a *sinner*, or the duties proper and necessary for us as depraved, guilty, and offending creatures; it is most evident, the light of nature cannot be sufficient for our information, by any means, or in any sense whatsoever. No, nor is the law of nature sufficient either to prescribe or establish this religion. The light of nature is, in no sense whatsoever, sufficient to discover this religion. It has no sufficient tendency to it; nor, indeed, any tendency at all to discover it to any one single person in any age. And it not only has no tendency to the obtaining of this knowledge, by mere natural means, but it affords no *possibility* of it. Not only is the *light* of nature insufficient to discover this religion, but the *law* of nature is not sufficient to establish it, or to give any room for it.

### CHAP. VIII.

On the medium of moral government particularly conversation.

§ 1. by *conversation*, I mean intelligent beings expressing their minds one to another, in words, or other signs intentionally directed to us for our notice, whose immediate and main design is to be significations of the mind of him who gives them. Those signs are evidences distinguished from works done by any, from which we may argue their minds. The first and most immediate design of the work, is something else than a mere signification to us of the mind of the efficient. Thus, I distinguish God's communicating his mind to us by word or conversation, from his giving us opportunity to learn it by philosophical reasoning; or by God's works which we observe in the natural world.

§ 2. There is a great difference between God's *moral* government of his creatures, that have understanding and will, and his general government of providential disposal. The nature, design, and ends of the latter, by no means require that it should be declared and made visible by a revelation of the methods, rules, particular views, designs, and ends of it: these are secret things that belong to God; in which men's understandings and wills are no way concerned. There is no application to these faculties in it; nor are these faculties any otherwise concerned, than the qualities or properties of inanimate and senseless things.

But it is quite otherwise with respect to God's moral government of a kingdom or society of intelligent and willing creatures; to which society he is united as its head, ruling for its good. The nature of that requires, that it should be declared, open, and visible. How can any moral government be properly and sufficiently established and maintained in a kingdom



of intelligent agents, consisting in exhibiting, prescribing, and enforcing methods, rules, and ends of their own intelligent voluntary actions, without declaring, and particularly promulgating to their understandings, those methods, rules, and enforcements? The moral government of a society, in the very nature of it, implies, and consists in, an application to their understandings, in directing the intelligent will, and in enforcing the direction by the declaration made.

§.3. It is needful, in order to a proper moral government, that the ruler should enforce the rules of the society, by threatening just punishments, and promising the most suitable and wise rewards. But, without word or voluntary declaration, there is no threatening or promising in the case, in a proper sense. To leave the subject to find out what reward would be wise, if there appear in the state of things room for every subject to guess at it in some decree, would be a different thing from *promising* it. And to leave men to their own reason, to find out what would be a just, deserved, and, all things considered, a wise punishment, though we should suppose some sufficiency in every one's reason for this, would be a different thing from *threatening* of it.

It is needful in a moral kingdom, not in a ruined and deserted state the union between the head and members remaining that there should be conversation between the governors and governed. It is requisite that the former should have intercourse with the latter in a way agreeable to their nature; that is, by way of *voluntary signification* of their mind to the governed, as the governed signify their minds voluntarily one to another. There should be something equivalent to conversation between the rulers and ruled; and thus the rulers should make themselves visible. The designs and ends of government should be made known; it should be visible what is aimed at, and what grand ends or events are in view, and the mind of the rulers should be declared as to the rules, measures, and methods, to be observed by the society. If the rulers are sovereign, absolute disposers, it is necessary their will should be? particularly declared, as to the good and evil consequence of obedience or disobedience, which they intend as moral enforcements of the rules and laws, to persuade the will to a compliance. For they can reach the will, or affect it at all, no further than they are made known. It is requisite something should be known, particularly, of the nature, weight, and degree of the rewards and punishments, and of their time, place, and duration.

§ 4. Thus, it is requisite that it should be declared what is the end for which God has made us, and made the world; supports it, provides for it, and orders its events. For what end mankind are made in particular; what is intended to be their main employment; what they should chiefly aim at in what they do in the world: how far God, the Creator, is man's end; and what man is to aim at with respect to God, who stands in no need of us, and cannot be in the least dependent on us: how far, and in what respect, we are to make God our highest end; and how we are to make ourselves, or our fellow-creatures, our end: what benefits man will have by complying with his end; what evils he shall be subject to by refusing, or failing



so to comply, in a greater or lesser degree. If we have offended, and deserved punishment, it must be known on what terms (if at all) we may be forgiven and restored to favour; and what benefits we shall receive, if we are reconciled.

It is apparent, that there would be no hope that these things would ever be determined among mankind, in their present darkness and disadvantages, without a revelation. Without a revelation now extant, or once extant, having some remaining influence by tradition men would undoubtedly for ever be at a loss, what God expects from us, and what we may expect from him; what we are to depend upon as to our concern with God, and what ground we are to go upon in our conduct and proceedings that relate to him; what end we are to aim at; what rule we are to be directed by; and what good, and what harm, is to be expected from a right or wrong conduct. Yea, without a revelation, men would be greatly at a loss concerning God; what he is; what manner of being; whether properly intelligent and willing; a being that has will and design, maintaining a proper, intelligent, voluntary dominion over the world. Notions of the first being, like those of Hobbes and Spinoza, would prevail. Especially would they be at a loss concerning those perfections of God, which he exercises as a moral governor. For we find that some of the deists, though they, from revelation, have been taught these; yet, having cast off revelation, apparently doubt of them all. Lord Bolingbroke, in particular, insists that we have no evidence of them.

§ 5. And though, with regard to many, when they have a revelation fully setting forth the perfections of God giving a rational account of them, and pointing forth their consistence their reason may rest satisfied in them; this is no evidence that it is not exceeding needful that God should tell us of them. It is very needful that God should declare to mankind what manner of being he is. For, though reason may be sufficient to confirm such a declaration after it is given, and enable us to see its consistence, harmony, and rationality, in many respects; yet reason may be utterly insufficient first to discover these things.

Yea, notwithstanding the clear and infinitely abundant evidences of his *being*, we need that God should tell us that there is a great being, who *understands*, who *wills*, and who has made and governs the world. It is of unspeakable advantage, as to the *knowledge* of this, that God has told us of it; and there is much reason to think, that the notion mankind in general have entertained in all ages concerning a Deity, has been very much originally owing to revelation.

On the supposition, that God has a moral kingdom in the world, that he is the head of a moral society, consisting either of some part of mankind, or of the whole; in what darkness must the affairs of this moral kingdom be carried on, without a communication between the head and the body; the ruler never making himself known to the society by any word, or other equivalent expression whatsoever, either by himself, or by any mediators, or messengers!

§ 6. So far as we see, all moral agents are *conversible* agents. It seems to be agreeable to the nature of moral agents, and their state in the universal system, that we observe none without it; and there are no beings that have even the semblance of intelligence and will, but possess the faculty of conversation; as in all kinds of birds, beasts, and even insects. So far as there is any appearance of something like a mind, so far they give *significations* of their minds one to another, in something like conversation among rational creatures. And, as we rise higher in the scale of beings, we do not see that an increase of perfection diminishes the need or propriety of communication and intercourse of this kind, but augments it. And accordingly, we see most of it among the most perfect beings. So we see conversation by voluntary immediate significations of each other's minds, more fully, properly, and variously, between mankind, than any other animals here below. And if there are creatures superior to mankind united in society, doubtless still voluntary converse is more full and perfect.

Especially do we find conversation proper and requisite between intelligent creatures concerning *moral* affairs, which are most important; affairs wherein especially moral agents are concerned, as joined in society, and having union and communion one with another. As to other concerns that are merely personal and natural, wherein we are concerned more separately, and by ourselves, and not as members of society, in them there is not equal need of conversation.

§ 7. Moral agents are *social* agents; affairs of morality are affairs of society. It is concerning moral agents as united in society in a commonwealth or kingdom, that we have been speaking. Particular moral agents so united, need conversation. The affairs of their social union cannot well be maintained without conversation. And if so, what reason can be given, why there should be no need of conversation with the head of the society? The head of the society, so far as it is united with it on a *moral* ground, is a social head. The head belongs to the society, as the natural head belongs to the body. And the union of the members with the head is greater, stricter, and more important, than one with another. And if their union with other members of the society require conversation, much more their greater union with the head. By all that we see and experience, the *moral* world, and the *conversible* world, are the same thing; and it never was intended, that the affairs of society, in any that are united in society among intelligent creatures, should be upheld and carried on without conversation.

There is no more reason to deny God any conversation with his moral kingdom, in giving laws, and enforcing them with promises and threatenings, than to deny him any conversation with them in another world, when judging them. But, can any that believe a future state, rationally imagine, that when men go into another world to be judged by their Supreme Governor, nothing will pass or be effected through the immediate interposition of the Judge, but all things be left wholly to go on according to laws of nature established from the beginning of the world; and that souls pass into another state by a law of nature,

as a stone, when shaken off from a building, falls down by gravity, without any miraculous signification from God? But there is as much reason to suppose this, as to deny any miraculous interposition in giving and establishing the laws of the moral society. If judgment and execution by law, be by immediate interposition and declaration, why not legislation?

§ 8. The *ground* of moral behaviour, and all moral government and regulation, is society, or mutual intercourse and social regards. The special medium of union and communication of the members of the society, and the being of society as such, is conversation; and the well-being and happiness of society is friendship. It is the highest happiness of all moral agents; but friendship, above all other things that belong to society, requires conversation. It is what friendship most naturally and directly desires. By conversation, not only is friendship maintained and nourished, but the felicity of friendship is tasted and enjoyed. The happiness of God's moral kingdom consists, in an inferior degree, in the members' enjoyment of each other's friendship; but infinitely more in the enjoyment of their Head. Therefore, here especially, and above all, is conversation requisite.

§ 9. Conversation between God and mankind in this world, is maintained by God's *word* on his part, and by *prayer* on ours. By the former, he speaks and expresses his mind to us; by the latter, we speak and express our minds to him. Sincere friendship towards God, in all who believe him to be properly an intelligent, willing being, does most apparently, directly, and strongly incline to prayer; and it no less disposes the heart strongly to desire to have our infinitely glorious and gracious Friend expressing his mind to us by his word, that we may know it. The same light which has directed the nations of the world in general to prayer, has directed them to suppose, that God, or the gods, have revealed themselves to men. And we see, that the same infidelity that disposes men to deny any divine revelation, disposes them to reject as absurd the duty of prayer.

§ 10. If God's moral kingdom, or the society of his friends and willing subjects, shall be in a most happy state in another world in the most complete friendship. and in perfect union with God their Head, as some of the deists pretend to believe is it reasonable to suppose any other, than that they will fully enjoy the sweets of their friendship one with another, in the most perfect conversation, either by words, or some more perfect medium of expressing their minds? And shall they have, at the same time, no conversation at all with their glorious Head, the fountain of all the perfection and felicity of the society, in friendship with whom their happiness chiefly consists? That friendship, and the happiness they have in it, is begun in this world; and this is the state wherein they are trained up for that more perfect state: and shall they nevertheless live here wholly without any intercourse with God of this sort; though their union with him, as their moral Head, and their great Friend, begins here; and though their happiness, as consisting in friendship to him, and also the enjoyment of that subordinate happiness of holding a virtuous and holy conversation one with another, be begun here? The need of conversation in order properly to support and carry on the concerns

of *society*, may well appear, by considering the need of it for answering all the purposes of *friendship*, which is one of the main concerns of society, in some respects the main social concern, and the end of all the rest.

Let us suppose, that some friend, above all others dear to us, in whose friendship consisted the main comfort of our life, should leave us in possession of something he had contrived and accomplished, some manifold complicated effect that he had produced which we might have always in our view. Suppose also that this work should be a very great and manifold evidence of the excellencies of our friend's mind, of his great, fixed, and firm benevolence to us; and that he should withdraw for ever, and never have any conversation with us; that no word should ever pass, or any thing of that nature; and that no word should be left behind in writing, nor any word ever spoken left in the memory: would this sufficiently and completely answer the purposes of this great friendship, and satisfy its ends and desires, or be a proper support of this great end of society? I cannot but think, every sober, considerate person will at once determine, that it would be very far from it, for such reasons as these, that it would not give us those views of things, pertaining to the support and enjoyment of friendship, suitable to the nature of intelligent, volitive, and conversible beings; not giving the direct and immediate view, nor at all tending, in so great a degree and so agreeable a manner, to affect and impress the mind. And as, for these reasons, this alone would not answer the ends and purposes of society in this respect; so, for the same reasons, it would not answer other purposes of society.

§ 11. As we may suppose, that God will govern mankind in that moral kingdom which he hath mercifully set up among them, in a manner agreeable to their nature; so, it is reasonable to suppose, that he would make his moral government, with respect to them, *visible*, not only in declaring the *general* ends, methods, and rules of his government, but also by making known the chief of his more *particular* aims and designs. As, in human kingdoms, in order to the wisdom, righteousness, and goodness of, the administration being properly visible so far as is requisite for encouraging and animating of the subject, and in order to the suitable convenience, satisfaction, and benefit of the whole society of intelligent agents it is needful, not only that the general end, *viz.* the public good, should be known, but also, the particular design of many of the principal parts of the administration, among which we may reckon the main negotiations, treaties, and changes of affairs, the cause and end of wars engaged in, the ground of treaties of peace and commerce, the design of general revolutions in the state of the kingdom, &c. Otherwise the society is not governed in a manner becoming their rational and active nature; but affairs are carried on in the dark, and the members have no opportunity to consent or concur, to approve or disapprove, to rejoice in the goodness, wisdom, and benefit of the administration, and to pay proper regards to those in whose hands the government is, &c. These things are necessary for the establishment and confirmation of the government. God's moral government over his moral kingdom on

earth, cannot, in such like respects, be carried on in a visible manner, and in a way suitable to our nature, without divine history and prophecy. Without divine history, we cannot properly see the grounds and foundation of divine administrations, the first formation or erection of God's moral kingdom, the nature and manner of the main revolutions to which it has been subject, which are the ground of future designs, and to which future events and intended revolutions have a relation. It is also necessary, that those past events should be known, in order that the reason, wisdom, and benefit of the present state of the kingdom, and of God's present dispensations towards it, may be known. And prophecy is needful to reveal the future designs and aims of government, and what good things are to be expected.

These things are necessary, in order to the proper establishment, health, and prosperity, of God's moral, intelligent kingdom. Without them, the government of an infinitely wise and good Head, is not sensible. There is no opportunity to see the effects and success of the administration. There is no opportunity to find it by experience. Neither the designs of government, nor the accomplishment of those designs, are sensible; and the government itself, with respect to fact, is not made visible.

§ 12. If it be said, that reason, and the light of nature, without revelation, are sufficient to show us, that the end of God's government, in his moral kingdom, must be, to promote these two things among mankind, *viz.* their virtue, and their happiness:

In reply, I would ask, What satisfaction can men without revelation have, with respect to the design, wisdom, and success of God's government, as to these ends, when wickedness so generally prevails and reigns, through all ages hitherto, in the far greatest part of the world; and the world, at all times, is so full of calamities, miseries, and death, having no prophecies of a better state of things in which all is to issue at last, in the latter ages of the world; or assuring us that all these miserable changes and great confusion are guided by Infinite Wisdom to that great final issue, and without any revelation of a future state of happiness to the city of God in another world?

§ 13. *Object.* God does maintain a moral government over all mankind; but we see, in fact, that many are not governed by revelation, since the greater part of the world have been destitute of divine revelation: which shows that God does not look upon conversation as necessary in order to his moral government of mankind, as God judges for himself, and acts according to his own judgment.

*Ans.* 1. What I have been speaking of, is God's moral government over a society of moral agents, which are his kingdom, or a society that have God for their King, united to them as the Head of the society, as it is with earthly kings with respect to their own kingdoms, where the union between king and subjects is not broken and dissolved; and not of a society or country of rebels, who have forsaken their lawful sovereign, withdrawn themselves from subjection to him, and cast off his government: though they may still be under the king's power, and moral dominion, in some sense, as he may have it in his power and design, to

conquer, subdue, judge, and punish them for their rebellion. But yet the sense in which such a nation is under the moral government of this king, and may be said to be his kingdom or people, is surely extremely diverse from that of a kingdom remaining in union with their king. In the case of a people broken off from their king, the maintaining of intercourse by conversation is in no wise in like manner requisite. The reason for such intercourse, which take place in the other case, do not take place in this.

In this case, society ceases; *i. e.* that union ceases between God and man, by which they should be of one society. And where society ceases, there the argument for conversation ceases. If a particular member of the society were wholly cut off, and ceases to be of the society the union being entirely broken the argument for conversation, the great medium of social concerns, ceases. So, if the body be cut off from the head, or be entirely disunited from it, intercourse ceases. Moral government in a society is a *social* affair; wherein consists the intercourse between superior and inferior constituents, between that which is original, and that which is dependent, directing and directed in the society. It is proper, in this case, that the rebel people should have sufficient means of knowing the end of their rebellion, and that it is their duty to be subject to their king, to seek reconciliation with him, and to inquire after his will. But while they remain obstinate in their rebellion, and the king has not received them into favour, the state of things does not require that he should particularly declare his intentions with respect to them, or should open to them the designs and methods of his administration. It is not necessary that he should publish among *them* the way and terms of reconciliation; make revelations of his goodness and wisdom, and the great benefits of his government; converse with them as their friend, and so open the way for their being happy in so great a friend; or that he should so particularly and immediately publish among them particular statutes and rules for their good, as a society of moral agents, &c. Conversation, in this sense, when there is an utter breach of the union, is not to be expected, nor is it requisite, though judging and condemning may.

*Ans. 2.* So far as the union between God and the heathen world has not been utterly broken, so far they have not been left utterly destitute of all benefit of divine revelation. They are not so entirely and absolutely cast off, but that there is a possibility of their being reconciled; and God has so ordered the case, that there is an equal possibility of their receiving the benefit of divine revelation.

If the heathen world, or any parts of it, have not only enjoyed a mere possibility of being restored to favour, but have had some advantages for it; so, a great part, yea, mostly the greater part, of the heathen world have not been left merely to the light of nature. They have had many things, especially in the times of the Old Testament, that were delivered to mankind in the primitive ages of the world by revelation, handed down from their ancestors by tradition; and many things borrowed from the Jews. And, during those ages, by many wonderful dispensations towards the Jews wherein God did, in a most public and striking manner,

display himself, and show his hand the world had, from time to time, notices sufficient to convince them, that there was a divine revelation extant, and sufficient to induce them to seek after it. And things sufficient to make revelation public, to spread it abroad to extend the frame of it and its effects to the utmost end of the earth, and to draw men's attention to it have been vastly more and greater in later times, than in the primitive ages.

*Ans. 3.* The nations that are separated from the true God, and live in an open and obstinate full rejection of him as their supreme moral Governor, reject all friendly intercourse while their state is such. They are open enemies; and, so far as God treats them as such, he does not exercise any friendly moral government over them. And they have light sufficient, without revelation, for any other exercise of moral government and intercourse, besides those that are friendly, *viz.* in judging and condemning them. They have light sufficient for that judgment and condemnation, of which they shall be the subjects. For their condemnation shall proceed no farther, than proportioned to their light. They shall be condemned for the violation of the law of nature and nations; and the degree of their condemnation shall be only answerable to the decree of the means and advantages they have had for information of the duties of this law, and of their obligations to perform them.

*Ans. 4.* What has appeared in those parts of the world which have been destitute of revelation, is so far from being any evidence that revelation is not necessary, that in those nations and ages which have been most destitute of revelation, the necessity of it has most evidently and remarkably appeared, by the extreme blindness and delusion which have prevailed and reigned, without any remedy, or any ability in those nations to extricate themselves from their darkness.

§ 14. I think, a little sober reflection on those opinions which appear among the deists, weighing them together with the nature of things, may convince us, that a general renunciation of divine revelation, after nations have enjoyed it, would soon bring those nations to be more absurd, brutish, and monstrous in their notions and practices, than the heathens were before the gospel came among them. For, (1.) Those nations had many things among them derived originally from revelation, by tradition from their ancestors, the ancient founders of nations, or from the Jews, which led them to embrace many truths contained in the Scripture; and they valued such tradition. It was not, in general, their humour to despise such an original of doctrine, or to contemn them because they had their first foundation in divine revelation, but they valued them the more highly on this account; and had no notion of setting them aside, in order to the drawing of every thing from the fountain of their own reason. By this means, they had a great deal more of truth in matters of religion and morality, than ever human reason would have discovered without helps. But now, the humour of the deists is, to reject every thing that they have had from supposed revelation, or any tradition whatsoever, and to receive nothing but what they can clearly see, and demonstrate from the fountain of their own unassisted reason. (2.) The heathens, by tradition,

received and believed many great truths, of vast importance, that were incomprehensible; and it was no objection with them against receiving them, that they were above their comprehension. But now, it is a maxim with the freethinkers, that nothing is to be believed but what can be comprehended; and this leads them to reject all the principles of natural religion (as it is called) as well as revealed. For there is nothing pertaining to any doctrine of natural religion, not any perfection of God, no, nor his very existence from eternity, without many things attending it that are incomprehensible. (3.) The heathens of old, in their reasonings, did not proceed in that exceeding haughtiness and dependence on their own mere singular understanding, disdaining all dependence on teaching, as our deists do; which tends to lead one to reject almost all important truths, out of an affectation of thinking freely, independently, and singularly. Some of the heathens professed their great need of teaching, and of *divine* teaching. (4.) The heathens did not proceed with that enmity against moral and divine truth, not having been so irritated by it. They were willing to pick up some scraps of this truth which came from revelation, which our deists reject all in the lump.

§ 15. If we suppose that God never speaks to, or converses at all with, mankind, and has never, from the beginning of the world, said any thing to them, but has perfectly let them alone as to any voluntary, immediate, and direct signification of his mind to them, in any respect teaching, commanding, promising, threatening, counselling or answering them; such a notion, if established, would tend exceedingly to atheism. It would naturally tend to the supposition, that there is no being that made and governs the world. And if it should nevertheless be supposed, that there is *some* being who is, in some respect, the original of all other beings: yet, this notion would naturally lead to doubt of his being properly an intelligent, volitive being; and to doubt of all duties to him implying intercourse, such as prayer, praise, or any address to him, external or internal, or any respect to him at all analogous to that which we exercise towards rulers or friends, or any intelligent beings we here see and know; and so it would tend to overthrow every doctrine and duty of natural religion. Now, in this respect, deism has a tendency to a vastly greater degree of error and brutishness with regard to matters of religion and morality, than the ancient heathenism. For the heathens in general had no such notion that the Deity never at all conversed with mankind in the ways above mentioned; but received many traditions, rules, and laws, as supposing they came from God, or the gods, by revelation.

§16. Many of the freethinkers of late deceive themselves, through the ambiguity or equivocal use of the word *reason*. They argue, that we must make our reason the highest rule by which to judge of all things, even of the doctrine of revelation; because reason is that by which we must judge of revelation itself. It is the rule on which our judgment of the truth of a revelation depends, and therefore undoubtedly must be that, by which particular doctrine of it must be judged: not considering that the word *reason* is here used in two senses. In the former, *viz.* in our judging of the divinity of a supposed revelation, the word means the



*faculty* of reason taken in the whole extent of its exercise; in the latter, it is the *opinion* of our reason, or some particular opinions that have appeared rational to us. Now there is a great difference between these two. It is true, the faculty of reason is that by which we are to judge of every thing, as it is the eye by which we see all truth. And, after we have received revelation, still, by the faculty of reason, we receive the particular doctrine of revelation, yea, even those that are most difficult to our comprehension. For, by the faculty of reason we determine this principle, that God knows better than us; and whatever God declares is true. But this is an exceedingly different thing from making an *opinion*, which we first establish without revelation, by reason only, as our rule to judge of particular doctrine which revelation declares. It may be illustrated by this: if there be a man with whom we have the most thorough acquaintance, and have long known to be a person of the soundest judgment and greatest integrity, who goes a journey or voyage to a place where we never were; and, when he returns, gives an account of some strange phenomena or occurrences that he was an eye-witness of there, which we should not have otherwise believed; but we believe them now to be true, because we rely on his testimony. Here, it would be ridiculous for a man to say, that it is unreasonable to believe him, because what he says is not agreeable to reason; (meaning, by *reason*, that particular *opinion* we should have had, independent on his testimony;) and urging that *reason* must be our highest rule, and not his testimony, because it is by our *reason* that we judge of the testimony, and credibility of the man that testifies; meaning, in this case, the *faculty* of reason. This would be as unreasonable, as for a man to say, that he never will rely on any representation made by the best microscope or telescope that is different from the representation which he has by the naked eye; because his eye is the rule by which he sees even the optic glass itself, and by which he judges whether it be regularly made, tending to give a true representation of objects; urging that his eye must be the highest rule for him to determine by, because it is by the eye he determines the goodness and sufficiency of the glass itself; and therefore he will credit no representation made by the glass, wherein the glass differs from his eye; and so will not believe that the blood consists partly of red particles, and partly of a limpid liquor, because it appears all red to the naked eye: not considering the different sense in which he uses the word *eye*. In the former case, *viz.* with respect to judging of the goodness of the optic glass, he means the sense of seeing, or the organ of sight. In the latter, when he says he will not believe the representation of the glass, wherein it differs from his eye, because his *eye* is the highest rule; by the *eye*, he means the particular *representation* he has by his eye, separately, and without the glass.

§ 17. Again: They blunder exceedingly, through not making a distinction between *reason* and a *rule of reason*. They say, that reason is our highest rule by which to judge of all things and therefore they must judge of the doctrine of revelation by it: whereas, they seem not to consider what they mean by reason being the highest rule. It is true, our reason or understanding is the only *judging faculty* by which we determine truth and falsehood. But

it is not properly our highest *rule of judging* of truth and falsehood, nor any rule at all. The *judge*, and the *rule* by which he judges, are diverse. A *power* of discerning truth, and a *rule* to regulate and determine the use of that power, are quite different things. The *rule* may be divine revelation, especially in matters of religion. As it is with the faculty or organ of sight, the organ is not properly the *highest* means, but the only *immediate* means we have of discerning the objects of sight. But if men were talking of *rules* how to *use* their eyes to the best advantage, so as to see most certainly and clearly to see the most distant or the minutest objects, so as to have the most certain and full information it would be ridiculous for any one to say that his *eye* was the highest *rule* to regulate his sight.

§ 18. Sometimes, by the word *reason*, is intended the same as *argument* or *evidence*, which the faculty of reason makes use of in judging of truth: as when we say, we should believe nothing without or contrary to *reason*; that is, we should not give the assent of our judgments without or against *evidence*, or something that appears which argues the thing to be true. But if this be meant by them who assert reason to be a rule superior to revelation, it is absurd in them thus to speak of reason as contradistinguished from revelation. To say, that argument or evidence is a higher rule than revelation, is to make evidence and divine revelation entirely distinct; implying, that divine revelation is not of the nature of evidence or argument. They ought to explain themselves, who assert that *evidence* is superior to the evidence we have by divine revelation. It is true, divine testimony is not the same thing as argument or evidence in general; because it is a particular sort of evidence. There are other particular sorts of evidence; and persons might speak as intelligibly, if they single out any other kind of evidence, and assert that reason or evidence was superior to that sort of evidence. As, for instance, one sort of evidence is human testimony of credible eye-witnesses; another is credible history; another is memory; another is present experience; another is geometrical mensuration; another is arithmetical calculation; another is strict metaphysical distinction and comparison. Now, would it not be an improper and unintelligible way of speaking, to ask, whether *evidence* was not above *experience*? or, whether *argument* was not above *mensuration* or *calculation*? If they who plead that reason is a rule to judge of truth superior to revelation, mean by *reason*, that evidence which is worthy to influence the faculty of reason; it seems not to be considered by them, that such evidence, when spoken of in general, *comprehends* divine testimony, as well as other sorts of evidence; unless they would entirely set aside divine revelation, as carrying in it no evidence at all. If this be their meaning, they are deceitful; for this is not what they pretend; since it would entirely change the point in dispute, and alter the whole controversy.

Or if, when they say reason is a higher rule than revelation, they mean reason *exclusive* of revelation, or that such arguments of truth as we have without revelation, are better than divine testimony; that is as much as to say, all other arguments are better than divine testimony. For reason or argument, without divine testimony, comprehends all other arguments

that are without divine testimony: and then, this is as much as to say, that divine testimony is the very least and lowest of all possible arguments, that ever can occur to the mind of man, in any measure to influence his judgment; which meaning they will hardly own. On the whole, it is manifest, that, let us turn the expressions which way we will, all the boasted proof of their assertion is owing wholly to confusion, and an ambiguous use of terms; it is talking without ideas, and, making sounds without fixing any distinct meaning.

§ 19. Here, if any, in disdain of such an imputation, shall say, "I see no necessity of supposing this assertion to be so unreasonable and unintelligible. By reason, we mean *that* evidence which is seen by reason simply considered; reason itself, without dependence on the dictates of another; viewing things as they are in themselves:" such an objector is mistaken, if he thinks he has got clear of the difficulty. All evidence whatsoever, even that by divine revelation, is included in his description of reason. It is by viewing things *as they are* in themselves, and judging by our *own* reason, and not by the reason of another, that we judge there is a divine revelation, and that we judge divine revelation must be agreeable to truth. Reason judges by viewing things as they are in themselves, not the less because it makes use of a *medium* of judgment: and when reason makes use of divine testimony as an evidence or medium of judgment, it judges as much by viewing things as they are in themselves, as when it makes use of any other medium of judgment; as, for instance, a measuring-rod in judging of distances, a compass in judging of directions and courses, and figures and characters in calculating and determining numbers.

If any should say, that *reason*, in our inquiries after truth, is to be regarded as a rule superior to *experience*, this according to what would be most naturally suggested to the mind by such a saying, and might generally be supposed to be intended by it according to the more usual acceptance of words would be a foolish assertion. For by the comparison which takes place in the proposition between *reason* and *experience*, reason would be understood in such a sense as that it might properly be set in opposition to experience, or taken in contradiction to it; and therefore the proposition must be understood thus, *viz.* That our highest rule is what our reason would suggest to us independent of experience, in the same things that are matters of experience. Or, what our reason would lead us to suppose *before* experience, is what we must regard as our highest rule, even in those matters that afterwards are tried *by* experience. Certainly, he that should proceed in this manner in his inquiries after truth, would not be thought wise by considerate persons.

§ 20. Yet it is really true, in some sense, that our reason is our highest rule; and that by which we are to try and judge of all things: even our experience and senses themselves must be tried by it. For we have no other faculty but our reason, by which we can determine of truth or falsehood, by any argument or medium whatsoever. Let the argument be testimony or experience, or what it will, we must judge of the goodness or strength of the argument by reason. And thus it is we actually determine, that *experience* is so good and sure a medium

of proof. We consider the nature of it; and our reason soon shows us the necessary connexion of this medium with truth. So we judge of the degree of dependence that is to be had on our senses by reason; by viewing the agreement of one sense with another, and by comparing, in innumerable instances, the agreement of the testimonies of the senses with other criteria of truth, and so rationally estimating the value of these testimonies.

But if this is what is meant by saying, that our reason is a surer rule than experience, it is an improper way of speaking, and an abuse of language. For, take reason thus; and so reason and experience are not properly set in contradiction, or put in comparison one with another; for the former includes the latter, as the genus includes the species, or as a whole includes the several particular sorts comprehended in that whole. For, judging by experience is one way of judging by reason; or rather, experience is one sort of argument which reason makes use of in judging. And to say that reason is a more sure rule than experience, is to say, that arguing is a more sure rule than a particular way of arguing; or to say that argument (in general) is a more sure rule than that particular sort of argument, *viz.* experience. Or if, by reason, is meant the *faculty of reason*, or that power or ability of the mind, whereby it can see the force of arguments; then such an assertion will appear still more nonsensical. For then, it is as much as to say, that the mind's *ability* to see the force of arguments, is a surer rule by which to judge of truth, than that particular argument, *viz.* experience; which is the same as to say, an ability to judge of arguments is a surer argument than that sort of argument, experience; or that a man's understanding is a better rule to understand by, than such a particular means or rule of understanding.

These observations concerning reason and experience, when these two are compared as rules by which to judge of truth, may be applied to reason and revelation, or divine testimony, when in like manner compared as distinct rules of truth. To insist, that men's own reason is a rule superior to divine revelation, under a pretence, that it is by reason that we must judge even of the authority of revelation; that all pretended revelations must be brought to the test of reason; and that reason is the judge whether they are authentic or not, &c. is as foolish as it would be to assert, for the like reasons, that man's own *reason* is a test of truth superior to *experience*. There is just the same fallacy in the arguments that are brought to support one and the other of these foolish assertions; and both are, for reasons equally forcible, very false, or very nonsensical.

§ 21. If the assertion of those who say, that men's own reason is a higher test of truth than divine revelation, has any sense in it, it must imply a comparison of *different sorts* of arguments or evidences of truth; and so the meaning of it must be, that those evidences of truth, which men find before they have the help of divine revelation, are a better criterion of truth, than any discovery they have by revelation. And their great argument to prove it is this, that the faculty of reason, by which the mind is able to discern the force of truth, is the only faculty by which we are able to judge of the value and force of revelation itself. It



is just such a sort of arguing, as if a person should go about to demonstrate, that a man could more certainly discover the form and various parts of the planets with the naked eye, than with a telescope; because the eye is that by which we see all visible things, yea, by which we see and discern how to use and to judge of the goodness of telescopes themselves.

In the argument these men use, to prove that reason is a better test of truth than revelation, they wretchedly deceive themselves, by sliding off from the meaning which they give to the word *reason* in the premises, into another meaning of it exceedingly diverse in the conclusion. In the premises, wherein they assert, that reason is that by which we judge of all things, even of revelation itself, they mean either the *power* of discerning evidence, or the *act* of reasoning in general. The consequence they draw is, Therefore reason is a higher test of truth than revelation. Here, if they retained the same sense of the word as in the premises, the conclusion would be perfect nonsense. For then, the conclusion would be thus: The *power* or the *act* of discerning evidence, is a better *evidence* of truth than divine revelation. But this is not what is intended to be understood. What is intended in the conclusion, is, that the evidence we have before we have revelation, or independently of it, is better and more certain than revelation itself.

§ 22. The outward provision which God makes through the ages of the world for the temporal benefit and comfort of mankind, in causing his sun to shine and his rain to descend upon them, and in numberless other things, is a great argument that God was not determined to be their everlasting, irreconcilable enemy. And if God be reconcilable, it will follow, that he must make a revelation to mankind, to make known to them the terms and methods of reconciliation. For God, who is offended, alone can tell us on what terms he is willing to be reconciled; and how he will be at peace with us, and receive us to favour. And there surely is nothing which can be pretended to be any revelation of this kind, if the Holy Scripture is not.

§23. *Objection:* The Scriptures are communicated to but few of mankind; so that, if a revelation of the method of reconciliation be necessary, a very great part of those who enjoy these external benefits and bounties of Divine Providence, still have no opportunity to obtain reconciliation with God, not having the benefit of that revelation. So that, notwithstanding these seeming testimonies of favour and placableness, it is all one to them as if God was irreconcilable. For still, for want of the knowledge of the method of reconciliation, it is all one to them as though there were no such method, and as though no reconciliation were possible. To this I answer

1st, The case of mankind is not just the same as if there were no such thing as reconciliation for mankind, or as though reconciliation were utterly impossible. For although the circumstances of a great part of the world be such that their reconciliation be very improbable, yet it is not utterly impossible. There is a way of reconciliation, and it is publicly known in the world; and God has ever afforded opportunity to the generality of the habitable world,

that if the minds of men had been as much engaged in the search of divine truth as they ought to have been, they might have felt after God, and found him; and might probably have come to an acquaintance with divine revelation.

2*d*, If there have been some parts of mankind, in some ages, for whom it was next to impossible that they should ever come to know that revelation which God has made, yet that hinders not the force of the argument for God's placableness to sinners, and the existence of a revealed method of reconciliation. The common favours of Providence may be a proof, that God intends favour to *some* among mankind, but yet be no proof that he intends that *all* shall actually have the benefits of his favour. None will deny, but that those outward blessings of God's goodness were intended for the temporal benefit of *mankind*; and yet there are numbers who never actually receive any temporal benefit by many of them. None will doubt, but that God aimed at men's outward good, in providing grain, and grapes, and other fruits which the earth produces for man's subsistence and comfort in the world; as also the most useful animals. But yet a very great part of the world were for a long time wholly destitute of the most useful of these. All the innumerable nations that dwelt on this American side of the globe, were from age to age, till the Europeans came hither, wholly destitute of wheat, rye, barley, pease, wine, horses, neat cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, and many other useful animals and fruits, which abounded in the other continent.

And it is probable, that some of those gifts of nature and Providence, which are most useful to mankind, were what all men remained without the benefit of for many ages; as metals, wine, and many things used for food, clothing, and habitations. The loadstone, with regard to its polar direction, was doubtless intended for the use of mankind; but yet it is but lately that any of them have had any benefit of it. Glass is a great gift of Providence, and yet but lately bestowed; and also some of the most useful medicines. And with regard to those things which are most universally useful, some have the benefit of them in vastly lesser degrees than others; as the heat of the sun, vegetation, &c.

§ 24. If it should be further objected, That if God's true aim in these outward benefits of providence, which have the appearances of favour, be real favours to mankind, and so that the true happiness of mankind should be the consequence; one would think it would have the same effect in all places where those blessings are bestowed.

I answer, that it will not follow. God may grant things in all parts of the world, the main design of which may evidently be the benefit of mankind, and yet not have that effect in all places where they are given. As the main design of Him who orders the existence of rain in the world, is making the earth fruitful; yet it does not follow that he designed this should actually be the effect in all parts of the globe where the rain falls. For it falls on the sea as well as the dry land, which is more than one half of the globe: but yet *there* it cannot answer this intention.

§ 25. Reason alone cannot certainly determine, that God will not insist on some satisfaction for injuries he receives. If we consider what have in fact been the general notions of mankind, we shall see cause to think, that the dictates of men's minds, who have been without revelation, have been contrariwise, *viz.* that the Deity will insist on some satisfaction. Repentance makes some satisfaction for many injuries that men are guilty of one towards another; because it bears some proportion to the degree of injury. But reason will not certainly determine, that it is proper for God to accept of repentance as some satisfaction for an offence, when that repentance is infinitely disproportionate to the heinousness of the offence, or the degree of injuriousness that is offered. And reason will not certainly determine, that the offence of forsaking and renouncing God in heart, and treating him with such indignity and contempt, as to set him below the meanest and vilest things, is not immensely greater, and more heinous, than any injury offered to men; and that therefore all our repentance and sorrow fall infinitely short of proportion in measure and degree. If it be said that we may reasonably conclude, and be fully satisfied in it, that a good God will forgive our sin on repentance; I ask, what can be meant by repentance in the case of them that have no love nor true gratitude to God in their hearts, but who discover such an habitual disregard and contempt of God in their conduct, as to treat created things, of the lowest value, with greater respect than him? If it be said, that thereby is meant being sorry for the offence; I ask, whether that sorrow is worthy to be accepted as true repentance, that does not arise from any change of heart, or from a better mind, a mind more disposed to love God, and honour him, being now so changed as to have less disregard and contempt? whether or not the sorrow which arises only from fear and self-love, with a heart still in rebellion against God, be such as we can be certain will be accepted? If not, how shall a man, who at present has no better heart, but yet is greatly concerned for himself through fear, know how to obtain a better heart? How does it appear, that he, if he tries only from fear and self-love, can make himself better, and make himself love God? what proper tendency can there be in the heart to make itself better, until it sincerely repents of its present badness? and how can the heart have sincerity of repentance of its present badness, until it begins to be better, and so begins to forsake its badness, by truly disapproving it, from a good disposition, or a better tendency arising in it? If the disposition remain just the same, then no sincere disapprobation arises; but the reigning disposition, instead of destroying, on the contrary approves and confirms itself. The heart can have no tendency to make itself better, until it begins to have a better tendency: for therein consists its badness, *viz.* having no good tendency or inclination. And to begin to have a good tendency, or, which is the same thing, to begin to have a sincere inclination to be better, is the same thing as to begin already to be better. So that it seems, that they that are now under the reigning power of an evil heart, can have no ability to help themselves, how sensible soever they may be of their misery, and concerned through fear and self-love to be delivered: but they need this from God, as part of their salvation, *viz.* that

God should give them sincere repentance, as well as pardon and deliverance from the evil consequences of sin. And how shall they know, without revelation, that God will give sinners a better heart, to enable them truly to repent; or in what way they can have any hope to obtain it of him? And if men could obtain some sincere repentance of their being wholly without that love of God that they ought to have; yet how can reason determine, that God will forgive their sin, until they wholly forsake it? or until their repentance is perfect? until they relinquish all their sinful contempt, ingratitude, and regardlessness of God? or, which is the same thing, until they fully return to their duty, *i. e.* to that degree of love, honour, gratitude, and devotedness to God, that is their duty? If they have robbed God, who can certainly say that God will forgive them, until they restore all that they have robbed him of, and give him the whole that he claims by the most absolute right? But where is any man that repents with such a perfect repentance? and if there be ever any instances of it in this world, who will say, that it is in every man's power to obtain it? or that there certainly are no lower terms of forgiveness? and if there are, who can tell certainly where to set the bounds, and say precisely to what degree a man must repent? How great must his sorrow be in proportion to his offences, &c.? Or, who can say, how long a man's day of probation shall last? Will reason alone certainly determine, that if a man goes on for a long time presumptuously in his contempt, rebellion, and affronts, presuming on God's goodness, depending that though he does thus abuse his grace as long as he pleases, yet if he repents at any time, God will forgive him, and receive him to favour, forgiving all his presumptuous aggravated rebellion, ingratitude, and provocation, and will receive him into the arms of his love? Will reason alone fully satisfy the mind, that God stands ready to pardon and receive to favour such a sinner, after long continuance in such horrid presumption and most vile ingratitude? Or, will reason fully determine for a certainty, that God will do it, if men thus presumptuously spend their youth, the best part of their lives, in obstinate and ungrateful wickedness, depending that God will stand ready to pardon afterwards? And, in short, how can reason alone be sufficient to set the bounds, and say how long God will bear with and wait upon presumptuous sinners? how many acts of such ingratitude and presumption he will be ready to forgive, and on what terms, &c.? I say, how can reason fix these limits, with any clear evidence that shall give the mind a fixed establishment and satisfaction?

Therefore, if there be any such thing as the forgiveness and salvation of sinful men; new relations of God to men, and concerns of God with men, and a new dependence of men on God, will arise, no less, probably much more, important, than those which are between God as man's Creator, and the Author of his natural good. And as God must manifest his perfections in a new work of redemption or salvation, contrived and ordered by his infinite wisdom, and executed by his power in a perfect consistence with his justice and holiness, and a greater manifestation of his goodness, than is made in his works as the Author of nature so these things must be the foundation of new regards to God, new duties, and a new religion,



founded on those displays of his perfections in the work of salvation, and on the new relations God sustains towards men, and the new dependence of men on God, and new obligations laid on men in that work, which may be called *revealed religion*, different from that natural religion which is founded on the works of God, as the Creator and the Author of nature, and our concerns with God in that work; though not at all contrary to it.

The light of nature teaches that religion which is necessary to continue in the favour of the God that made us; but it cannot teach us that religion which is necessary to our being restored to the favour of God, after we have forfeited it.

### CHAP. IX.

Mahometanism compared with Christianity particularly with respect to their propagation.

§ I. in what respect the propagation of Mahometanism is far from being parallel with the propagation of Christianity, will appear by these observations. The *revolution* that was brought to pass in the world, by the propagation of Mahometanism, was not so great as that which happened by the propagation of Christianity; yea, in this respect, was by no means worthy to be compared to it. Consider the state the world was in before Christianity was propagated; how dark, ignorant, barbarous, and wicked; how strongly these things were established by long universal immemorial custom; how fixed in men's hearts; how established by all human authority, and power, and inclination; and how vast the alteration, when Christianity was introduced and established; how vast the overthrow of that which had been built up before, and stood from age to age; how great, how strong the building; how absolute its destruction: and also, how great the building that was erected in its room; and of how different and opposite a nature from that which had stood on the same ground before.

§ 2. But as to the revolution brought to pass in the world by Mahometanism, it consisted either in the change made among the heathen barbarous nations, which had their original from Arabia or Scythia or among professing Christians. But with respect to neither of these, was the revolution comparably so great as the other. As to the change made among those *heathens*, they long had entertained some obscure notions of the true God; and many of the great truths of what is called natural religion, they had obtained by those glimmerings of the light of the gospel which had been diffused over great part of the world; even that part of it that had not fully embraced Christianity. But Mahometanism carried them very little farther in these things; and was an occasion of but small advance of light and knowledge. As to the change made among *Christians*, there was no advance at all made in knowledge, or in any thing that was good. And as to the change made among them as to religious customs, they had so degenerated before, and were become so superstitious, that the alteration was not very perceptible.

§ 3. The difference of the two revolutions was immensely great as to *goodness*. The change made in the world by the propagation of Christianity, was a great change indeed,

with regard to light and knowledge. It was a change from great darkness to glorious and marvellous light. By the preaching of the gospel in the world, the day-spring from on high visited the earth, and the sun arose after a long night of the grossest darkness. But as to the change made in Christendom by the propagation of Mahometanism, there was no increase of light by it, but on the contrary, it was evidently a change from light to darkness. It was a propagation of ignorance, and not of knowledge. As to the change made among the heathens, as we observed before, there was but a small degree of increased light; and all that was added, was borrowed from Christianity. Any increase of knowledge that arose, proceeded only from Mahomet and his followers communicating what had before been communicated to them by Christian teaching. There can be no pretence of the least degree of addition in any thing, beyond what they had before received from the gospel. And as to rules and precepts, examples, promises, or incitements to virtue of any kind, no addition at all was made. What alteration there existed, was only for the worse; the examples, histories, representations, and promises of the new Mahometan religion, only tended exceedingly to debase, debauch, and corrupt the minds of such as received it.

§ 4. The revolution that was occasioned by the propagation of Christianity, was an infinitely greater and more wonderful effect, if we consider the *opposition* that was overcome in bringing it to pass. Christianity was propagated against all the opposition that could be made by man's carnal dispositions, strengthened by inveterate general custom, principles, habits, and practice, prevailing like a mighty flood. Mahometanism was propagated, not in opposition to those inclinations, but by *complying* with them, and gratifying them, in examples, precepts, and promises, as Stapferus observes, (Theol. Polem. tom. iii. p. 292.) Speaking of Mahomet's laws, he says, "The law which he published was, above all others, accommodated not only to the *opinions* of men, but also to the *depraved* nature, manners, and innate vices of those nations, among whom he propagated it; nor did it require much more than external exercises, which, to a carnal man, are much more easy to be performed, than those spiritual exercises which the sacred pages prescribe. He allowed of revenge for injuries; of discarding wives for the slightest causes; of the addition of wives to wives, which must have served only as so many new provocatives to lust. At the same time he indulged himself in the greatest excess of promiscuous and base lasciviousness. He placed the true worship of God in such external ceremonies, as have no tendency to promote true piety. In fine, the whole of that religion which he instituted, was adapted to no other end, than the shedding of human blood."

§ 5. This religion is particularly adapted to the luxurious and *sensual* disposition. Christianity was extremely contrary to the most established and darling notions of the world; whereas Mahomet accommodated his doctrine to all such notions as were most pleasing at that time, among the heathen, Arabians, Jews, and the several most prevailing sects of Christians; as Stapferus observes:

“Mahomet retained many of the opinions of the ancient Arabians; he mixed his doctrine with the fables of the Jews, and retained many of the ceremonies of the other religions prevalent at that time. The religion of Mahomet favoured the prejudices of the Jews and of the heathens; and was suited to the desires of the flesh, and to the allurements of the world. But the religion which Christ taught, did not, in the least instance, favour the depraved affections of men, and the indulgence of the flesh; but was diametrically opposed to them: nor was it suited to the prejudices of either Jews or Gentiles; but it was plainly contrary to the preconceived opinions of men. Whence the apostles, in preaching this religion, immediately opposed both the religion of the Jews and of the Gentiles.” (Ibid. p. 340.) Christianity was propagated under the most violent, universal, and cruel persecution of all the powers of the world. Mahometanism was not so; it never made its way any where, in any remarkable degree, against persecution.

§ 6. The difference will appear great, if we consider the *time* when each of these were propagated. Christianity was propagated at a time when human learning and science was at its greatest height in the world. But Mahometanism was broached and propagated in ages of great darkness, after learning had exceedingly decayed, and was almost extinguished in the world.

§ 7. The difference will farther appear, if we consider the *places* from whence the religions were propagated. Christianity was first begun in a place of great light, the greatest light with regard to religious knowledge then known, and in a very public part of the globe; whither resorted innumerable multitudes of people three times every year, from almost all parts of the then known world. And beside the vast resort of Jews and proselytes thither, it was a country that was at that time under the inspection and government of the Romans, where they had a governor, and other public officers, constantly residing. It was propagated especially from Jerusalem, the chief city in that country, and one of the greatest and most public cities in the world; and, indeed, all things considered, was next to Rome itself, nay, in some respects, even far beyond Rome. And the nations among whom it was first propagated after the Jews, were not the more ignorant and barbarous, but the most knowing and learned in the world; as particularly the Greeks and Romans. And the cities where it was very early received, and from whence it was promulgated to other parts, were the greatest, most public, and polite; such as Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, Corinth, Athens, and Rome: and some of these were the greatest seats of learning and philosophy on earth. Whereas Mahometanism was broached, in a dark corner of the earth, Arabia; and the people among whom it first gained strength, who sent out armies to propagate it to the rest of the world, were an ignorant and barbarous sort of people; such as the Saracens and Turks, who originated from Scythia.

§ 8. The difference appears in the *means* and *method* of propagation. Christianity was propagated by light, instruction and knowledge, reasoning and inquiry. These things were encouraged by the gospel; and by these means the gospel prevailed. But Mahometanism

was not propagated by light and instruction, but by darkness; not by encouraging reasoning and search, but by discouraging knowledge and learning; by shutting out those things, and forbidding inquiry; and so, in short, by blinding the eyes of mankind. It was propagated by the power of the sword also; by potent sultans, absolute tyrants, and mighty armies. Christianity was propagated by the weakest of men, unarmed with any thing but meekness, humility, love, miracles, clear evidence, most virtuous, holy, and amiable examples, and the power and favour of eminent virtue, joined with assured belief of the truth, with self-denial and suffering for truth and holiness. By such weapons as these was it propagated against the power, authority, wealth, and armour of the world: against the greatest potentates, most absolute and cruel tyrants, their most crafty counsels, and greatest strength, utmost rage and cruelty, and determined resolutions to put a stop to it. It was propagated against all the strength of the strongest empire that ever was in the world.

§ 9. One principal way wherein the propagation of Christianity is a proof of its truth, consists in its being an evidence of the *facts* that are the foundation of it. Christianity is built on certain great and wonderful visible facts; such as, Christ's resurrection from the dead, and the great and innumerable miracles wrought by him and his apostles, and other his followers, in Judea and many parts of the world. These facts were always referred to, as the foundation of the whole; and Christianity always pretended to be built on them. That Christianity, which, in effect, is no other than the belief of these facts, should lie extensively propagated in and near the places and time when the facts were said to be wrought; when and where there was so much opportunity and advantage to know the truth of the matter; is a great, standing, everlasting evidence of the truth of the facts. But as to Mahometanism, it pretends to no facts for its proof and foundation, but only Mahomet's pretences to intercourse with heaven, and his success in rapine, murder, and violence. Belief of sensible miracles, or public attestations of heaven to Mahomet's authority and doctrine, was no part of his religion; and was not employed in its propagation.

§ 10. If we consider the propagation of Christianity as a doctrine or belief of wonderful divine facts, Mahometanism is not set up in opposition to it; because the Mahometan religion itself acknowledges the principal facts of Christianity, though it has no facts of its own to urge. And so Mahometanism rather confirms than weakens Christianity; and the propagation of Mahometanism itself may be considered as one thing belonging to the propagation of Christianity, and as a part of that propagation, in as far as it consists in a propagation of a *professed belief* of those facts. It is so far an instance of the propagation of that which is the foundation of Christianity, that it proves all the rest. The Alcoran owns Jesus to be a great prophet; "the messenger of God," (Surat. v. 84.) that he wrought miracles, healing a man blind from his birth, and the leprous, (Surat. v. 119.) also raising the dead; and that Jesus as born of Mary was himself a miracle, (Surat. xxiii. 52.) He often speaks of Jesus as the servant and messenger of God; (Surat. iv. 158. iii. 152. iv. 169, 170. v. 84.) Now, owning this, is in

effect owning the whole. This is the foundation of the whole, and proves all the rest. It owns that Jesus was miraculously conceived and born; (Surat. iii. 47. xix. 20, 21.) and without sin. (Surat. iii. 36. xix. 19.) Mahomet owns Jesus, and ascribes the conception of Christ alone to the power of God, and the inflation of his Spirit. In Surat. xxi. 19. are these words, as the words of God: "And Mary was a chaste virgin, and We inspired her with Our Spirit, and set up her and her son as a miracle to all ages." He owned Jesus to be the Messiah foretold in the law and the prophets; Surat. iii. 45. "When the angels said, O Mary, certainly God declares to thee his own word; his name shall be Jesus Christ, the son of Mary:" Surat. xix. 29. Surat. iv. "Certainly Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, is the ambassador of God and his word." He owned Christ's ascension into heaven. "God raised him (Christ) to himself;" Surat. iv. 157. Concerning Christ's miracles, Mahomet says, Surat. iii. 45. v. 119. "God says, O Jesus, the son of Mary, I have strengthened thee by the Spirit of holiness; and thou shalt, by my leave, heal a man blind from his birth; and by my leave thou shalt raise the dead from their graves."

§ 11. In this respect the great propagation of the Mahometan religion is a *confirmation* of revealed religion and so of the Christian in particular, which alone can have any pretext to be a religion revealed by God as this is a great demonstration of the extreme darkness, blindness, weakness, childishness, folly, and madness of mankind in matters of religion, and shows how greatly they stand in need of a divine guide, and divine grace and strength for their help, such as the gospel reveals. And that this gross delusion has continued so long to so great an extent, shows how helpless mankind are, under ignorance and delusion in matters of religion; and what absolute need they have of extraordinary divine interposition for their relief. And besides, such a miserable, blind, helpless state of mankind, is also exactly agreeable to the representation made in the Christian revelation.

## CHAP. X.

The Jewish nation have, from their very beginning, been a remarkable standing evidence of the truth of revealed religion.

§ 1. when every other nation under heaven had forsaken the true God, and was overwhelmed in heathenish darkness, the Jews had among them the knowledge and worship of the true God, and rational and true notions of his being, attributes, and works; of his relation to mankind, our dependence upon him, and the worship and regards due to him. This was upheld among them alone, for so many ages, to the coming of Christ; while they were surrounded on every side with nations vastly differing from them, and the worst of idolaters. The whole world beside themselves had forgotten the true God, and forsaken his worship, and were all the while involved in gross heathenism. They lived in the midst of the most frequented and most populous parts of the world. They did not live separated from the rest of the world, as in an island or a peninsula; nor yet as divided from others by vast deserts, or impassable mountains; but on the continent, in the midst of the habitable world, with

populous countries adjoining to them almost on every side. Those nations, who were their next neighbours on every side, were stedfastly gross pagans, and some of the most barbarous idolaters.

§ 2. They were not a nation that studied philosophy; they had no schools among them under the care of philosophers, who instructed their pupils in human science; yet they had most apparently far better, more sublime, and purer, notions of God and religion, of man's duty, and of divine things in general, than the best of the heathen philosophers. Nor do they seem to have been a people any way remarkably distinguished from other nations, by their genius and natural abilities. They were a comparatively small people, not a great empire, not a vast and potent commonwealth.

§ 3. Such changes and revolutions frequently came to pass in their nation, and such was their peculiar state from time to time, that they were exceedingly liable to be corrupted and overrun with heathenish notions, and the customs of idolatrous nations, and to grow into a conformity to the rest of the world in that respect. They were above two hundred years in Egypt, which may be looked upon as the second nation, if not the first, for being the fountain of idolatry. And they lived there under circumstances tending the most to their being corrupted with idolatry, and brought to a conformity with the Egyptians in that respect, of any that can be imagined; especially on these accounts: they were there in the beginning and rise of their nation. There the nation had its birth. It grew from one family of about seventy persons, with the father of the whole family at the head of it, to be more than a million of people, yea probably (reckoning male and female) about two millions. And they lived there, not separate and distinct from the Egyptians; but had continual intercourse with them. Yea, they dwelt there as inferiors, in subjection to the Egyptians; their slaves: and the Egyptians who had daily concern with them, were their masters.

§ 4. After they came into the land of Canaan, they for several ages dwelt there with the remains of the ancient heathen inhabitants, who were so numerous and strong, as sometimes to overcome and keep them long in subjection; which also, from time to time, their idolatrous neighbours did. And after they had lived long in the land ten of their tribes were carried away into final captivity, and heathen inhabitants planted in their stead: by which the religion of the remaining two tribes was the more exposed. At last these remaining two tribes, with the Levites, and all that were left of the ten tribes who had mixed with them, were carried away into Babylon, the chief city of Chaldea, the country that above all in the world (at least, excepting Egypt) was the fountain of idolatry; there they dwelt during the time of one generation. So that before any of them returned, the body of the people were a new generation, born and brought up in that land of darkness, amongst idolaters, their superiors and masters, and most of them the most honourable men that were then in the world; and a great part, perhaps the greater part, of the nation never returned, but continued dispersed in heathen countries till Christ's coming. As to the nation in general, those in Canaan and those out of

it were in subjection to the three successive heathen monarchies, the Persian, Grecian, and Roman; and heathen people belonging to each of those empires, often swarmed in their country.

§ 5. The people seemed to be, from their very beginning till the Babylonish captivity, exceedingly prone to idolatry; were fond, in that respect, of the customs of those heathen neighbours, and were apt to think it honourable to be like the rest of the nations, and a disgrace to be singular. This appears in that they actually oftentimes apostatized to idolatry, embraced the worship of the heathen gods, and neglected the worship of the true God; and continued sometimes for a long time in their conformity to their heathen neighbours. Yet they were wonderfully reclaimed from time to time; so that they were never suffered finally to apostatize, as all other nations in the world had done, nor were left in their apostacy for so long a space of time.

§ 6. All is the more remarkable, in that not only the true God and his spiritual worship are so infinitely diverse from the gods and religion of the heathens; but the external institutions and rites of worship observed among the Jews, and the law of their worship and religion, were remarkably diverse and repugnant to the religious rites of their heathen neighbours. They were exceedingly opposite to the rights of the Egyptians, among whom they lived so long, and among whom they first became a nation. So were they also to the rites of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, of the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, &c.

§ 7. The Jews may be considered as a remarkable evidence of the truth of revealed religion, in that they were preserved so long a time a distinct nation from all others, even since their father Jacob's time, till this day; being neither destroyed, nor abolished, nor lost by mixing with other nations. Jacob himself was exposed to be destroyed by his brother Esau, before he was married. His family were greatly exposed to destruction, at least as to any permanent distinction from other people, when Laban pursued after him, with a design probably to kill him, and to bring back his wives and children into Padan-aram, and to keep them there; or, at least, by some means to carry back his family, and to prevent their ever going to Canaan. He and his family were in imminent danger of being destroyed when Esau came out against him with four hundred men. His family were greatly exposed to danger by the inhabitants of Canaan, when provoked by his sons destroying the Shechemites. A series of wonderful and miraculous providences respecting Joseph, were the means of preserving the family, without which they would probably either have perished by the famine, or, in the time of that famine, have wandered away from Canaan, in such obscurity, and under such disadvantages, that they would likely have never returned any more to Canaan; and so the family would have been broken up.

§ 8. In Egypt they were greatly exposed to be destroyed, when Pharaoh set himself to effect their destruction by drowning all the males. When they had continued so long in Egypt, under such abject circumstances; it could be owing to nothing but a series of the

greatest miracles, that ever they were separated from that people and land, so as to return again to dwell by themselves, to be kept a distinct nation. They were in imminent danger of being swallowed up by Pharaoh and his host at the Red sea; or of receiving such a blow, as wholly to break up the design of their proceeding to Canaan to live there. They were exposed to suffer that which would have prevented their proceeding, when the Amalekites met them, and fought with them.

§ 9. Nothing but a course of most astonishing miracles for forty years could have prevented their perishing in the wilderness, or being obliged to go back again into Egypt, and suffering captivity, dispersion, and ruin by the nations that dwelt around that wilderness. They were greatly exposed to be ruined as a people, by the opposition of the Moabites, Midianites, Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan. That ever they got the possession of Canaan, which was then held by many nations greater and stronger than they, was owing to a course of great miracles, without the intervention of which they must have perished as a people.

§ 10. After they had obtained the possession of the land, they were often greatly exposed to be utterly ruined in the time of the judges, when their enemies in those parts, who seemed to have an exceeding great hatred of them, prevailed against and had the mastery of them. It could be owing to nothing but the special providence of God, that those enemies did not improve the advantages they had in their hands, utterly to destroy them, or at least to drive or carry them captive out of that land; particularly the provoked Canaanites, before the deliverance by Deborah and Barak; the Midianites and the people of the East, before the deliverance by Gideon; and after them the Philistines.

§ 11. Afterwards, in the time of the kings, there were many efforts of the enemies of Israel utterly to destroy the whole nation, to cut them off from being a people, and to blot out their very name from under heaven, agreeably to [Psalm lxxxiii. 3-8](#). "They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent. They are confederate against thee. The tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre: Assur also is joined with them; they have holpen the children of Lot." In David's time there was such a mighty combination of enemies against them, and so great a force was raised, that, one would think, might have been sufficient to swallow up the nation. After Solomon's time, the nation was greatly weakened, and so much the more exposed to ruin, by their division into two kingdoms, often contending, and seldom in amity the one with the other. The nation was greatly exposed in Rehoboam's time to be swallowed up by Shishak king of Egypt; in Asa's time, by the vast army of the Ethiopians; and again, by the mighty army of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, in Jehoshaphat's time, [2 Chron. xx](#). When the kings of Assyria overran



and utterly destroyed the ten tribes, it was a wonder that the two tribes were spared, and the people were greatly exposed to be finally ruined by Sennacherib's army, who intended nothing else.

§ 12. When the people were carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and the whole land laid utterly waste; it was a wonder that this did not prove an entire end to them as a people. It was a wonder they were kept distinct in their captivity; that then they were delivered; and that after they had been in captivity so long, till those that had formerly lived in Canaan were generally dead, and a new generation born in Chaldea was risen up, they should be brought back, and again settled in their own land, and established as a people there. It was a wonder that the land was vacant for them; and a wonder that they were not hindered in their design of resettling there, by the mighty opposition made to it by the Samaritans.

§ 13. The people were marvellously preserved from being blotted out from under heaven by Haman, in the time of Esther and Mordecai. They were wonderfully preserved in Antiochus's time, who was earnestly set on their utter destruction as a people; and it may be observed in general concerning them, during the time of the Old Testament, that there was no nation whatsoever against whom the nations in general were at such enmity, as the nation of the Jews; and they were, on this account, much more likely to be destroyed than any other nation.

§ 14. They lived in a part of the world where they were more exposed to be overrun by other nations, and so to be by them either trodden down, or torn away and scattered abroad in the earth, than had they dwelt in any other part; living as it were in the midst of the earth, betwixt three great continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Their land lay in the very road or thoroughfare between Asia and Africa; between Egypt and the great Eastern and Northern kingdoms, which for many ages were the greatest, most potent, and active kingdoms in the world. It seems the other nations thereabout were all destroyed from being a people, before Christ's time: as the Midianites, the Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, the seven nations of Canaan, and the Philistines.

§ 15. It is remarkable, concerning a great part of the time of the Old Testament, *viz.* from the Babylonish captivity till Christ, that a great part of the Jews lived dispersed amongst other nations: and both those who were thus dispersed, and those that lived in their own land, were all that time in the power of the heathen nations of the four monarchies.

§ 16. With respect to the time since Christ, their preservation as a distinct nation has, in many respects, been still more remarkable. It was wonderful, that what happened to them in the time of Titus Vespasian, when the greater part of the nation was destroyed, and the rest dispersed all over the world in such wretched circumstances, did not prove their utter destruction as a people. And the calamities that happened to the remnant soon afterwards, made their continuance as a distinct people yet more surprising. For within half a century

after their destruction by Titus, in the reign of Trajan and Adrian, the nation in general every where rose in rebellion against the Romans; and were finally every where beaten; so that in these wars the Jews had a thousand cities and fortresses destroyed, with the slaughter of about five hundred and eighty thousand men. What are left of this people have ever since remained in a total dispersion over all the world, mixed every where with other people, without any thing like a government or civil community of their own, and often extremely harassed by other nations; though still they remain a clear and perfectly distinct nation from all other people.

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**PART II.**

*OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE MYSTERIES OF SCRIPTURE.*

§ 1. when we seek for any thing in the dark by so low a faculty of discerning as the sense of feeling, or by the sense of seeing with a dim light, sometimes we cannot find it; though it be there, it seems to us to be impossible that it should be. But yet, when a clear light comes to shine into the place, and we discern by a better faculty, or the same faculty in a clearer manner, the thing appears very plain to us. So, doubtless, many truths will hereafter appear plain, when we come to look on them by the bright light of heaven, that now are involved in mystery and darkness.

§ 2. How are we ready to trust to the determinations of one, universally reputed a man of great genius, of vast penetration and insight into things, if he be positive in any thing that appears to us very mysterious, and is quite contrary to what we thought ourselves clear and certain in before! How are we ready in such a case to suspect ourselves; especially if it be a matter wherein he has been very much versed; has had much more occasion to look into it than we; and has been under greater advantages to know the truth! How much more still, if one should be positive in it, as a thing he had clearly and undoubtedly seen to be true, if he were still of ten times greater genius, and of a more penetrating insight into things, than any that ever have appeared? And, in matters of fact, if some person whom we had long known, one of great judgment and discretion, justice, integrity, and fidelity, and had always been universally so reputed by others, should declare to us, that he had seen and known that to be true which appeared to us very strange and mysterious, and concerning which we could not see how it was possible; how, in such a case, should we be ready almost to suspect our own faculties, and to give credit to such a testimony, in that which, if he had not positively asserted it, and persisted in it, we should have looked upon as perfectly incredible, and absurd to be supposed!

§ 3. From that text, [John iii. 12.](#) “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?” several things are manifest concerning mysteries in religion. (1.) That there are things contained in those doctrine which Christ came into the world to teach, which are not only so far above human comprehension, that men cannot easily apprehend all that is to be understood concerning them; but which are difficult to be received by the judgment or belief; “How shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?<sup>447</sup>” difficult, upon the same account that the doctrine of the new birth was difficult to Nicodemus, because it was so strange, and seemingly impossible. (2.) We may from the words infer, that the more persons are in themselves, and in their own nature, above us; the more the doctrine or truths concerning them are mysterious to us, above our comprehension,

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447 [John iii. 12.](#)

and difficult to our belief; the more do those things that are really true concerning them, contain seeming inconsistencies and impossibilities. For Christ, in the preceding verses, had been speaking of something that is true concerning man, being of the same nature, an inhabitant of the same world, with ourselves; which, therefore, Christ calls an earthly thing. And this seemed very mysterious and impossible, and to contain great seeming inconsistencies. “How can a man be born when he is old?”<sup>448</sup> This seemed to be a contradiction. And after Christ had somewhat explained himself, still the doctrine seemed strange and impossible; [ver. 9](#). “How can these things be?” Nicodemus still looked upon it as incredible, and, on that account, did not believe it at that time, as is implied in these words of Christ; “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not.”<sup>449</sup> But Christ here plainly signifies, that he had other truths to teach that were not about man, an earthly inhabitant, but about a person vastly above men, even about himself who is from heaven, and in heaven, as in the next verse: “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Which, therefore, it would be much more difficult to men’s understanding and judgment, seeming to contain greater impossibilities and inconsistencies; as he then proceeds immediately to declare him a heavenly thing, as he calls it, *viz.* that Christ, a heavenly and divine person should die; [ver. 14, 15](#). Such a mysterious doctrine, so strange and seemingly inconsistent and impossible, that a divine person should die, is more strange than that men should be born again. Hence, when divines argue, from the mysterious nature of many things here below with which we are daily conversant, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose but that there should be things concerning God which are much more mysterious; and that, therefore, it is unreasonable to object against the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.; they argue justly, because they argue as Christ argued.

§ 4. The wiser heathens were sensible that the things of the gods are so high above us, that what appertains to them should appear exceedingly mysterious and wonderful to us; and that it is therefore unreasonable to disbelieve what we are taught concerning them on that account. This is fully expressed by Pythagoras; *viz.* “*Concerning the gods, disbelieve nothing wonderful, nor yet concerning divine things.* This, says Jamblicus, declareth the superlative excellency of God instructing us, and puts us in mind, that we ought not to estimate the divine power by our own judgment. The Pythagoreans stretched this rule beyond the line of divine revelation, to the belief of every oriental tradition.” Gale’s Court of the Gentiles, p. 2. b. 2. c. 8. 190.

§ 5. It is not necessary that persons should have clear ideas of the subject of a proposition, in order to be rationally convinced of the truth of the proposition. There are many truths,

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448 [John iii. 4.](#)

449 [John iii. 12.](#)

of which mathematicians are convinced by strict demonstration, concerning many kinds of quantities, as, surd quantities and fluxions; but concerning which they have no clear ideas.

§ 6. Supposing that mankind in general were a species of far less capacity than they are; so much less, that, when men are come to full ripeness of judgment and capacity, they arrived no higher than that degree to which children generally arrive at seven years of age; and supposing a revelation to be made to mankind, in such a state and degree of capacity, of many such propositions in philosophy as are now looked upon as undoubted truths; and let us suppose, at the same time, the same degree of pride and self-confidence as there is now; what cavilling and objecting would there be! Or, supposing a revelation of these philosophical truths had been made to mankind, with their present degree of natural capacity, in some ancient generation suppose that which was in Joshua's time in that degree of acquired knowledge and learning which the world had arrived at then, *how incredible* would those truths have seemed!

§ 7. If things, which fact and experience make certain, such as the miseries infants are sometimes the subjects of in this world, had been exhibited only in a revelation of things in an unseen state, they would be as much disputed as the Trinity and other mysteries revealed in the Bible.

§ 8. There is nothing impossible or absurd in the doctrine of the *incarnation of Christ*. If God can join a body and a rational soul together, which are of natures so heterogeneous and opposite, that they cannot, of themselves, act one upon another; may he not be able to join two spirits together, which are of natures more similar? And, if so, he may, for ought we know to the contrary, join the soul or spirit of a man to himself. Had reason been so clear in it, that God cannot be incarnate, as many pretend, it could never have such a notion to gain ground and possess the minds of so many nations: nay, and of Julian himself, who says, that "Jupiter begat Esculapius out of his own proper substance, and sent him down to Epidaurus, to heal the distempers of mankind." Reason did not hinder Spinoza, Blount, and many other modern philosophers, from asserting that God may have a body; or rather, that the universe, or the matter of the universe, is God. Many nations believed the incarnation of Jupiter himself. Reason, instead of being utterly averse to the notion of a divine incarnation, hath easily enough admitted that notion, and suffered it to pass, almost without contradiction, among the most philosophical nations of the world.

§ 9. "In thinking of God's raising so many myriads of spirits, and such prodigious masses of matter, out of nothing, we are lost and astonished, as much as in the contemplation of the Trinity. We can follow God but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and matter of amazement to us. How, then, shall we comprehend himself? How shall we understand his nature, or account for his actions? In that he contains what is infinitely more inconceivable than all the wonders of his creation put together." Deism Revealed, edit. 2. vol. ii. p. 93, 94.



Those who deny the *Trinity*, because of its mysteriousness and seeming inconsistency, yet, generally, own God's certain prescience of men's free actions, which they suppose to be free in such a sense, as not to be necessary. So that we may do, or may not do, that which God certainly foresees. "They also hold, that such a freedom without necessity, is necessary to morality; and that virtue and goodness consists in any one's doing good when he might do evil. And yet they suppose, that God acts by the eternal law of nature and reason, and that it is impossible that he should transgress that law, and do evil; because that would be a contradiction to his own nature, which is infinitely and unchangeably virtuous. Now this seems a flat contradiction. To say that the infinite goodness of God's nature makes it utterly impossible for God to do evil, is exactly the same as to say, he is under a natural necessity not to do evil. And to say he is morally free, is to say he may do evil. Therefore the necessity and freedom in this case being both moral, the contradiction is flat and plain; and amounts to this, that God, in respect to good and evil actions, is both a necessary and free agent. Dr. Clark, in his treatise on the Attributes, labours to get clear of this contradiction upon these principles of liberty, but without success; and leaves it just where all men, who hold the same principles, must be forced to leave it. Therefore, they hold such mysteries, in respect to Deity, that are even harder to be conceived of, or properly expressed and explained, than the doctrine of the Trinity.

"When we talk of God, who is infinite and incomprehensible, it is natural to run into notions and terms which it is impossible for us to reconcile. And in lower matters, that are more within our knowledge and comprehension, we shall not be able to keep ourselves clear of them. To say that a curve line, setting out from a point within a hair's breadth of a right line, shall run towards that right line as swift as thought, and yet never be able to touch it, seems contrary to common sense; and were it not clearly demonstrated in the conchoid of Nicomedes, could never be believed. Matter is infinitely divisible; and therefore, a cubical inch of gold may be divided into an infinity of parts; and there can be no number greater than that which contains an infinity. Yet another cubical inch of gold may be infinitely divided also; and therefore, the parts of both cubes must be more numerous than the parts of one only. Here is a palpable contrariety of ideas, and a flat contradiction of terms. We are confounded and lost in the consideration of infinities; and surely, most of all, in the consideration of that *Infinite of infinities*. We justly admire that saying of the philosopher, that *God is a Being whose centre is every where, and circumference nowhere*, as one of the noblest and most exalted flights of human understanding; and yet, not only the terms are absurd and contradictory, but the very ideas that constitute it, when considered attentively, are repugnant to one another. Space and duration are mysterious abysses, in which our thoughts are confounded with demonstrable propositions, to all sense and reason flatly contradictory to one another. Any two points of time, though never so distant, are exactly in the middle of

eternity. The remotest points of space that can be imagined or supposed, are each of them precisely in the centre of infinite space.” Deism Revealed, vol. ii. p. 109-111.

Here might have been added the mysteries of God’s eternal duration, it being without succession, present, before and after, all at once: *Vitæ interminabilis tota simul et perfecta possessio*.

§ 10. To reject every thing but what we can first see to be agreeable to our reason, tends, by degrees, to bring every thing relating not only to revealed religion, but even to natural religion, into doubt; to make all its doctrine appear with dim evidence, like a shadow, or the ideas of a dream, till they are all neglected as worthy of no regard. It tends to make men doubt of the several attributes of God, and so, in every respect, to doubt what kind of being God is; and to make men doubt about the forgiveness of sin, and about the duties of religion, prayer and giving thanks, social worship, &c. It will tend, at last, to make men esteem the science of religion as of no value, and so totally neglect it; and from step to step it will lead to scepticism, atheism, and at length to barbarity.

§ 11. Concerning common *sense*, it is to be observed, that common *inclination*, or the common dictates of inclination, are often called common sense. When any thing is shocking to the common dispositions or inclinations of men, that is called a contradicting of common sense. So, the doctrine of the extreme and everlasting torments of hell, being contrary to men’s common folly and stupidity, is often called contrary to common sense. Men, through stupidity, are insensible of the great evil of sin; and so the punishment of sin threatened in the word of God disagrees with this insensibility, and it is said to be contradictory to common sense. In this case, that turn of mind which arises from a *wicked* disposition, goes for common sense.

“We ought never to deny, because we cannot conceive. If this were not so, then a man born blind would reason right, when he forms this syllogism, ‘We know the figure of bodies only by handling them; but it is impossible to handle them at a great distance; therefore, it is impossible to know the figure of far distant bodies.’ To undeceive the blind man, we may prove to him that this is so, from the concurrent testimony of all who surround him. But we can never make him perceive how this is so. It is therefore a fundamental maxim in all true philosophy, that many things may be incomprehensible, and yet demonstrable; that though seeing clearly be a sufficient reason for affirming, yet, not seeing at all, can never be a reason for denying.” Ramsay’s Philosophical Principles of Religion, vol. i. p. 22, 23.

§ 12. One method used to explode every thing in religion that is in the least difficult to the understanding, is to ridicule all distinctions in religion. The unreasonableness of this may appear from what Mr. Locke observes concerning discerning and judgment. Hum. Underst. book ii. chap. 2. “Accurately discriminating ideas one from another, is of that consequence to the other knowledge of the mind, that, so far as this faculty is in itself dull, or not rightly made use of, for distinguishing one thing from another, so far our notions

are confused, and our reason and judgment disturbed or misled. If in having ideas in the memory ready at hand, consists quickness of parts; in this, of having them unconfused, and being able nicely to distinguish one thing from another, where there is but the least difference, consists in a great measure the exactness of judgment, and clearness of reason, which is to be observed in one man above another. Judgment lies in separating carefully one from another ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another.”

So Dr. Turnbull, in his Principles of Moral Philosophy, part i. chap. 3. p. 94. “Judgment is rightly said to lie in nicely distinguishing the disagreements and variances or differences of ideas; those especially which lie more remote from common observation, and are not generally adverted to. The man of judgment or discretion (for so discretion properly signifies) may be defined to be one who has a particular aptitude to descry differences of all kinds between objects, even the most hidden and remote from vulgar eyes.”

§ 13. If any respect to the Divine Being is of importance, then speculative points are of importance; for the only way whereby we know what he is, is by speculation. If our doctrine concerning him are not right, it will not be that Being, but some other, that we have respect for. So it may be said concerning our respect for Christ. If our doctrine concerning him, concerning his divinity, for instance, are false, we have not respect for the Christ of whom the Scriptures speak, but for an imaginary person, infinitely diverse. When it is said by some, that the only fundamental article of faith is, that Jesus is the Messiah; if thereby be meant, that a person called by that name, or that lived at such a time or place, was the Messiah, that name not implying any properties or qualities of his person, the doctrine is exceedingly unreasonable; for surely the *name* and the *place* are not of so great importance as some other things essential in his person, and have not so great concern in the identity of the object of our ideas and respect, as the person the gospel reveals. It is one great reason why speculative points are thought to be of so little importance, that the modern religion consists so little in respect to the Divine Being, and almost wholly in benevolence to men.

§ 14. Concerning what is often said by some, that all things necessary to salvation are plain and clear, let us consider how, and in what sense, this is true, and in what sense it is not true. *1st*, It is true, that all things necessary to salvation are clearly and plainly revealed. But it does not follow, that they shall *appear* to be plainly revealed to *all men*. No divine thing can have evidence sufficient to appear evident to *all men*, however great their prejudices, and however perverse their dispositions. *2dly*, If thereby is meant, that all things necessary to be believed are easily comprehended, there is no reason in such an assertion, nor is it true.

Some late writers insist, that, for a thing to be revealed, and yet remain mysterious, is a contradiction; that it is as much as to say, a thing is revealed, and yet hid. I answer: The thing revealed is the truth of the doctrine; so that the *truth* of it no longer remains hid,



though many things concerning the *manner* may be so. Yet many things concerning the nature of the things revealed may be clear, though many other things concerning their nature may remain hid. God requires us to understand no more than is intelligibly revealed. That which is not distinctly revealed, we are not required distinctly to understand. It may be necessary for us to know a thing in part, and yet not necessary to know it perfectly.

§ 15. The importance of all Christian doctrine whatsoever, will naturally be denied, in consequence of denying that one great doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction to divine justice, and maintaining those doctrine that establish men's own righteousness, as that on which, and for which, they are accepted of God. For that great christian doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, his vicarious sufferings and righteousness, by which he offered an infinite price to God for our pardon and acceptance to eternal favour and happiness, is that to which all evangelical doctrine, all doctrine beside the truths of natural religion, have relation; and they are of little importance, comparatively, any other way, than as they have respect to that. This is, as it were, the centre and hinge of all doctrine of pure revelation.

§ 16. Indeed, the papists, who are very far from having such a notion of that evangelical faith, which is the special condition of salvation in opposition to works, and have forsaken the evangelical notion of true saving religion, yet with fiery zeal, insist on the profession of a great number of doctrine, and several of the doctrine of pure revelation, as the Trinity, &c. But this in them flows not from any regard to their influence in internal saving religion, but from quite another view, *i. e.* to uphold their tyranny. These are the doctrine which have been handed down among them by their church from ancient tradition; and, to maintain the credit of the infallibility, and divine authority and dominion, of their hierarchy over men's faith, they must be zealous against any that presume to deny Christ's doctrine, because they look upon it as an infringement on the high authority they claim. And some protestants have a zeal for doctrine from like views; doctrine indeed for which they have no great value, in themselves considered.

§ 17. That it is not alone sufficient to believe this one article, that a person of the name of *Jesus* came from God to reveal his will to man, without knowing or determining what he was, or concerning his nature and qualities, is evident from this, that it is often spoken of as necessary to *know* Christ. It is said, "This is eternal life, to *know* thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."<sup>450</sup>

§ 18. There are two things especially that make modern fashionable divines look on doctrine of revealed religion of little importance. One is, their mistake about the *conditions* of salvation; another is, their mistake about the *nature* of true virtue, placing it chiefly, and most essentially, in benevolence to men, and so little in respect to God and Christ. If Christian virtue consists very much in a proper respect to Christ, then certainly it is of great

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450 [John xvii. 3.](#)

importance to know what sort of person he is, at least, as to that particular wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists, which is surely his divinity, if he be a divine person. Another thing on which a proper respect to him depends, is his relation to us, and our dependence upon him; which surely chiefly depends on his satisfaction and merits for us, if he has satisfied and merited for us. The reasons or grounds of the love and honour to Christ required of us, consist chiefly in two things: (1.) In what he *is*: and, (2.) In what he has *done* for us. Therefore, with regard to the latter, it concerns us greatly to know, at least as to the principal things, what they are. And if he has satisfied for our sins; if he has suffered in our stead; if he has truly purchased eternal life and happiness for us; if he has redeemed us from an extremely sinful, miserable, helpless state, a state wherein we deserved no mercy, but eternal misery; then these are principal things.

Another reason why doctrine are thought to be of little importance, is a notion of *sincerity* wherein true virtue consists, as what may be prior to any means of it that God grants; as if it was what every man had in his power, antecedently to all means; and so the means are looked upon as of little importance. But the absurdity of this may be easily manifested. If it be independent of all means, then it may be independent of natural information, or of the truths of the light of nature, as well as of revealed religion; and men may *sincerely* regard and honour they know not what. The truths of natural religion, wherein Christians differ from the most ignorant, brutish idolaters, the most savage and cruel of the heathen nations, may be of little importance. And the reason why they have this notion of sincerity antecedent to means, and so independent on means, is, that they have a notion that sincerity is independent on God, any otherwise than as they depend on him for their creation. They conceive it to be independent on his sovereign will and pleasure. If they were sensible that they depend on God to give it according to his pleasure, it would be easy and natural to acknowledge, that God gives it in his own way, and by his own means.

§ 19. If any article of faith at all concerning Jesus Christ be of importance, it must be of importance to know or believe something concerning his person; what sort of a person or being he was. And if any thing concerning him be of importance to be known and believed, it must be something wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists; for nothing can be of importance to be known or believed about him, but in order to some regard or respect of heart. But most certainly, if any thing of his excellency and dignity be of importance to be known or believed, it must be of importance at least to know so much about him, as to know whether he be God or a mere creature; for herein lies the greatest difference, as to dignity, that can possibly be. This difference is infinite. If it be of importance to know how worthy he is, then it doubtless is of importance that we should not be ignorant of, and deny, as it were, all his dignity, or so much of it, that what remains shall be absolutely as nothing to that which is denied. It is of importance that we love Christ, or have respect to him as one that is excellent, and worthy of esteem and love. The apostle says, "If any man love not

the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha. <sup>451</sup> » And doubtless, true love to Christ is in some respect suitable to the worthiness and excellency of his person. Therefore it is of importance to believe, and not to deny, those doctrine which exhibit his worthiness. It is of importance that we do not in effect deny the whole of his worthiness.

§ 20. How many things were believed by the ancient philosophers about divine matters, even the most rational of them, more mysterious than the doctrine of the Trinity, chiefly because such things were handed to them by the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Chaldeans, or Persians, or on the authority of some great master! Yet these things were imbibed without much difficulty, the incomprehensibleness of the doctrine being no objection to their receiving them.

§ 21. There are things evidently true concerning the nature of our own souls, that seem strange paradoxes, and are seeming contradictions; as that our souls are in no place, and yet have a being; or, if they are supposed to be in a place, that yet they are not confined to place, and limited to certain space; or, if they be, that they are not of a certain figure; or, if they are figurative, that their properties, faculties, and acts, should or should not be so too.

§ 22. If many things we all see and know of the mortality of mankind, the extreme sufferings of infants, and other things innumerable in the state of the world of mankind, were only matter of doctrine which we had no notice of any other way than by revelation, and not by fact and experience; have we not reason to think, from what we see of the temper of this age, that they would be exceedingly quarrelled with, objected mightily against, as inconsistent with God's moral perfections, not tending to amiable ideas of the Godhead, &c.?

§ 23. The definition of a *mystery*, according to Stapferus, Theol. Polem. p. 263, and 858. is this: A *mystery* is a religious doctrine, which must be made known by immediate revelation, and cannot be known and demonstrated from the principles of reason, but is above reason, and which in this whole universe has nothing like itself, but differs from all those truths which we discover in this system of the world. (Ibid. p. 859.) It appears from this definition, that whatever is known by divine revelation, and is not certain from the principles of reason, is a *mystery*; otherwise it could not be said to be revealed. Mysteries are the first things which we conceive concerning revelation; for no revelation can be conceived without mysteries, and therefore they constitute the sum and essence of revelation.

§ 24. It is to be observed, that we ought to distinguish between those things which were written in the sacred books by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and those which were only committed to writing by the direction of the Holy Spirit. To the former class belong all the mysteries of salvation, or all those things which respect the means of our deliverance taught in the gospel, which could not be known from the principles of reason, and therefore must be revealed. But to the other class those things belong, which either are already known

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451 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

from natural religion, but are of service to inculcate duty on man, and to demonstrate the necessity of revealed means of salvation; or are histories, useful to illustrate and to assure us of the doctrine revealed, and which point out the various degrees of revelation, the different dispensations of salvation, and the various modes of governing the church of God; all which are necessary to be known in the further explanation of mysteries.

§ 25. Mysteries constitute the criterion of divine revelation: so absurdly do they act, who allow a revelation, and deny mysteries; or deny revelation for this reason, that it contains mysteries. What the sum and essence of revealed religion are, is plain from the end of it, which is to point out to sinful man the means of obtaining salvation, and of recovering the divine favour. But this is, that Jesus Christ is the only and most perfect cause of salvation, to be received by a true faith. This doctrine, however, is a mystery of godliness manifestly great; [1 Tim. iii. 16](#). And thus that great mystery constitutes the sum and essence of revelation. The essence of revealed religion consists in this, that men by a true faith receive this doctrine, which the apostle calls a mystery manifestly great. Therefore, the knowledge of the greatest mystery belongs to the very essence of the religion of a sinner. How absurd do many of the doctrine of mathematicians and astronomers appear to ignorant men, when they cannot see the reason of those doctrine, although they are most true and evident, so that not the least doubt concerning them can remain in the mind of a thorough mathematician! (Ibid. tom. iii. p. 560.)

§ 26. Since, in religion, there are some primary truths, and others more remote, which are deduced from the former by reasoning, and so are secondary and these last may not be known, though the primary are known, but when once they are known they cannot be denied it follows, that those articles which constitute religion, and so are fundamental, are to be distinguished into primary and secondary. The primary are those of which a man cannot be ignorant, consistently with true religion and his own salvation; and they are necessary with a necessity of means. The secondary are those of which a man may be ignorant, consistently with his resting upon the foundation of true religion, and with his own salvation; and those are necessary with a necessity of command. Therefore, to the same man, certain doctrine may be now fundamental, which were not fundamental to him before he knew them. (Ibid. tom. i. p. 524, 525.)

*Joh. Chr. Kirchmejerus*, in his Dissert. concerning fundamental articles, says, "They may be either reduced to fewer, or extended to more; as often one article may include the rest, and so all may be reduced to that one; and, on the other hand, that one, according to the various truths contained in it, may be divided into several. Therefore, authors do not contradict themselves, who reduce all fundamental articles to one; for they cannot well be determined by their number; because as many fundamental truths are contained in one fundamental truth, as there are essential properties belonging to the truths thus contained. Therefore the Holy Scripture often sums up all fundamental articles in one, as in [John xvii](#).

3. 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' Sometimes it distinguishes them into several; as in [1 Tim. i. 5](#). 'Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.' " (Ibid. tom. i. p. 528.)

§ 27. On account of the various degrees of men's capacities, and the various circumstances of the times in which they live, one man may know truths which another cannot know. Whence it follows, that the very same articles are not fundamental to all men; but accordingly as revelation hath been more or less complete, according to the several dispensations under which men have lived, their various natural abilities, and their various modes and circumstances of living, different articles are, and have been, fundamental to different men. This is very plain from the different degrees of knowledge before and since the coming of Christ; for before his coming, many truths lay hid, which are now set in the most clear light: and the instance of the apostles, abundantly shows the truth of what I have now advanced; who, although they were already in a state of grace, and their salvation was secured, yet for some time were ignorant of the necessity of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of the true nature of his kingdom. Whereas, he who now does not acknowledge the necessity of Christ's death, is by all means to be considered as in fundamental error. Therefore, as a man hath received of God greater or less natural abilities, so let the number of articles to which he shall give his assent be greater or smaller; and as revelation hath been made, or information hath been given, to a man, more clearly or obscurely, in the same proportion is more or less required of him. Therefore, in our own case, we ought to be cautious of even the smallest errors, and to aim at the highest degree of knowledge in divine truths. In the case of others, we ought to judge concerning them with the greatest prudence, mildness, and benevolence. Hence we see, that a certain precise number of articles, which shall be necessary and fundamental to every man, cannot be determined. (Ibid. p. 531.)



### **PART III.**

#### *OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.*

§ 1. If the temptation to the children of Israel was so great, to idolize the brazen serpent, a lifeless piece of brass, for the temporal salvation which some of their forefathers had by looking on it; how great would be their temptation to idolatry by worshipping Christ, if he were a mere creature, from whom mankind receive so great benefits! If that brazen serpent must be broken in pieces, to remove the temptation to idolatry, [2 Kings xviii. 4](#). shall so great a temptation be laid before the world to idolize a mere creature, by setting him forth in the manner that he is set forth in Scripture?

§ 2. Must Moses's body be concealed, lest the children of Israel should worship the remains of him whom God made the instrument of such great things? And shall another mere creature whom men, on account of the works he has done, are under infinitely greater

temptation to worship be most openly and publicly exhibited, as exalted to heaven, seated at God's own right hand, made Head over all things, Ruler of the universe, &c. in the manner that Christ is? Was not this the temptation to all nations to idolatry, *viz.* That men had been distinguished as great conquerors, deliverers, and the instruments of great benefit? And shall God make a mere creature the instrument of so many greater benefits, and in such a manner as Christ is represented to be in the Scripture, without an infinitely greater temptation to idolatry?

§ 3. When the rich young man called Christ *Good Master*, not supposing him to be God, did Christ reject it, and reprove him for calling him so? He said, "There is none *good* but one, that is God; <sup>452</sup> " meaning, that none other was possessed of goodness that was to be trusted. And yet, shall this same Jesus, if indeed not that God who only is to be called *good*, or trusted in as such, be called in Scripture, He that is holy; He that is true? the Amen, the faithful and true Witness? the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? the blessed and the only Potentate; the King of kings, and Lord of lords? the Lord of life, that has life in himself, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father? the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God? the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end? God, Jehovah; Elohim, the King of glory? Compare [Isa. xlii. 8.](#) [Ps. lxxvii. 18.](#) [Isa. xlv. 20, 21.](#), &c. "They pray unto a God that cannot save Tell ye and bring them near; let them take counsel together There is no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me." Yet it is said of Christ, that "He is able to save unto the uttermost. <sup>453</sup> " Yea, the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as mighty to save; saving by his own arm, and by the greatness of his strength, [Isa. lxiii. 1-6.](#) compared with [Rev. xiv. 15.](#) And it is evident, that it is his character, in the most eminent manner, to be the Saviour of God's people; and that with respect to what is infinitely the highest and greatest work of salvation; the greatest deliverance from the most dreadful evil, from the greatest, worst, and strongest enemies, and bringing them to the greatest happiness. It follows, [Isa. xlv. 22.](#) "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Here it is spoken of as the great glory of God, and peculiar to him, that he is a universal Saviour, not only of the Jews, but of all nations. And this is the peculiar character of Jesus. He is the Saviour of all nations. The glory of calling and saving the Gentiles, is represented as peculiarly belonging to him; so that he has this divine prerogative, which is spoken of here as belonging to the one only God, and to none else. And, which is more than, all this, these very things are applied to Christ in the New Testament, [Philip. ii. 10, 11.](#) "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and things under the earth." And the thing spoken of in the following verses, as the peculiar prerogative of God, in distinction from all

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452 [Matt. xix. 17.](#)

453 [Heb. vii. 25.](#)

other beings, as the only Saviour, viz. having righteousness, and being justified in him, are every where in the New Testament most eminently ascribed to Christ, as in a most special manner belonging to him.

§ 4. Being the *Saviour* of God's people, is every where in the Old Testament mentioned as the peculiar work of the Deity. The heathens are reproached for worshipping gods that could not save; and God says to the idolatrous Israelites, "Go to the gods whom ye have served, let them deliver you." See [Isa. xliii. 3, 10 15.](#) in which verses we have another clear demonstration of the divinity of Christ.<sup>454</sup> Trusting is abundantly represented as a principal thing in that peculiar respect due to God alone, as of the essence of divine adoration due to no other than God. And yet, how is Christ represented as the peculiar object of the faith and trust of all God's people, of all nations, as having all-sufficiency for them? Trusting in any other is greatly condemned; is a thing, than which nothing is represented as more dangerous, provoking to God, and bringing his curse on man.

§ 5. And how often is being the *Redeemer* of God's people spoken of as the peculiar character of the mighty God of Jacob, the First and Last, the Lord of hosts, the only God, the Holy One of Israel! (So [Isa. xli. 14. xliii. 14. xlv. 6, 24. xlvii. 4. xlviii. 17. xlix. 7, 26. liv. 5. and lx. 16.](#)) And it may be observed, that when God has this title of the *Redeemer of Israel* ascribed to him in those places, it is joined with some other of the peculiar and most exalted names and titles of the most high God: such as, the Holy One of Israel; (so [Isa. xli. 14. xliii. 14. xlvii. 4. xlviii. 17. and xlix. 7.](#)) The Mighty One of Jacob, ([chap. xlix. 26. and lx. 16.](#)) The Lord of hosts, ([Isa. xlvii. 4. and xlv. 6.](#)) The God of the whole earth, ([chap. liv. 5.](#)) The First and the Last, besides whom there is no God, ([xlv. 6.](#)) The Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, ([ver. 34.](#)) Yet the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as the Redeemer of God's people in the most eminent manner, ([chap. lxiii. 1-6.](#))

§ 6. God is careful that his people should understand, that their honour and love and praise for the redemption out of Egypt, belongs only to *him*, and therefore is careful to inform them, that he *alone* redeemed them out of Egypt, and that there was no other God with him; and to make use of that as a principal argument why they should have no other gods before him. (See [Deut. xxxii. 12. Exod. xx. 3. Psal. lxxxi. 8, 9, 10. Hos. xiii. 4.](#)) The words in that place are remarkable: "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour besides me."<sup>455</sup> If God insisted on that as a good reason why his people should know no God besides him, that he alone was their Saviour

454 See also [Hos. viii. 4.](#) See also [Isa. xlix. 26.](#) and [Deut. xxxiii. 29. Jer iii. 23. Jonah ii. 8, 9. Psalm iii. 8. Isa. xxv. 9.](#)

455 [Hosea xiii. 4](#)

to save them out of Egypt; would he afterwards appoint another to be their Saviour in an infinitely greater salvation?

§ 7. The works of *creation* being ascribed to Christ, most evidently prove his proper divinity. For God declares, that he is Jehovah that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, [Isa. xlv. 24](#). (See also the next chapter, [xlv. 5-7, 12](#).) And not only is the creation of the world ascribed to Christ often in Scripture, but that which in *Isa.* is called the new creation, which is here represented as an immensely greater and more glorious work than the old creation, *viz.* the work of redemption, as this prophet himself explains it, ([Isa. lxxv. 17, 18, 19](#).) is every where, in a most peculiar and distinguishing manner, ascribed to Christ. [2 Peter i. 1](#). “Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:” **GREEK.** [Tit. ii. 13](#). “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” **GREEK.** It is agreeable to the manner of the apostle’s expressing himself in both places, to intend one and the same person, *viz.* *Christ*, under two titles: as when speaking of God the Father, in [Eph. i. 3](#). “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” **GREEK.** See Dr. Goodwin’s Works, vol. i. p. 93,94.

§ 8. That passage in [Isa. xl. 13, 14](#). “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?” proves Christ’s divinity; for Christ directs the Spirit of the Lord. See [John xvi. 13-15](#). and many other places. Compare the following texts, set in opposite columns: those in the first column are represented as belonging to *God* only, which yet, in the second column, are given to Christ.

*The name GOD.*

[Isa. xlv. 5](#).

[John i. 1](#).

scripRef passage=” [Isa. xlv. 8](#).”&gt; [xlv. 8](#).

[Heb. i. 8](#).

[xlv. 9](#).

[Rom. ix. 5](#).

*The name JEHOVAH.*

[Psalm cii. 25](#), &c.

[Heb. i. 10](#).

[Zech. xi. 12](#).

[Matt. xxvii. 9, 10](#).

[Zech. xii. 10](#).

[John xix. 37](#)..

[Isa. xl. 3](#).

[Mark i. 3](#).

[Hos. i. 7](#).

[Luke ii. 11](#).



*Divine Perfections.*

1 Kings viii. 39.  
John ii. 24. xvi. 30. Ac. i. 24.  
Jer. xvii. 10.  
Rev. ii. 3.  
Isa. xliv. 6.  
Rev. i. 17.  
Rev. i. 8.  
Rev. xxii. 13.  
1 Tim. vi. 15.  
Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 16.  
Isa. x. 21.  
Isa. ix. 6.  
Rom. x. 12.  
Acts x. 36. Rom. ix. 5.  
Psalm xc. 2.  
Prov. viii. 22., &c.

*Divine Works.*

Neh. ix. 6.  
John i. 3. Col. i. 16, 17.  
Gen. i. 1.  
Heb. i. 10.

*Divine Worship.*

Exod. xx. 3.  
Heb. i. 6.  
Mat. iv. 10. and Gal. iv. 8.  
John v. 23.<sup>456</sup>

§ 9. If Christ in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, he must be from *eternity*; for then he is before the beginning, by which must be meant, the beginning of time; the beginning of that kind of duration which has *beginning and following*, before and after, belonging to it. The beginning of created existence, or, *the beginning of the creation which God created*, as the phrase is, [Mark iii. 19](#). In [Proverbs viii. 22](#). it is said, “The Lord possessed me before his works of old;” and therefore before those works which in [Genesis i. 1](#). are said to be made in the beginning. God’s eternity is expressed thus, [Psalm xc. 2](#). “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst created the earth and the world, even from everlasting.” So it is said, [Prov. viii. 22.](#), &c. “The Lord possessed me in the beginning

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456 See Waterland’s answer to some queries.

of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was,” &c.

§ 10. That the kingdom of the Messiah is so commonly called the *kingdom of heaven*, is an evidence that the Messiah is God. By the kingdom of heaven is plainly meant a kingdom wherein God doth reign, or is King. The phrase, the kingdom of heaven, seems to be principally taken from [Dan. ii. 14](#). “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;” where the meaning plainly is, after the heads of those four great monarchies have each one had their turn, and erected kingdoms for themselves in their turn, and the last monarchy shall be divided among ten kings; finally, the God of heaven shall take the dominion from them all, and shall set up a kingdom for himself. He shall take the kingdom, and shall rule for ever. In this book, chap. [iv. 26](#). it is said, “After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.” The words in the foregoing verse express what is meant: “Until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.” Therefore, by the kingdom of heaven which shall be set up, is meant the kingdom wherein God himself shall be the king; not as reigning and administering by other kings or judges, as he was king in the time of the judges, and in the time of David and Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah, &c. and as he always doth in the time of good kings: but he shall set up *his kingdom*, in distinction from all kingdoms or states, wherein the heavens shall rule, or God himself shall be king. And therefore the kingdom of heaven is often called the kingdom of God, in the New Testament. And it is abundantly prophesied in the Old Testament, that in the days of the Messiah, God shall take to himself the kingdom, and shall reign as king, in contradistinction to other reigning subordinate beings. And that God himself shall reign on earth, as king among his people, is abundantly manifested from many prophecies.<sup>457</sup> And in this very prophecy of Daniel, chap. vii. where this kingdom, which the Lord of heaven should at last set up, (plainly this same kingdom,) is more fully spoken of, it is manifest, that the Messiah is to be the king in that kingdom, who shall reign as vested with full power, and complete kingly authority.  
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§11. God is several times called in Scripture, the *Glory of Israel*, or of God’s people; and it is a title peculiar to him, wherein he appears as especially distinguished from false gods, [Jer. ii. 11](#). “Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.” [Psal. cvi. 20](#). “Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.” But we find that Christ in the New Testament is spoken of as “the glory of God’s people Israel. [Luke ii. 23](#).

457 See [Psalm xciii. 1. xcvi.10. xcvii.](#) at the beginning, and [xciv. 1. Isa. xxxiii. 22. Isa. xl. 9, 10, 11. Zeph. iii. 14, 15. Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3.](#)

458 See also [Dan. ix. 25. Gen. xlix. Psalms ii. cx. lxxxix. and xlv. Isa. ix. and Zech. vi. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxx. 9. and xxxiii. 15. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 24. Hos. iii. 5. Zech. vi. 12, &c.](#) and in many other places.

§ 12. What is said in [Job xix. 25-27](#). “For I know that my Redeemer liveth,” &c. is a proof of the divinity of Christ. For here, he whom Job calls his Redeemer, his *God*, is God;” Yet in my flesh shall I see God.” But it is very manifest, that Christ is he who is most properly and eminently our Redeemer or *God*: And here Job says, that God shall stand at the latter day, at the general resurrection, on the earth; when he shall see him in his flesh. But the person that shall then stand on the earth, we know, is no other than Jesus Christ. And how often, in other places, both in the Old Testament and the New, is *Christ’s* coming to judgment spoken of as *God’s* coming to judgment! *Christ’s* appearing, as *God’s* appearing! and our standing before the judgment-seat of Christ, as our standing before *God’s* judgment-seat!

§ 13. [Luke i. 16, 17](#). “And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Here John the Baptist is spoken of as going before the Lord, the God of the children of Israel, to prepare his way; agreeably to the prophecies; particularly [Mal. iii. 1.](#) and [iv. 5, 6](#). But who is this person who is called the Lord, the God of Israel, whose forerunner, John the Baptist, is to prepare his way? Nothing is more manifest, than that it is Jesus Christ. See [Mark i. 1-3](#). “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,” (alluding to two prophecies, *viz.* [Mal. iii. 1.](#) and [Isa. xl. 3.](#)) Here is a distinction of two persons; the one speaking in the first person singular, “Behold, I send my messenger;” the other spoken to in the second person, “before *thy* face, which shall prepare *thy* way before *thee*,” which makes it evident that the person spoken of, and whose forerunner he was to prepare his way, was Jesus Christ. So [Matt. xi. 10.](#) [Luke vii. 27](#). See also how manifest this is by [John i. 19](#). “And this is the record of John.” [Verse 23](#). “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias;” with the following verses, especially [ver. 31](#). “And I know him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel: therefore am I come baptizing with water.” So that it is evident, that Christ is he that in the 1st of Luke is called the Lord, or, Jehovah the God of Israel, as the phrase is in the original of the Old Testament, in places from whence this phrase is taken. Therefore it is evident, that Christ is one God with the Father; for the Scripture is very express, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is but one Jehovah; as, [Deut. vi. 4](#). “Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.”

§ 14. And if we look into those prophecies of the Old Testament referred to in these places of the evangelists, it is manifest, that what they foretell concerns a forerunner to prepare the way for the only true and supreme God; as, [Isa. xl. 3](#). “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of *Jehovah*; make straight in the desert a high way for *our God*.” This is evidently the same that is spoken of in the following parts of the

chapter; as in [verse 9](#), and following verses.: “Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold *your God*; behold, *Jehovah God* will come. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment? Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?” [Ver. 22](#). “It is he that sitteth on the circle of the earth, and all the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.” If the supreme God is not spoken of here, where shall we find the place where he is spoken of? If it be an infinitely inferior being, where is God’s distinguishing greatness, and infinitely superior magnificence? It here follows, [ver. 25](#). “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.” A created being would not use such language, or make such a challenge. He that is created himself, would not say, as it follows in the next verse, Lift up your eyes on high; behold, who hath created those things?” So it is evident, that it is the one only God that is spoken of, whose forerunner John was to be. [Mal. iii. 1](#). “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before ME. And *Jehovah*, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into his temple.” [Luke i. 76](#). “And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the *Highest, Greek*; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way.”

§ 15. It is a great evidence that Christ is one being with the supreme God, that the Spirit of the supreme God is spoken of as his Spirit, proceeding from and sent and directed by him. The Spirit by whom the prophets of old were inspired, is spoken of as the Spirit of Christ: [1 Pet. i. 11](#). “Searching what, or what manner of time, *the Spirit of Christ*, which was in them, did signify; when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” But it is very manifest, that this was the Spirit of the one only living and true God; so that we must needs understand, that the word written by the prophets, is the word of the supreme God. See [2 Pet. i. 21](#). [2 Tim. iii. 16](#). And that they spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of the supreme God, is manifest from [Luke i. 69, 70](#). “And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David; as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” The word *Spirit*, in the original languages, signifies *wind*, and sometimes is used to signify *breath*. Therefore, Christ breathed on his disciples, when he would signify to them that he would give them the Holy Ghost: [John xx. 22](#). “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

This plainly teaches us that the Holy Ghost was his Spirit, as much as man's breath is his breath.

Again, it is evident, that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, as much as a person's eyes are his own eyes. [Rev. v. 6.](#) "And I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Alluding to [Zech. iii. 9.](#) "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes." But these seven eyes, in the next chapter, are spoken of as representing the Spirit of God, and the eyes of Jehovah: [chap. iv. 6.](#) "Not by might nor power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." [Ver. 10.](#) "And shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, with those seven. They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro though the whole earth."

Christ is spoken of as *sending* the Holy Ghost, and *directing* him: [John xvi. 7.](#) "I will send him unto you." [Ver. 13, 14, 15.](#) "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." But it is spoken of as the peculiar prerogative of God to direct his Spirit. [Isa. xl. 13.](#) "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?"

§ 16. It is true, that creatures are sometimes called *god*. The kings and judges of God's Israel, the ancient church, are called gods; but no otherwise than as types of Christ. And the angels are called gods. Yet it is very remarkable, that in that only place where they are so called by God, they are commanded to *worship Christ*; and in the same verse, a curse is denounced on all such as are guilty of idolatry. [Psalm xcvi. 7.](#) compared with [Heb. i. 6.](#)

§ 17. God so often speaking of himself as a *jealous* God signifying that he will by no means endure any other husband of his church affords a clear evidence, that Jesus Christ is the same God with the Father. For Christ is often spoken of as that person who is, in the most eminent and peculiar manner, the Husband and Bridegroom of his church. That God who is the Holy One of Israel, is the Husband of the church, as appears by [Isa. liv. 5.](#) "Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Or, as the words are, "Thy Goel, the Holy One of Israel." The goel was the near kinsman, that married the widow who had lost her husband, as appears by [Ruth iii. 9-12.](#) But this Holy One of Israel is the name of that God who is the Father, as appears by [Isa. xlix. 7.](#) and [lv. 5.](#) and so is the Lord of hosts, as appears by [Isa. xlv. 6.](#)

§ 18. Christ is the Lord mentioned in [Rom. x. 13](#). “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.” That it is Christ who is spoken of, is evident from the two foregoing verses; and also from the [14th](#). But the words are taken from [Joel ii. 32](#). where the word translated Lord, is Jehovah. See also [1 Cor. i. 2](#).

§ 19. And [1 Cor. x. 9](#). “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted.” By this, it appears, that Christ was that God, that Holy One of Israel, whom they tempted in the wilderness. [1 Cor. x. 22](#). “Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?” It is evident, that by the Lord here, is meant Jesus Christ, as appears by the preceding context; and that therefore, he is that being who says, “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God. <sup>460</sup>”

§ 20. [Rev. ii. 23](#). Christ says, “I am he that trieth the reins and the heart, and will give to every one of you according to his works.” This is said by the Son of God, as appears by the [18th verse](#). foregoing. Compare this with other passages of Scripture, where those things are spoken of as the prerogative of the supreme God. Parallel with it is [John xxi. 17](#). “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

§ 21. It would be unreasonable to suppose, that there is one Being infinitely greater than all other beings so that all others are as nothing to him, and infinitely beneath him in power and yet, that there is no kind of works or effects of his power, that is peculiar to him, by which he is greatly distinguished from others. He that appeared sitting on the throne above the cherubims and wheels in Ezekiel’s visions, ([Ezek. i. 27](#). and other places,) was undoubtedly Christ; because he appeared in the shape of a man, which God the Father never did. No man hath seen God, *viz.* the Father, at any time:” but the person that there appeared, was undoubtedly God. He is represented as one that has heaven for his throne, and sits as supreme Ruler of the universe. This is undoubtedly the same that rides on the heavens in the help of his people, and his excellency on the sky; that rides on the heaven of heavens by his name Jah, or Jehovah. And this is called the appearance of the likeness, or image of the glory of the Lord; [Ezek. i. 28. iii. 23.](#) and [viii. 4](#). This, while it shows him to be a person truly divine, also shows him to be Christ. For what can this image of the Lord, with an appearance of brightness round about, ([ver. 27, 28.](#)) be, but the same which the apostle speaks of, who is the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of his person?” And this is evidently the same that sat on the throne in the temple, which was called the Chariot of the Cherubims. And this person is called the God of Israel, [Ezek. x. 20](#). and the whole that this person says to Ezekiel from time to time shows, that he is truly God.

§ 22. It is a great evidence of the divinity of Christ, that the Holy Ghost is so put into subjection to him, as to become his messenger; even the Spirit of God, as the Holy Ghost is often called, or the Spirit of the Father, as he is called, [Matt. x. 20](#). The same that is there called the Spirit of the Father, is in [Mark xiii. 11](#). called the Holy Ghost. Now, certainly, it

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is unreasonable to suppose, that the Spirit of the supreme God should be put under the direction and disposal of a mere creature, one infinitely below God. The only evasion here, must be this, that the Holy Ghost is also a created Spirit inferior to the Son. For if Christ be a mere creature, it would be unreasonable to suppose that he should have the Spirit of God subjected to him, on any other supposition, whether the Spirit of God be supposed to be only the power and energy of the Most High, or a superior created Spirit. But how does the Holy Ghost, being a creature inferior to the Son, consist with Christ's being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost? and his being honoured by having the Holy Ghost descending upon him? and being anointed with it, and working his greatest miracles by the power of the Holy Ghost? and its being a great honour done to Christ, that the Spirit was given to him not by measure? Besides, the Holy Ghost being a creature, not only infinitely inferior to God, but inferior to the Son, is exceedingly inconsistent with almost every thing said of the Holy Spirit in Scripture: as, his being called the Power of the highest; his searching all things, even the deep things of God, and knowing the things of God in the most distinguishing manner, as the spirit of man within him knows the things of a man; the Scriptures being the word of God, as it is the word of the Holy Ghost; Christians being the temple of the living God, as they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; lying unto the Holy Ghost being called lying unto God; the chief works of God being ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as the works of creation, and the forming of man in the womb. ([Eccles. xi. 5.](#) [Job xxxiii. 4.](#)) Giving the highest sort of wisdom, *viz.* spiritual understanding; forming the human nature of Christ; being the author of regeneration and sanctification; creating a new heart, and so being the author of the new creation, which is spoken of as vastly greater than the old.

Blasphemy against the Father is pardonable; but not against the Holy Ghost. It is unreasonable to suppose that only the body of Christ was made by the Holy Ghost. It is evident, that the whole human nature, the holy thing that was born of the virgin, was by the Holy Ghost; [Luke i. 35.](#) But the Son of the virgin was a holy thing, especially with regard to his soul. The soul of Adam was from the Spirit of God, from God's breathing into him the breath of life. But this breath of life signifies the Spirit of God, as appears by Christ's breathing on his disciples after his resurrection, saying, [John xx. 22.](#) "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Spirit of God is called the breath of God; [Job xxxiii. 4.](#) "The Spirit of God hath made me; the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." If God's Spirit gives life to other men, or mankind in general, doubtless he gave life to Adam. And if that Spirit of God which gives life to mankind in general, be, in doing that work, called the breath of God; we may well suppose, that when we find that which gave life and soul to Adam, called God's breath, thereby was meant God's Spirit.

§ 23. How unreasonable must our notions be of the creation of the world, on Arian principles! For it is manifest by the Scripture, that the world was made by the Spirit of God, as well as by the Son of God. But the Son of God is, according to them, a created Spirit; and

the Spirit of God must therefore also be a created Spirit inferior to him. Therefore, we must suppose, that the Father created the world by the Son, and that the Son did not create the world by himself, but by the Spirit of God, as his minister or instrument. So that the Spirit of God herein must act as the instrument of an instrument!

§ 24. It is evident that the same Word, the same Son of God, that made the world, also upholds it in being, and governs it. This is evident, in part, unto reason. For upholding the world in being, and creating it, are not properly distinct works; since it is manifest, that upholding the world in being is the same with a *continued creation*; and consequently, that creating the world is but the *beginning* of upholding it, if I may so say beginning to give it a supported and dependent existence and preservation is only continuing to give it such a supported existence. So that, truly, giving the world a being at first, no more differs from preserving it through all successive moments, than giving a being the *last* moment, differs from giving a supported being *this* moment. And the Scripture is as express, that the world is upheld by Christ, as that it was created by him; [Colos. i. 16, 17](#). “For by him were all things created, and by him all things consist.” [Heb. i. 2, 3](#). “By whom also he made the worlds, and upholding all things by the word of his power.” And it is he that shall bring the world to an end. [Heb. i. 10, 11, 12](#). “Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, &c. They shall perish, but thou shall endure. As a vesture shall thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

But if these things are so, what shall we think of the upholding and government of the world, while Christ was in his humbled state, and while an infant, and when we are told that he was wearied with his journey, and his strength in some measure spent, only with governing the motions of his own body? Who upheld and governed the world at that time? Doubtless it will be said, that God the Father took the world out of the hands of the Son for that time, to uphold and govern it, and returned it into his hands again at his exaltation. But is there any ground to suppose such a mighty change as this, as to the author of the universe, that it should have such different authors of its being, and of all its properties, natural principles, motions, alterations, and events, both in bodies and all created minds, for three or four and thirty years, from what it had ever before or since? Have we any hint of such a thing? or have we any revelation of any thing analogous? Has God ever taken the work of a creature out of its hands, according to the ordinary course of things?

§ 25. The supreme God is doubtless distinguished by some works or other. As he must be infinitely distinguished from all other beings in his *nature*; so, doubtless, there are some *manifestations* or other of this vast superiority above all other beings. But we can have no other proper manifestations of the divine nature, but by some *effects* of it. The invisible things of God are seen by the things that are made. The word of God itself is no demonstration of the superior distinguishing glory of the supreme God, any otherwise than by his works; and that two ways: 1. As we must have the perfections first proved by his works, in



order to know that his word is to be depended on. 2. As the works of God, appealed to and declared in his word, make evident that divine greatness and glory which the word of God declares. There is a difference between declaration and evidence. The *word* declares; but the *works* are the proper evidence of what is declared.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the vastly distinguished glory of the supreme God is manifested by some distinguishing peculiar works of his. That the supreme God is distinguished very remarkably and most evidently from all other beings, by some works or other, is certain by the Scripture. It is often represented, that he most plainly and greatly shows his distinguishing majesty, power, and wisdom, and vast superiority to other beings, by his works that are seen, and set in the view of the children of men. So [Psalm lxxxi. 8.](#) “Among the gods there is none like unto thee, neither are there any works like unto thy works;” see also [verse 10. Psalm lxxxix. 5, 8, 9, 10.](#) “The heavens shall praise thy wonders: for who in heaven can be compared to the Lord? who amongst the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.” [Deut. iii. 24.](#) “What God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?” [Psalm lxxii. 18.](#) “Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things.” This is often added to the declarations of God’s works, “That ye may know that I am the Lord, or that I am Jehovah:” and this, “That ye may know that there is none like unto me,” &c. [Exod. viii. 10, 22. chap. ix. 14, 16. and x. 2.](#) and innumerable other places.

§ 26. But now, what are these distinguishing works of God? or the works by which his distinguishing dignity and glory are clearly manifested? What works are they that can be named or thought of? Is it creating the world? Or is it the creating of the spiritual, intellectual world, which undoubtedly is an unspeakably greater work, than creating the material world? Is it preserving and upholding the world? Or is it governing the world? Or is it redemption and salvation; or at least some particular great salvation? Was it the redemption out of Egypt, and carrying the people of Israel through the wilderness, and giving them the possession of Canaan? Or is it the greatest work of redemption, even salvation from spiritual, total, and eternal destruction, and bringing to eternal holiness and glory? Is it conversion, regeneration, restoring a fallen, sinful creature, and making men new creatures, giving them holiness, and the image of God? or giving wisdom to the heart, the truest and greatest wisdom? Is it the conversion of the Gentile world, and renewing the whole world of mankind, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles? Or is it conquering Satan and all the powers of darkness, and overcoming all evil, even the strongest holds of sin and Satan, all God’s enemies in their united strength? Is it searching the hearts of the children of men? Is it working any particular kind of great miracles? Is it raising the dead to life, or raising all in general at the last day? Is it judging the world, angels and men, in the last and greatest judgment? Is it bestowing

on the favourites of God, both men and angels, their highest, most consummate, and eternal glory? Is it destroying the visible creation, and bringing all to their final period and consummation, and to their most perfect and eternal state? Or, are there any other works greater than these, that can be thought of, which we can find appealed to as clearly manifesting the most peculiar and distinguishing glory of the supreme God, in comparison of whom all other beings whatsoever are absolutely as nothing? Yet all these are ascribed to Christ.

§ 27. The *creation* of the world in general is often spoken of as the *peculiar* work of the supreme God, a work wherein he manifests his glory as supreme, and distinguished from all other beings: [Rom. i. 19, 20](#). “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” Doubtless it is the supreme God who is here spoken of. And what godhead is clearly to be seen by the creation of the world, but the supreme Godhead? And what can that invisible glory and power of this God be, but that by which he is distinguished from other beings, and may be known to be what he is? It is said, “that which may be known of God, is clearly manifest by his works.” But doubtless, one thing, and infinitely the most important, that may be known of God, is his supreme dignity and glory, that glory which he has as supreme God. But if the creation of the world be not a work peculiar to him, how are these things so clearly manifested by his work? The work of creation is spoken of as one of the great wonders done by him, who is God of gods and Lord of lords, who alone doth great wonders; as in [Ps. cxxxvi. 2-9](#). “O give thanks unto the God of gods. O give thanks to the Lord of lords. To him who alone doth great wonders. To him that by wisdom made the heavens. To him that stretched out the earth over the waters. To him that made great lights, The sun to rule by day,” &c. This is the work of the supreme God, which he wrought *alone*, [Job ix. 8](#). “Which alone spreadeth out the heavens.” And [2 Kings xix. 15](#). “O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth:” [1 Chron. xvi. 24, 25, 26](#). “Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.” [Isa. xl. 25, 26](#). “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.” How plain is it here, that creating the world is spoken of as a work of the supreme God, most evidently showing that none is like him, or to be compared to him? So [verse 12](#). compared with [verse 18](#). God asserts the creation of the world to be his work, so as to deny any associate or *instrument*; as in [Isa. xlv. 24](#). “Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens *alone*, that spreadeth abroad the earth *by myself*.” [Isa. xiv. 5-7](#). “I am Jehovah, and there is none else; there is no God besides me: that they may know

from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness." [Verse 12](#). "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens." [Verse 18](#). "Thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it." [Verse 21](#). "I am Jehovah, and there is no God else beside me: a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me." Yet these works are applied to Christ.

§ 28. God's creating the world, is used as an argument, to show the nations of the world the reasonableness of forsaking all other gods, and worshipping the one true God only. [Rev. xiv. 7](#). "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (See also [Acts xiv. 15](#). and [Rev. x. 6](#).) The work of creation is spoken of as the distinguishing work of the supreme only living and true God, showing him to be alone worthy to be worshipped; as in [Jer. x. 6-12](#). "Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain. Jehovah is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power: he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."

§ 29. But the *creation* of the world is ascribed to Jesus Christ, in [John i. 3](#). [Col. i. 16](#). [Heb. i. 10](#). It is ascribed to him as being done by his power, as the work of his hands, [Heb. i. 10](#). And his work in such a manner, as to be a proper manifestation of his greatness and glory; and so as to show him to be God, [John i. 1-3](#). Is the creation of the spiritual, intelligent world, consisting of angels, and the souls of men, and the world of glory, a *peculiar* work of the supreme God? Doubtless it is so. [Neh. ix. 6](#). "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with *all their host*: and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." [Psalm civ. 4](#). "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." And the creation of the spiritual and intelligent world, in every part of it, is also ascribed to Christ. For it is said, [John i. 3](#). "The world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." And to him is expressly ascribed the creation of the invisible world, and of the angels in particular, even the very highest and most exalted of them; and all the most glorious things in the invisible heaven, the highest and most glorious part of the creation of God. [Col. i. 16](#). "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible;" (these include the invisible things on earth, as well as in heaven, even the souls of men;) "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him."

§ 30. *Preserving* the creation, is spoken of as the work of the one only Jehovah, [Neh. ix. 6](#). "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; and thou *preservest them all*." [Isa. xl](#).

26. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might; for that he is strong in power, not one faileth." [Job xii. 7-10](#). "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of Jehovah hath made this, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind?" See also. [Psalm xxxvi. 6, 7](#).

But the preservation of the creation is also ascribed to Christ; [Heb. i. 3](#). "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." [Colos. i. 17](#). "By him all things consist."

§ 31. *Governing* the creation, is another thing often spoken of as the *peculiar* work of God; as in [Isa. xl. 21, to the end](#). There, governing the world is the manifest peculiar work of him to whom none is like and none equal. And, in [Isa. xlv. 1-13](#). governing the world, bringing to pass revolutions in nations, &c.; are spoken of as the peculiar works of him who is Jehovah alone. See [2 Chron. xxix. 11, 12](#). and [Psalm xxii. 28. xlvii. 2, &c](#). But Christ is often, in the New Testament, spoken of as the *Governor* of the world, is prayed to as such, and spoken of as he whose will disposes all events.

Sitting as king in heaven, having his throne there, and governing the universe for the salvation of his people, are spoken of as peculiar to the supreme God. But, how often and eminently are these things ascribed to Christ! His having his throne in heaven; being exalted far above all heavens; thrones, dominions, &c. being made subject to him; being made head over all things to the church, &c.

§ 32. *Judging* the world, is another thing spoken of as peculiarly and distinguishingly belonging to the supreme God. <sup>461</sup> [Psalm l. 1-7](#). "The mighty God, even Jehovah, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Our God shall come; a fire shall devour before him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people: and the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against thee. I am God, even thy God." This [50th Psalm](#). begins thus: *el elohim jehovah*, "The God of gods, Jehovah; or, the most mighty God, even jehovah." Who can believe that these three most magnificent names of the Deity are thus united, to signify any other than the supreme God?  
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But it is apparent, that Christ is abundantly spoken of as eminently the Judge of all nations, of all degrees, quick and dead, angels and men. We are particularly and fully instructed, that it is his distinguishing office to judge the world, [John v. 22](#). [2 Tim iv. 8](#). [Rev. xix. 11](#). and many other places.

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<sup>461</sup> See [1 Sam. ii. 3, 10](#). [Job xxi. 22](#). [Psalm xi. 4, 5](#). [lxxv. 6, 7](#). [lxxxii. 1, 8](#). [Judg. xi. 27](#). [Psalm xciv. 2](#).

<sup>462</sup> See also [Psalm ix. 7, 8](#). [1 Chron. xvi. 25, 26-33](#). [Psalm xcvi. 4, 5-13](#). Also [Psalm xcvi. 4, 5-13](#). Also [Psalm xcvi. 4, 5-13](#).

§ 33. *Destroying* the world at the consummation of all things is spoken of as a *peculiar* work of God; even of Jehovah, [ver. 1, 12, 16, 18, 21, 22.](#); the Creator of the world, [ver. 24, 25, 28.](#) See also [Psalm xcvi. 1-6.](#) and [Neh. i. 4, 5, 6.](#) [Jer. x. 6, 7, 10.](#) [Psalm xlvi. 6.](#) [civ. 32.](#) [cxliv. 5.](#) [Isa. lxiv. 1, 2, 3.](#) [Job ix. 4-7.](#) But this is spoken of as the work of the Son of God, [Heb. i.](#) latter end.

§ 34. The wonderful *alterations* made in the *natural world*, at the coming out of Egypt; the giving of the law, and entrance into Canaan; are often spoken of as the *peculiar* works of God, greatly manifesting the divine majesty as vastly distinguished from all other gods: such as, dividing the sea; drowning Pharaoh and his hosts there; causing the earth to tremble, the mountains to quake at his presence, the heavens to drop, the hills to skip like rams and lambs; Jordan being driven back; the sun and moon standing still, &c.

But these were infinitely small things, in comparison with what shall be accomplished at the end of the world, when the mountains and hills shall be thrown into the midst of the sea; and not only some particular mountains shall quake, but the whole earth, yea, the whole visible world, shall be terribly shaken to pieces. Not only shall mount Sinai be on fire, as if it would melt, but all the mountains, and the whole earth and heavens shall melt with fervent heat; the earth shall be dissolved even to its centre. And not only shall the Red sea and Jordan be dried up for a few hours, in a small part of their channels, but all the seas, and oceans, and rivers through the world shall be dried up for ever. Not only shall the sun and moon be stopped for the space of one day; but they, with all the innumerable mighty globes of the heavens, shall have an everlasting arrest, an eternal stop put to their courses. Instead of drowning Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, the devil and all the wicked shall be plunged into the eternal lake of fire and brimstone, &c.

The former kind of effects were but little, faint shadows of the latter. And the former are spoken of as the peculiar, manifest, glorious works of the supreme one only God, evidently manifesting his peculiar majesty and glory. But the latter are the works of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, as is evident by [Heb. i. 10-12.](#) It is here worthy to be remarked, that though the Scripture teaches, that Christ's majesty shall at the last day appear to be so great in his coming in power and great glory, yet it is said, when these things shall be, *God alone* should be exalted, in opposition to *men* and to *other gods*, [Isa. ii. 10, to the end.](#)

§ 35. The work of *salvation* is often spoken of as *peculiar* to God. It is said, the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, [Psal. xxxvii. 39.](#) and that salvation belongeth unto the Lord, [Psal. iii. 8.](#) [Jonah ii. 9.](#) God's people acknowledge him to be the God of their salvation, [Psal. xxv. 5.](#) [xxvii. 1.](#) and [Isa. xii. 2.](#) Saving effectually is spoken of as his prerogative, [Jer. xvii. 14.](#) "Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise." [Psal. lxxviii. 20.](#) "He that is our God, is the God of salvation, and to the Lord our God belong the issues from death."



Salvation is spoken of as being of God, in opposition to *men*, and to all *creature* helps, [Jer. iii. 23](#). “Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.” [Psal. lx. 11](#). “Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help (Heb. salvation) of man.” [Ver. 16](#). “I Jehovah am thy Saviour.” [Psal. cxlvi. 3, 5](#). “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom is no help (or salvation). Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.” Salvation in or by any other is denied, [Isa. lix. 16](#). “And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore, his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him.”

It is spoken of as his prerogative to be the *rock* of salvation, to be *trusted* in by men. “Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.” See [Psal. xcv. 1. lxii. 2](#). “He *only* is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence.” [Ver. 5-9](#). “My soul, wait thou on God *alone*, for my expectation is from him. He *only* is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.”<sup>463</sup>

It is said, that there is no *other Saviour* besides the one only Jehovah; [Isa. xliii. 3](#). “I am Jehovah thy God, the Saviour of Israel;” [xliii. 11](#). “I, even I, am Jehovah, and *besides* me there is no Saviour.” See [Isa. xlvii. 4. liv. 5.](#) and [xlv. 15](#). “O God of Israel, the Saviour.” [Ver. 21.](#), to the end; “I am Jehovah, and there is no God else besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.” Here observe, that this is given as a reason why all nations in the world should look to him *only* for salvation, that he *only* was God; taking it for granted, and as an universally established point, that none but *God* could be a Saviour. And here salvation is claimed as the prerogative of the one only God, and therefore *exclusively* of a secondary and subordinate god. It follows, “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength. Even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”<sup>464</sup> [” Hosea xiii. 4](#). “Yet I am Jehovah, thy God from the land of Egypt: and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is *no Saviour besides me*.”

God is so completely the *only Saviour* of his people, that others are not admitted to partake of this honour, as mediate and subordinate saviours: [Hos. i. 7](#). And therefore, the

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463 See [Deut. xxiii. 4. 2. 1 Sam. xxiii.3. Psal. xviii. 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 1, 2, 31, 32. Psal. xviii. 2. 30, 31 46. Isa. xxvi.4. Heb. i. 12.](#)

464 [Isa. 45:23-25.](#)

heavenly hosts, in giving praise to God, ascribe salvation to him, as *his peculiar* and distinguishing glory; [Rev. xix. 1.](#) “I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God.”

§ 36. But nothing is more evident, by the express and abundant doctrine of Scripture, than that Jesus Christ is most eminently and *peculiarly* the Saviour of God’s people, and the Saviour of the world. In [John iv. 42.](#) his very name is *Jesus, Saviour*. He is spoken of as the Author of eternal salvation, [Heb. v. 9.](#) And the Captain of the salvation of his people, [Heb. ii. 10.](#) a Prince and a Saviour. He is called Zion’s salvation, [Isa. lxii. 11.](#) “Behold, thy salvation cometh.” He is spoken of, as saving by his own strength, and able to save to the uttermost; one mighty to save, and therein distinguished from all others; as in [Isa. lxiii. 1.](#) “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” [Ver. 5.](#) “I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore *mine own arm* brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me.” What is said in this place, is meant of Christ, as is manifest by comparing [ver. 3.](#) with [Rev. xix. 15.](#) And the very same things that are said of Jehovah, the only God, as the only Saviour in whom men shall trust for salvation, as in [xlv. 21, to the end.](#) are from time to time applied to Christ in the New Testament. And it is expressly said, [Acts iv. 12.](#) “There is salvation *in no other*, neither is there any other name given under heaven amongst men, whereby we must be saved.” And the heavenly hosts, in their praises, ascribe salvation to Christ in like manner as to God the Father, [Rev. vii. 10.](#) “Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.” See also [chap. v.](#) Christ is a rock sufficiently sure, and perfectly to be trusted, [Isa. xxviii. 16, 17.](#) [1 Cor. x. 4.](#)

§ 37. The redemption from Egypt, and bringing the children of Israel through the wilderness to the possession of Canaan, is often spoken of as a great salvation, which was most evidently the *peculiar* work of the one only Jehovah, greatly manifesting his distinguished power and majesty. [2 Sam. vii. 22, 23.](#) “Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like thee; according to all that we have heard with our ears;” meaning what they had heard of his great fame, or the name he had obtained by his wonderful works, in bringing them out of Egypt, &c. as appears by what follows; [2 Sam. vii. 23.](#) “And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things, and terrible for thy land, before thy people which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?” The same work is mentioned as an evidence, that the doer of it is Jehovah, and that there is none like unto him, and as that which makes known God’s name through the earth; [Exod. viii. 10, 22. ix. 14, 16. and x. 2.](#) See also [chap. xv. 6-11. xviii. 11. and xxxiv. 10. Deut. iii. 24.](#)

§ 38. But it was Jesus Christ that wrought that salvation: [Isa. lxiii. 9, 10.](#) “The angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them, and he bore them, and earned them all the days of old. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.” This rebelling

and vexing of his Holy Spirit is evidently the same thing with that spoken of, [Psal. xcv. 8, 9, 10](#). “As in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long was I grieved with that generation.” But it is evident that he whom they tempted, provoked, and grieved, was that God whose great works they saw, and therefore was that God who wrought those wonderful works in Egypt and the wilderness: as is evident by the same, [ver. 3](#). where he is called “Jehovah, a great God, and a great King above all gods.” And it is equally clear by that passage in [Isa. lxiii.](#) just quoted, that it was the *angel of God’s presence*, and by [1 Cor. x. 9](#). “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted.”

And as it is said, [Isa. lxiii.](#) that the angel of God’s presence saved them, &c. so it is plain by [Exod. xxiii. 20-33.](#) that God’s angel, a different person from him who acts as first in the affairs of the Deity, brought them into Canaan, &c. And it is plain, that the person that appeared in the bush, who said his name was *Jehovah*, and *I am that I am*, was the angel of Jehovah: [Exod. iii. 2, 14. vi. 3.](#) and [Acts vii. 30.](#) And nothing is more evident, by the whole history, than that the same person brought them out of Egypt: and also, that it was the same angel which appeared and delivered the ten commandments at mount Sinai, conversed there with Moses, and manifested himself from time to time to the congregation in the wilderness. [Acts vii. 38.](#) “This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us.” That angel doubtless was the same that is called the angel of the covenant; [Mal. iii. 1.](#) “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come into his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts:” and this messenger without doubt was Christ. It is plain by [Heb. xii. 25, 26, 27.](#) that he who spake at mount Sinai was Christ: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh,<sup>465</sup>” &c.

§ 39. Thus we see, that however the work of salvation be so often spoken of as *peculiar* to God; yet this salvation out of Egypt, so much celebrated in Scripture, is not peculiar to God the Father; but that the Son wrought this work as well as the Father. And it is true, that the Scriptures abundantly speak of an infinitely greater and more glorious salvation than that out of Egypt; *viz.* the salvation of men from sin, Satan, eternal death and ruin, and bringing them to the heavenly Canaan, to eternal life and happiness there. This is spoken of as a far greater work than the other. So that, in comparison of it, it is not worthy to be remembered or mentioned. [Jer. xvi. 14, 15.](#) “It shall no more be said, The Lord liveth,” &c. see also [chap. xxiii. 6-8. Isa. xliii. 18-21.](#) “Remember ye not the former things,” &c. But I need not stop to show the reader how this great salvation is in Scripture ascribed in a *peculiar* manner to *Christ* as the author.

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465 [Heb. xii. 25.](#)



§ 40. We read in Scripture of two *creations*: the *first*, that which Moses gives an account of in the first chapter of Genesis; the *other*, a spiritual creation, consisted in restoring the moral world, bringing it to its highest perfection, and establishing it in its eternal felicity and glory; and the latter is spoken of as most incomparably the greatest work; [Isa. lxxv. 17, 18.](#) and [lxxvi. 22.](#) Now, as creation is so much spoken of as a most peculiar work of the supreme God, one may well determine, that if the first creation be not so, yet the second is, which is so much greater, and evidently the greatest of all God's works.

But this new creation, which is the same with the work of redemption, is, in the most especial manner, spoken of as the work of Jesus: for he is ever mentioned as the great Redeemer and restorer. This work is committed to him: for this he has a full commission. It is left in his hands; all things are committed to him; all power in heaven and in earth is given him, that he may accomplish this work, and bring it to its most absolute perfection. To this end are subjected to him, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and he is made head over all things; and to this end, the world to come, that is, all the affairs of that new creation, are put in subjection unto him: and he, with regard to all the transactions belonging to this new creation, that are written in the book of God, is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Christ built the house; he built all things, especially in this new creation; and therefore is God. These things are plainly asserted in [Heb. iii. 3, 4.](#) "For this man (rather this *person*) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man: but he that built all things is God." Thus, the work of redemption, which is both the greatest work of salvation, and the greatest work of creation, (the two kinds of works chiefly spoken of in Scripture as divine,) is accomplished by the Son of God.

§41. The giving of spiritual and saving *light* is one chief part of the new creation, as creating the light was a chief part of the old creation. The causing of this spiritual light is spoken of as the *peculiar* work of God. [2 Cor. iv. 6.](#) "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," &c. But the giving of this light is especially ascribed to Christ, as the author and fountain of it. He is called the Light of the world; the Light of life; the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He is the Sun of righteousness. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, &c.

§ 42. So *calling* men into Christ's fellowship and kingdom, is also ascribed to God. [Rom. viii. 30.](#) "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." [Acts ii. 39.](#) "As many as the Lord our God shall call." [1 Cor. i. 9.](#) "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." [1 Thess. ii. 12.](#) "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." [2 Thess. ii. 13,14.](#) "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation; whereunto he called you by our gospel." [2 Tim. i. 9.](#) "According to

the power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." 1 Pet. v. 10. "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory."

But this is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Rom. i. 6. "Among whom also ye are the called of Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. vii. 17. "As the Lord hath called every one." John x. 3. "And he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Verse 16. "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in; and they shall hear my voice." Eph. i. 18. "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling."

§ 43. *Regeneration*, or the changing and renewing of the heart, is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. John i. 13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." James i. 18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

It is likewise ascribed to Christ. Saints are born of him in their spiritual generation, and therefore are called his seed; Gal. iii. 29. It is Christ that baptizes men with the Holy Ghost, which is called the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and a being born of water and of the Spirit. Christ sanctifies and cleanses the souls of men, by the washing of water, by the word; Eph. v. 26.

§ 44. *Justification*, washing from sin, delivering from guilt, forgiving sin, admitting to favour and to the glorious benefits of righteousness in the sight of God, are often spoken of as belonging peculiarly to God. Rom. iii. 26. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Verse 30. "Seeing it is one God that justifieth," &c. Chap. viii. 30. "Whom he called, he also justified." Verse 33. "It is God that justifieth." Isa. xliii. 25. "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." Psalm li. 2-4. "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Therefore the Jews said, Luke v. 21. "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

But Christ hath power to forgive sin, as it follows in the last-mentioned place; verse 24. "But that ye may know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," &c. He washes us from our sins in his own blood; Rev. i. 5. And he justifies those that know and believe in him; Isa. liii. 11.

§ 45. *Overcoming Satan*, and delivering men from him, and giving his people victory over him, are spoken of as the peculiar works of God's glorious power. Isa. xxvii. "In that day, Jehovah, with his great and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan, that crooked serpent; he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Psalm viii. 1, 2. "O Jehovah, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

But it is the special work of Christ to bruise the serpent's head; to destroy the works of the devil; and that by his own strength. For he is represented as conquering him, because

he is stronger than the strong man armed, and so overcoming him and taking from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and spoiling his goods. It is he that has spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them. He is the spiritual Samson, that has rent the roaring lion as lie would have rent a kid; and the spiritual David, that has delivered the lamb out of his mouth, and has slain that great Goliath. He is that Michael who fights with the dragon and casts him out; and at last will judge Satan, and will utterly destroy him; and will inflict those everlasting torments on him spoken of in [Rev. xx. 10](#). In the apprehension of which he now trembles, and trembled for fear that Christ would inflict those torments on him, when he cried out and fell down before him, saying, <sup>466</sup> “Art thou come to torment me before the time?” and, <sup>467</sup> “I beseech thee, torment me not.”

§ 46. Should any imagine that those parts of the work of redemption, which are initial, and are wrought in this world, being more imperfect, may be wrought by the Son of God; but that the more glorious perfection of it, which is brought to pass in heaven, is peculiar to God the Father: in opposition to this, it may be observed, it belongs to Christ to take care of the souls of his saints after death; to receive them to the heavenly state; and to give them possession of heaven. Therefore the Scriptures represent, that he redeems his saints to God, and makes them kings and priests. He has the key of David, the key of the palace, and the keys of hades, or the separate state, and of death; and opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens. He is gone to heaven as the forerunner of the saints. He has, in their name, taken possession of that inheritance which he has purchased for them, that he may put them in possession of it in due time. He is gone to prepare a place for them, that he may come and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also; and make them sit with him in his throne. And therefore Stephen, when dying, commended his spirit into Christ’s hands.

Or, if any shall say, that the far more glorious salvation which shall be effected at the end of the world; when all things shall be brought to their highest consummation, shall be the peculiar work of God the Father; I answer, It is abundantly manifest from Scripture, that the consummation of all things shall be by Christ. He shall raise the dead by his voice, as one that has power and life in himself. He shall raise up the bodies of his saints in their glorious resurrection, making their bodies like to his glorious body; [John v. 25, 29.](#) and [vi. 39, 40.](#) He, as the universal and final Judge, shall fully put all things to rights, and bring every thing to its last and most perfect state. He shall bestow that great gift of eternal life, in both soul and body, on the whole church, and every individual member in a state of most consummate glory, which is the thing aimed at in all the preceding steps of the great affair of redemption. He shall present his church to himself and to his Father a glorious church, not

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<sup>466</sup> [Matt. 8:29.](#)

<sup>467</sup> [Luke 8:28.](#)

having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; all in a perfect purity, beauty, and glory: and the glory which God hath given him he will give them, in the most perfect manner, that they may reign with him for ever and ever. And thus, he will cause the New Jerusalem to appear in its brightest glory, as a bride adorned for her husband; and will perfect the new creation, and cause the new heavens and new earth to shine forth in their consummate and eternal beauty and brightness; when God shall proclaim, *It is done*; I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.<sup>468</sup> Christ is represented as being himself the light and glory that enlightens the New Jerusalem, that fills with brightness and glory the church of God, in its last, consummate, and eternal glory; [Rev. xxi. 23](#).

§ 47. Concerning the name *Jehovah*, see [Neh. ix. 6](#). “Thou art *Jehovah alone*; thou hast made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth,” &c. [Deut. vi. 4](#). “Hear, O Israel, *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.*” [2 Sam. xxii. 32](#). “Who is God, save *Jehovah*? who is a rock, save our God?” So [Psal. xviii. 31](#). [1 Kings xviii. 39](#). “*Jehovah*, he is the God; *Jehovah*, he is the God.” When God proclaimed his name in mount Sinai, [Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6](#). “He passed by and proclaimed, *Jehovah, Jehovah.*” [Jer. x. 10](#). “*Jehovah* is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King.” [Exod. xv. 11](#). “Who is like unto thee, O *Jehovah*?” [1 Chron. xvii. 20](#). “O *Jehovah*, there is none like unto thee.” [Psal. lxxxvi. 8](#). It might well be expected, that, in that abundant revelation which God has made of himself, he would make himself known by some one name at least, which should be expressly delivered as the peculiar and distinguishing name of the Most High. And we find it to be so: God has, with great solemnity, declared a certain name as his most peculiar name; which he has expressly and very often spoken of as a name that belongs to him in a most distinguishing manner, and belongs to the Supreme Being only; and hath expressly asserted that it belongs to no other. But, notwithstanding all this, the Arians, to serve their particular purpose, reject this name, as not being the distinguishing name of the supreme God.

§ 48. *King of kings* and *Lord of lords*, are titles peculiar to the Supreme Being. [Deut. x. 17](#). “For the Lord your God is God of gods, and the Lord of lords.” [Psal. cxxxvi. 3](#). “O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his mercy endureth for ever.” [Dan. ii. 47](#). “Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods, and Lord of kings.” [1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, 16](#). “Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen.” [Rev. xix. 11-16](#). “He whose name is called the *Word of God*, hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, king of kings, and lord of lords.”

<sup>468</sup> [John xi. 25](#). and [v. 22, 23, 27](#). [Eph. v. 20](#). [1 Cor. xv. 20-28](#). [Matt. xxv. 24](#). [2. Tim. iv. 8](#). [Luke xxii. 29, 33](#). [Matt. xxiv. 47](#). [Rev. ii. 7, 10](#). and [. iii. 21](#). [Rev. xxii. 11, 17](#).

§49. *Christ's eternity* is abundantly asserted. [Psal. cii. 24-27.](#) "Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." [Rom. i. 23.](#) "The incorruptible God." [1 Tim. vi. 16.](#) "The King eternal, immortal." [Rev. iv. 9, 10. v. 14. x. 5, 6. and xv. 7.. Heb. vii. 3.](#) "Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life."

§ 50. There must be a vast difference, not only in the degree, but in the kind, of respect and worship due to the supreme God as well as in other things; since there is so infinite a difference between this Being and all others. There is a great difference as to the kind of respect proper for a wife to render to her husband, and that which it is proper for her to render towards other men. So it is with regard to the respect due to God; otherwise there would not be a foundation for that *jealousy*, which God exercises on occasion of his professing people worshipping other beings.

In addition to what has been observed of the *works* and *worship* of God, the following savings of Christ are worthy to be observed. [John v. 17.](#) "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." [Ver. 19.](#) "What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise." [Ver. 23.](#) "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." It is plain, God is *jealous* in that respect, that no other being may share with him in honour, that he alone may be exalted. It is expected that other beings should humble themselves, should be brought low, should deny themselves for God, and esteem themselves as nothing before him. And as he requires that they should abase themselves, he would not set up others to exalt them to a rivalry with himself. If men may pray to Christ, may adore him, give themselves up to him, trust in him, praise him, and serve him; what kind of worship is due to the Father, entirely distinct from all this in nature and kind?

When Satan tempted Christ to fall down and worship him, as one that had power to dispose of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; Christ replies, "It is written, Thou shall worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."<sup>469</sup> But the Arians must suppose, that we are required to worship and serve some other being than this Lord God which Christ speaks of, as the disposer not only of the kingdoms of this world, but of the kingdom of heaven and the glory thereof. On the supposition of Christ's being merely a creature, he would much more properly be ranked with creatures exclusively, and never with God (as being called by his name and titles, having ascribed to him his attributes, dominions, &c.). However great a *creature* he might be, he would be infinitely below God.

§ 51. Concerning the grand *objection* from that text,<sup>470</sup> "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, nor the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father:" I would observe, that even the Arians themselves, with regard to some things said of Christ, must make the distinction

469 [Matt. iv. 10.](#)

470 [Mark xiii. 32.](#)

between his power or knowledge, as to his inferior and superior nature; or, if they do not allow two natures, then, at least, as to his humbled state, and his state both before and after his humiliation: as [Mark vii. 24](#). “And would have no man know it, but he *could not* be hid.” This cannot mean that the person who created the whole world, visible and invisible, &c. and by whom all things consist and are governed, had not *power* to order things so, that he might be hid.

§ 52. It is observable, that Christ is frequently called *God* absolutely, **Greek** and **Greek**; by which name even the heathens themselves always understood the supreme God. Dr. Cudworth, in his “Intellectual System,” abundantly shows, that the heathens generally worshipped but one supreme, eternal, universal, uncreated Deity; but that their best philosophers maintained, that this Deity subsisted in three hypostases: though they had many created gods. And in page 627, he says, “It now appears, from what we have declared, that as to the ancient and genuine Platonists and Pythagoreans, none of their trinity of gods, or divine hypostases, were independent; so, neither were they creature-gods, but uncreated, they being all of them not only eternal, and necessarily existent and immutable, but also universal, *i. e.* infinite and omnipotent causes, principles, and creators of the whole world. From whence it follows, that these Platonists could not justly be taxed with idolatry, in giving religious worship to each hypostasis of their trinity. And one grand design of Christianity being to abolish the pagan idolatry or creature worship, it cannot justly be charged therewith, from that religious worship given to our Saviour Christ and the Holy Ghost, they being none of them, according to the true and orthodox Christianity, creatures, however the Arian hypothesis made them such. And this was indeed the grand reason why the ancient fathers so zealously opposed Arianism. We shall cite a remarkable passage out of Athanasius, fourth oration against the Arians, to this purpose, as follows:

“Why, therefore, do not these Arians, holding this, reckon themselves amongst the pagans or Gentiles, since they do, in like manner, worship the creature *besides* the Creator? **Greek**” Athanasius’s meaning here, could not well be, that they worshipped the creature *more* than the Creator; forasmuch as the Arians constantly declared that they gave less worship to the Son than to the Father.

“For though the pagans worship one uncreated and many created gods; but these Arians only one uncreated, and one created, to wit, the Son, or Word of God; yet will not this make any real difference betwixt them; because the Arians’ one created god, is one of those many pagan gods; and these many gods of the pagans or Gentiles have the same nature with this one, they being alike creatures.”

§ 53. It is remarkable, that in so many places, both in the Old Testament and New, when Christ is spoken of, his glory and prerogatives represented, and the respect due to him urged, that the vanity of idols in the same places should be represented, and idolatry warned against.

See [Psal. xvi. 4](#). It is manifest, that it is the Messiah that there speaks. See also many prophecies of Isa. and other prophets. [1 John v. 20, 21](#). [1 Cor. x. 19-22](#).

“There is not the least intimation, where Christ is styled *God*, either in the texts themselves, or contexts, that this is to be understood of his *office*, and not of his *person*; as is the case where magistrates are styled gods, where the very next words explain it, and tell us what is to be understood by it. And when Moses and angels are called gods, no one who attends to the whole discourse, could easily mistake the meaning, and not see that this term *God* was there used in an inferior and metaphorical sense.” Letter to the Dedicator of Mr. Emlyn’s Inquiry, &c. p. 7, 8. [Matt. xix. 17](#). “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.” “Mr. Emlyn affirms it to be evident, that Christ here distinguishes himself from God, and denies of himself what he affirms of God. But the truth of his interpretation entirely depends upon the *opinion* which the young man had of Christ, who received this answer from him.” Ibid. p. 17, 18.

§ 54. That Christ had divine omniscience, appears from his own words; [Rev. ii. 23](#). “And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the hearts and the reins.” Now Solomon declares, [1 Kings viii. 39](#). “Thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.” And [Jer. xvii. 10](#). God says, “I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins.” And Christ does not say, The churches shall know that I search the reins and the heart; but that “I am he,” &c. which, if words have any force in them, yea, if the expression is not altogether unintelligible, implies, “I am he who is distinguished by this character; or the churches shall know that I am the God who searcheth,” &c. Ibid. p. 43, 44.

§ 55. That the eternal Logos should be subordinate to the Father, though not inferior in nature; yea, that Christ, in his *office*, should be subject to the Father, and less than he, though in his higher nature not inferior, is not strange. It is proper, among mankind, that a son should be subordinate to his father, yea, subject in many respects, though of the same human nature; yea, though in no respect inferior in any natural qualification. It was proper that Solomon should be under David his father, and be appointed king by him, and receive charges and directions from him, though, even then, in his youth, probably not inferior to his father.

The disciples of Christ, or those that trusted in him, when here on earth, applied to him as trusting in his ability, not only to heal all diseases of the body, and to raise the dead; but as leaving their souls in his hands, and being able to heal the diseases of their minds; as being the author and fountain of virtue. So [Luke xvii. 5](#). “The apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” So the father of the demoniac, [Mark ix. 24](#). “Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.”

§ 56. It is a good argument for Christ’s divinity, that he is to be the author of the resurrection. The atoms and particles in one little finger, are capable of so many removes, and such dispersions, that I believe it would surpass any finite understanding, at two or three

thousand years' end, to tell what distinct particles of the universe belonged to it. It would require a vast strength and subtlety of mind, to trace but one atom so nicely, as to know that individual atom in the universe, after so long a time; after it had been a particle of air, water, oil, or animal spirit, &c. and had been transported with prodigious swiftness from place to place, backwards and forwards, millions of times, amongst innumerable others of the same kind. Especially, would it be exceeding difficult, so narrowly to watch two of such at once. If so, what would it be, to follow every atom in a man's body; yea, of all the bodies that ever have died, or shall die? And, at the same time, to have the mind exercised with full vigour upon innumerable other matters, that require an equal strength of understanding? and all this with such ease, that it shall be no labour to the mind?



§ 57. God would not have given us any person to be our redeemer, unless he was of divine and absolutely supreme dignity and excellency, or was the supreme God; lest we should be under temptation to pay him too great respect; lest, if he were not the supreme God, we should be under temptation to pay him that respect which is due only to the supreme, and which God, who is a jealous God, will by no means allow to be paid to an inferior being. Men are very liable to be tempted to rate those too highly, from whom they have received great benefits. They are prone to give them that respect and honour, that belongs to God only. Thus, the Gentile world deified and adored such of their kings as did great things for them, and others from whom they received great benefits. So Cornelius was tempted to give too great respect to Peter, he being the person that God had marked out to be his teacher and guide in things pertaining to eternal salvation. So the apostle John could scarce avoid adoring the angel that showed him those visions: he fell down to worship him once and again. Though the first time he had been strictly warned against it; yet the temptation was so great, that he did it again: [Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 8.](#) This being a temptation they were so liable to, was greatly disallowed of by God. When Cornelius fell down before Peter, he took him up, saying, [Acts x. 26.](#) "Stand up; I myself also am a man." So, when the people at Lystra were about to offer divine worship to Paul and Barnabas, when they heard of it, they rent their clothes, and ran in among them, crying out, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein;" [Acts xiv. 15.](#) And when John was about to adore the angel, how strictly was he warned against it! "See thou do it not," says he, "for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, that have the testimony of Jesus Christ: worship God."<sup>471</sup> And God has always been so careful to guard against it, that he hid the body of Moses, that it might be no temptation to idolatry. But if any thing can be a temptation to give supreme respect and honour to one that is not the Supreme Being, this would be a temptation, *viz.* to have

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471 [Rev. xix. 10.](#)



a person that is not the Supreme Being, to be our redeemer; to have such an one endure such great sufferings out of love to us, and thereby to deliver us from such extreme and eternal misery, and to purchase for us so great and eternal happiness. God therefore, in wisdom, has appointed such a person to be our redeemer, that is of absolutely supreme glory and excellency, that we may be in no danger of loving and adoring him too much; that we may prize him, exalt him for the great things that he has done for us, as much as we will, nay, so far as his love to us, his sufferings for us, and the benefits we receive by him, can tempt us to, without danger of exceeding. Christ has done as great things for us as ever the Father did. His mercy and love have been as great and wonderful; and we receive as much benefit by them, as we do by the love and mercy of the Father. The Father never did greater things for us than to redeem us from hell, and bring us to eternal life. But if Christ had not been a person equal with the Father, and worthy of our equal respect, God would not have so ordered it, that the temptation to love and respect the Son, which results from favours that we have by kindness received, should be equal with the inducements we have to love and respect the Father.

§ 58. I shall offer some reasons against Dr. Watts's notion of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul. If the pre-existing soul of Christ created the world, then, doubtless, he upholds and governs it. The same Son of God that did one, does the other. He created all things, and by him all things consist. And if so, how was his dominion confined to the Jewish nation, before his incarnation, but extends to all nations since? Besides, there are many things ascribed in the Old Testament to the Son of God, in those very places, which Dr. Watts himself supposes to speak of him, that imply his government of the whole world, and all nations. The same person that is spoken of as King of Israel, is represented as the Governor of the world.

According to this scheme, the greatest of the works of the Son in his created nature, implying the greatest exaltation, was his first work of all; *viz.* His creating all things, all worlds, all things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: and this before ever he had any trial at all of his obedience, &c. At least, this work seems much greater than judging the world at the last day; which the Scripture often speaks of as one of the highest parts of his exaltation, which he has in reward for his obedience and sufferings: and Dr. Watts himself supposes his honours, since his humiliation, to be much greater than before.

§ 59. On this scheme it will follow, that the covenant of redemption was made with a person that was not *sui juris*, and not at liberty to act his own mere good pleasure, with respect to undertaking to die for sinners; but was obliged to comply, on the first intimation that it would be well pleasing to God, and a thing that he chose.

§ 60. According to that scheme, the man Christ Jesus was not properly the son of the virgin, and so the son of man. To be the son of a woman, is to receive being in both soul

and body, in consequence of a conception in her womb. The soul is the principal part of the man; and sonship implies derivation of the soul as well as the body, by conception. Though the soul is no part of the mother, and be immediately given by God, yet that hinders not its being derived by conception; it being consequent on it, according to a law of nature. It is agreeable to a law of nature, that where a perfect human body is conceived in the womb of a woman, and properly nourished and increased, a human soul should come into being; and conception may as properly be the cause whence it is derived, as many other natural effects are derived from natural causes or antecedents. For it is the power of God which produces these effects, though it be according to an established law. The soul being so much the principal part of man, a derivation of the soul by conception, is the chief thing implied in a man's being the son of a woman.

According to what seems to be Dr. Watts's scheme, the Son of God is no distinct divine person from the Father. So far as he is a divine person, he is the same person with the Father. So that in the covenant of redemption, the Father covenants with himself, and he takes satisfaction of himself, &c. Unless you will say, that one nature covenanted with the other; the two natures in the same person covenanted together, and one nature in the same person took satisfaction of the other nature in the same person. But how does this confound our minds, instead of helping our ideas, or making them more easy and intelligible!

§ 61. The Son of God, as a distinct person, was from eternity. It is said, [Micah v. 2](#). "His goings forth were of old from everlasting." So [Prov. viii. 23](#). "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." So he is called, [Isa. ix. 6](#). "The everlasting Father." I know of no expressions used in Scripture, more strong, to signify the eternity of the Father himself.

Dr. Watts supposes the world to be made by the pre-existent soul of Christ; and thinks it may properly be so said, though the knowledge and power of this pre-existent soul could not extend to the most minute parts, every atom, &c. But it is evidently the design of the Scripture to assure us that Christ made all things whatever, in the absolute universality, [John i. 33](#). "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." [Col. i. 16, 17](#). "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Now, if we suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it will follow, that let his wisdom and power be as great as they will, if finite, but a few of those individual things that are made, were the effects of his power and wisdom: yea, that the number of the things that were made by him, are so few, that they bear no proportion to others, that did not immediately fall under his notice; or that of the things that are made there are ten thousand times, yea infinitely more, not made by him, than are made by him: And so, but infinitely few of their circumstances are ordered by his wisdom.

It is said, [Heb. ii. 8.](#) “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.” Here it is represented, that God the Father has put every individual thing under the power and government of another person, distinct from himself. Out this cannot be true of the human soul of Christ, as it must be according to Dr. Watts’s scheme, let the powers of that be never so great, if they are not infinite. For things and circumstances, and dependencies and consequences of things in the world, are infinite in number; and therefore a finite understanding and power cannot extend to them: yea, it can extend to but an infinitely small part of the whole number of individuals, and their circumstances and consequences. Indeed, in order to the disposal of a few things, in their motions and successive changes, to a certain precise issue, there is need of infinite exactness, and so need of infinite power and wisdom.

§ 62. The work of creation, and so the work of upholding all things in being, can, in no sense, be properly said to be the work of any *created* nature. If the created nature gives forth the word, as Joshua did, when he said, “Sun, stand thou still; <sup>472</sup>” yet it is not that created nature that does it. That being that depends himself on creating power, does not properly do any thing towards creation, as Joshua did nothing towards stopping the sun in his course. So that it cannot be true in Dr. Watts’s scheme, that that Son of God, who is a distinct person from God the Father, did at all, in any manner of propriety, *create* the world, nor does he uphold it or govern it. Nor can those things that Christ often says of himself be true: as “The Father worketh hitherto, and I work. <sup>473</sup>” [John v. 17, 19.](#) “Whatsoever the Father doth, those doth the Son likewise,” [John v. 17, 19.](#); it being very evident, that the works of creating and upholding and governing the world are ascribed to the Son, as a distinct person from the Father.

§ 63. Not only is the word *Elohim* in the plural number, but it is joined to a verb of the plural number, in [Gen. xx. 13.](#) *When God caused me to wander from my father’s house.* The word *hightnu*, *caused to wander*, is in the plural number. This is agreeable to the use of plural verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, in [Gen. i. 26. iii. 22. xi. 7.](#) See other instances in [Gen. xxxv. 7. Exod. xxxii. ii. 4.](#) compared with [Neh. ix. 18., Isa. xvi. 6.](#)

The very frequent joining of the word *Elohim*, a word in the plural number, with the word *Jehovah*, a word in the singular number, (as may be seen in places referred to in the English concordance, under the words, Lord God, Lord his God, Lord my God, Lord our God, Lord their God, Lord thy God, Lord your God,) seems to be a significant indication of the union of several divine persons in one essence. The word *Jehovah* signifies as much as the word *Essence*, and is the proper name of God with regard to his self-existent, eternal, all-sufficient, perfect, and immutable Essence. Moses seems to have regard to something

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472 [Joshua x. 12.](#)

473 [John v. 17.](#)

remarkable in thus calling *Elohim*, the plural, so often by the singular name, *Jehovah*; especially in that remark which he makes for the special observation of God's people Israel, in [Deut. vi. 4](#). "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." In the original, it is *Jehovah Elohenu Jehovah Ehadh*; the more proper translation of which is, *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*. The verb *is* is understood, and properly inserted between *Jehovah Elohenu* and *Jehovah Ehadh*, thus, *Jehovah Elohenu is Jehovah Ehadh*; which, if most literally translated, is thus, *Jehovah Our Divine Persons it one Jehovah*; as though Moses, in this remark, had a particular reference to the word *Elohim* being in the plural number, and would guard the people against imagining from thence that there was a plurality of essences or beings, among whom they were to divide their affections and respect.

A further confirmation, that the name *Elohim*, when used as the name of the True God, signifies some plurality, is, that this same name is commonly, all over the Hebrew Bible, used to signify the gods of the heathens, when many gods are spoken of. See those places in the Hebrew Bible, which are referred to in the English concordance, under the word *gods*. In [Exod. xx. 2, 3](#), when it is said in the third verse, "Thou shalt have no other *gods* before me." The word is the same as in the foregoing verse, where it is said, "I am the Lord thy god, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt."<sup>474</sup> It is *Elohim* in both verses: I am the *Jehovah*, thy *Elohim*: Thou shalt have no other *Elohim*. Yet the latter *Elohim* is joined with an adjective of the plural number; which seems naturally to lead the children of Israel, to whom God spake these words, to suppose a plurality in the *Elohim* which brought them out of Egypt, implied in the name *Jehovah*. [Ps. lviii. 11](#). "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth; *Elohim Shophetim*:" Which literally is, *Elohim*, judges (in the plural number). See the evident distinction made between *Jehovah sending*, and *Jehovah sent* to the people, and dwelling in the midst of them, in [Zech. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11](#), and [iv. 8, 9, 11](#). "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, after the glory hath he *sent* me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." "For behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath *sent* me."<sup>475</sup> "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."<sup>476</sup> "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shall know that the Lord of hosts hath *sent* me unto thee."<sup>477</sup> "Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath *sent* me unto you."<sup>478</sup> "Then

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474 [Deut. v. 6](#).

475 [Zech. ii. 9](#).

476 [Zech. ii. 10](#).

477 [Zech. ii. 11](#).

478 [Zech. iv. 8, 9](#).

answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof? <sup>479</sup> ” [Josh. xxiv. 19.](#) “And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God, Elohim Kedhoshim.” *He is the holy Gods.* Not only is the word *Elohim* properly plural, the very same that is used, [ver. 15.](#) the gods which your fathers served, &c. but the adjective *holy* is plural. A plural substantive and adjective are used here concerning the True God, just in the same manner as in [1 Sam. iv. 8.](#) “Who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods.” And in [Dan. iv. 8.](#) “In whom is the Spirit of the holy Gods.” So [ver. 9, 18.](#) and [chap. v. 11.](#) That the plural number should thus be used with the epithet *Holy*, agrees well with the doxology of the angels, ” Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,” &c. [Isa. vi.](#) and [Rev. iv.](#)

§ 6.4. It is an argument, that the Jews of old understood that there were several persons in the Godhead, and particularly, that when the cherubim, in the [6th of Isa.](#), cried, ” Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts,” they had respect to three persons: that the seventy interpreters, in several places, where the Holy One of Israel is spoken of, use the plural number; as in [Isa. xli. 16.](#) “Thou shall glory in the Holy One of Israel;” in the LXX it is, **Greek.** [Isa. lx. 14.](#) “The Zion of the Holy One of Israel;” it is **Greek** So [Jer. li. 5.](#) “Filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel;” **Greek**

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479 [Zech. iv. 11.](#)

**REMARKS**

ON

**IMPORTANT THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES.**

480



CHAP. I.

CONCERNING GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT, A FUTURE STATE, AND THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

§ 1. THE Creator of the world is doubtless also the Governor of it. He that had power to give being to the world, and set all the parts of it in order, has doubtless power to dispose of the world, to continue the order he has constituted, or to alter it. He that first gave the laws of nature, must have all nature in his hands; so that it is evident God has the world in his hands, to dispose of as he pleases. And, as God is able, so he is inclined, to govern the world. For, as he is an intelligent being, he had some end in what he did, otherwise he did not act as a voluntary agent in making the world. That being never acts voluntarily, that has no end in what he does, and aims at nothing at all in it. Neither God nor man is properly said to make any thing that necessarily or accidentally proceeds from them, but that only which is voluntarily produced. Besides, we see in the particular parts of the world, that God had a particular end in their formation. They are fitted for such an end. By which it appears, that the Creator did act as a voluntary agent, proposing final causes in the work of creation; and he that made the particular parts for certain ends, doubtless made the whole for a certain end. And, if God made the world for some end, doubtless he will choose to have this world disposed of to answer that end. For his proposing the end, supposes, that he chooses it should be obtained. Therefore, it follows, that God will choose to take care that the world be disposed of to the obtaining of his own ends, which is the same thing as his choosing to have the government of the world. And it is manifest, in fact, that God is not careless how the affairs and concerns of the world he has made proceed, because he was not careless of this matter in the creation itself; as it is apparent, by the manner and order in which things were created, that God, in creating, took care of the future progress and state of things in the world. This being established, I now proceed to show, that it must be, that God maintains a moral government over the world of mankind.

§ 2. If it be certain, that God is concerned, and does take care, how things proceed in the state of the world he has made, then he will be especially concerned how things proceed in the state of the world of mankind. Mankind are the principal part of the visible creation. They have understanding, are voluntary agents, and can produce works of their own will, design, and contrivance, as God does. And the Creator looks upon them as the principal part of his visible creation, as is manifest, because he hath set them at the head of his creation.

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480 THE GREATEST PART OF THESE REMARKS ARE ORIGINAL, AND MAY BE CONSIDERED AS A SECOND VOLUME OF PRESIDENT EDWARDS'S MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS; BUT, AS THEY RELATE TO SUBJECTS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT, MAKE BY THEMSELVES A BOOK.

The world is evidently made to be a habitation for man, and all things about him are subordinated to his use. Now, if God be careful how the world that he has made be regulated, that his end may be answered, and that it may not be in vain, he will be especially careful of this concerning the principal part of it, and in the same proportion that it is principal or superior in his own account to the rest. The more God has respect to any part of the world he has made, the more concerned he will be about the state of that part. But, it is manifest by the creation itself, that God has more respect or regard to man, than to any other part of the visible creation; because he has evidently made and fitted other parts to man's use. And therefore God will not leave the world of mankind to themselves, without taking any care to govern and order their state. It is evident, by the manner in which God has formed and constituted other things, that he has respect to beauty, good order and regulation, proportion and harmony; so, in the system of the world, in the seasons of the year, in the formation of plants, and of the various parts of the human body. Surely, therefore, he will not leave the principal part of the creation, about the state of which he is evidently, in fact, chiefly concerned, without making any proper provision for its being in any other than a state of deformity, discord, and the most hateful and dreadful confusion.

§ 3. By what has been already said, God is most concerned about the state and government of that which is highest in his creation, and which he values most; and so he is principally concerned about the ordering the state of mankind, which is a part of the creation that he has made superior, and that he values most: and therefore, in like manner, it follows, that he is principally concerned about the regulation of that which he values most in men, *viz.* what appertains to his intelligence and voluntary acts. If there be any thing in the principal part of the creation, that the Creator values more than other parts, it must be that wherein it is above them, or, at least, something wherein it differs from them. But the only thing wherein men differ from the inferior creation, is intelligent perception and action. This is that in which the Creator has made man to differ from the rest of the creation, and by which he has set him over it, and by which he governs the inferior creatures, and uses them for himself; and therefore it must needs be, that the Creator should be chiefly concerned that the state of mankind should be regulated according to his will, with respect to what appertains to him as an intelligent, voluntary creature. Hence it must be, that God does take care that a good moral government should be maintained over men; that his intelligent, voluntary acts should be all subject to rules; and that with respect to them all, he should be the subject of judicial proceeding. For unless this be, there is no care taken that the state of mankind, with respect to their intelligent, voluntary acts, should be regulated at all; but all things will be remedilessly in the utmost deformity, confusion, and ruin. The world of mankind, instead of being superior, will be the worse, and the more hateful, and the more vile and miserable, for having the faculties of reason and will; and this highest part of the creation will be the lowest, and infinitely the most confused, deformed, and detestable,



without any provision for rectifying its evils. And the God of order, peace, and harmony, that constituted the inferior parts of the world, which he has subjected to man, and made subservient to him, in such decency, beauty, and harmony, will appear to have left this chief part of his work, and the end of all the rest, to the reign of everlasting discord, confusion, and ruin; contradicting and conflicting with its own nature and faculties; having reason, and yet acting in all things contradictory to it; being men, but yet beasts; setting sense above reason; improving reason only as a weapon of mischief and destruction of God's workmanship.

§ 4. I would again argue, that God must maintain a moral government over mankind, thus: It is evident, that it was agreeable to the Creator's design, that there should be some moral government maintained amongst men; because, without any, either in nations, provinces, towns, or families, and also without any divine government over the whole, the world of mankind could not subsist, but would destroy itself. Men would be not only much more destructive to each other, than any kind of animals are to their own species, but a thousand times more than any kind of beasts are to those of any other species. Therefore, the nature that God has given all mankind, and the circumstances in which he has placed them, lead all, in all ages throughout the habitable world, into moral government. And the Creator doubtless intended this for the preservation of this highest species of creatures; otherwise he has made much less provision for the defence and preservation of this species, than of any other. There is no kind of creature that he has left without proper means for its own preservation. But unless man's own reason, to be improved in moral rule and order, be the means he has provided for the preservation of man, he has provided him with no means at all. Therefore, it is doubtless the original design of the Creator, that there should be moral subordination amongst men, and that he designed there should be heads, princes, or governors, to whom honour, subjection, and obedience should be paid. Now, this strongly argues, that the Creator himself will maintain a moral government over the whole. For, without this, the preservation of the species is but very imperfectly provided for. If men have nothing but human government to be a restraint upon their lusts, and have no rule or judgment of an universal omniscient governor to be a restraint upon their consciences, still they are left in a most woeful condition; and the preservation and common benefit of the species, according to its necessities, and the exigencies of its place, nature, and circumstances in the creation, is in nowise provided for, as the preservation and necessities of other species are.

Now, is it reasonable to think, that the Creator would so constitute the circumstances of mankind, that some particular persons, that have only a little image and shadow of his greatness and power over men, should exercise it in giving forth edicts, and executing judgment; and that he who is above all, and the original of all, should exercise no power in this way himself, when mankind stand in so much more need of such an exercise of his

power, than of the power of human governors? He has infinitely the greatest right to exercise the power of a moral governor, if he pleases. His relation to man as his Creator, most naturally leads to it. He is infinitely the most worthy of that respect, honour, and subjection that is due to a moral governor. He has infinitely the best qualifications of a governor, being infinitely wise, powerful, and holy, and his government will be infinitely the most effectual to answer the ends of government.

§ 5. It is manifest, that the Creator of the world, in constituting human moral governments among men, has, in that constitution, had great respect to those qualifications, that relation, and those rights and obligations, in those whom he has appointed to be rulers, and in putting others under their moral government, which he has in himself in a vastly more eminent degree. As particularly, in the government of parents over their children, which of all other kinds of human moral government is most evidently founded in nature, and which the preservation of the species doth most immediately require. Here God hath set those to be moral rulers, who are the wiser and stronger, and has appointed those to be in subjection who are less knowing, and weaker, and have received being from their rulers, and are dependent, preserved, and maintained. Would not he therefore maintain moral government himself over mankind, who is their universal father, their universal preserver, who maintains all, and provides all with food and raiment, and all the necessaries and enjoyments of life, and is infinitely wiser and stronger than they? Would not he maintain a moral government over men, who need his government, as children need the government of their parents, and who are no more fit to be left to themselves in the world without his rules, directions, authority, promises, threatening, and judgment, than children are fit to be left to themselves in a house?

§ 6. As man is made capable of knowing his Creator, so he is capable of a high esteem of his perfections, his power, wisdom, and goodness. He is capable of a proper esteem of God for his wise, excellent, and wonderful works, which he beholds; and for their admirable contrivance, which appears in so excellently ordering all things; and of gratitude to him for all the goodness of which he himself is the subject: or, on the contrary, of slighting and despising him, and hating him, finding fault with his works, reproaching him for them, slighting all his goodness which he receives from him; yea, hating him for ordering things in his providence to him as he has done, and cursing and blaspheming him for it.

Now, it is unreasonable to suppose, that God should be an indifferent spectator of those things in his creature made in his own image, and made superior to all other creatures; and in a creature that he values above all the rest of the creation. It cannot be equally agreeable to him, whether man gives him proper esteem, love, honour, and gratitude; or, on the contrary, unreasonably despises, hates, and curses him. And if he be not an indifferent spectator of these things, then he will not act as a perfectly indifferent spectator, and wholly let men

alone, and order things in no respect differently for those ends one way or other. But so it must be, if God maintains no moral government over mankind.

§ 7. As man is made capable of knowing his Creator, so he is capable of knowing his will in many things, *i. e.* he is capable of knowing his ends in this and the other works which he beholds. For it is this way principally that he comes to know there is a God, even by seeing the final causes of things; by seeing that such and such things are plainly designed and contrived for such and such ends; and therefore he is capable of either complying with the will of his Creator, or opposing it. He is capable of falling in with God's ends, and what he sees his Creator aim at, and co-operating with him, or of setting himself against the Creator's designs. It is manifest, that it is the Creator's design, that parents should nourish their children, and that children should be subject to their parents. If a man therefore should murder his children, or if children should rise up and murder their parents, they would oppose the Creator's aims. So if men use the several bodily organs to quite contrary purposes to those for which they were given, and if they use the faculties of their own minds to ends quite contrary to those for which they were fitted, (for doubtless they were given and fitted for some end or other,) he may perversely use his dominion over the creatures against the ends to which they were given. For, however far we suppose man may be from being capable of properly frustrating his Creator, yet he is capable of showing that his will is contrary to his Creator's ends. He may oppose his Creator in his will; he may dislike God's ends, and seek others. Now, the Creator cannot be an indifferent spectator of this; for it is a contradiction to suppose, that opposition to his will and aims should be as agreeable to him in itself, as complying with his will. And if he is not an indifferent spectator, then he will not act as such, and so he must maintain a moral government over mankind.

§ 8. This argument is peculiarly strong, as it respects man's being capable of falling in with or opposing God's ends in his own creation, and his endowing him with faculties above the rest of the world. It is exceeding manifest concerning mankind, that God must have made them for some end; not only as it is evident that God must have made the world in general for some end, and as man is an intelligent voluntary agent; but as it is especially manifest from fact, that God has made mankind for some special end. 'For it is apparent, in fact, that God has made the inferior parts of the world for some end, and that the special end he made them for, is to subserve the benefit of mankind. Therefore, above all, may it be argued, that God has made mankind for some end. If an artificer accomplishes some great piece of workmanship, very complicated, and with a vast variety of parts, but the whole is so contrived and connected together, that there is some particular part which all the other parts are to subserve, we should well conclude that the workman had some special design to serve by that part, and that his peculiar aim in the whole, was what he intended should be obtained by that part. Now, man, the principal part of the creation, is capable of knowing his Creator, and is capable of discerning God's ends in the formation of other things;



therefore, doubtless, since God discovers to him the ends for which he has made other things, it would be very strange if he should not let him know the end for which he himself is made, or for which he had such distinguishing faculties given him, whereby he is set above other parts of the creation. Therefore, in the use of his own faculties, he must either fall in with the known design of the Creator in giving them, or thwart it. He must either co-operate with his Creator, as complying with the end of his own being, or wittingly set himself as his enemy. Of this the Creator cannot be an indifferent spectator; and therefore, by what was said before, must maintain moral government over mankind.

§ 9. It may be argued, that God maintains a moral government over the world of mankind, from this, that the special end of the being of man is something wherein he has to do with his Creator. The special end of the brute creation is something wherein they are concerned with men. But man's special end is some improvement or use of his faculties towards God. For the *special* end for which God made mankind, is something very diverse and very superior to those ends for which he made any part of the inferior creation; because God has made man very different from them. But man's special end does not respect any other parts of the visible creation. All these are below him, and all, as we observed before, are made for him, to be subservient to his use. Their special end respects him; but his special end does not respect them. For, this is unreasonable in itself: if they are in their formation and end subordinated to him, and subjected to him, then the Maker sets a greater value on him than them, and therefore he has not made him for them. For that would be to suppose them most valuable in the eyes of their Maker. And it is manifest, in fact, that the being of mankind does not subserve the benefit of the inferior creatures, any farther than is just necessary to turn them to his own use, and spend them in it.

To this we may add, that the happiness of the greater part of mankind, in their worldly enjoyments, is not great enough, or durable enough, to prove that the end of all things in the whole visible universe is only that happiness. Therefore, nothing else remains, no other supposition is possible, but that man's special end is something wherein he has immediately to do with his Creator.

§ 10. If God has made men above other creatures, with capacities superior to them, for some special end, for which other creatures are not made, that special end must be something peculiar to them, for which they are capacitated and fitted by those superior faculties. Now, the greatest thing that men are capacitated for, by their faculties, more than the beasts, is, that they are capable of having intercourse with their Creator, as intelligent and voluntary agents. They are capable of knowing, esteeming, and loving him, and capable of receiving instructions and commands from him, and capable of obeying and serving him, if he be pleased to give commands, and make a revelation of his mind. Surely this is not without some end. He that has done nothing in the inferior world in vain, has not given man this

capacity in vain. The sun has not its light given it without a final cause; and shall we suppose, that mankind has this light of the knowledge of their Creator without a final cause?

Thus, it is evident, that the special end for which God has made man, is something wherein he has intercourse with his Creator, as an intelligent, voluntary agent. Hence, the consequence is certain, that mankind are subject to God's moral government. For there can be no such thing maintained, as a communication between God and man, as between intelligent, voluntary agents, without moral government. For in maintaining communication or converse, one must yield to the other, must comply with the other; there must be union of wills; one must be clothed with authority, the other with submission. If God has made man to converse with himself, he is not indifferent how he is conversed with. One manner of behaviour must be agreeable to his will, and another not; and therefore God cannot act as indifferent in this matter. He cannot let man alone, to behave toward him just as he pleases; therefore there must be moral government. God cannot be indifferent, whether he is respected and honoured, or is contemned and hated.

§ 11. Now as the consequence of the whole, I would infer two things:

1. A future state of rewards and punishments. For, unless there be such a state, it will certainly follow, that God, in fact, maintains no moral government over the world of mankind. For, otherwise, it is apparent, that there is no such thing as rewarding or punishing mankind, according to any visible rule, or indeed, according to any order or method whatsoever. Without this, there may be desires manifested, but there can be no proper laws established, and no authority maintained. Nothing is more manifest, than that in this world there is no such thing as a regular, equal disposing of rewards and punishments of men according to their moral estate. There is nothing in God's disposals toward men in this world, to make his distributive justice and judicial equity visible, but all things are in the greatest confusion. Often the wicked prosper, and are not in trouble as other men. They become mighty in power; yea, it has commonly been so in all ages, that they have been uppermost in the world. They have the ascendant over the righteous. They are mounted on thrones; while the righteous remain in cottages. And, in this world, the cause of the just is not vindicated. Many wicked men have the righteous in their power, and trample them under foot, and become their cruel persecutors: and the righteous are oppressed, and suffer all manner of injuries and cruelties; while the wicked live, and reign in great glory and prosperity.

2. What has been said, does invincibly argue a divine revelation. Because, if God maintains a moral government over mankind, then there must be rewards and punishments. But these sanctions must be declared: for instance, the punishments which enforce God's laws must be made known. To suppose that God keeps up an equal, perfect moral government over the world, and yet leaves men wholly at a loss about the nature, manner, degree, time, place, and continuance of their punishment, or leaves it only to their guesses, or for them to argue it out from the nature of things, as well as they can, and every one to make his

judgment according as his notions shall guide him, is a very unreasonable supposition. If moral government be maintained, the order and method of government must be visible; otherwise it loses the nature of moral government. There may be a powerful disposal, as inanimate, unintelligible things are the subjects of God's government, in a visible and established order; but no moral government. The order of government serves to maintain authority, and to influence and rule the subject morally, no further than it is visible. The notion of a moral government, without a revelation or declaration of the mind of the head, by his word, or some voluntary sign or signification, in the whole of it is absurd. How absurd is it to suppose, that there should be converse and moral government maintained between the head and subjects, when both are intelligent, voluntary agents, without a voluntary communication of minds and expressions, thoughts and inclinations, between the head and the members of the society!

§ 12. It need not be looked upon as any objection to men's remaining in being after the death of their bodies, that the beasts that are made for man cease to be when they die. For it is manifest, in fact, that man is the end of the rest of the creatures in this lower world. This world, with all its parts, inanimate, vegetative, and sensitive, was made for an habitation for man during his present state: and if man be the end of the rest of the creatures, for which the rest were made, and to whose use they are subordinated, then man is *imtar omnium*. The end of all is equivalent to the whole. Therefore there is no need of any thing else to be preserved; nothing is lost; no part is in vain. If the end of all be preserved, all is preserved: because he is all, the rest is only for his occasional use. The beasts subserve man's use in the present state: and then, though they cease, yet their end is obtained, and their good, which is their end, remains still in man. Though the tent that was set up for man to sojourn in during his state of probation, ceases when that occasion is over, surely that is no argument that the inhabitant ceases too.

And that the beasts are made for man, affords a good positive argument for a future state of man's existence. For that all other creatures in this lower world are made for man, and that he himself should be made for no more than they, *viz.* a short continuance in this world to enjoy the good thing? of it is unreasonable.

§ 13. The natural world, which is in such continual labour, as is described in the first chapter of Eccles., constantly going round in such revolutions, will doubtless come to an end: these revolutions are not for nothing. There is some great event and issue of things, some grand period, aimed at. Does God make the world restless, to move and revolve in all its parts, to make no progress? to labour with motions so mighty and vast, only to come to the same place again? Some great end is nearer to an accomplishment, after a thousand revolutions are finished, than when there was only one finished. The waters of the sea are not so restless, continually to ascend into the heavens, and then descend on the earth, and then return to the sea again, only that things may be as they were before. One generation of men

does not come, another go, and so continually from age to age, only that at last there may be what there was at first, *viz.* mankind upon earth. The wheels of God's chariot, after they have gone round a thousand times, do not remain just in' the same place that they were in at first, without having carried the chariot nearer to a journey's end.

§ 14. This is a confirmation of a future state. For, if these revolutions have not something in another state that is to succeed this, then they are in vain. If any thing of this world is to remain, after its revolutions are at an end, doubtless it will be that part which is the head of all the rest; or that creature for which all the rest is made; and that is man. For, if he wholly ceases, and is extinct, it is as if the whole were totally extinct: because he is the end of all. He is that creature, to serve whom the labours and revolutions of this world are, and whom they affect; and therefore, if he does not remain after the revolutions have ceased, then no end is obtained by all these revolutions: because nothing abides as the fruit of them after they are finished. But all comes to no more than just what was before this world itself began, *viz.* an universal nonexistence; all is extinct; all is as if the world had never been; and therefore all has been in vain; for nothing remains as the fruit. He that is carried in the chariot, does not remain after he is brought with so much labour and vast ado to the end of his journey; but ceases to be, as the chariot itself does.

§ 15. This confirms the divinity of the Christian revelation; which gives this account of things, that this world is come to an end; it is to be dissolved; that the revolutions of the world have an appointed period; and that man, the end of this lower world, is to remain in being afterwards; and gives a rational account of the great period, design, and issue of all things, worthy of the infinite wisdom and majesty of God.

§ 16. Some part of the world, *viz.* that which is the highest, the head, and the end of the rest, must be of eternal duration, even the intelligent, reasonable creatures. For, if these creatures, the head and end of all the rest of the creation, come to an end, and be annihilated, it is the same thing as if the whole were annihilated. And if the world be of a temporary duration, and then drops into nothing, it is in vain, *i. e.* no end is obtained worthy of God. There is nobody but what will own, that if God had created the world, and then it had dropped into nothing the next minute, it would have been in vain; no end could be obtained worthy of God. And the only reason is, that the end would have been so small, by reason of the short continuance of the good obtained by it. And so it is still infinitely little, if it stand a million of ages, and then drops into nothing. That is as a moment in the sight of God. It is, in comparison of him, absolutely equivalent to nothing, and therefore an end not worthy of him. No end is worthy of an infinite God, but an infinite end; and therefore the good obtained must be of infinite duration. If it be not so, who shall fix the bounds? Who shall say a million of years is long enough? And if it be, who shall say a good of a thousand years' continuance does not become the wisdom of God? And if it does, how can we say but that a good of still shorter continuance would not answer the ends of wisdom? If it would, who

can say that the sovereignty of God shall not fix on a good of a minute's continuance as sufficient; which is as great in comparison with him as a million of years? The only reason why a good of a minute's continuance is not great enough to become the Creator of the world, is, that it is a good so little, when compared with him. And the same reason stands in equal force against a good of any limited duration whatsoever.

§ 17. It is often declared in the Old Testament, that God will bring every work into judgment; that there is verily a God that judgeth in the earth; that his eyes are on the way of man; that he considers all his goings: that the sins of the wicked, and the good deeds of the righteous, are exactly observed, and written in a book of remembrance, and none of them forgotten; that they are sealed and laid up among God's treasures; and that he will render to every man according to his works: that the Judge of all the earth will do right; and that therefore God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked: that as to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings; that as to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him; that it is impossible it should be otherwise; that there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from God the Judge; that God cannot forget his people; that a woman may sooner forget her sucking child; that God has graven them on the palms of his hands; that God beholds and takes notice of all their afflictions, and pities them, as a father pitieth his children; but that he is the enemy of wicked men; that their sins shall find them out; that though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished; that the way of righteousness is a certain way to happiness, and the way of sin a sure way to misery. Solomon himself is more abundant than all other penmen of the Old Testament, in observing the difference between the righteous and the wicked in this respect, the greatness and the certainty of that difference.<sup>481</sup> And, in [Eccles. xii. 13,14](#). Solomon declares, "That to fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man: because God will bring every work into judgment, with ever secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." And [chap. v. 8](#). "If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they." [Chap. viii. 11](#). "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." And therefore, there is some other time, beside the time of this life, for executing the sentence which he observes will so surely lie executed. In [Prov. x. 7](#). Solomon says, the memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot. And of this memory or good name



481 • See [Prov. i. 31. 32.](#) and [li. 11, 21, 22.](#) and [iii. 2, 4, 8, 13-18, 21-26, 32, 35.](#) [iv. 5-13, 22.](#) [viii. 17-21, 35, 36.](#) [ix. 5. 6. 11. 12.](#) [x. 16. 17, 27, 28, 29.](#) [xi. 7, 8, 18, 19, 21, 30, 31.](#) [xii. 2, 3, 14, 21, 28.](#) [xiii. 9, 13, 14, 15, 21.](#) [xiv. 19, 26, 27.](#) [xv. 3, 6, 24.](#) [xvi. 3-7.](#) [xix. 23.](#) [xxi. 15. 16. 18. 21.](#) [xxii. 4, 8.](#) [ixiii. 17, 18.](#) [xxlv. 1-5, 12, 15, 16, 19-22.](#) [xxviii. 10. 13, 14. 18.](#) [xxix. 6.](#) and in many other places in the book of Proverbs.



of the just, he says, ([Eccles. vii. 1.](#)) that “it is better than precious ointment, (meaning the precious ointment they were wont to anoint the children of great and rich men with, when first born,) and that, upon this account, the day of a godly man’s death (followed with a good name and so blessed a memory) is better than the day of one’s birth.”

§ 18. If God has perfectly forgiven all the sins of the righteous, and they are so high in his favour; and if the great evidence of this favour be the durableness of the benefits that are the fruits of it, and the chief fruit of it is life; then it is at least to be expected, that they will escape that mortality which is such a remarkable disgrace to those that have (lie human nature, and so wonderful to behold in those whom the Most High has made to differ so much from the beasts in capacity, dignity, end, and design. We might surely expect, that these high favourites should, with regard to life and durableness of happiness, not be mere beasts, and have no pre-eminence above them; and that they should not be like the grass, and the Rower of the field, which in the morning flourisheth and groweth up, but in the evening is cut down and withered; that all their happiness and all the benefits of God’s favour should not be like a shadow, like a dream, like a tale that is told; that it should not be as a span, and should not pass away as the swift ships, as the eagle that hasteth to the prey; to which things the life of man is compared in Scripture.

The things of this world are spoken of as having no profit or value, because they are not lasting, but must be left at death, and therefore are mere vanity, and not worthy that any man should set his heart on them; [Psalm xlix. 6.](#), to the end; [Prov. xxiii. 4, 5.](#) [Prov. xi. 7.](#) [Eccles. ii. 15, 16, 17.](#) [chap. iii. ten first verses.](#); [verse 19.](#) [chap. v. 14, 15, 16.](#) But the rewards of righteousness are abundantly represented as exceedingly valuable and worthy that men should set their hearts upon them, because they are lasting; [Prov. iii. 16.](#) [viii. 18.](#) and [Isa. lv. 3.](#) [Psalm i. 3.](#), to the end; [Isa. xvii. 7, 8.](#) and innumerable other places. How can these things consist one with another, unless there be a future state?

It is spoken of as a remarkable thing, and what one would not expect, that good men should die as wicked men do, as it seems to be, by good men’s dying a temporal death as wicked men do; [Eccles. ii. 16.](#) [chap. ix. 3, 4, 5.](#) And therefore, it may be argued, that it does but seem to be so; but that in reality it shall not be so, inasmuch as, though good men die a temporal death as wicked men do, yet, as to their happiness, they die not, but live forever in a future state. It is an evidence of a future state, that in the Old Testament so many promises are made to the godly, of things that shall be after they are dead, which shall be testimonies of God’s great favour to them, and blessed rewards of his favour; so many promises concerning their name, and concerning their posterity, and the future church of God in the world; and yet that we are so much taught in the Old Testament that men are never the better for what comes to pass after they are dead, concerning these things, (*i. e.* if we look only at the present life, without taking any other state of existence into consideration.) [Job xiv. 21.](#) [Eccles. i. ii. iii. 22.](#) and [ix. 5, 6.](#) Yea, the wise man says expressly, that the dead

have no more a reward, ([Eccles. ix. 5.](#)) i. e. in any thing in this world. That man shall die as a beast, seems to be spoken of, [Eccles. iii. 16.](#) to the end; as a vanity, an evil, a kind of mischief and confusion, that appears in the world. Therefore this is an argument, that God, the wise orderer of all things, who brings order out of confusion, will rectify this disorder by appointing a future state.

§ 19. It is an argument that the Old Testament affords for the proof of a future life and immortality, that we are there taught, that mortality is brought in by sin, and comes as a punishment of sin. Therefore, it is natural to suppose, that when complete forgiveness is promised, and perfect restoration to favour, and deliverance from death, and the bestowment of life, as thy fruit of this favour, eternal life and immortality is intended. The better men are, the more terrible would it make death, if there were no future state. For the better they are, the more they love God. Good men have found the fountain of good. Those men who have a high degree of love to God, greatly delight in God. They have experience of a much better happiness in life than others; and therefore it must be more dreadful for them to have their beings eternally extinct by death. Hence we may strongly argue a future state: for it is not to be supposed, that God would make man such a creature as to be capable of looking forward beyond death, and capable of knowing and loving him, and delighting in him as the fountain of all good, which will necessarily increase in him a dread of annihilation, and an eager desire of immortality; and yet so order it, that such desire should be disappointed; so that his loving his Creator, should in some sense make him the more miserable.

§ 20. Nothing is more manifest, than that it is absolutely necessary, in order to a man's being thoroughly, universally, and stedfastly virtuous, that his mind and heart should be thoroughly weaned from this world; which is a great evidence, that God intends another world for virtuous men. He surely would not require them, in their thoughts, affections, and expectations, wholly to relinquish this world, if it were all the world they were to expect: if he had made them for this world wholly and only, and had created the world for them, to be their only country and home, all the resting-place ever designed for them. If all the creatures God has made are to come to an end, and the world itself is to come to an end, and so to be as though it had never been, then it will be with all God's glorious and magnificent works, agreeably to what is said of the temporal prosperity of the wicked. [Job xx. 6, 7, 8.](#) "Though its excellency be never so great, yet it shall perish for ever; it shall all fly away as a dream; it shall be chased away as a vision of the night." It shall vanish totally, and absolutely be as though it had not been.

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## CHAP. II.

## CONCERNING THE ENDLESS PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WILL DIE IMPENITENT.

§ 1. THE word everlasting is used in the very sentence of the Judge at the last day, whom we cannot suppose to use rhetorical tropes and figures. The wicked that are finally impenitent, are represented as wholly cast away, lost, made no account of, &c. which is quite inconsistent with their punishment being medicinal, and for their good and purification, and to fit them for final and eternal happiness. Eternal punishment is not eternal annihilation. Surely they will not be raised to life at the last day only to be annihilated. "The words used to signify the duration of the punishment of the wicked, do, in their etymology, truly signify a proper eternity; and if they are sometimes used in a less strict sense, when the nature of the thing requires it, yet that can never pass as any reason why they are not to be understood absolutely, when the subject is capable of it. They are terms the most expressive of an endless duration, of any that can be used or imagined. And they always signify so far positively endless, as to be express against any other period or conclusion, than what arises from the nature of the thing. They are never used in Scripture in any other limited sense, than to exclude all positive abolition, annihilation, or conclusion, other than what the natural intent or constitution of the subject spoken of must necessarily admit. The word a, **Greek**, which is the word generally used by the sacred writers, is, we know, derived from the adverb **Greek**, which signifies for ever, and cannot without force be used in any lower sense. And, particularly, this is the word by which the eternal and immutable attributes of Deity are several times expressed." Dodwell's Sermon in answer to Whiston, p. 1.5, 16.

§ 2. If the torments of hell are *purifying* pains, that purge the damned from their sins, it must be by bringing them to repentance, convincing them of the evil of sin, and inducing them to forsake it, and with a sincere heart to turn from sin to God, and heartily to choose virtue and holiness. There is no other way for sinners twine purged as moral agents; and, if hell fire is the means of any other purification, it cannot be a moral purification.

If the wicked in hell are the subjects of torments, in order to their purification, and so being fitted for, and finally brought to, eternal happiness; then they are the subjects of a dispensation, that is truly a dispensation of love, and of divine and infinite goodness and benevolence, towards them. And if the design of the pains of bell be that of kind and benevolent chastisement, to bring sinners to repentance, and compliance with the divine will; then we cannot suppose that they will be continued after the sinner has repented, and is actually brought to yield and comply. For that would be to continue them for no purpose; to go on using means and endeavours to obtain the end, when the end is accomplished, and the thing aimed at is fully obtained already. Moreover, if the damned, after many ages suffering extreme torment in hell, are to be delivered, and made perfectly and eternally happy, then they must be in a state of probation during this long season of their confinement to

such extreme misery. If they are not in a state of probation, or on any trial how they will behave themselves under these severe and terrible inflictions of wrath, but are to be delivered, and made eternally happy at the end of a certain period; then what restraints are they under from giving an unbounded loose and licence to their wickedness, in expressions of enmity against God, in cursing and blaspheming, and whatever their hearts are inclined to? And if they are in such a state as this, wherein they are thus left to unrestrained wickedness, and every curb to their most wicked inclination is taken off, being nevertheless sure of deliverance and everlasting happiness; how far is this state fit to be a state of purgation of rational creatures and moral agents from sin, being a state wherein they are so far from means of repentance, reformation, and entirely reclaiming and purging them from sin, that all manner of means are rather removed; and so much is every restraint taken off, that they are given up wholly to sin, which, instead of purifying them, will tend above all things that can be conceived, to harden them in sin, and desperately establish the habits of it?

§ 3. A state of purgation of moral agents, that is, a state to bring sinners to repentance and reformation, and not a state of trial, is a gross absurdity. If any should say, that, "though we should maintain that the pains of hell are purifying pains, to bring sinners to repentance, in order to their deliverance and eternal happiness; yet there will be no necessity of supposing, either that they may sin with impunity, and so without restraint; or that they are properly in a state of probation: for they have no probation whether they shall finally have eternal happiness, because it is absolutely determined by the benevolent Creator, concerning his intelligent creatures, that they shall finally be brought to a state of happiness: but yet their circumstances may be such as may tend greatly to restrain their wickedness, because that the time of their torment shall be longer or shorter, according as they behave themselves under their chastisements more or less perversely; or that their torment shall be raised to a greater height, and additions be made in proportion to the wickedness they commit in then" purgatory flames." To this I ANSWER: Even on this supposition they are in a state of probation for a more speedy possession of eternal life and happiness, and deliverance from further misery and punishment; this makes their state as much a state of probation, as their state in the present life. For here it is supposed by these men, that sinners are not in a state of trial, whether ever they shall obtain eternal happiness or no; because that is absolutely determined, and the determination known or knowable concerning all without any trial. But only it is a state of trial whether they shall obtain eternal life so soon as at the end of their lives, or at the day of judgment. Neither have they any trial during this life, whether they shall escape all affliction and chastisement for sin or not; but whether they shall be relieved from a state of suffering so soon, and shall-escape those severer and longer chastisements that, with respect to many, are to come afterwards.

And on the supposition of the objection, there must be the proper circumstances of a state of probation in hell, as well as on earth. There they must likewise be continued in that

state of free agency, that renders them properly the subjects of judgment and retribution. For on the supposition of the objection, they shall be punished for their wickedness in hell, by an addition to their misery proportioned to their sin; and they shall be the subjects of God's merciful strivings, endeavours, and means to bring them to repentance, as well as here. And there must be a divine judgment alter the trial, to determine their retribution, as much as after this life. And the same, or like things, must be determined by the Supreme Judge, as will be determined at the day of judgment. At that great day, on the supposition of such as I oppose, What will be determined concerning the impenitent? not what their eternal state shall be, but only whether they shall have eternal happiness immediately; whether they have repented, and are qualified for immediate admission to heavenly glory; or, whether the bestowment of it shall be delayed, and farther chastisements made use of, and so it must be again after their castigatory purifying pains. At the end of all, there must be a judgment, whether now they truly repent, and so have performed the condition of deliverance, and immediate admission to the state of the blessed, or whether there shall be a further season of misery; which brings it in all respects to be a proper judgment, as much as that at the general resurrection; and the preceding time of the use of means and God's striving with them to bring them to repentance, is as much a proper time of trial in order to judgment, as the time of this life.

§ 4. But if the damned are in a state of trial, let it be considered how unreasonable this is. If they are in a state of trial, then they must be in a state of liberty and moral agency, as those men will doubtless own; and so, according to their notion of liberty, must be under no necessity of continuing in their rebellion and wickedness, but may cast away their abominations, and turn to God and their duty, in a thorough subjection to his will, very speedily. And then, seeing the end of their probationary state, and the severe means God uses with them to bring them to repentance, is obtained; how unreasonable will it be to suppose, that God, after this, would continue them still under hell torments for a long succession of ages? But if God should speedily deliver them on their speedy repentance, how are the threatenings and predictions of their everlasting punishment fulfilled in any sense, according to the sense even of those who deny the absolute eternity of the misery of hell, and hold, that the words everlasting and fur ever, &c. when applied to the misery of the damned, are not to be taken in the strictest sense? They yet allow they signify a very long time, a great many ages.

§ 5. If the devils and damned spirits are in a state of probation, and have liberty of will, and are under the last and most extreme means to bring them to repentance, and consequently the greatest means, having the strongest tendency of all to be effectual, I say, if thus, then is it possible that the greatest part, if not all, of them may be reclaimed by those extreme means, and may be brought to thorough repentance before the day of judgment; yea, it is possible, it might be very soon. And, if so, how could it certainly be predicted concerning the devil, that he would do such and such great things in opposition to Christ

and his church, from age to age? and that at last he should be judged and punished, and have God's wrath more terribly executed upon him? as, [Rev. xx. 10.](#) "And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever." And how is it said in Scripture, that when he fell, he was cast down from heaven, and reserved under chains of darkness unto judgment? The expression seems naturally to signify strong and irrefragable bonds, which admit of no comfort or hope of escape. And besides, a being reserved in chains unto judgment, is not consistent with the appointment of another time of trial and opportunity to escape the judgment and condemnation. It is said, [Jude 6.](#) "They are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." And if any of the separate souls of the wicked, that are in the case that the soul of the rich man was in, when he died and lift up his eyes in hell being in torments, should repent and be delivered he-fore the day of judgment, and so should appear at the 'right hand among the righteous at that day, then how could that be verified, [2 Cor. v. 10.](#) "For we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether good or bad?" And we have reason to think, that the time of standing before the judgment-seat of Christ, which the apostle has a special respect to, is the day of judgment, if we compare this with other scriptures; as that of the same apostle, [Acts xvii. 31.](#) "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." And many other places.

§ 6. And how does their being in a state of trial, many of them for so many ages after death before the day of judgment, during all which time they have opportunity to repent, consist with those words of Christ, [Mark viii. 38.](#) "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels?" How is their continuing in a state of trial from the time of that generation, and from the end of their lives to the day of judgment, consistent with its being declared to them from God beforehand, that they shall certainly be condemned at the day of judgment? or, with Christ's certifying them beforehand, that whatever trial they shall have, whatever opportunity God should give them for repentance and pardon, for so many ages, all would be in vain; which in effect is passing the sentence. We may argue in like manner, from those words, [Matt. x. 14, 15.](#) "And whosoever shall not receive you, and hear your words, verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city." So [Matt. xi. 21-24.](#) "Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida: I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell. I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

It is here declared, what the state of those obstinate unbelievers should be at the day of judgment for their wickedness here in the body, with an asseveration, I say unto you. And sentence indeed is passed beforehand upon them by their Judge, concerning their punishment that shall be executed upon them at the day of judgment. The declaration is made in the form of a solemn denunciation or sentence: Woe until thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida, &c. And is it reasonable to suppose, that the very Judge that is to judge them at the end of the world, would peremptorily declare, that they should not escape punishment at the day of judgment; yea, solemnly denounce sentence upon them, dooming them to the distinguished punishment they should then suffer for their obstinacy in their lifetime; and yet appoint another time of trial, of a great many hundred years between their death and the day of judgment, wherein they should have opportunity to escape that punishment?

§ 7. It is here also to be observed, that the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha should be condemned to misery at the day of judgment, though they had already been in their purifying flames, and in a state of probation. The apostle ([Rom. ii. 16.](#)) repeatedly tells us, when these things shall be, that men shall thus receive their retribution; “In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel;”<sup>482</sup> which shows that this life is the only state of trial, and that all men shall be judged at the end of the world according to their behaviour in this life, and not according to their behaviour in another state of trial, between this life and that day. So it is apparent, by [2 Thess. i. 5-9.](#) “Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with ever-lusting destruction,” &c. Here it is manifest, that all who are obstinate unbelievers, rejectors of the gospel, shall at the day of judgment be punished with everlasting destruction. So that no room is left for a state of trial, and a space to repent before that time for ages in hell. So it is apparent, [Matt. xxv.](#) that none will be found at the right hand, but they that have done such good works, as can be done only in this world; which would not be declared beforehand, if there was an opportunity given for millions of others to obtain that privilege.

§ 8. It may be proved, that the day of man’s trial, and the time of God’s striving in the use of means to bring him to repentance, and waiting for his repentance under the use of means, will not be continued after this life, from those words, [Gen. vi. 6.](#) “My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be 120 years.” It is as much as to say, that it is not fit that this day of trial and opportunity should last always to obstinate, perverse sinners. It is fit some bounds should be set to my striving and waiting on such as abuse the day of my patience; and that merciful means and gracious calls should

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482 [Rom. ii. 16.](#)

not be continued, without limits, to them that trample all means and mercies under-foot, and turn a deaf ear to all calls and invitations, and treat them with constant contempt. Therefore I will fix a certain limit; I will set their bounds to 120 years; when, if they repent not, I will put an end to all their lives, and with their lives shall be an end of my striving and waiting. This, which in Genesis is called God's Spirit striving, is by the apostle Peter expressed by the waiting of the long-suffering of God; [1 Pet. iii. 20](#). But, according to the doctrine we are opposing, instead of God's striving and using means to bring those wicked men to repentance, and waiting in the use of striving and endeavours 120 years, or to the end of their lives, and no longer; he has gone on still since that, for above 4000 years, striving with them in the use of more powerful means to bring them to repentance, and waiting on them, and will continue to do so for so long a lime afterwards, that the time is often called everlasting, and represented as enduring for ever and ever.

§ 9. Those words of Christ, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh wherein no man can work," [John ix. 4](#). prove that there is no other day of trial after this life. Christ having undertaken for us, and taken on him our nature, and appearing in the form of a servant, and standing as our surety and representative, had a great work appointed him of God to do in this life for eternity. He could not obtain eternal life and happiness for himself any other way, than by doing that work in this life, which was the time of his probation for eternity, as well as ours. And therefore his words imply as much as if he had said, I must do that work which God has appointed me to do for eternity, that great service which must be done, as I would be eternally happy, now while the day of life lasts, which is the only day appointed for the trial of man's faithfulness in the service of God, in order to his being accepted to eternal rewards. Death is coming, which will be the setting of the sun, and the end of this day; after which no work will remain, nothing to be done that will be of any significance in order to the obtaining of the recompence of eternal felicity.

§ 10. And doubtless to the same purpose is that in [Eccles. ix](#). "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work," (or no man can work,) "nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." As much as to say, after this life, nothing can be done, nothing invented or devised, in order to your happiness; no wisdom or art will serve you to any such purpose, if you neglect the time of the present life. It is unreasonable to suppose the wise man means only that we should in this life do all that we can in temporal concerns, and to promote our temporal interest, and that nothing can be done towards this after this life: not only as this would be an observation of very little importance, it being as flat and impertinent as if he had said, whatever your hand finds to do this year, do it with your might; for nothing that you do or devise the next year, will signify any thing to promote your interest and happiness this year: but also because the wise man himself, in



the conclusion of this book, informs us, that his drift through the whole book is, to induce us to do a spiritual work; to fear God and keep his commandments, in order, riot to happiness in this life, (which he tells us throughout the book is never to be expected,) but in order to a future happiness and retribution in consequence of a judgment to come; chap. xii. 13, 14. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: For this is the whole" (*i. e.* the whole business, the whole concern) "of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

§ 11. If the wicked in hell are in a state of trial, under severe chastisement, as means in order to their repentance and obtaining the benefit of God's favour in eternal rewards, then they are in a state of such freedom as makes them moral agents, and the proper subjects of judgment and retribution. Then those terrible chastisements are made use of as the most powerful means of all, more efficacious than all the means used in this life which prove ineffectual, and which proving insufficient to overcome sinners' obstinacy, and prevail with 'their hard hearts, God is compelled to relinquish them all, and have recourse to those torments as the last means, the most effectual and powerful. If the torments of hell are to last ages of ages, then it must be because sinners in hell all this while are obstinate; and though they are free agents as to this matter, yet they wilfully and perversely refuse, even under such great means, to repent, forsake their sins, and turn to God. It must be further supposed, that all tins while they have the offers of immediate mercy and deliverance made to them, if they will comply. Now, if this be the case, and they shall go on in such wickedness, and continue in such extreme obstinacy and pertinaciousness, for so many ages, (as is supposed, by its being thought their torments shall be so long continued,) how desperately will their guilt be increased! How many thousand times more guilty at the end of the term, than at the beginning! And therefore they will be much the more proper objects of divine severity, deserving God's wrath, and still a thousand times more severe or longer continued chastisements than the past; and therefore it is not reasonable to suppose, that all the damned should be delivered from misery, and received to God's favour, and made the subjects of eternal salvation and glory at that time, when they are many thousand times more unworthy of it, more deserving of continuance in misery, than when they were first cast into hell. It is not likely that the infinitely wise God should so order the matter. And if their misery should be augmented, and still lengthened out much longer, to atone for their new contracted guilt; they must be supposed to continue impenitent, till that second additional time of torment is ended; at the end of which their guilt will still be risen higher, and vastly increased beyond what it was before. And, at this rate, where can there be any place for an end of their misery?

§ 12. It further appears from what was observed above, that the sinner continuing obstinate in wickedness under such powerful means to reclaim him, for so long a time, will be so far from being more and more purged, or brought nearer to repentance, that he will be farther from it. Wickedness in his heart will be vastly established and increased. For, it may

be laid down as an axiom, that the longer men continue wilfully in wickedness, the more is the habit of sin established, and the more and more will the heart be hardened in it. Again, it may be laid down as another axiom, that the greater and more powerful the means are, that are used to bring men to reform and repent, which they resist, and are obstinate under, the more desperately are men hardened in sin, and the more the principle of it in the heart is confirmed. It may be laid down as a third axiom, that long continuance in perverse and obstinate rebellion against any particular kind of means, tends to render those particular means vain, ineffectual, and hopeless.

After the damned in hell have stood it out with such prodigious perverseness and stoutness, for ages of ages, in their rebellion and enmity against God, refusing to bow to his will under such constant, severe, mighty chastisements, attended all the while with offers of mercy, what a desperate degree of hardness of heart and fixed strength of habitual wickedness will they have contracted at last, and inconceivably farther will they be from a penitent, humble, and pure heart, than when first cast into hell! And if the torments should be lengthened out still longer, and also their impenitence, (as by the-supposition one will not end before the other does,) still the farther will the heart be from being purified. And so, at this rate, the torments will never at all answer their end, and must be lengthened out to all eternity.

§13. [Matt. v. 25, 26.](#) “Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” These words imply, that sinners are in the way with their adversary, having opportunity to be reconciled to him but for a short season, inasmuch as it is intimated, that they must agree with him quickly, or they shall cease to be in the way with him, or to have opportunity to obtain his favour any more. But, if they shall be continued in a state of probation after death to the end of the world, and after that for ages, how far, how very far, are these words of Christ from representing the matter as it is?

§ 14. That some even in this world are utterly forsaken of God, and given up to their own hearts’ lusts, proves that these men never will be purified from their sins. That God should, in the future world, use great means to purify them, and fit them for eternal happiness and glory, in the enjoyment of himself, is not consistent with the supposition, that, after the use of great means and endeavours with them in this world, he gives them up to sin, because of their incorrigibleness and perverse obstinate continuance in rebellion, under the use of those great means, and so leaves them to be desperately hardened in sin, and to go on and increase their guilt, and multiply transgressions to their utter ruin; which is agreeable to manifold representations of Scripture. This is not agreeable to the scheme of such as suppose, that God is all the while, before and after death, prosecuting the design of purifying and

preparing them for eternal glory. Consider [Psal. xcii. 7.](#) “When the wicked spring as grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.” These places show, God has no merciful design with those whom he gives up to sin.

§ 15. The apostle, in [Heb. vi. 4-6.](#) says, “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, &c. if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,” &c. The apostle speaks of their renovation to repentance, as never likely to happen; for this reason, that they have proved irreclaimable under such great means to bring them to repentance, and have thereby so desperately hardened their hearts, and contracted such great guilt by sinning against such great light, and trampling on such great privileges. But if so, how much more unlikely still will it be, that they should ever be renewed to repentance, after they have gone on still more and more to harden their hearts by an obstinate, wilful continuance in sin, many thousand years longer, under much greater means; and have therefore done immensely more to establish the habit of sin, and increase the hardness of their hearts; and after their guilt is so vastly increased instead of being diminished! If it be impossible to bring them to repentance, after they have rebelled against such light and knowledge of Christ, and the things of another world, as they had in this life; how much more impossible is it, when added to this, they have had that infinitely greater and clearer knowledge and view of those things to be manifested at the day of judgment! Then they shall see Christ in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels; shall see his great majesty, and know the truth of his promises and threatenings, by sight and experience; and shall see all those ineffable manifestations of the glory of Christ, of his power, omniscience, strict inflexible justice, infinite holiness and purity, truth and faithfulness, and his infinite mercy to penitents. They shall then see the dreadful consequences of rebellion and wickedness, and the infinitely happy and glorious consequences of the contrary; and, even at this time, (on the supposition,) have the offers of mercy and deliverance from that dreadful misery, and the enjoyment of the favour of their great Judge, and participation of all the happiness and glory of the righteous which they shall see at his right hand, if then they will throw down the weapons of their rebellion, and repent, and comply with his will. But if they still, from the greatness of their enmity and perverseness, obstinately and wilfully refuse, yea, and continue still thus refusing, even after they have actually felt the terrible wrath of God, and are cast into the lake of fire; yea, after they have continued there many ages, all the while under offers of mercy on repentance; I say, if it be impossible to renew them to repentance, after their rebelling against and trampling on the light and knowledge, and means used with them in this world, so that it is not to be expected, because of the degree of hardness and guilt contracted by it; how much less is it to be expected at the day of judgment, after all this obstinacy manifested, and guilt contracted? If guilt be contracted by despising such means and advantages as the apostle has respect to in this life, that it may be

compared to guilt that would be contracted by crucifying Christ afresh; how much more, when added to this, they shall so openly have despised Christ, when appearing to them in all the terrors, and glories, and love, that shall be manifested at the day of judgment, in their immediate and most clear view, and all is offered to them, if they will but yield subjection to him; and their enmity shall have appeared so desperate as rather to choose that dreadful lake of fire, and shall have continued in their choice even after they have felt the severity of that torment without rest day or night for many ages?

§ 16. That all shall not be finally purified and saved, is manifest from [Matt. xii. 31, 32](#). “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” Also, [Mark iii. 28, 29](#). “Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and all blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.” And [1 John v. 16](#). “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say he shall pray for it.” From each of these places it is manifest, that he that is guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall surely be damned, without any deliverance from his punishment, or end to it. The various expressions that are used, serve much to certify and fix the import of others. In [Matt. xii. 31](#). it is said, “The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” The negative is general, and equally respects all times. If this sin should be forgiven at a remote time, it would be as contrary to such a negative, as if it were forgiven immediately. But, to determine us that Christ has respect to all times, even the remotest, and that he means to deny that he shall be forgiven at any time whatsoever, in Mark it is said, “He shall never be forgiven; or, hath never forgiveness;”<sup>483</sup> and, lest this never should be interpreted to mean, never as long as he lives, or never in this world, it is said in [Matt. xii. 32](#). “It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.” And lest it should be said, that, although he never is forgiven, yet that does not hinder but that there may be an end to his punishment; because he may suffer all he deserves in suffering a temporal punishment, or punishment of a limited, long duration; and he that is acquitted in paying all his debt, is not said to be forgiven his debt: another expression is used in Mark, which shows that he shall ever suffer damnation, and never have deliverance from his misery, whether by forgiveness or without it. “Hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of to come,” show the meaning of the word eternal here, to be such as absolutely excludes any period, any time of favour, wherein condemnation and punishment

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483 [Mark iii. 29](#).

shall have ceased. And what the apostle John says of those who commit the unpardonable sin, confirms the whole, and proves that he that has committed this sin remains under no dispensation of mercy, and that no favour is ever to be hoped for from God; and therefore it is not our duty to pray for such favour. ” There is a sin unto death, I do not say he shall pray for it;” or, I give you no direction to pray for them that sin this sin unto death.

§ 17. Thus it is evident, that all wicked men will not have an end to their damnation; but when it is said, they are in danger of eternal or everlasting damnation, the word eternal is to be understood in the strictest sense. The same terms are used concerning all impenitent sinners, that they shall be sentenced to eternal punishment, and shall go into everlasting punishment, &c. That their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; and they shall be tormented for ever and ever; and such terms are used after this world comes to an end; and also when they who have committed the unpardonable sin, and others, shall be sentenced all together to an everlasting fire, in the same terms. It is unreasonable to suppose that the punishment of some will be everlasting, in an infinitely different sense from others jointly sentenced; and that the duration of the punishment of one shall be perfectly as nothing, compared with the duration of the punishment of the other, infinitely less than a second to a million of ages. And it is unreasonable to suppose such a difference, also on this account, that there cannot be such a difference in the demerit of them that commit the unpardonable sin, and the demerit of the sins of all other wicked men, some of whom are exceedingly, and almost inconceivably, wicked. There cannot be a truly infinite difference in their guilt, as there must be a properly infinite difference between the dreadfulfulness of those torments that have an end, however long continued, and however great, and the torments of a truly and strictly everlasting fire.

§ 18. If the damned in hell shall all finally be saved, they shall be saved without Christ. It is manifest, that Christ’s saving work will be at an end at the day of judgment; for, as Christ has a twofold office, that of the Saviour of the world, and the Judge of the world; so, the business of the latter office properly succeeds the former. It is not fit, in the nature of things, that he should come into the world and appear openly in the character of universal Judge, to decide men’s state in consequence of the trial there has been for making their state better by salvation till that trial is over, and all its effects completed, when no more is to be hoped as to altering their state for the better by his salvation. Therefore Christ, at his first coming, appeared in order to save men from condemnation and a sentence of eternal misery; and not to judge them; as he tells us, [John xii. 47.](#) “If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not: for I came, not to judge the world, but to save the world.” See also [chap. iii. 17.](#) and [viii. 15.](#) But the great business he will come upon at his second coming, as is abundantly declared, is to judge the world. And it is also exceedingly plain, that Christ’s saving work will be at an end at the day of judgment; because we read, [2 Cor. xv.](#) that at the end of the world he will deliver up his kingdom; he will resign his commission: which proves,

that the work of salvation, which is the design of it, will be at an end, when all his enemies, all that rejected him, and would not have him to rule over them, and so have failed of his salvation, shall be made his footstool, shall be condemned and destroyed. Instead of being the heirs of salvation, he shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, &c. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe; [2 Thess. i. 8-10.](#)

§ 19. If the damned, after they have suffered awhile, are to be delivered, and to have eternal life; then the present dispensation of grace and life to the fallen children of men, that was introduced by Christ and his apostles, is not the last; but another is to be introduced after this has proved unprofitable and ineffectual. But, that a new dispensation of grace should thus be introduced, because that which was brought in by Christ and his apostles, proves weak and unprofitable through men's corruption, and there appears to be need of one which shall be more effectual, is not agreeable to the Scripture. For this dispensation is spoken of as the last and most perfect, wherein perfection was reached, [Heb. vii. 19.](#) "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." And [chap. xi. 40.](#) "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The ancient dispensation is spoken of as that which God found fault with, in proving ineffectual through the corruption of men; and so he introduced a new administration, that should not be liable to exception, and therefore should not wax old, or be ever liable to vanish away and give place to another. [Heb. viii. 6.](#), to the end. So he speaks of the things of that ancient dispensation, as things which were liable to be shaken and removed; but of the things of the new dispensation then introduced, as those that could not be shaken, but should remain for ever; [Heb. xii. 25.](#), to the end; and [2 Cor. iii. 11.](#) The dispensation of the New Testament is often spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament as an everlasting dispensation; [Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.](#) [chap. xxxii. 40.](#) [Isa. lxi. 8.](#) [Ezek. xxxvii. 26.](#)

§ 20. To suppose that, after all the means of grace that are used in this world, Moses and the prophets, Christ and the gospel, the warnings of God's word, and the exhibitions of glorious gospel grace, have been despised and obstinately withstood, so as to make the case desperate as to their success, God has other means in reserve, to be used afterwards to make men holy, that will be more powerful, and shall be effectual; is not agreeable to Scripture. Particularly, [Luke xvi. 27.](#), to the end: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." And this is especially manifest, from [Rev. xxii. 10-12.](#) "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of



the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be.”

I think the meaning must be either, The time is quickly coming, when every man’s state will be fixed, inasmuch as I am quickly coming to judgment, to fix every man’s state unalterably, according as his work shall be; and after that there will be no alteration, nor any means or endeavours in order to it; but he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and if this be the meaning, it makes it evident, that Christ will not immediately proceed to the use of the most powerful and effectual means of all, to change the state of the unjust and filthy, to purify them and make them holy, and fit them for eternal glory, with infallible success. Or, the meaning must be this, which seems to be much the most probable: Christ having given this last revelation to his church to be added to the book of Scripture, with which the canon was to be shut up and sealed, by the instrumentality of the apostle John, who lived the longest of the apostles, and wrote this book after all the rest were dead; orders John, *ver. 10.* to publish this book, wherein such great future judgments are revealed as coming on the wicked, and such an affecting declaration of the future glory of the saints, to enforce the rest of God’s word and means of grace; and then intimates, that no more revelations are to be expected, no more instructions and warnings are to be added to the word of God, as the steady means of grace, any further to confirm and enforce the rest; and the next revelation that is to be expected, and that Christ will make of himself to the world, is to be his immediate appearance in judgment, to fix unalterably every man’s state according to his works, according to the improvement he shall have made of those past revelations, instructions, and warnings: and therefore, those that will not be purified by those means, are not to expect that better or other means will ever be used with them; but he that is unjust must remain so still, and he that is filthy must be filthy still, and he that is righteous shall be righteous still, and he that is holy shall be holy still. Thus Christ takes leave of his church till his last coming, warning them to improve the means of grace they have, and informing them that they are never to have any other: *q. d.* They have Moses and the prophets; and, in the writings of the New Testament, they have more glorious, powerful, and efficacious revelations of me. Those writings I now finish and seal. Let them hear these, and make a good improvement of them; for these are the last means I shall ever use to change man’s state. This is inconsistent with his reserving his greatest and most powerful means, with a determined certain success, to be used after the day of judgment.

§ 21. They who suppose the damned are made to suffer the torments of hell for their purification, suppose, that God is herein prosecuting his grand design of benevolence to his creatures; yea, benevolence to the sufferers; and that he does not use these severe means but from necessity for their good, because all gentle remedies prove ineffectual. Now it is unreas-

unable to suppose that God is under any necessity of inflicting such extreme torments upon them for so long a time, in order to their being brought to repentance; and that,

1. If we consider the *nature of things*: torments inflicted have *no tendency* to bring a wicked man to repentance directly and properly, if by repentance we mean an alteration of the disposition, anal appetites, and taste of the mind. We know by experience, that pain inflicted for gratifying an appetite, may make men afraid to gratify the appetite; but they do not change the inclination, or destroy the appetite. They may make men willing to comply with external exercises, of which they have a distaste, and to which their heart, in its relish and inclinations, is averse; yet not from love to the things complied with, but from hatred of pain, and love of ease. So that the man complies in some sense; but his heart does not comply. He is only driven, and as it were forced; and an increase of pain alters not the nature of things. It may make a man more earnestly to desire freedom from pain; but still there is no more to be expected from it, than is in the tendency of pain, which is not to give a new nature, a new heart, or a new natural relish and disposition. It is not granted, that even long continued pains and practice will gradually raise an habitual love to virtue. The pains of the damned being great and long continued, may more and more convince them of the folly of their negligence and fearlessness in sin, and may make them willing to take some pains, but will not show them the beauty of holiness, or the odiousness of sin, so as to cause them to hate sin on its own account.

Can any one that considers human nature, especially of those that deny an innate, desperate wickedness of heart, (as the men that we have this controversy with generally do,) doubt in the least, whether, if a man should be in a furnace of fire for one day only, alive and full of quick sense, and should retain a full and lively remembrance of his misery, it would not be sufficient to make him wholly comply with all the pains and outward self-denial requisite in order to an universal, external obedience to the precepts of the word of God, rather than have those torments renewed and continued for ages; and indeed rather than endure one more such day? What pains would not such a man be willing to suffer? What labours could be too much? What would he not be willing to part with, in foregoing worldly wealth or pleasures? Would not the most covetous man, that had felt such a rod as this, be willing to part with all his treasures of silver and gold? and the most ambitious man be willing to live in a cottage or wilderness? the most voluptuous man to part with his pleasures? Would he need first to endure many ages of such torment, before he would be willing thus far to comply? It is against all principles of human nature to suppose it. If he retains the remembrance of the torment, in a lively idea of it, it must unspeakably outweigh the most lively and affecting and attractive ideas of the good things of the world. The supposition, therefore, of his not being brought to compliance by less torment, is as unreasonable as to suppose, that a mote of dust would sink the scale, being put in a balance with a talent of lead, or with ten thousand talents. If the Most High compassionate these poor wretches.,



and has nothing but a kind and gracious design of infinite mercy and bounty towards them, why does he take such dreadful measures with them? Will no other do? Cannot infinite wisdom find out some gentler method to bring to pass the same design? If it be said, that no other can accomplish the effect, consistently with the freedom of will; I answer, What means can be devised, having a greater tendency to drive men, and compel them to comply with the thing required, (if there be any such thing,) without acting freely, and as persons left to their own free choice, than such a rod not only held over, but used upon them in such an amazing manner, by an omnipotent hand?

2. It is apparent, from what has often come to pass, that God is in no necessity of making use of such dreadful and long-continued torments, in order to bring sinners to repentance. It is most unreasonable to suppose, that no sinners that ever were converted in this world, were, before their conversion, as wicked and as hard-hearted as some of those that have died impenitent; as Saul the persecutor, afterwards the apostle Paul, and some of the converts, in the [2d chapter of Acts.](#), who had had a hand in Christ's crucifixion, and innumerable instances of persecutors and others, who have been brought to repentance since those days. Such were converted by gentler means than those pains of hell, in what the Scripture calls everlasting burnings; and that without any infringement of liberty necessary to their being moral agents. It would be unreasonable to suppose, that all those eighteen, on whom the tower of Siloam fell, were good men. But Christ would not have his hearers imagine they were worse than themselves; and yet intimates, that there was a possibility of their escaping future misery by repentance.

3. So far as pain and affliction are made use of to bring men to repentance, it is apparent God can make infinitely less severe chastisement effectual, together with such influences and assistances of his Spirit, as are not inconsistent with the persons' moral agency in their forsaking sin and turning to God. And, if it should be said, that none of them had the habits of sin so confirmed, as all such as die in sin; I would answer, That this is very unreasonably supposed: and if it should be allowed, yet it cannot be pretended, that the difference of guilt and hard-heartedness is proportionable at all to the severity of the chastisement used for purgation. If no more than ten degrees of pain, or one year's chastisement, be requisite for the overcoming of five degrees of strength of the habit of sin, one would think, that less than 100,000 degrees, or 100,000 years' chastisement, should be sufficient to overcome ten degrees of strength of the same habit.

§ 22. If the torments of hell are purifying pains, and are used by a God of universal benevolence towards his creatures, as necessary means for the purgation of the wicked from sin, and their being fitted for, and finally brought to, eternal happiness in the enjoyment of the love of God; then it will follow, that the damned in hell are still the objects of God's mercy and kindness, and that in the torments they suffer, they are the subjects of a dispensation of grace and benevolence. All is for their good; all is the best kindness that can be done

them, the most benevolent treatment they are capable of, in their state of mind; and, in all, God is but chastising them as a wise and loving father, with a grieved and compassionate heart, gives necessary chastisement to sons whom he loves, and whose good he seeks to the utmost; in all he does he is only prosecuting a design of infinite kindness and favour. And indeed, some of the chief of those who are in the scheme of purifying pains, expressly maintain, that, instead of being the fruits of vindictive justice, they are the effects of God's benevolence, not only to the system of intelligent creatures in general, but to the sufferers themselves. Now, how far are these things from being agreeable to the representation which is made of things in the Holy Scriptures?

The Scriptures represent the damned as thrown away of God; as things that are good for nothing; and which God makes no account of; [Matt. xiii. 48](#). As dross, and not gold and silver, or any valuable metal; [Psal. cxix. 119](#). "Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth as dross." So [Ezek. xxii. 18](#). [Jer. vi. 28-30](#). as salt that has lost its savour; as good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under-foot of men; as stubble that is left, and as the chaff thrown out to be scattered by the wind, and go whither that shall happen to carry it, instead of being gathered and laid up as that which is of any value. [Psal. i. 4](#). [Job xxi. 18](#). and [xxxv. 5](#). as that which shall be thrown away as wholly worthless, as chaff, and stubble, and tares; all which are thrown away as not worthy of any care to save them; yea, are thrown into the fire, to be burnt up as mere nuisances, as fit for nothing but to be destroyed, and therefore are cast into the fire to be destroyed and done with. [Matt. iii. 12](#). and [. xii. 30](#). [Job xxi. 18](#). as barren trees, trees that are good for nothing; and not only so, but cumberers of the ground; and as such, shall be cut down and cast into the fire. [Matt. iii. 10](#). and [vii. 19](#). [Luke xiii. 7](#). as barren branches in a vine, that are cut off and castaway; as good for nothing, and gathered and burned. [John xv. 6](#). as thrown out and purged away as the filth of the world. Thus, it is said, [Job xx. 7](#). "That the wicked shall perish for ever, as his own dung." They are spoken of as those that shall be spued out of God's mouth; as thrown into the lake of fire; as the great sink of all the filth of the creation; [Rev. xxi. 8](#). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their share in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." As briars and thorns, that are not only wholly worthless in a field, but hurtful and pernicious; and are nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned; [Heb. vi. i.e.](#) the husbandman throws them into the fire, and so has done with them for ever. He does not still take care of them, in order to make them fruitful and flourishing plants in his garden of delights. The wicked, it is said, shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world; [Job xviii. 18](#). Instead of being treated by God with benevolence, chastening them with the compassion and kindness of a father, for their great and everlasting good, they, at that day, when God shall gather his children together, to make them experience the blessed fruits of the love of a heavenly Father, shall be shut out as dogs; [Rev. xxi. 7, 8](#). with [chap. xxii. 14, 15](#). And are represented

as vessels to dishonour, vessels of wrath, fit for nothing else, but to contain wrath and misery. They are spoken of as those that perish and lose their souls; that are lost; (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Those that lose themselves and are cast away; those that are destroyed, consumed, &c. which representations do not agree with such as are under a dispensation of kindness, and the means of a physician, in order to their eternal life, health, and happiness, though the means are severe. When God, of old, by his prophets, denounced his terrible judgments against Jerusalem and the people of Israel, against Moab, Tyre, Egypt, Assyria, &c. which judgments, though long continued, were not designed to be perpetual; there were mixed with those awful denunciations, or added to them, promises or intimations of future mercy. But, when the Scripture speaks of God's dealings with ungodly men in another world, there are nothing but declarations and denunciations of wrath and misery, and no intimations of mercy; no gentle terms used, no significations of divine pity, no exhortations to humiliation under God's awful hand, or calls to seek his face and favour, and turn and repent. The account that the Scripture gives of the treatment that wicked men shall meet with after this life, is very inconsistent with the notion of their being from necessity subjected to harsh means of cure, and severe chastisement, with a benevolent, gracious design of their everlasting good; particularly the manner in which Christ will treat them at the day of judgment. He will bid the wicked depart from him as cursed.

§ 23. We have no account of any invitations to accept of mercy; any counsels to repent, that they may speedily be delivered from this misery. But it is represented that then they shall be made his footstool. He shall triumph over them. He will trample upon them as men are wont to tread grapes in a wine-press, when they trample with all their might, to that very end that they may effectually crush them in pieces. He will tread them in his anger, and trample them in his fury, and, as he says, their blood shall be sprinkled on his garments, and he will stain all his raiment, [Isaiah lxiii.](#) at the beginning; [Rev. xiv. 19, 20.](#) and [chap. xix. 15.](#) in which last place it is said, he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. These things do not savour of chastening with compassion and benevolence, and as still prosecuting a design of love toward them, that he may in the end actually be their Saviour, and the means of their eternal glory. There is nothing in the account of the day of judgment, that looks as though saints had any love or pity for the wicked, on account of the terrible long-continued torments which they must suffer. Nor indeed will the accounts that are given admit of supposing any such thing. We have an account of their judging them, and being with Christ in condemning them, concurring in the sentence, wherein he bids them begone from him as cursed with devils into eternal fire; but no account of their praying for them, nor of their exhorting them to consider and repent.

They shall not be grieved, but rather rejoice at the glorious manifestations of God's justice, holiness, and majesty, in their dreadful perdition, and shall triumph with Christ; [Rev. xviii. 20.](#) and [xix at the beginning.](#) They shall be made Christ's footstool, and so they

shall be the footstool of the saints. [Psalm lxxviii. 23.](#) “That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.” If the damned were the objects of divine benevolence, and designed by God for the enjoyment of his eternal love, doubtless it would be required of all God’s children to love them, and to pity them, and pray for them, and seek their good; as here in this world it is required of them to love their enemies, to be kind to the evil and unjust; and to pity and pray for the vilest of men, that were their own persecutors, because they are the subjects of God’s mercy in many respects, and are fit objects of infinite divine mercy and love. If Christ, the head of all the church, pities the damned and seeks their good, doubtless his members ought to do so too. If the saints in heaven ought to pity the damned, as well as the saints on earth are obligated to pity the wicked that dwell here; doubtless their pity ought to be in some proportion to the greatness of the calamities of the objects pt it, and the greatness of the number of those they see in misery. But if they had pity and sympathizing grief in such measure as this, for so many ages, what an alloy would it be to their happiness! God is represented as whetting his glittering sword, bending his bow, and making ready his arrows on the string against wicked men, and lifting his hand to heaven, and swearing, that he will render vengeance to his enemies, and reward them that hate him, and make his arrows drunk with their blood, and that his sword shall devour their flesh. [Deut. xxxii. 40, 41, 42.](#) and [Psalm vii. 11, 12, 13.](#) Certainly this is the language and conduct of an enemy, not of a friend, or of a compassionate chastising father.

§ 24. The degree of misery and torment that shall be inflicted, is an evidence that God is not acting the part of benevolence and compassion, and only chastening from a kind and gracious principle and design. It is evident, that it is God’s manner, when he thus afflicts men for their good, and chastens them with compassion, to stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; to correct in measure; to consider the frame of those that are corrected; to remember their weakness, and to consider how little they can bear. He turns away his anger, and does not stir up all his wrath. [Psalm lxxviii. 37, 38, 39.](#) [Isa. xxvii. 8.](#) [Jer. xxx. 11.](#) and [xlvi. 28.](#) And it is his manner, in the midst even of the severest afflictions, to order some mitigating circumstances, and to mix some mercy. But the misery of the damned is represented as unmixed. The wine of the wrath of God is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, that they may be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night. [Rev. xiv. 10, 11.](#) They are tormented in a flame that burns within them, as well as round about them, and they shall be denied so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues. And God’s wrath shall be inflicted in such a manner, as to show his wrath, and make his strength known on the vessels of wrath, and which shall be punished with everlasting destruction, answerable to that glory of Christ’s power in which he shall appear at the day of judgment, when he shall come in the glory of

his Father, with power and great glory, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. Can any imagine, that in all this God is only correcting from love, and that the subjects of these inflictions are some of those happy ones whom God corrects in order to teach them out of his law? whom he makes sore, and bindeth up? [Job v. 17,18.](#) [Psalm xciv. 12.](#) There is nothing in Scripture that looks as if the damned were under the use of means to bring them to repentance. It is apparent that God's manner is, when he afflicts men to bring to repentance by affliction, to join instructions, admonitions, and arguments to persuade.

But if we judge by scripture representations of the state of the damned, they are left destitute of all these things. There are no prophets, or ministers, or good men, to admonish them, to reason and expostulate with them, or to set them good examples. There is a perfect separation made betwixt all the righteous and the wicked by a great gulf; so that there can be no passing from one to the other. They are left wholly to the company of devils, and others like them. When the rich man in hell cries to his father Abraham, begging a drop of water, he denies his request; and adds no exhortation to repentance. Wisdom is abundantly represented in the book of Proverbs, as counselling, warning, calling, inviting, and expostulating with such as are under means for the obtaining wisdom, and as waiting upon them in the use of means, that they may turn at her reproof. But as to such as are obstinate under these means of grace and calls of wisdom, till the time of their punishment comes, it is represented, that their fear shall come as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwind; that distress and anguish shall come upon them; and that then it will be in vain for them to seek wisdom: that if they seek her early, they shall not find her, and if they call upon her, she will not hear; but instead of this, will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh: which certainly does not consist with the idea that the God of wisdom is still striving with them, and using means, in a benevolent and compassionate manner, to bring them to seek and embrace wisdom; still offering wisdom with all her unspeakable benefits, if they will hearken to her voice and comply with her counsel. Is wisdom then actually using the most powerful and effectual means to bring them to this happiness, even such as shall surely be successful, though they have obstinately refused all others, and when wisdom called, they heretofore refused, when she stretched forth her hand, they did not regard? Is he still most effectually acting the part of a friend, to deliver them from their distress and anguish, instead of laughing at their calamity? [Prov. i.](#) latter end. This declaration of wisdom, if it ever be fulfilled at all, will surely be fulfilled most completely and perfectly at the time appointed for obstinate sinners to receive their most perfect and complete punishment.

If all mankind, even such as live and die in their wickedness, are and ever will be the objects of Christ's goodwill and mercy, and those whose eternal happiness he desires and seeks; then surely he would pray for all: but Christ declares that there are some that he prays not for. [John xvii. 9.](#) "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast

given me; for they are thine.” Compared with [ver 14](#). “The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” [Ver. 25](#). “The world hath not known thee, but I have known thee; and these have known that thou hast sent me;” and [ver. 20](#). “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” By this it appears that Christ prayed for all that should ever be true believers. But he prayed not for those who should not be brought by the word of the apostles, and such means of grace as are used in this world, to believe in him, and should continue notwithstanding not to know God, and in enmity against true holiness or Christianity. These were such as Christ prayed not for.

§ 25. If sin and misery, and the second death, are to continue and prevail for so long a lime after the day of judgment, with respect to great multitudes that Christ will finally save and deliver from those things, having perfectly conquered and abolished them; then how can the Scriptures truly represent, that all enemies shall be put under his feet at the end of the world, and that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; and that then, having perfectly subdued all his enemies, he shall resign up the Kingdom to the Father, and he himself be subject to the Father? as in [1 Cor. xv. 20-28](#). The time of Christ’s victory over death will be at the general resurrection and day of judgment, as is evident by [ver. 54](#). with the foregoing context. The chief enemies that Christ came to destroy, with regard to such as should be saved, and be of his church, were sin and misery, or death consisting in sin, and death consisting in suffering the second death, unspeakably the greatest enemy that came by sin, infinitely more terrible than temporal death. But if the notion I am opposing be true, these greatest and worst enemies, instead of being subdued, shall have their principal reign afterwards, for many ages at least; *viz.* sin in the sad effect and consequence of it, men’s misery; and God shall have his strongest conflict with those enemies afterward; that is, shall strive against them in the use of the most powerful means.

§ 26. There is a great evidence, that the devil is not the subject of any dispensation of divine mercy and kindness, and that God is prosecuting no design of infinite goodness towards him, and that his pains are not purifying pains. It is manifest, that, instead of any influence of his torments to bring him nearer to repentance, he has been from the beginning of his damnation, constantly, with all his might, exerting himself in prosecuting his wickedness, his violent, most haughty, and malignant opposition to God and man; fighting especially with peculiar virulence against Christ and his church; opposing with all his might, every thing that is good; seeking the destruction and misery of all mankind, with boundless and insatiable cruelty; on which account he is called Satan, the adversary, and Abaddon, and Apollyon, the destroyer. He is represented as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, a viper, the old serpent, the great red dragon, red on account of his bloody cruel nature. He is said to be a murderer from the beginning. He has murdered all mankind, has murdered their souls as well as their bodies. He was the murderer of Jesus Christ, by instigating Judas

and his crucifiers. He has most cruelly shed the blood of an innumerable multitude of the children of God. He is emphatically called the evil one, that wicked one, &c. he is a liar, and the father of lies, and the father of all the sin and wickedness that is, or ever has been, in the world. He is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. It is said, that he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. And all wicked men are spoken of as his children. He has set up himself as God of this world, in opposition to the true God, and has erected a vast kingdom over the nations; and is constantly carrying on a war with the utmost earnestness, subtlety, malice, and venom, against Jesus Christ, and all his holy and gracious designs; maintaining a kingdom of darkness, wickedness, and misery, in opposition to Christ's kingdom of light, holiness, and peace; and thus wilt continue to do till the end of the world, as appears by scripture prophecies.

§ 27. And God's dealings with him are infinitely far from being those of in *friend*, kindly seeking his infinite good, and designing nothing else in the end, but to make him eternally happy in love and favour, and blessed union with him. God is represented every where as acting the part of an enemy to him, that seeks and designs nothing in the final event but his destruction. The grand work of God's providence, which he is prosecuting from the beginning to the end of the world, *viz.* the work of redemption, is against him, to bruise or break in pieces his head, to cast him like lightning from heaven, from that height of power and dominion to which he has exalted himself, to tread him under-foot, and to cause his people to trample and bruise, or crush him under-foot, and gloriously to triumph over him. Christ, when he conquered him, made a show of him openly, triumphing over him. And it is evident, that, as it will be with the devil in this respect, so it will be with the wicked. This is reasonable to suppose, from what the Scripture represents of the relation wicked men stand in to the devil as his children, servants, subjects, instruments, and his property and possession. They are all ranked together with him in one kingdom, in one interest, and one company. And many of them are the great ministers of his kingdom, and to whom he has committed authority; such as the beast and false prophet that we read of in the Revelation. Now, how reasonable and natural is it to suppose, that those who are thus united should have their portion and lot together! As Christ's disciples, subjects, followers, soldiers, children, instruments, and faithful ministers, shall have their part with him in his eternal glory; so we may reasonably believe, that the devil's disciples, followers, subjects, soldiers in his army, his children, instruments, and ministers of his kingdom, should have their part with him, and not that such an infinite difference should be made between them, that the punishment of the one should be eternal, and that of the other but temporal, and therefore infinitely less, infinitely disproportionate; so that the proportion between the punishment of the latter, and that of the former, is as nothing, infinitely less than an unit to a million of millions. This is unreasonable to be supposed in itself, as the difference of guilt and wickedness cannot be so great, but must be infinitely far from it; especially, considering the aggravations of

“the wickedness of a great part of damned men, as committed against Christ, and gospel grace and love; which exceeding great aggravation the sin of the devils never had.

§ 28. As the devil’s ministers, servants and instruments, of the angelic nature, those that are called the devil’s angels, shall have their part with him; for the like reason we may well suppose, his servants, and instruments of the human nature, will share with him. And not only is this reasonable in itself, but the Scripture plainly teaches us that it shall be so. In [Rev. xix. 20.](#) it is said, “The beast and the false prophet were both cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.” So it is said, [chap. xx. 10.](#) “The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever;” thus expressing both the kind of misery and the duration. Just in the same manner it is said concerning the followers of the beast. It is said, [chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11.](#) “Saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast, &c. the same shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night.” And [chap. xxi. 8.](#) of wicked men in general, it is said, they shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. So we find in Christ’s description of the day of judgment, the wicked are sentenced to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. By which it appears most plainly, that they share with the devil in suffering misery of the same kind, and also share with him in suffering misery of the same everlasting continuance. And, indeed, not only would the punishment infinitely differ as to quantity and duration, if the punishment of the devils was to be eternal, and of wicked men only temporal; but, if this were known, it would, as it were, infinitely differ in kind. The one suffering God’s haired and mere vengeance, inflictions that have no pity or kindness in them; the other, the fruit of his mercy and love, and infinitely kind intention: the one attended with absolute despair, and a black and dismal sinking prospect of misery, absolutely endless; the other with the light of hope, and a supporting prospect, net only of an end to their misery, but of an eternal unspeakable happiness to follow. According to the notion which I am opposing, the judgment that shall take place at the end of the world, will be so far from being the last judgment, or any proper judgment to settle all things in ‘their final state, that it will, with respect to the wicked, be no more than the judgment of a physician, whether more sharp and powerful remedies must not be applied in order to the relief of sinners, and the cure of their disease, which, if not cured, will make them eternally miserable!

§ 29. It is evident, that the future misery of the wicked in hell is not come to an end, and to be succeeded by eternal happiness; and that their misery is not subservient to their happiness, because the Scripture plainly signifies, concerning those that die in their sins, that they have all the good and comfort in *this life* that ever is designed for them. [Luke vi. 24.](#) “Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation.” [Luke xvi. 25.](#) “Son, remember that thou in thy *lifetime* receivedst thy good things.” [Psal. xvii. 13, 14.](#) “Deliver



my soul from the wicked from the men of the world which have their portion in *this life*, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure.”

§ 30. According to the opinion I am now opposing, God will surely at the last deliver all the damned from their misery, and make them happy. So that God will see to it, that the purifying torments shall certainly at last have their effect, to turn them from sin. Now, how can this consist with God’s treating them as moral agents, and their acting from the freedom of their own wills, in the affair of their turning from sin, and becoming morally pure and virtuous, according to the notions of freedom and moral agency which now prevail, and are strenuously maintained by some of the chief assertors of this opinion concerning hell torments; which notion of freedom implies contingency, and is wholly inconsistent with the necessity of the event? If after all the torments used to bring sinners to repentance, the consequence aimed at, *viz.* their turning from sin to virtue, be not necessary, but it shall still remain a contingent event, whether there ever will be any such consequence of those severe, long-continued chastisements, or no; then, how can it be determined, that this will surely be the consequence? How can it be a thing infallible, that such a consequence of means used will follow, when at the same time, it is not a consequence any way necessarily connected with the means used, it being only a thing contingent whether it will follow or not? If God has determined absolutely to make them all pure and happy, and yet their purity and happiness depend on the freedom of their will; then here is an absolute, divine decree, consistent with the freedom of men’s will, which is a doctrine utterly rejected by the generality of that sort of men who deny the eternity of hell torments. If it be said, that God has not absolutely determined the duration or measure of their torments, but intends to continue them till they do repent, or to try lesser torments first, and, if these do not answer, to increase them till they are effectual, determining that he will raise or continue them till the effect shall finally and infallibly follow; that is the same thing as to necessitate the effect. And here is necessity in such a case, as much as when a founder puts a piece of metal into a furnace, with a resolution to melt it, and if continuing it there a little while will not dissolve it, that he will keep it there till it does dissolve; and if, by reason of its peculiar hardness, an ordinary degree of heat of the furnace will not be effectual, that he will increase the vehemence of the heat, till the effect shall certainly follow.

§ 31. If any should maintain this scheme of temporary future punishments, *viz.* that the torments in hell are not purifying pains, and that the damned are not in a state of trial with regard to any expected admission to eternal happiness, and that therefore they are not the proper objects of divine benevolence; that the dispensation they are under, is not truly a dispensation of mercy, but that their torments are properly penal pains, wherein God displays his vindictive justice; that they shall suffer misery to such a degree, and for so long a time, as their obstinate wickedness in this world *deserves*; and that indeed they shall be miserable a very long time, so long, that it is often figuratively spoken of in Scripture as being everlast-

ing, and that then they shall be annihilated: On this I would observe, that there is nothing got by such a scheme; no relief from the arguments taken from Scripture, for the proper eternity of future punishment. For, if it be owned, that Scripture expressions denote a punishment that is properly eternal, but that it is in no other sense properly so, than as the annihilation, or state of non-existence, to which the wicked shall return, will be eternal; and that this eternal annihilation is that death which is so often threatened for sin, perishing far ever, everlasting destruction, being lost, utterly consumed, See. and that the fire of hell is called eternal fire, in the same sense that the external fire which consumed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha is called eternal fire, [Jude 7](#). because it utterly consumed those cities, that they might never be built more; and that this fire is called that which cannot be quenched, or at least not until it has destroyed them that are cast into it. If this be all that these expressions denote, then they do not at all signify the length of the torments, or long continuance of their misery; so that the supposition of the length of their torments is brought in without any necessity, the Scripture saying nothing of it, having no respect to it, when it speaks of their everlasting punishments; and it answers the scripture expressions as well, to suppose that they shall be annihilated immediately, without any long pains, provided the annihilation be everlasting.

§ 32. If any should suppose, that the torments of the damned in hell are properly penal, and in execution of penal justice, but yet that they are neither eternal, nor shall end in annihilation, but shall be continued till justice is satisfied, and they have truly suffered as much as they deserve, whereby their punishment shall be so long as to be called everlasting, but that then they shall be delivered, and finally be the subjects of everlasting happiness; and that therefore they shall not in the mean time be in a state of trial, nor will be waited upon in order to repentance, nor will their torments be used as means to bring them to it; for that the term and measure of their punishment shall be fixed, from which they shall not be delivered on repentance, or any terms or conditions whatsoever, until justice is satisfied: I would observe, in answer to this, that if it be so, the damned, while under their suffering, are either answerable for the wickedness that is acted by them while in that state, or may properly be the subjects of a judicial proceeding for it, or not. If the former be supposed, then it will follow, that they must have another state of suffering and punishment, after the ages of their suffering for the sins of this life, are ended. And it cannot be supposed, that this second period of suffering will be shorter than the first: for the first is only for the sins committed during a short life, often represented in Scripture, for its shortness, to be a dream, a tale that is told, a blast of wind, a vapour, a span, a moment, &c. But the time of punishment is always represented as exceeding long, called everlasting; represented as enduring for ever and ever, as having no end, &c. If the sins of a moment must be followed with such punishment, then, doubtless, the sins of those endless ages must be followed with another second period of suffering, much longer. For it must be supposed, that the damned continue sinning

all the lime of their punishment; for none can rationally imagine that God would hold them under such extreme torments, and terrible manifestations and executions of his wrath, after they have thoroughly repented, and turned from sin, and are become pure and holy, and conformed to God, and so have left off sinning. And if they continue in sin during this state of punishment, with assurance that God still has a great benevolence for them, even so as to intend finally to make them everlastingly happy in the enjoyment of his love, then their sin must be attended with great aggravation; as they will have the evil and ill desert of sin set before them in the most affecting manner, in their dreadful sufferings for it, attended besides with evidence that God is infinitely benevolent towards them, and intends to bestow infinite blessings upon them. But, if this first long period of punishment must be followed with a second as lone, or longer; for the same reason, the second must be followed by a third, as long, or longer than that; and so the third must be followed by a fourth, and so *in infinitum*; and, at this rate, there never can be an end of their misery. So this scheme overthrows itself.

§ 33. And if the damned are not answerable for the wickedness they commit during their state of punishment, then we must suppose that, during the whole of their long and, as it were, eternal state of punishment, they are given up of God to the most unrestrained wickedness, having this to consider, that how far soever they go in the allowed exercises and manifestations, of their malice and rage against God and Christ, saints and angels, and their fellow be never the worse damned spirits, they have nothing to fear from it, it will ; and surely, continuing in such unrestrained wickedness, for such duration, must most desperately confirm the habit of sin, must increase the root and fountain of it in the heart. Now, how unreasonable is it to suppose, that God would thus deal with such as were objects of his infinite kindness, and the appointed subjects of the unspeakable and endless fruits of his love, in a state of perfect holiness and purity, and conformity to and union with himself; thus to give them up beforehand to unrestrained malignity against himself, and every kind of hellish wickedness, as it were infinitely to increase the fountain of sin in the heart, and the strength of the principle and habit! Now, how incongruous is it to suppose, with regard to those for whom God has great benevolence, and designs eternal favour, that he would lay them under a necessity of extreme, unbounded hatred of him, blasphemy and rage against him, for so many ages; such necessity as should exclude all liberty of their own in the case! If God intends not only punishment, but purification, by these torments; on this supposition, instead of their being purified, they must be set at an infinitely greater distance from purification. And if God intends them for a second time of probation, in order to their being brought to repentance and the love of God after their punishment is finished; then how can it be certain beforehand, that they shall finally be happy, as is supposed? How can it be certain they will not fail in their second trial, or in their third, if there be a third? Yea, how much more likely, that they will fail of truly turning in heart from sin to the love of God, in their second trial, if there be any proper trial in the case, after their hearts have been so much more brought

under the power of a strong habit of sin and enmity to God! If the habit proved so strong in this life, that the most powerful means and mighty inducements of the gospel would not prevail, so that God was, as it were, under a necessity of cutting them down and dealing thus severely with them; how much less likely will it be, that they will be prevailed upon to love God and the ways of virtue, after their hearts are set at so much greater distance from those things! Yea, unless we suppose a divine interposition of almighty, efficacious power, to change the heart in the time of this second trial, we may be sure that, under these circumstances, the heart will not turn to love God.

§ 34. And besides, if they are laid under such a necessity of hating and blaspheming God, for so many ages, in the manner that has been spoken of, how extremely incongruous is such an imagination, that God would lay those he intended for the eternal bounty and blessedness of dear children, under such circumstances, that they must necessarily hate him, and with devilish fury curse and blaspheme him for innumerable ages, and yet never have cause, even when they are delivered and made happy in God's love, to condemn themselves for it, though they see the infinite hatefulness and unreasonableness of it, because God laid them under such a necessity, that they could use no liberty of their own in the case? I leave it for all to judge, whether God's thus ordering things with regard to such as, from great benevolence, he intended for eternal happiness in a most blessed union with himself, be credible.

§ 35. The same disposition and habit of mind, and manner of viewing things, is indeed the main ground of the cavils of many of the modern freethinkers; and modish writers, against the extremity and eternity of hell torments, if relied upon, would cause them to be dissatisfied with almost any thing that is very uncomfortable in a future punishment, so much as the enduring of the pain that is occasioned by the thrusting of a thorn under the nail of the finger, for a whole year together, day and night, without any rest, or the least intermission or abatement. There are innumerable calamities that come to pass in this world, through the permission and ordination of Divine Providence, against which (were it not that they are what we see with our eyes, and are universally known and incontestable facts) this cavilling, unbelieving spirit would strongly object; and, if they were only proposed in theory as matters of faith, would be opposed as exceedingly inconsistent with the moral perfections of God; and the opinions of such as asserted them would be cried out against, as in numberless ways contrary to God's wisdom, his justice, goodness, mercy, &c. such as, the innumerable calamities that have happened to poor innocent children, through the merciless cruelty of barbarous enemies; their being gradually roasted to death, shrieking and crying for their fathers and mothers; the extreme pains they sometimes are tormented with, by terrible diseases which they suffer; the calamities that have many times been brought on whole cities, while besieged, and when taken by merciless soldiers, destroying all, men, women, and children, without any pity; the extreme miseries which have been suffered by

millions of innocent persons, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, in times of persecution, when there has been no refuge to be found on earth; yea, those things that come to pass universally, of which all mankind are the subjects, in temporal death, which is so dreadful to nature.

## CHAP. III.

## CONCERNING THE DIVINE DECREES IN GENERAL, AND ELECTION IN PARTICULAR

§ 1. WHETHER God has decreed all things that ever came to pass or not, all that own the being; of a God own that he knows all things beforehand. Now, it is self-evident, that if he knows all things beforehand, he either doth approve of them, or he doth not approve of them; that is, he either is willing they should be, or he is not willing they should be. But to will that they should be, is to decree them.\*

§ 2. The Arminians ridicule the distinction between the secret and revealed will of God, or, more properly expressed, the distinction between the decree and law of God; because we say he may decree one thing, and command another. And so, they argue, we hold a contrariety in God, as if one will of His contradicted another. However, if they will call this a contradiction of wills, we know that there is such a thing; so that it is the greatest absurdity to dispute about it. We and they know it was God's secret will, that Abraham should not sacrifice his son Isaac; but yet his command was, that he should do it. We know that God willed, that Pharaoh's heart should be hardened; and yet that the hardness of his heart was sin. We know that God willed the Egyptians should hate God's people: [Psal. cv. 25](#). "He turned their heart to hate his people, and deal subtlety with his servants." We know that it was God's will, that Absalom should lie with David's wives; [2 Sam. xii. 11](#). "Thus saith the Lord, I will raise up this evil against thee, out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour; and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." We know that God willed that Jeroboam and the ten tribes should rebel. The same may be said of the plunder of the Babylonians; and other instances might be given. The Scripture plainly tells us, that God wills to harden some men, [Rom. ix. 18](#). That he willed that Christ should be killed by men, &c.

§ 3. It is most certain, that if there are any things so contingent, that there is an equal possibility of their being or not being, so that they may be, or they may not be; God foreknows from all eternity that they may be, and also that they may not be. All will grant that we need no revelation to teach us this. And furthermore, if God knows all things that are to come to pass, he also foreknows whether those contingent things are come to pass or no, at the same time that they are contingent, and that they may or may not come to pass. But what a contradiction is it to say, that God knows a thing will come to pass, and yet at the same time knows that it is contingent whether it will come to pass or no; that is, he certainly knows it will come to pass, and yet certainly knows it may not come to pass! What a contradiction is it to say, that God certainly foreknew that Judas would betray his Master, or Peter deny him, and yet certainly knew that it might be otherwise, or certain! v knew that he might be deceived! I suppose it will be acknowledged by all, that for God certainly to know a thing

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will be, and yet certainly to know that it may not be, is the same thing as certainly to know that he may be deceived. I suppose it will also be acknowledged, that certainly to know a thing, and also at the same time to know that we may be deceived in it, is the same thing as certainly to know it, and certainly to know that we are uncertain of it, or that we do not certainly know it; and that it is the same thing as certainly to know it, and not certainly to know it at the same time; which we leave to be considered, whether it be not a contradiction.

§ 4. The meaning of the word absolute, when used about the decrees, wants to be stated. It is commonly said, God decrees nothing upon a foresight of any thing in the creature; as this, they say, argues imperfection in God; and so it does, taken in the sense that they commonly intend it. But nobody, I believe, will deny but that God decrees many things that he would not have decreed, if he had not foreknown and foredetermined such and such other things. What we mean, we completely express thus That God decrees all things harmoniously, and in excellent order, one thing harmonizes with another, and there is such a relation between all the decrees, as makes the most excellent order. Thus God decrees rain in drought, because he decrees the earnest prayers of his people; or thus, he decrees the prayers of his people, because he decrees rain. I acknowledge, to say, *God decrees a thing because*, is an improper way of speaking; but not more improper than all our other ways of speaking about God. God decrees the latter event, because of the former, no more, than he decrees the former, because of the latter. But this is what we mean When God decrees to give the blessing of rain, he decrees the prayers of his people; and when he decrees the prayers of his people for rain, he very commonly decrees rain; and thereby there is harmony between these two decrees, of rain and the prayers of God's people. Thus also, when he decrees diligence and industry, he decrees riches and prosperity; when he decrees prudence, he often decrees success; when he decrees striving, then he often decrees the obtaining the kingdom of heaven; when he decrees the preaching of the gospel, then he decrees the bringing home of souls to Christ; when he decrees good natural faculties, diligence, and good advantages then he decrees learning; when he decrees summer, then he decrees the growing of plants; when he decrees conformity to his Son, then he decrees calling; when he decrees calling, then he decrees justification; and when he decrees notification, then he decrees everlasting glory. Thus, all the decrees of God are harmonious; and this is all that can be said for or against absolute or conditional decrees. But this I say, it is as improper to make one decree a condition of another, as to make the other a condition of that: but there is a harmony between both.

§ 5. It cannot be any injustice in God to determine who is certainly to sin, and so certainly to be damned. For, if we suppose this impossibility, that God had not determined any thing, things would happen as fatally as they do now. For as to such an absolute contingency, which they attribute to man's will, calling it the sovereignty of the will; if they mean, by this sovereignty of will, that a man can will as he wills, it is perfect nonsense, and the same as if they

should spend abundance of time and pains, and be very hot, at proving, that a man can will when he doth will; that is, that it is possible for that to be, which is. But if they mean, that there is a perfect contingency in the will of man, that is, that it happens merely by chance that a man wills such a thing, and not another, it is an impossibility and contradiction, that a thing should be without any cause or reason, and when there was every way as much cause why it should not have been. Wherefore, seeing things do unavoidably go fatally and necessarily, what injustice is it in the Supreme Being, seeing it is a contradiction that it should be otherwise, to decree that they should be as they are!

§ 6. Contingency, as it is holden by some, is at the same time contradicted by themselves, if they hold foreknowledge. This is all that follows from an absolute, unconditional, irreversible decree, that it is impossible but that the things decreed should be. The same exactly follows from foreknowledge, that it is absolutely impossible but that the thing certainly foreknown should precisely come to pass.

If it will universally hold, that none can have absolutely perfect and complete happiness, at the same time that any thing is otherwise than he desires at that time it should be; so thus, if it be true, that he has not absolute, perfect, infinite, and all possible happiness now, who has not now all that he wills to have now; then God, if any thing is now otherwise than he wills to have it now, is not now absolutely, perfectly, and infinitely happy. If God is infinitely happy now, then every thing is now as God would have it to be now; if every thing, then those things that are contrary to his commands. If so, it is not ridiculous to say, that things which are contrary to God's commands, are yet in a sense agreeable to his will? Again, let it be considered, whether it be not certainly true, that every one that can with infinite ease have a thing done, and yet will not have it done, wills it not; that is, whether or no he that wills not to have a thing done, properly wills not to have a thing done. For example, let the thing be this, that Judas should be faithful to his Lord; whether it be not true, that if God could with infinite ease have it done as he would, but would not have it done as he could, if he would, it be not proper to say, that God would not have it be, that Judas should be faithful to his Lord.

§ 7. They say, to what purpose are praying, and striving, and attending on means, if all was irreversibly determined by God before? But, to say that all was determined before these prayers and strivings, is a very wrong way of speaking, and begets those ideas in the mind, which correspond with no realities with respect to God. The decrees of our everlasting state were not before our prayers and strivings; for these are as much present with God from all eternity, as they are the moment they are present with us. They are present as part of his decrees, or rather as the same; and they did as really exist in eternity, with respect to God, as they exist in time, and as much at one time as another. Therefore, we can no more fairly argue, that these will be in vain, because God has foredetermined all things, than we can,



that they would be in vain if they existed as soon as the decree, for so they do, inasmuch as they are a part of it.

§ 8. That we should say, that God has decreed every action of men, yea, every action that is sinful, and every circumstance of those actions; that he predetermines that they shall be in every respect as they afterwards are; that he determines that there shall be such actions, and just so sinful as they are; and yet that God does not decree the actions that are sinful, as sin, but decrees them as good, is really consistent. For we do not mean by decreeing an action as sinful, the same as decreeing an action so that it shall be sinful; but by decreeing an action us sinful, I mean decreeing it for the sake of the sinfulness of the action. God decrees that they shall be sinful, for the sake of the good that he causes to arise from the sinfulness thereof; whereas man decrees them for the sake of the evil that is in them.

§ 9. When a distinction is made between God's revealed will and his secret will, or his will of command and decree, will is certainly in that distinction taken in two senses. His will of decree, is not his will in the same sense as his will of command is. Therefore, it is no difficulty at all to suppose, that the one may be otherwise than the other: his will in both senses is his inclination. But when we say he wills virtue, or loves virtue, or the happiness of his creature; thereby is intended, that virtue, or the creature's happiness, absolutely and simply considered, is agreeable to the inclination of his nature. His will of decree is, his inclination to a thing, not as to that thing absolutely and simply, but with respect to the universality of things, that have been, are, or shall be. So God, though he hates a thing as it is simply, may incline to it with reference to the universality of things. Though he hates sin in itself, yet he may will to permit it, for the greater promotion of holiness in this universality, including all things, and at all times. So, though he has no inclination to a creature's misery, considered absolutely, yet he may will it, for the greater promotion of happiness in this universality. God inclines to excellency, which is harmony, but yet he may incline to suffer that which is unharmonious in itself, for the promotion of universal harmony, or for the promoting of the harmony that there is in the universality, and making it shine the brighter. And thus it must needs be, and no hypothesis whatsoever will relieve a man, but that he must own these two wills of God. For all must own, that God sometimes wills not to hinder the breach of his own commands, because he does not in fact hinder it. He wills to permit sin, it is evident, because he does permit it. None will say that God himself does what he does not will to do. But you will say, God wills to permit sin, as he wills the creature should be left to his freedom; and if he should hinder it, he would offer violence to the nature of his own creature. I answer, this comes nevertheless to the very thing that I say. You say, God does not will sin absolutely; but rather than alter the law of nature and the nature of free agents, he wills it. He wills what is contrary to excellency in some particulars, for the sake of a more general excellency and order. So that this scheme of the Arminians does not help the matter.



§ 10. It is a proper and excellent thing for infinite glory to shine forth; and for the same reason, it is proper that the shining forth of God's glory should be complete; that is, that all parts of his glory should shine forth, that every beauty should be proportionably effulgent, that the beholder may have a proper notion of God. It is not proper that one glory should be exceedingly manifested, and another not at all; for then the effulgence would not answer the reality. For the same reason it is not proper that one should be manifested exceedingly, and another but very little. It is highly proper that the effulgent glory of God should answer his real excellency; that the splendour should be answerable to the real and essential glory, for the same reason that it is proper and excellent for God to glorify himself at all. Thus it is necessary, that God's awful majesty, his authority and dreadful greatness, justice, and holiness, should be manifested. But this could not be, unless sin and punishment had been decreed; so that the shining forth of God's glory would be very imperfect, both because these parts of divine glory would not shine forth as the others do, and also the glory of his goodness, love, and holiness would be faint without them; nay, they could scarcely shine forth at all. If it were not right that God should decree and permit and punish sin, there could be no manifestation of God's holiness in hatred of sin, or in showing any preference, in his providence, of godliness before it. There would be no manifestation of God's grace or true goodness, if there was no sin to be pardoned, no misery to be saved from. How much happiness soever he bestowed, his goodness would not be so much prized and admired, and the sense of it not so great, as we have elsewhere shown. We little consider how much the sense of good is heightened by the sense of evil, both moral and natural. And as it is necessary that there should be evil, because the display of the glory of God could not but be imperfect and incomplete without it, so evil is necessary, in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world; because the creature's happiness consists in the knowledge of God, and sense of his love. And if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness of the creature must be proportionably imperfect; and the happiness of the creature would be imperfect upon another account also; for, as we have said, the sense of good is comparatively dull and flat, without the knowledge of evil.

§ 11. It is owned, that God did choose men to eternal life, upon a foresight of their faith. But then, here is the question, whether God decreed that faith, and chose them that they should believe.

§ 12. The sin of crucifying Christ being foreordained of God in his decree, and ordered in his providence, of which we have abundant evidence from the nature of the thing, and from the great ends God had to accomplish by means of this wicked act of crucifying Christ; it being, as it were, the cause of all the decrees, the greatest of all decreed events, and that on which all other decreed events depend as their main foundation; being the main thing in that greatest work of God, the work of redemption, which is the end of all other works;

and it being so much prophesied of, and so plainly spoken of, as being done according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; I say, seeing we have such evidence that this sin is foreordained in God's decrees, and ordered in providence, and it being, as it were, the head sin, and representative of the sin of men in general; hence is a clear argument, that all the sins of men are foreordained and ordered by a wise Providence.

§ 13. It is objected against the absolute decrees respecting the future actions of men, and especially the unbelief of sinners, and their rejection of the gospel, that this does not consist with the sincerity of God's calls and invitations to such sinners; as he has willed, in his eternal secret decree, that they should never accept of those invitations. To which I answer, that there is that in God, respecting the acceptance and compliance of sinners, which God knows will never be, and which he has decreed never to cause to be, in which, though it be not just the same with our desiring and wishing for that which will never come to pass, yet there is nothing wanting but what would imply imperfection in the case. There is all in God that is good, and perfect, and excellent in our desires and wishes for the conversion and salvation of wicked men. As, for instance, there is a love to holiness, absolutely considered, or an agreeableness of holiness to his nature and will; or, in other words, to his natural inclination. The holiness and happiness of the creature, absolutely considered, are things that he loves. These things are infinitely more agreeable to his nature than to ours. There is all in God that belongs to our desire of the holiness and happiness of unconverted men and reprobates, excepting what implies imperfection. All that is consistent with infinite knowledge, wisdom, power, self-sufficiency, infinite happiness and immutability. Therefore, there is no reason that his absolute prescience, or his wise determination and ordering what is future, should hinder his expressing this disposition of his nature, in like manner as we are wont to express such a disposition in ourselves, *viz.* by calls and invitations, and the like.

The disagreeableness of the wickedness and misery of the creature, absolutely considered, to the nature of God, is all that is good in pious and holy men's lamenting the past misery and wickedness of men. Their lamenting these, is good no farther than it proceeds from the disagreeableness of those things to their holy and good nature. This is also all that is good in wishing for the future holiness and happiness of men. And there is nothing wanting in God, in order to his having such desires and such lamentings, but imperfection; and nothing is in the way of his having them, but infinite perfection; and therefore it properly, naturally, and necessarily came to pass, that when God, in the manner of existence, came down from his infinite perfection, and accommodated himself to our nature and manner, by being made man, as he was, in the person of Jesus Christ, he really desired the conversion and salvation of reprobates, and lamented their obstinacy and misery; as when he beheld the city Jerusalem, and wept over it, saying, "O Jerusalem," &c. In the like manner, when he comes down from his infinite perfection, though not in the manner of being, but in the

manner of manifestation, and accommodates himself to our nature and manner, in the manner of expression, it is equally natural and proper that he should express himself as though he desired the conversion and salvation of reprobates, and lamented their obstinacy and misery.

§ 14. MAXIM 1. There is no such thing *truly* as any pain, or grief, or trouble in God.

MAXIM 2. Hence it follows that there is no such thing as any real disappointment in God, or his being really crossed in his will, or things going contrary to his will; because, according to the notion of *will*, to have one's will, is agreeable and pleasing; for it is the notion of being pleased or suited, to have things as we will them be; and so, on the other hand, to have things contrary to one's will, is disagreeable, troublesome, or uncomfortable. [Job xxiii. 13.](#) "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that he doth."

In the first place, I lay this down, which I suppose none will deny, that as to God's own actions, God decrees them, or purposes them beforehand. For none will be so absurd as to say that God acts without intentions, or without designing to act, or that he forbears to act, without intending to forbear. 2dly, That whatsoever God intends or purposes, he intends and purposes from all eternity, and that there are no new purposes or intentions in God. For, if God sometimes begins to intend what he did not intend before, then two things will follow.

1. That God is not omniscient. If God sometimes begins to design what he did not design before, it must of necessity be for want of knowledge, or for want of knowing things before as he knows them now, for want of having exactly the same views of things. If God begins to intend what he did not before intend, it must be because he now sees reasons to intend it, that he did not see before; or that he has something new, objected to his understanding, to influence him.

2. If God begins to intend or purpose things that he did not intend before, then God is certainly mutable, and then he must, in his own mind and will, be liable to succession and change; for wherever there are new things, there is succession and change.

Therefore, I shall take these two things for positions granted and supposed in this controversy, *viz.* that as to God's own actions and forbearings to act, he decrees and purposes them beforehand; and that whatsoever God designs or purposes, he purposes from all eternity, and thus decrees from all eternity all his own actions and forbearings to act.

COROLL. Hence God decrees from all eternity, to permit all the evil that ever he does permit; because God's permitting is God's forbearing to act or to prevent.

§ 15. It can be made evident by reason, that nothing can come to pass, but what it is the will and pleasure of God should come to pass. This may be argued from the infinite happiness of God. For every being had rather things should go according to his will, than not; because, if he had not rather, then it is not his will. It is a contradiction to say, he wills it, and yet does not choose it, or had not rather it should be so than not. But, if God had rather things should

be according to his will than not, then, if a thing fall out otherwise than he hath willed, he meets with a cross; because, on this supposition, he had rather it should have been otherwise, and therefore he would have been better pleased if the thing had been otherwise. It is contrary to what he choose, and therefore it is of necessity that he must be displeased. It is of necessity that every being should be pleased, when a thing is as he chooses, or had rather it should be. It is a contradiction to suppose otherwise. For it is the very notion of being pleased, to have things agreeable to one's pleasure. For the very same reason, every being is crossed, or it is unpleasing to him, when a thing is, that he chose, and had rather should not have been. For it is the very notion of a thing's being cross or unpleasing to any, that it is contrary to his pleasure.

But if God can meet with crosses and things unpleasing to him, then he is not perfectly and unchangeably happy. For wherever there is any unpleas'dness or unpleasantness, it must, of necessity, in a degree diminish the happiness of the subject. Where there is any cross to a being's choice, there is something contrary to happiness. Wherever there is any unpleas'dness, there is something contrary to pleasure, and which consequently diminishes pleasure. It is impossible any thing should be plainer than this.

§ 16. The commands and prohibitions of God are only significations of our duty and of his nature. It is acknowledged that sin is, in itself considered, infinitely contrary to God's nature; but it does not follow, but that it may be the pleasure of God to permit it, for the sake of the good that he will bring put of it. God can bring such good out of that, which in itself is contrary to his nature, and which, in itself considered, he abhors, as may be very agreeable to his nature, and when sin is spoken of as contrary to the will of God, it is contrary to his will, considered only as in itself. As man commits it, it is contrary to God's will; for men act in committing it with a view to that which is evil. But as God permits it, it is not contrary to God's will; for God in permitting it has respect to the great good that he will make it an occasion of. If God respected sin as man respects it in committing it, it would be exceedingly contrary to his will; but considered as God decrees to permit it, it is not contrary to God's will. To give an instance The crucifying of Christ was a great sin; and as man committed it, it was exceedingly hateful and highly provoking to God. Yet upon many great considerations it was the will of God that it should be done. Will any body say that it was not the will of God that Christ should be crucified? [Acts iv. 28.](#) "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

§ 17. Sin is an evil, yet the futuration of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world. There is certainly a difference between the thing itself existing, and its being an evil thing that ever it came into existence. As for instance, it might be an evil thing to crucify Christ, but yet it was a good thing that the crucifying of Christ came to pass. As men's act, it was evil, but as God ordered it, it was good. Who will deny but that it may be so, that evil's

coming to pass may be an occasion of greater good than it is an evil, and so of there being more good in the whole, than if that evil had not come to pass? And if so, then it is a good thing that that evil comes to pass. When we say the thing is an evil thing in itself, then we mean that it is evil, considering it only within its own bounds. But when we say that it is a good thing that ever it came to pass, then we consider the thing as a thing among events, or as one thing belonging to the series of events, and as related to the rest of the series. If a man should say, that it was a good thing that ever it happened that Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, or that it was a good thing that ever it came to pass that Pope Leo X. sent out indulgences for the commission of future sins, nobody would understand a man thus expressing himself, as justifying these acts.

It implies no contradiction to suppose that an act may be an evil act, and yet that it is a good thing that such an act should come to pass. A man may have been a bad man, and yet it may be a good thing that there has been such a man. This implies no contradiction; because it implies no contradiction to suppose that there being such a man may be an occasion of there being more good in the whole, than there would have been otherwise. So it no more implies a contradiction to suppose that an action may be a bad action, and yet that it may be a good thing that there has been such an action. God's commands, and calls, and counsels, do imply another thing, *viz.* that it is our duty to do these things; and though they maybe our duty, yet it may be certain beforehand that we shall not do them.

And if there be any difficulty in this, the same difficulty will attend the scheme of the Arminians; for they allow-that God permits sin. Therefore, as he permits it, it cannot be contrary to his will. For if it were contrary to his will as he permits it, then it would be contrary to his will to permit it; for that is the same thing. But nobody will say that God permits sin, when it is against his will to permit it; for this would be to make him act involuntarily, or against his own will.

§ 18. "The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." [Psalm lxxvi. 10](#). If God restrains sin when he pleases; and when he permits it, permits it for the sake of some good that it will be an occasion of, and does actually restrain in all other cases; it is evident that when he permits it, it is his will that it should come to pass for the sake of the good that it will be an occasion of. If he permits it for the sake of that good, then he does not permit it merely because he would infringe on the creature's liberty in restraining it; as is further evident because he does restrain it when that good is not in view. If it be his will to permit it to come to pass, for the sake of the good that its coming, to pass will be an occasion of; then it is his will to permit it, that by its coming to pass he may obtain that good; and therefore it must necessarily be his will that it should come to pass, that he may obtain that good. If he permits it, that, by its coming to pass, he may obtain a certain good, then his proximate end in permitting it, is, that it may come to pass. And if he wilts the



means for the sake of the end he therein wills the end.<sup>484</sup> If God wills to permit a thing that it may come to pass, then he wills that it should come to pass. This is self-evident. But if he wills to permit it to come to pass, that by its coming to pass he may obtain some end, men



484 This phrase, “to will to permit,” could never have obtained currency among either moral, theological, or metaphysical writers, had they duly considered the subject of negative causality its peculiar nature, its relation to what is positive, and its appropriate consequences. By “causality” is meant, an adequate reason for a certain (as opposed to a mere probable) consequence; which causality, it is maintained, may be negative as well as positive, passive as well as active. A positive and active causation must be from the first cause, but not that which is negative and passive. That the latter is connected with consequences, which are infallibly certain, will be shown in the course of this note, which is intended to vindicate the divine character and government from undeserved imputations. The word “permit,” must either include an act of the will, or not include it: if the former, to will to permit must be “to will to will” something, or to will some act of the will. If it be said, that the phrase means, a will, in general, to exercise some other will, in particular: it is replied, that this does not constitute any difference of will, except as one thing is subservient to another in the series of decrees. But a little consideration will show the impropriety of applying the word in this manner. The divine decrees must necessarily be either direct or indirect, as there is no medium; and the former must be of those objects which are excellent for their own sake, but the latter must be made respecting objects for the sake of something else which is excellent. Nothing can be the object of a direct decree, but what terminates in God, as well as emanates from him, in a direct manner, as goodness, holiness, truth, &c. and nothing can be an object of an indirect decree, (as the creation of a material world, the appointment of its laws, &c.) but what terminates in him in an indirect manner, as subservient to the other. For, “of him, and through him, and to him, are all thirds” de-erred by him. Thus far most are agreed. But the word “permit,” in reference to moral evil, cannot mean, in any consistency of language or thought, even an indirect decree or will; for it would involve a decree of opposite objects, and thereby contradictory causations. God decrees the holiness of his creatures in order to their happiness, and their happiness for his own glory. But were we to say, that he decrees the creature’s comparative defect, for the sake of his moral failure, and the latter for the sake of showing his own justice, he must on that supposition decree opposite things, and thereby put the stamp of approbation upon the evil as well as upon the good. To say, that sin is willed for the sake of good, does not mend the matter; for still, on the supposition, it would be willed, and consequently decreed, as a contrary object. That an inferior good should be willed in subserviency to another superior, is very just; and that the laws of nature which are good should be the occasion of harm to individuals, is not unworthy of the holy author of those laws; but moral evil stands directly opposed to his rectitude and infinitely holy nature. According to the doctrine here controverted, God would be the fountain of good and evil alike; and he who commits a sin may as justly ascribe it to God ultimately, as another may ascribe to him the goodness of his deed\*. If the latter is called to exercise gratitude, the former is entitled to plead exculpation. Nor is it sufficient to say, that the sinner aims at an end, in transgressing, different from that which God aims at; for on the hypothesis, his circumstances, without one exception, are decreed, from whence the sin arises, and indeed the very existence of sin must ultimately proceed from the divine will. But that the sinner should be blamed for doing what was decreed to be

done, including his defects (the ground of his fallibility) whence proceed his wrong ends in sinning, is to subvert all proper ideas of justice, right and wrong, good and evil. Some will allow, that the difficulties which their hypothesis involves, are inexplicable, at least by our contracted minds in the present state; but yet hold, that we are forced to determine thus, in order to avoid still greater difficulties. For, say they, we must either adopt this plan, or deny God's foreknowledge. But this is a hasty and illegitimate inference; and which is owing, as before intimated, to the want of properly ascertaining the doctrine of negative causality. If this be overlooked, embarrassments will be sure to follow, nor can the most subtle penetration be of any avail to effect a disentanglement. This oversight is the cause why many anxious inquirers after truth have met with a mortifying disappointment, in endeavouring to reconcile what otherwise is demonstrably irreconcilable. And this is the reason why many have drawn back with disgust from a scene, with which, the more they viewed it, the more they were perplexed. They neglected, or did not sufficiently perceive, the only principle by which the greatest difficulties in moral science may be satisfactorily explained, and by the aid of which some of the most important truths of revealed religion, which appeared to clash, may assume a beautiful consistency, and may be shown to be founded in eternal truth. Faith indeed may live, and even triumph, without a scientific knowledge of its objects; but it may grow stronger, and triumph still more, (*cæteris paribus*) in the front of daring opposition, or when insidiously attacked by the "opposition of science, falsely so called," when possessed of demonstrative evidence of the harmony of divine perfections, and of truths which depend on that harmony. But, before we come to state and illustrate more particularly the principle in question, we must not lose sight of the other idea, included in the term "permit." If the phrase "to will to permit" cannot mean "to will to will," or "to will to decree," an act of the will is not included in the term "permit." And this exclusion of an act of will, undoubtedly, enters into its only justifiable acceptance in reference to the present subject. To permit, is not to hinder what has, or appears to have, a tendency to take place. To will to hinder, to prevent, to oppose, to counteract, or to effect any thing, is strictly proper, when a contrary effect or tendency of any kind is implied. But to will to hinder a dead man from walking is nonsense. When a person has an inclination, or a tendency of any kind, and when it is in the power of another to hinder its operation, but does not hinder, it is proper to say that he permits it; that is, he does not will the contrary. An exercise of will is both useless and unmeaning, when only to permit is intended; for the event is supposed to take place if not prevented. For one man to permit another to do a good or a bad action, when it is in his power to prevent it, is good sense; because it implies an inclination in the person permitted. But why is it improper to say that God permits a man to do his duty? It is because he neither would nor could do it by mere permission. If permission implied an act of will, there would be no impropriety in a language which yet all allow to be absurd, viz. that God permits a man to be good! But to permit evil is good sense, and approved language. Why? Because no exercise of will, on the part of the permitter, is required; or, because it is implied that it would take place if not prevented. To decree the continued existence of the world in its present form for a given time, expresses a clear and consistent idea; but to say that God has decreed that he will not do the contrary during the same period, is unmeaning language. When a declaration is made, that God will not do a thing, as drowning the earth with another deluge, &c. the plain meaning is, that it expresses the non-existence of an imagined event. But the non-existence of an imagined event, no more implies a decree concerning it, than does the non-existence of other imagined worlds, or another fancied first cause. To prevent implies will, in counteracting the intended effect, but to permit, is not to will the counteraction. Therefore, "to will to permit" is the same thing as "to will



not to will," which, both in meaning and in language, is alike indefensible. And when we say that God permits moral evil, if we have any consistent meaning, it must intend, that he does not will to hinder it except in a legislative sense and if so, what possible room is there left for any exercise of will in permission? Infinite perfection forbids it. Man, indeed, may determine not to do a thing; but this must refer either to a former intention of doing that thing, which now is altered, or to some expectation of the contrary. But nothing of this kind can belong to God, who "is of one mind." Can any sin then take place without God's will and concurrence? It is replied; if by "sin" be meant the act of the sinner in its concrete form, the divine will and concurrence are implied. But we should remember that in every act, however morally evil, there is, and necessarily must be, a natural good included. The natural powers and energy of the mind are of that quality, proceeding from the divine will, and without which there could be no moral act either good or bad. But the sinfulness of the act (which is often expressed by the shorter word sin) cannot possibly proceed except from some defect, which therefore must be a negative cause, and which no more needs the divine will for its production, than does mere nihility need it. The idea of perfection and of will, is positive; but that of imperfection and of permission is negative. And as perfection admits of degrees, considered as existing in creatures, so does the want of perfection. The former is the effect of divine will, but the latter needs no will, nor can admit any. Nay, for a creature to exist without any want of perfection, is the same as a self-sufficient creature. (for then alone could he be without perfection,) which is infinitely absurd. We may further observe, that if there were nothing good in an act concretively sinful, no evil could attach to such act; for what is moral evil, if not the perversion of that which is naturally good? If the natural powers and their acts, abstractedly considered, were not in themselves good, moral evil would be impossible. And were there no negative cause, or some kind of defect in the agent, all his acts would be morally as well as physically good, and that infallibly, as those of the absolutely perfect Being, in the Deity there is no defect of any kind, nor any negative cause of any effects or consequences; and therefore no liability to moral evil. But how can we conceive of a negative cause, affording a demonstration of an infallible consequence? Is there any thing analogous to it in the nature of things? And if there be, what importance, can be attached to it? Let us coolly endeavour to furnish a reply to these questions. We can easily conceive of a mathematical point, and it is universally allowed that it has no dimensions it has neither length, breadth, nor thickness and therefore is a negative idea. It implies a negation of every thing that has positive existence. It is therefore pure nihility under a relative consideration. But though in itself it is nothing positive, yet that nothing, when it stands related to a line which has positive length, becomes a source of innumerable demonstrations. For if we take into the account, together with a point, a circumference and equal radii, we have the positive idea of a circle, composed of a centre and circumference. And without this relation subsisting between a relative nothing and a positive something, the idea of a circle is not possible; and consequently the ideas of the properties of a circle (which are innumerable) are absolute impossibilities. So nearly allied and so perfectly similar, are the very first principles of geometrical and metaphysical science. For, as without the negative idea of a mathematical point, (for points are the boundaries of lines,) constituting an adequate reason of an infallible consequence, not a single demonstration in geometry can be effected; so, without the negative idea of passive power, as the opposite to that power which is active and positive, not one demonstration, properly so called, can be effected in metaphysical and moral science. This may appear to some a bold assertion: but it is not more bold than true. He who would dispute the fact, may just as well dispute the truth of the very first definition in geometrical science, viz. that of a point. He may indeed raise objections,

and plead that we can see a point, and therefore it must have some dimensions; or, if it be nothing, it can be no cause, no adequate reason of any thing as a consequence, &c. But if he attempt seriously to vindicate his objections by argument, he cannot avoid showing himself perfectly ridiculous to those who understand the subject. And equally ridiculous must he appear who would attempt to disprove the fact of negative causation in moral science. But how can we admit that there may be two coexistent causes in the same subject, one positive and the other negative? We are obliged to admit it from a due consideration of stubborn facts. For what fact can be more plain, than that from the same agent may, and actually do, proceed effects, virtue and vice, which are diametrically opposite to each other? And, surely such effects must proceed from opposite causes. If therefore virtue proceeds from a positive cause, as all must allow, vice must proceed from a negative causality. This evidence is demonstrative. Yet, the inquisitive may ask, is there any phenomenon in the nature of things analogous to this? Though an answer to this question is not necessary to the end of establishing the fact, it may serve, *ex abundanti*, for illustration. For this purpose, then, we may appeal to a mathematical line, which has positive length, with a negation of breadth; and without this negative causality no geometrical demonstration can be established. And the same may be said of a plane superficies, the boundaries of which are lines. Thus a negative causality enters into every geometrical demonstration, in conjunction with what is positive. But the reader should keep in mind that these instances are adduced for illustration, not professed proofs of the doctrine. The latter is founded on direct evidence from the very nature of God, and that of a creature. That a comparative defect is a negative cause, in the sense before explained, is evident, when we consider (as before intimated) (that in no creature can it be found without a comparative good, conjoined with it; and that in free agents this good, which consists chiefly in the natural intellect and will, is capable of opposite directions, one conformable to rectitude, and another opposed to it. Now, it is clearly impossible that these directions, one for the chief good, and the other against it, should proceed from the same cause, whether good or bad. The direction of the will towards rectitude cannot be caused by defect, any more than something positive can proceed from nihility. Nor can the direction of the will against rectitude be caused by perfection of any kind or decree. But intellect and will in all beings, whether original or derived, are perfections, and therefore cannot be the cause of a direction against perfection; for then there would be a cause repugnant to itself, which is impossible. The wrong choice, therefore, which is a wrong direction of the will, must proceed from a negative cause; for in causes there is no medium between positive and negative. But though infinite perfection cannot be the cause of imperfection of any kind or decree, for reasons which have been already adduced, yet perfection affords occasion, an innocent occasion, for imperfection to show itself, by way of contrast. Thus, if absolute perfection were to produce no creature, no occasion would be afforded for comparative imperfection to show itself; and without the latter, moral evil would be impossible. The inference, therefore, is irrefragable, that moral evil originates from a negative causality, or that defect in the agent, which is the want of ulterior perfection. Yet here it may be proper to add, as of the utmost importance to be taken into the account, that though effects may proceed from negative causes, as well as from positive, and with equal certainty, yet there is this important difference; the former is only hypothetical, the latter absolute, originally considered. The first cause is positive existence independent of will, and unconditional, and every other positive cause must emanate from the first will: but a negative cause, consisting in defect, cannot possibly take place, with respect to causality, but on conditions, *viz.* the condition of a created nature, and that of permission, in the explained sense of the word. A positive cause may counteract the tendency of a negative one, but not vice versa.

Hence is derived the proper notion of permitting moral evil to take place; the negative cause is not hindered from taking effect, for reasons infinitely good and wise. But to represent this permission, or sufferance, as willing or decreeing the negative as well as the positive part of sin, is an infinite absurdity; for the sinfulness of an act being the direct opposite to infinite perfection, such representation makes infinite perfection to oppose itself. Thus all good, in every kind and degree every quantum of created nature, from the greatest to the least, together with all positive and active causality are from God "He is light," knowledge, and purity, "and with him is no darkness at all," no ignorance, no want of holiness. And thus also all moral evil proceeds from the offender, who is the subject at once of a quantum of derived, and therefore limited perfection, and of comparative defect. And these two things (perfection and defect) enter into the very notion of a created nature. Is it necessary to say any thing more in confirmation of the general theorem, that there is in the human mind a negative causality, from whence may flow a certainty of consequence? It may tend to the further satisfaction of the reader, if we advert to another argument founded on the nature of free will. The term "will" designates a power of the mind which is positive and active; but the term "free," connected with it, expresses a negative idea. For it expresses, when properly used, the absence of coercion and restraint, but in different respects. The complex idea of "free will" is resolved into this plain proposition, the will is free: that is, the will is not constrained in one respect, and is nor restrained in another. It is neither decretively constrained to evil, nor decretively restrained from good, No other freedom can be predicated of the will as the cause of moral effects. And it is as much a relative nothing as a mathematical point. We may therefore safely affirm, that among the countless millions of moral effects, which take place, not only among men but also in the created universe of free agents, there is not one but what is beholden to a negative causality for its existence, in connexion with what is positive. For, if freedom be excluded, no act can have a moral quality. To conclude this note, which has already exceeded the limits at first intended, we must observe once more, and it cannot be too strongly inculcated, that there is no case or circumstance in which moral evil might not be prevented by the supreme will, were it employed for that purpose. For as God is all-sufficient, and as his control over his creatures, for their good, is absolute; his power to effect a prevention of moral evil is undoubted. Nor can there be any question that this power, in pursuance of divine decrees, does in fact, and in instances which to us are inconceivably numerous, counteract the tendencies of negative causes to prevent moral evil. But if it be inquired, why, in any instances, it is permitted to take place, when God might with infinite ease prevent it? It is sufficient here to say, that God is infinitely wise as well as powerful, and equitable as well as benevolent. But a further answer to this inquiry would lead us to consider the ultimate reasons of moral government, or why amoral system is at all established; and the question has been already discussed in the first volume of this work, to which the reader is referred. COROLLARIES. 1. Negative causality, in connexion with what is positive, is an essential principle of moral science. If either be excluded, we can have no clear and adequate idea of any moral act, much less a demonstration of its cause. 2. These two principles, relatively connected, furnish us; with sufficient data, and the only sufficient ones, for a demonstrative solution of this problem, What is the origin of moral evil. 3. In these principles we have the means of demonstrating the origin of all evil whatever, as well as of all good. 4. We may further infer, that Mr. Locke was not mistaken when he said, "I am bold to think, that morality is capable of demonstration, as well as mathematics." Essay. B. III, chap. xi. § 16. And again, "The idea of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings,

he wills to permit it that it should come to pass. For to will to permit a thing to come to pass, that by its coming to pass good may be obtained, is exactly the same thing as to will to permit it to come to pass, that it may come to pass, and so the end may be attained. To will to permit a thing to come to pass, that he may obtain some end by its coming to pass, and yet to be unwilling that it should come to pass, certainly implies a contradiction.

If the foundation of that distinction that there is between one man and another, whereby one is a good man, and another a wicked man, be God's pleasure, and his causation; then God has absolutely elected the particular persons that are to be godly. For, by supposition, it is owing to his determination. [Matt. xi. 25-27](#). "At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the

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being such as are clear in us, would I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations as might place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration: wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out to any one that will apply himself with the same indifferency and attention to the one, as he does to the other of these sciences." B. iv. chap. iii. § 18. Once more, "This gave me the confidence to advance that conjecture, which I suggested chap. iii. viz. That morality is capable of demonstration, as well as mathematics. And I doubt not but if a right method were taken, a great part of morality might be made out with that clearness, that could leave, to a considering man, no more reason to doubt, than he could have to doubt of the truth of propositions in mathematics which have been demonstrated to him." B. iv. chap. xii. § 8. 5. As geometrical evidence proceeds upon the supposition of points, lines, angles, &c. and the province of the demonstration is to show the consequence resulting from the supposition; so, the above-stated principles afford the means of demonstrating moral consequences, on the supposition of effects being given to show their necessary causes, or of causes being given to show their necessary effects. If the quantum of moral good, or of moral evil, in any given act, be supposed, the business of a demonstration is to show the relative proportion it bears to its appropriate cause or causes: or, on the other hand, if the quantum of causal influence be supposed to show, as a demonstrative consequence, the nature and relative proportion of moral good or evil in the act. This is the true province of moral science, as contradistinguished from conjectural observations and a set of rules. These, in their proper place, have an important use for the purpose of moral conduct: but they can by no means furnish data for scientific knowledge. 6. There is one inference more that must not be omitted, viz. that the true principles and demonstrative consequences of moral science are incomparably more important in themselves, and ought to be more interesting to all mankind, than any others; because they lead us in a more direct manner than any others to the knowledge of God and ourselves. They point out to us at once the sources of good and evil, happiness and misery; they afford motives for devout affections of the noblest kind; and, in proportion as they are properly applied, they stimulate to the practice of the sublimest virtues, and the most circumspect conduct. Without a divine revelation, indeed, it is highly probable, that the true principles and relations of moral science could never have been discovered by mankind; but that circumstance, while it has no tendency to depreciate the evidence, demands our gratitude to him who is the only source of "every good and every perfect gift." W

wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”

§ 19. It may be argued from the infinite power and wisdom of God, that nothing can come to pass, but that it must be agreeable to the will and pleasure of God that it should come to pass. For, as was observed before, every being had rather things should be according to his will, than not. Therefore, if things be not according to his will, it must be for want of power. It cannot be for want of will, by supposition. It must therefore be for want of sufficiency. It must be either because he cannot have it so, or cannot have it so without some difficulty, or some inconvenience; or all may be expressed in a word, *viz.* that he wants sufficiency to have things as he wishes. But this cannot be the case of a being of infinite power and infinite wisdom. If he has infinite power and wisdom, he can order all things to be just as he wills: and he can order it with perfect and infinite ease, or without the least difficulty or inconveniency.. Two things lie before him, both equally within his power, either to order the matter to be, or not to order it to be; and both of them are equally easy to him. One is as little trouble to him as the other; as to easiness or trouble, they are perfectly equal. It is as easy for him to order it, as not to order it. Therefore, his determination, whether it be ordering it, or not ordering it, must be a certain sign of his will in the case. If he does order it to be, this is a sign that his will is that it should be. And if he does not order it to be, but suffers it not to be, that is as sure a sign that he wills that it should not be. So that, however the thing is, it is a sure sign that it is the will of God that it should be as it is.

To this, nothing can be objected, unless that it is not for want of will, nor want of power in God, that things be not as he would have them, but because the nature of the subject will not allow of it. But how can this be to the purpose, when the nature of the subject itself is of God, and is wholly within his power, is altogether the fruit of his mere will? And cannot a God of infinite wisdom and infinite power cause the natures of thing to be such, and order them so after they are caused, as to have things as he chooses, or without his will's, being crossed, and things so coming to pass that he had rather have them otherwise? As, for instance, God foresaw who would comply with the terms of salvation, and who would not: and he could have forborne to give being to such as he foresaw would not comply, if, upon some consideration, it was not his pleasure that there should be some who should not comply with the terms of salvation. Objectors may say, God cannot always prevent men's sins, unless he act contrary to the free nature of the subject, or without destroying men's liberty. But will they deny, that an omnipotent and infinitely wise God could not possibly invent, and set before men, such strong motives to obedience, and have kept them before them in such a manner, as should have influenced all mankind to continue in their obedience, as the elect angels have done, without destroying their liberty? God will order it so, that the

saints and angels in heaven never will sin: and does it therefore follow, that their liberty is destroyed, and that they are not free, but forced in their actions? Does it follow, that they are turned into blocks, as the Arminians say the Calvinist doctrine turn men?

§ 20. God decrees all the good that ever comes to pass; and therefore there certainly will come to pass no more good, than he has absolutely decreed to cause; and there certainly and infallibly will no more believe, no more be godly, and no more be saved, than God has decreed that he will cause to believe, and cause to be godly, and will save.

§ 21. The foreknowledge of God will necessarily infer a decree: for God could not foreknow that things would be, unless he had decreed they should be; and that because things would not be future, unless he had decreed they should be. If God, from all eternity, knew that such and such things were future, then they were future; and consequently the proposition was from all eternity true, that such a thing, at such a time, would be. And it is as much impossible that a thing should be future, without some reason of its being future, as that it should actually be, without some reason why it is. It is as perfectly unreasonable to suppose, that this proposition should be true, *viz.* such a thing will be, or is to be, without a reason why it is true; as it is that this proposition should be true, such a thing actually is, or has been, without some reason why that is true, or why that thing exists. For, as the being of the thing is not in its own nature necessary, so that proposition that was true before, *viz.* that it shall be, is not in its own nature a necessary truth. And therefore I draw this consequence, that if there must be some reason of the futurity of the thing, or why the thing is future; this can be no other than Gods decree, or the truth of the proposition, that such a thing will be, has been determined by God. For the truth of the proposition is determined by the supposition. My meaning is, that it does not remain a question: but the matter is decided, whether the proposition shall be true or not. The thing, in its own nature, is not necessary, but only possible; and therefore, it is not of itself that it is future; it is not of itself in a state of futurity, if I may so speak, but only in a state of possibility; and there must be some cause to bring it out of a state of mere possibility, into a state of futurity. This must be God only; for there was no other being by supposition existing. And though other things are future, yet it will not be sufficient to say, that the futurity of other things is the cause of the futurity of this. And it is owing only to him, that is the first being, and that exists necessarily, and of himself, that all other things, that are not in their own nature necessary, or necessarily future, but merely possible, are brought out of that state of mere possibility, into a state of futurity, to be certainly future. Here is an effect already done, *viz.* the rendering that which in its own nature is only possible, to be certainly future, so that it can be certainly known to be future: and there must be something already existing, that must have caused this effect. Whatsoever is not of itself, or by the necessity of its own nature, is an effect of something else. But that such a thing should be future by supposition, is not of itself or by necessity of its own nature. If things that appertain to the creature, or things that come

to pass in time, be not future of themselves and of their own nature, then they are future because God makes them to be future. This is exceedingly evident; for there is nothing else at all beside God and things that come to pass in time. And therefore, if things that come to pass in time have not the reason of their own futuration in themselves, it must be in God.

But if you say, that the ground or reason of their futuration is in the things themselves, then things are future prior to any decree, or their futuration is antecedent in nature of any decree of God. And then, to what purpose is any decree of God? For, according to this supposition, God's decreeing does not make any thing future, or not future; because it was future prior to his decree. His decreeing or appointing that any thing shall be, or shall not be, does not alter the case. It is not about to be, or about not to be, any thing the more for God's decreeing it. According to this supposition, God has no freedom or choice in decreeing or appointing any thing. It is not at his choice what shall be future, and what not; no, not in one thing. For the futuration of things is by this supposition antecedent in nature to his choice; so that his choosing or refusing does not alter the case. The things in themselves are future, and his decreeing cannot make them not future; for they cannot be future and not future at the same time; neither can it make them future, because they are future already: so that they who thus plead for man's liberty, advance principles which destroy the freedom of God himself. It is allowed that things are future before they come to pass; because God foreknows them. Either things are future antecedently to God's decree and independently of it, or they are not. If they are not future antecedently to, and independently of, God's decree, then they are made so by his decree; there is no medium. But if they are so antecedently to his decree, then the above-mentioned absurdity will follow, *viz.* that God has no power by his decree to make any thing future or not future. He has no choice in the case. And if it be already decided, something must have decided it; for, as has been already shown, it is not true without a reason why it is true. And if something has determined or decided the truth of it, it must be God that has decided it, or something else. It cannot be chance or mere accident: that is contrary to every rational supposition. For it is to be supposed, that there is some reason for it, and that something does decide it. If there be any thing that comes to pass by mere accident, that comes to pass of itself without any reason. If it be not chance therefore that has decided it, it must be God or the creature. It cannot be the creature as actually existing: for, by supposition, it is determined from all eternity before any creature exists. Therefore, if it be any thing in the creature that decides it in any way, it must be only the futuration of that thing in the creature. But this brings us to the absurdity and contradiction, that the same thing is both the cause and the effect of itself. The very effect, the cause of which we are seeking, is the futuration of the thing; and if this futuration be the cause of that effect, it is the cause of itself.

§ 22. The first objection of the Arminians is, that the divine decree infringes on the creature's liberty. In answer to this objection, we may observe some things to show what is

the true notion of liberty, and the absurdity of their notion of liberty. Their notion of liberty is, that there is a sovereignty in the will, and that the will determines itself, so that its determination to choose or refuse this or that, is primarily within itself; which description of liberty implies a self-contradiction. For it supposes the will, in its first act, choosing or refusing to be determined by itself; which implies that there is an antecedent act of the will to that first act, determining that act. For, if the will determines its own first act, then there must be an act of the will before that first act, (for that determining is acting,) which is a contradiction. There can be no fallacy in this; for we know that if the will determines its own act, it does not determine it without acting. Therefore, here is this contradiction, *viz.* that there is an act of the will before the first act. There is an act of the will determining what it shall choose, before the first act of choice; which is as much as to say, that there is an act of volition before the first act of volition. For the will's determining what it will choose, is choosing. The will's determining what it will will, is willing. So that according to this notion of liberty, the will must choose before it chooses, in order to determine what it will choose. If the will determines itself, it is certain that one act must determine another. If the will determines its own choice, then it must determine by a foregoing act what it will choose. If the will determines its own act, then an antecedent act determines the consequent; for that determining is acting. The will cannot determine without acting. Therefore I inquire what determines that first act of the will, *viz.* its determination of its own act? It must be answered, according to their scheme, that it is the will by a foregoing act. Here, again, we have the same contradiction, *viz.* that the first act of the will is determined by an act that is before that first act. If the will determines itself, or determines its own choice, the meaning of it must be, if there be any meaning belonging to it, that the will determines how it will choose; and that it chooses according to that, its own determination how to choose, or is directed in choosing by that its own determination. But then I would inquire, whether that first determination, that directs the choice, be not itself an act or a volition; and if so, I would inquire what determines that act. Is it another determination still prior to that in the order of nature? Then I would inquire, what determines the first act or determination of all? If the will, in its acts of willing or choosing, determines or directs itself how to choose, then there is something done by the will prior to its act of choosing that is determined, *viz.* its determining or directing itself how to choose. This act determining or directing, must be something besides or distinct from the choice determined or directed, and must be prior in order of nature to it. Here are two acts of the will, one the cause of the other, *viz.* the act of the will directing and determining, and the act or choice directed or determined. Now, I inquire, what determines that first act of the will determining or directing, to determine and direct as it does? If it be said, the will determines itself in that; then that supposes there is another act of the will prior to that, directing and determining that act, which is contrary to the supposition. And if it was not, still the question would recur, what determines that first determining act of the will? If the will de-



termines itself, one of these three things must be meant, *viz.* 1. That that very same act of the will determines itself. But this is as absurd as to say that something makes itself; and it supposes it to be before it is. For the act of determining is as much prior to the thing determined, as the act of making is before the thing made. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that the will determines its own act, by some other act that is prior to it in order of nature; which implies that the will acts before *its* first act. Or, 3. The meaning must be, that the faculty, considered at the same time as perfectly without act, determines its own consequent act; which is to talk without a meaning, and is a great absurdity. To suppose that the faculty, remaining at the same time perfectly without act, can determine any thing, is a plain contradiction; for determining is acting. And besides, if the will does determine itself, that power of determining itself does not argue any freedom, unless it be by an act of the will, or unless that determination be itself an act of choice. For what freedom or liberty is there in the will's determining itself, without an act of choice in determining, whereby it may choose which way it will determine itself? So that those that suppose the will has a power of self-determination, must suppose that that very determination. is an act of the will, or an act of choice, or else it does not at all help them out in what they would, *viz.* the liberty of the will. But if that very determination how to act, be itself an act of choice, then the question returns, what determines this act of choice.

Also, the foreknowledge of God contradicts their notion of liberty as much, and in every respect in the same manner as a decree. For they do not pretend that decree contradicts liberty any otherwise, than as it infers that it is beforehand certain that the thing will come to pass, and that it is impossible but that it should be, as the decree makes an indissoluble connexion beforehand between the subject and predicate of the proposition, that such a thing shall be. A decree infers no other necessity than that. And God's foreknowledge does infer the same to all intents and purposes. For if from all eternity God foreknew that such a thing would be, then the event was infallibly certain beforehand, and that proposition was true from all eternity, that such a thing would be; and therefore there was an indissoluble connexion beforehand between the subject and predicate of that proposition. If the proposition was true beforehand, the subject and predicate of it were connected beforehand. And therefore it follows from hence, that it is utterly impossible that it should not prove true, and that, for this reason, that it is utterly impossible that a thing should be true, and not true, at the same time.

§ 23. The same kind of infallible certainty, that the thing will come to pass, or impossibility but that it should come to pass, that they object against, must necessarily be inferred another way, whether we hold the thing to be any way decreed or not. For it has been shown before, and I suppose none will deny, that God from all eternity decrees his own actions. Therefore he from all eternity decrees every punishment that he ever has inflicted, or will inflict. So that it is impossible, by their own reasoning, but that the punishment should come

to pass. And if it be impossible but that the punishment should come to pass, then it is equally impossible but that the sin should come to pass. For if it be possible that the sin should not come to pass, and yet impossible but that the punishment should come to pass, then it is impossible but that God should punish that sin which may never be.

§ 24. For God certainly to know that a thing will be, that possibly may be, and possibly may not be, implies a contradiction. If possibly it may be otherwise, then how can God know certainly that it will be? If it possibly may be otherwise, then he knows it possibly may be otherwise; and that it is inconsistent with his certainly knowing that it will not be otherwise. If God certainly knows it will be, and yet it may possibly be otherwise, then it may possibly happen to be otherwise than God certainly knows it will be. If so, then it may possibly happen that God may be mistaken in his judgment, when he certainly knows; for it is supposed that it is possible that it should be otherwise than he judges. For that it should be otherwise than he judges, and that he should be mistaken, are the same thing. How unfair therefore is it in those that hold the foreknowledge of God, to insist upon this objection from human liberty, against the decrees, when their scheme is attended with the same difficulty, exactly in the same manner!

§ 25. Their other objection is, that God's decrees make God the author of sin. I answer, that there is no more necessity of supposing God the author of sin, on this scheme, than on the other. For if we suppose, according to my doctrine, that God has determined, from all eternity, the number and persons of those that shall perform the condition of the covenant of grace; in order to support this doctrine, there is no need of maintaining any more concerning God's decreeing sin, than this, *viz.* that God has decreed that he will permit all the sin that ever comes to pass, and that upon his permitting it, it will certainly come to pass. And they hold the same thing; for they hold that God does determine beforehand to permit all the sin that does come to pass; and that he certainly knows that if he does permit it, it will come to pass. I say, they in their scheme allow both these; they allow God does permit all the sin to come to pass, that ever does come to pass; and those that allow the foreknowledge of God, do also allow the other thing, *viz.* that he knows concerning all the sin that ever does really come to pass, that it will come to pass upon his permitting it. So that if this be making God the author of sin, they make him so in the very same way that they charge us with doing it.

§ 26. One objection of theirs against God's decreeing or ordering, in any sense, that sin should come to pass, is, that man cannot do this without making himself sinful, and, in some measure, guilty of the sin, and that therefore God cannot. To this I answer, that the same objection lies against their own scheme two ways: 1. Because they own that God does permit sin, and that he determines to permit beforehand, and that he knows, with respect to all sin that ever is committed, that upon his permitting it, it will come to pass; and we hold no other. 2. Their objection is, that what is a sin in men, is a sin in God; and therefore,

in any sense to decree sin, would be a sin. But if this objection be good, it is as strong against God's permission of sin, which they allow; for it would be a sin in men to permit sin. We ought not to permit or suffer it where we have an opportunity to hinder it; and we cannot permit it without making ourselves in some measure guilty. Yet they allow that God does permit sin; and that his permitting it does not make him guilty of it. Why must the argument from men to God be stronger in the other case than in this?

§ 27. They say, that we ought to begin in religion, with the perfections of God, and make these a rule to interpret Scripture. *Ans.* 1. If this be the best rule, I ask, why is it not as good a rule to argue from these perfections of God, his omniscience, infinite happiness, infinite wisdom and power, as his other attributes that they argue from? If it lie not as good a rule to argue from these as those, it must be because they are not so certain, or because it is not so certain that he is possessed of these perfections. But this they will not maintain; for his moral perfections are proved no otherwise than by arguing from his natural perfections; and therefore the latter must be equally certain with the former. What we prove another thing by, must at least be as certain as it makes the thing proved by it. If an absolute and universal decree does infer a seeming inconsistency with some of God's moral perfections, they must confess the contrary to have a seeming inconsistency with the natural perfections of God.

Again, 2dly, They lay it down for a rule, to embrace no doctrine which they by their own reason cannot reconcile with the moral perfections of God. But I would show the unreasonableness of this rule. For, 1. If this be a good rule, then it always was so. Let us then see what will follow. We shall then, 2dly, have reason to conclude every thing to be really inconsistent with God's moral perfections, that we cannot reconcile with his moral perfections; for if we had not reason to conclude that it is inconsistent, then we have no reason to conclude that it is not true. But if this be true, that we have reason to conclude every thing is inconsistent with God's moral perfections which we cannot reconcile with those perfections, then David had reason to conclude that some things that he saw take place, in fact were inconsistent with God's moral perfections, for he could not reconcile them with those perfections, [Psalm lxxiii](#). And Job had cause to come to the same conclusion concerning some events in his day. 3. If it be a good rule, that we must conclude that to be inconsistent with the divine perfections, that we cannot reconcile with, or, which is the same thing, that we cannot see how it is consistent with, those perfections, then it must be because we have reason to conclude that it cannot happen that our reason cannot see how it can be, and then it will follow that we must reject the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, &c.

The Scripture itself supposes that there are some things in the Scripture that men may not be able to reconcile with God's moral perfections. See [Rom. ix. 19](#). "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And the apostle doth not answer the objection,

by showing us how to reconcile it with the moral perfections of God, but by representing the arrogance of quarrelling with revealed doctrine under such a pretence, and not considering the infinite distance between God and us. “Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replies! against God? <sup>485</sup>” And God answered Job after the same manner. God rebuked him for darkening counsel by words without knowledge, and answered him, only by declaring and manifesting to him the infinite distance between God and him; so letting him know, that it became him humbly to submit to God, and acknowledge his justice even in those things that were difficult to his reason; and that without solving his difficulties any other way than by making him sensible of the weakness of his own understanding.

§ 28. If there be no election, then it is not God that makes men to differ, expressly contrary to Scripture. No man ought to praise God for that happiness that he has above other men, or for that distinction that is between him and other men, that he is holy and that he is saved; when they are not holy and not saved. The saints in heaven, when they look on the devils in hell, have no occasion to praise God on account of the difference between them. Some of the ill consequences of the Arminian doctrine are, that it robs God of the greater part of the glory of his grace, and takes away a principal motive to love and praise him, and exalts man to God’s room, and ascribes the glory to self, that belongs to God alone. [Rom. xi. 7.](#) “The election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded.” That by the *election* here is not meant the Gentiles, but the elect part of the Jews, is most apparent by the context. Such Arminians who allow, that some only are elected, and not all that are saved, but none that are reprobated, overthrow hereby their own main objection against reprobation, *viz.* that God offers salvation to all, and encourages them to seek it, which, say they, would be inconsistent with God’s truth, if he had absolutely determined not to save them; for they will not deny that those that are elected whilst ungodly, are warned of God to beware of eternal damnation, and to avoid such and such things, lest they should be damned. But for God to warn men to beware of damnation, though he has absolutely determined that they shall not be damned, is exactly parallel with his exhorting men to seek salvation, though he has actually determined that they shall not be saved.

§ 29. That election is not from a foresight of works, or conditional, as depending on the condition of man’s will, is evident by [2 Tim. i. 9.](#) “Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” [Philip. ii. 13.](#) “For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” [Rom. ix. 15, 16.](#) “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Men’s labours and endeavours themselves are from God. [1 Cor. xv. 10.](#) “But by the grace of

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God, I am what I am; and his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all. Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

§ 30. God decrees all things, and even all sins. [Acts ii. 23.](#) “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;” [iv. 28.](#) “For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” If the thing meant, be only that Christ’s sufferings should come to pass by some means or other; I answer, they could not come to pass but by sin. For contempt and disgrace was one thing he was to suffer. Even the free actions of men are subject to God’s disposal. [Prov. xxi. 1.](#) “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; he turn-eth it as the rivers of water, whithersoever it pleaseth him.” See [Jer. lii. 3.](#) “For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.” The not complying with the terms of the covenant of grace is decreed, [1 Pet. ii. 8.](#) “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.” What man determines, never comes to pass, unless God determines it, [Lam. iii. 37.](#) “Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not?” By commanding is here meant willing; and God is elsewhere said to speak, and it was done; to command, and it stood fast. God determines the limits of men’s lives. This is exceeding evident. [Job vii. 1.](#) “Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days also like the days of a hireling?” *Days of a hireling* signify an appointed, certain, limited time; as [Isa. xvi. 14.](#) and [xxi. 16.](#) If the limits of men’s lives are determined, men’s free actions must be determined, and even their sins; for their lives often depend on such acts. See also [Job xiv. 5.](#)

§31. If God does not know all things, then his knowledge may increase, he may gain, and may grow wiser as he grows older. He may discover new things, and may draw consequences from them. And he may be mistaken: if *he* does not know, he may guess wrong: if he does not know, he has no infallible judgment; for an infallible judgment is knowledge. And if he may be mistaken, he may order matters wrong; he may be frustrated; his measures may be broken. For, doubtless, in things that are uncertain, he orders things according to what appears most probable, or else he fails in prudence. But in so ordering things, his measures may be broken. And then the greater part of the great events, *viz.* events among rational creatures, would be uncertain to him. For the greater part of them depend on men’s free actions. That he does foreknow, is evident by his predicting and foretelling events, and even the sins of men, as Judas’s sin. If he did not foreknow, he might change his will as he altered his views. Now, it is especially with respect to God’s will and purposes, that he is said in Scripture not to be changeable. Having thus proved the foreknowledge of God, and the greater part of Arminians not denying it, I shall hereafter take it for granted, and shall



argue against those only that allow it. If he did not foreknow and might be disappointed, he might repent.

§ 32. They say, as God's power extends only to all things possible, so God's knowledge only extends to all things knowable.

*Ans.* Things impossible, or contradictions, are not things; but events that come to pass, are things. God's power does extend to all things, otherwise it would not be infinite. So neither is the knowledge of God infinite, unless God knows all things. To suppose that God cannot do things impossible, does not suppose that God's power can be increased. But to suppose that God does not know men's free actions, does suppose that God's knowledge may be increased. To suppose that God's decrees are conditional, in the sense of the Arminians, or that they depend, as they suppose, on a foresight of something that shall come to pass in time, is to suppose that something that first begins to be in time, is the cause of something that has been from all eternity, which is absurd; for nothing can be a cause of that existence, which is before the existence of that cause. What an absurdity is it, to suppose that that existence which is an effect, is effected by a cause, when that cause that effects it, is not. or has no being! If it be answered, that it is not the actual existence of the thing, that is the reason or cause of the decree, but the foresight of the existence; and the foresight of the existence may be at the same time with the decree, and before it, in the order of nature, though the existence itself is not; and that it is not properly the actual existence of the thing foreseen, that is the cause of the decree, but the existence of it in the divine foreknowledge. I reply, that this does not help the difficulty at all, but only puts it a step further off; for still, by their scheme, the foreknowledge depends on the future actual existence; so that the actual existence is the cause of the divine foreknowledge, which is infinite ages before it. And it is a great absurdity to suppose this effect to flow from this cause, before the existence of the cause. And whatever is said, the absurdity will occur, unless we suppose that the divine decree is the ground of the futuration of the event, and also the ground of the foreknowledge of it. Then the cause is before the effect; but otherwise the effect is before the cause.

§ 33. If God absolutely determined that Christ's death should have success in gathering a church to him, it will follow that there was a number absolutely elected, or that God had determined some should surely be saved. If God determined that some should surely be saved, that implies that he had determined that he would see to it, that some should perform the conditions of salvation and be saved; or, which is the same thing, that he would cause that they should be surely saved. But this cannot be, without fixing on the persons beforehand. For the cause is before the effect. There is no such thing as God's resolving absolutely beforehand that he would save some, and yet not determining who they should be, before they were actually saved; or that he should see to it, That there should be in a number the requisites of salvation, and yet not determine who, till they actually have the requisites of salvation. But God had absolutely determined that some should be saved, yea, a great number, after

Christ's death; and had determined it beforehand. Because he had absolutely promised it; [Isa. xlix. 6.](#) and [liii. 10.](#) See in [Psal. lxxii.](#) and other places in the Psalms, and [Tit. ii. 14.](#) God, having absolutely purposed this before Christ's death, must either have then determined the persons, or resolved that he would hereafter determine the persons; at least, if he saw there was need of it, and saw that they did not come in of themselves. But this latter supposition, if we allow it, overthrows the Arminian scheme. It shows that such a predetermination, or absolute election, is not inconsistent with God's perfections, or the nature of the gospel-constitution, or God's government of the world, and his promise of reward to the believing and obedient, and the design of gospel offers and commands, as the Arminians suppose. If God has absolutely determined to save some certain persons, then, doubtless, he has in like manner determined concerning all that are to be saved. Gods promising, supposes not only that the thing is future, but that God will do it. If it be left to chance, or man's contingent will, and the event happen right, God is never the truer. He performs not his promise; he takes no effectual care about it; it is not he that promised, that performs. That thing, or rather nothing, called fortune, orders all. Concerning the absurdity of supposing that it was not absolutely determined beforehand, what success there should be of Christ's death; see *Polhill's Spec. Theolog. in Christo.* p.165-171.

It is pretended, that the antecedent certainty of any sin's being committed, seeing that it is attended with necessity, takes away all liberty, and makes warnings and exhortations to avoid sin, a mere illusion. To this I would bring the instance of Peter. Christ told him, that he should surely deny him thrice that night, before the cock should crow twice. And yet, after that, Christ exhorted all his disciples to watch and pray, that they might not fall into temptation; and directs, that he who had no sword, should sell his garment and buy one.

§ 34. How evident is it, that God sets up that to be sought after as a reward of virtue, and the fruit of our endeavours, which yet has determined shall never come to pass! As, [1 Sam. xiii. 13.](#) "And Samuel said unto Saul, Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee. For now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever." It is evident that God had long before decreed, that the kingdom of Israel should be established in the tribe of Judah. [Luke xxii. 22.](#) "The Son of man goeth as it was determined, [Matt. xxvi. 24.](#) and [Mark xiv. 21.](#) as it is written of him,] but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." *As it was determined:* as this passage is not liable to the ambiguities which some have apprehended in [Acts ii. 23.](#) and [iv. 28.](#) (which yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it in their most natural construction,) I look upon it as an evident proof, that those things are in the language of Scripture said to be determined or decreed, (or exactly bounded and marked out by God, as the word **Greek** most naturally signifies,) which he sees will in fact happen in consequence of his volitions, without any necessitating agency, as well as those events of which he is

properly the author; and, as Beza expresses it, "*Qui sequitur deum emendate sane loquitur*, we need not fear falling into any impropriety of speech, when we use the language which God has taught." *Doddridge in loc.*

§ 35. As to the decrees of election, see [Psal. lxxv. 4](#). "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." [Isa. xli. 9](#). "Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." [Matt. xx. 16](#).

"So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen." [Chap. xxii.](#)

14. "For many are called, but few are chosen." [Chap. xxiv. 24](#). "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; in so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very *elect*." [John vi. 37-46](#). "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," &c. [Chap. x. 3, 4, and ver. 11, and 14-17. ver. 26-30](#). "To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. I am the good Shepherd; and know my sheep, and am known of mine. Therefore doth my Father love me; because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," &c. [Chap. xvii. 6-20](#). "I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word, &c. Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." [Acts xviii. 10](#). "For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." As to reprobation, see [Matt. xi. 20-27](#). "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, &c. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father"; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." [John vi. 44-46](#). "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day, &c. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." [Chap. viii. 47](#). "He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." [Chap. x. 26](#). "But ye believe not, because you are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." [Chap. xvii. 9-13](#). "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine," See. [1 Thess. v. 9](#). "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." [1 Pet. ii. 8](#). "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they





were appointed.” [Jude 4](#). “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.” [1 John iv. 6](#). “We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” [Rev. iii. 8](#). “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.” [Chap. xx. 12-15](#). “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged put of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.” [John xii. 37-41](#). “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. Because that Esaias said, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, &c. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him.” [Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8. 11-14, 16-19. ver. 21-24. ver. 27, 29, 33](#). “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For the children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, The elder shall serve the younger, &c. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, &c. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour? &c. Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence. And whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” And [chap. xi. 1-6. ver. 7-11. ver. 15,17,19-23. ver. 32, 36](#). “I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin, &c. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day. Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them, &c. And if

some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in, &c. And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

§ 36. All that is intended when we say that God decrees all that comes to pass, is, that all events are subject to the disposals of Providence, or that God orders all things in his providence; and that he intended from eternity to order all things in providence, and intended to order them as he does. Election does not signify only something common to professing Christians, [Matt. xx. 16.](#) “Many are called, but few are chosen.” [Matt. xxiv. 31.](#) “He shall send forth his angels, and gather together his elect.”

§ 37. God’s foreknowledge appears from this, that God has foretold that there should be some good men, as the Arminians themselves allow. *Stebbing*, in his Treatise concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, p. 237, second edition, says as follows: “So long as a man may be certain that those things will come to pass which God hath foretold, he may be certain, that God’s grace will prevail in multitudes of men before the end of all things. For by divers predictions in holy writ we are assured, that when Christ shall come to judgment, there will be some who shall be changed, and put on immortality.”

§ 38. The Scriptures, in teaching us this doctrine, are guilty of no hard imposition on our understanding of a doctrine contrary to reason. If they had taught the contrary doctrine, it would have been much more contrary to reason, and a much greater temptation to persons of diligent and thorough consideration, to doubt of the divinity of the Scripture.

§ 39. Concerning the decreeing of sin, see [Acts iii. 17, 18.](#) with [Acts xiii. 27.](#) “And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”<sup>486</sup> “For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.”<sup>487</sup>

§ 40. It is objected, that this is a speculative point. So might they say, Jesus’s being the Messiah, is a speculative point.

§ 41. If God’s inviting or commanding a person to do a thing, when he, in his decree, has ordained that it shall be otherwise, argues insincerity in the command or invitation, the insincerity must be in this, *viz.* that he commands a thing to be done, when his end in

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486 [Acts iii. 17, 18.](#)

487 [Acts xiii. 27.](#)

commanding is not, that the thing may be done; which cannot be his end; because he knows certainly at the time that he commands it, that it will not be. But it is certain, that God's commanding a thing to be done, which he certainly knows at the time will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity in God in commanding. For thus God commanded Pharaoh to let the people go: and yet he knew he would not obey, as he says at the same time that he orders the command to be given him, [Exod. iii. 18, 19.](#) "And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God: and I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go; no, not by a mighty hand." See also [chap. iv. 21, 22, 23.](#) and [chap. vii. 1-7.](#); see also [chap. ix. 16.](#) compared with [Rom. ix. 17.](#)

§ 42. It is impossible for an infinitely wise and good being to do otherwise, than to choose what he sees on the whole to be best. And certainly reason requires us to suppose, that of all possible events with respect to sin, and the conversion and salvation of particular persons, it is better that one of those possible and opposite events should come to pass than another; and therefore, an infinitely wise and good being must choose accordingly. What God permits, he decrees to permit. If it is no blemish to God to permit sin, then it is no blemish to him to purpose or intend to permit it. And if he be omniscient, and does designedly permit that sin which actually comes to pass, then he designedly permits that sin, knowing, if he permits it, it will actually come to pass. And this is an effectual permission, and all that we plead for. What, then, do our adversaries quarrel with us for? And why do they pretend that we charge God with being the author of sin? There is a way of drawing consequences from Scripture, that begs the question. As the Arminians say, there are many more texts plainly against election, than seem to be for it, *viz.* those texts that represent, that general offers of salvation are made, as though it were left to men's choice, whether they will be saved or no. But that is begging the question. For the question very much consists in these things, whether an absolute decree be inconsistent with man's liberty, and so with a general offer of salvation, &c.

§ 43. Concerning the Arminian notion of election, that when the apostles speak of election, they only mean that by which the professing Christians in those days were distinguished from others, as the nation of Israel of old was; this is unreasonable, according to their own principles. For if they were elected, and that was the reason why they so far embraced the gospel, as to become Christians rather than others, then, on Arminian principles, no thanks were due to them for embracing the gospel; neither were others, who continued openly to reject the gospel, to blame; and it was in vain to use any means to persuade any to join with the Christian church; nor were any to blame for not doing it, or to be praised for doing it, &c. Besides, their principles render vain all endeavours to spread the gospel.

For the gospel will certainly be spread to all nations that are elected; and all such shall have the offers of the gospel, whether they take any care of the matter or no.

§ 44. Dr. Whitby, to make out his scheme, makes the word election signify two entirely different things; one, election to a common faith of Christianity; another, a conditional election to salvation. But every one must be sensible of the unreasonableness of such shifting and varying, and turning into all shapes, to evade the force of Scripture.

§ 45. It is evident the apostle, in [Rom. ix.](#) has not only respect to God's sovereignty in the election and preterition of nations, because he illustrates his meaning by the instance of a particular person, *viz.* Pharaoh. The exercise of the sovereignty that he speaks of, appears by the express words of the apostle about vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath, vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour. But the vessels of mercy, he speaks of as prepared to glory. They, it is plain, are those that shall be saved, and the vessels of wrath are those that perish. He speaks of those that shall be saved, [ver. 27.](#) "A remnant shall be saved." What is there that God does decree, according to the scheme of the Arminians, so as to make it in any measure consistent with itself? He does not decree any of the great events of the world of mankind, (which are the principal events, and those to which all others are subordinated,) because these depend on men's free will. He does not absolutely decree any events wherein the welfare of men is concerned; for if he does, then these things, according to their scheme, cannot be the subject of prayer. For according to them, it is absurd to seek or pray for things, which we do not know but that God has absolutely decreed and fixed before. We do not know but that lie has determined absolutely and unfrustrably from eternity, that they shall not be; and then, by their scheme, we cannot pray in faith for them. See Whitby, p. 177, &c. And if God does not decree and order those events beforehand, then what becomes of the providence of God; and what room is there for prayer, if there be no providence? Prayer is sbt out this way also. According to them, we cannot reasonably pray for the accomplishment of things that are already fixed, before our prayers; for then our prayers alter nothing, and what, say they, signifies it for us to pray?

Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that we cannot pray in faith for the salvation of others, if we do not know that Christ died intentionally for their salvation.

§ 46. To Dr. Whitby's observation, that the apostle speaks of churches, as though they were all elect, I answer, he speaks from a judgment of charity, as Dr. Whitby himself observes, p. 460. God foreknows the elect, as God is said to know those that are his own sheep from strangers; as Christ is said not to know the workers of iniquity, that is, he owns them not. In the same sense, God is said to know the elect from all eternity; that is, he knew them as a man knows his own things. He acknowledged them from eternity. He owns them as his children. Reprobates he did not know; they were strangers to God from all eternity. If God ever determined, in the general, that some of mankind should certainly be saved, and did not leave it altogether undetermined whether ever so much as one soul of all mankind should

believe in Christ; it must be that he determined that some particular persons should certainly believe in him. For it is certain that if he has left it undetermined concerning this, and that, and the other person, whether ever he should believe or not, and so of every particular person in the world; then there is no necessity at all, that this, or that, or any particular person in the world, should ever be saved by Christ, for the matter of any determination of God's. So that, though God sent his Son into the world, yet the matter was left altogether undetermined by God, whether ever any person should be saved by him, and there was all this ado about Christ's birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God's right hand, when it was not as yet determined whether he should ever save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all.

§ 47. It is most absurd to call such a conditional election as they talk of, by the name of election, seeing there is a necessary connexion between faith in Jesus Christ and eternal life. Those that believe in Christ, must be saved, according to God's inviolable constitution of things. What nonsense is it, therefore, to talk of choosing such to life from all eternity out of the rest of mankind! A predestination of such to life is altogether useless and needless. By faith in one that has satisfied for sin, the soul necessarily becomes free from sin. By faith in one that has bought eternal life for them, they have, of unavoidable consequence, a right to eternal life. Now, what sense is it to say, that God from all eternity, of his free grace, chose out those that he foresaw would have no guilt of sin, that they should not be punished for their guilt, as others were, when it is a contradiction to suppose that they can be punished for their guilt when they have none? For who can lay any thing to their charge, when it is Christ that has died? And what do they mean by an election of men to that which is, in its own nature, impossible that it should not be, whether they are elected to it or no; or by God's choosing them that had a right to eternal life, that they should possess it? What sense is it to say that a creditor chooses out those among his debtors to be free from debt, that owe him nothing? But if they say that election is only God's determination, in the general, that all that believe shall be saved, in what sense can this be called election? They are not *persons* that are here chosen, but mankind is divided into two sorts, the one believing, and the other unbelieving, and God chooses the believing sort. It is not election of persons, but of qualifications. *God* does from all eternity choose to bestow eternal life upon those that have a right to it, rather than upon those who have a right to damnation. Is this all the election we have an account of in God's word? Such a thing as election may well be allowed; for that there is such a thing as sovereign love, is certain; that is, love, not for any excellency, but merely God's good pleasure. For whether it is proper to say that God from all eternity loved the elect or no, it is proper to say that God loved men after the fall, while sinners and enemies; for God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son to die. This was not for any goodness or excellency, but merely God's good pleasure; for he would not love the fallen angels.

§ 48. Christ is often spoken of in Scripture as being, by way of eminency, the elect or chosen of God. [Isa. xlii. 1.](#) “Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.” [Luke xxiii. 35.](#) “If he be the Christ, the chosen of God.” [1 Pet. ii. 4.](#) “A living stone, chosen of God, and precious.” [Psal. lxxxix. 3.](#) “I have made a covenant with my chosen:” [ver. 19.](#) “I have exalted one chosen out of the people.” Hence those persons in the Old Testament, that were the most remarkable types of Christ, were the subjects of a very remarkable election of God, by which they were designed to some peculiar honour of the prophetic, priestly, or kingly office. So Moses was called God’s chosen, in that wherein he was eminently a type of Christ, *viz.* as a prophet and ruler, and mediator for his people; [Psal. cvi. 23.](#) “Had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach.” So Aaron was constituted high priest by a remarkable election of God, as in [Numb. xvi. 5.](#) and [xvii. 5.](#) [Deut. xxi. 5.](#) So David the king was the subject of a remarkable election; [Psal. lxxviii. 68-72.](#) “Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Sion which he loved; and he built his sanctuary like high palaces; like the earth which he hath established for ever. He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheep-folds, from following the ewes great with young; he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.” [1 Sam. xvi. 7-10.](#) “The Lord hath not chosen this, neither hath the Lord chosen this; the Lord hath not chosen these.” Christ is the chosen of God, both as to his divine and human nature. As to his divine nature, he was chosen of God, though not to any addition to his essential glory or real happiness, which is infinite, yet to great declarative glow. As he is man, he is chosen of God to the highest degree of real glory and happiness of all creatures. As to both, he is chosen of God to the office and glory of the mediator between God and men, and the head of all the elect creation. His election, as it respects his divine nature, was for his worthiness and excellency and infinite amiableness in the sight of God, and perfect fitness for that which God chose him to, and his worthiness was the ground of his election. But his election, as it respects his human nature, was free and sovereign, not being for any worthiness, but his election was the foundation of his worthiness. His election, as he is God, is a manifestation of God’s infinite wisdom. The wisdom of any being is discovered by the wise choice he makes; so the infinite wisdom of God is manifest in the wisdom of his choice when he chose his eternal Son, one so fit, upon all accounts, for the office of a mediator, when he only was fit, and when he was perfectly and infinitely lit; and yet his fitness was so difficult to be discerned, that none but one of infinite wisdom could discover it. His election, as he was man, was a manifestation of God’s sovereignty and grace. God had determined to exalt one of the creatures so high, that he should be one person with God, and should have communion with God, and should have glory in all respects answerable; and so should be the head of all other elect creatures, that they might be united to God and glorified in him. And his sovereignty appears in the election of the man Jesus, various ways. It appears in choosing the species of creatures of which he

should be, *viz.* the race of mankind, and not the angels, the superior species. God's sovereignty also appears in choosing this creature of the seed of fallen creatures that were become enemies and rebels, abominable, miserable creatures. It appears in choosing that he should be of such a branch of mankind, in selecting the posterity of David, a mean person originally, and the youngest of the family. And as he was the seed of the woman, so his sovereignty appears in his being the seed of such particular women; as of Leah, the uncomely wife of Jacob, whom her husband had not chosen; and Tamar a Canaanitess, and a harlot; and Rahab a harlot; and Ruth a Moabitess; and of Bathsheba, one that had committed adultery; and as he was the seed of many a mean person. And his sovereignty appears in the choice of that individual female of whom Christ was born.

It was owing to this election of God, that the man Jesus was not one of the corrupt race of mankind, so that his freedom from sin and damnation is owing to the free, sovereign, electing love of God in him, as well as in the rest of elect men. All holiness, all obedience and good works, and perseverance in him, was owing to the electing love of God, as well as in his elect members. And his freedom from eternal damnation was owing to the free, electing love of God another way, *viz.* as it was owing to God's electing love to him and his members, but to him in the first place, that he did not fail in that great and difficult work that he undertook; that he did not fail under his extreme sufferings, and so eternally continue under them. For if he had failed; if his courage, resolution, and love had been conquered by his sufferings, he never could have been delivered from them; for then he would have failed in his obedience to God, and his love to God failing, and being overcome by sufferings, these sufferings would have failed of the nature of an acceptable sacrifice to God, and the infinite value of his sufferings would have failed, and so must be made up in infinite duration, to atone for his own deficiency. But God having chosen Christ, he could not fail in this work, and so was delivered from his sufferings, from the eternity of them, by the electing love of God. Justification and glorification were fruits of God's foreknowledge and predestination in him, as well as in his elect members.

So that the man Christ Jesus has the eternal, electing love of God to him, to contemplate and admire, and to delight and rejoice his heart, as all his elect members have. He has it before him, as others have, eternally to praise God for his free and sovereign election of him, and to ascribe the praise of his freedom from eternal damnation, (which he, with his elect members, beholds, and has had a sense of, far beyond all the rest, and so has more cause of joy and praise for his deliverance from it,) and the praise of the glory he possesses, to that election. This election is not for Christ's works or worthiness, for all his works and worthiness are the fruits of it. God had power over this seed of the woman, to make it either a vessel to honour, or dishonour, as he had over the rest.

Christ is, by way of eminency, called the elect of God. For though other elect men are by election distinguished from the greater part of mankind, yet they, in their election, have

that which is common to thousands and millions; and though the elect angels are distinguished by election from the angels that fell, yet they are chosen among myriads of others; but this man, by his election, is vastly distinguished from all other creatures in heaven or earth; and Christ, in his election, is the head of election, and the pattern of all other election. Christ is the head of all elect creatures; and both angels and men are chosen in him in some sense, *i. e.* chosen to be in him. All elect men are said to be chosen in Christ, [Eph. i. 4](#). Election contains two things, *viz.* foreknowledge and predestination, which are distinguished in the [8th chapter of Romans](#). The one is choosing persons to be God's, which is a foreknowing of them; and the other, a destining them to be conformed to the image of his Son, both in holiness and blessedness. The elect are chosen in him with respect to those two, in senses somewhat diverse. With respect to foreknowledge or foreknowing, we are chosen in him as God chose us, to be actually his in this way, *viz.* by being in Christ, or being members of his Son. This is the way that God determined we should actually become his. God chose Christ, and gave his elect people to him; and so, looking on them as his, owned them for his own. But by predestination, which is consequent on his foreknowledge, we are elected in Christ, as we are elected in his election. For God having in foreknowledge given us to Christ, he thenceforward beheld us as members and parts of him; and so ordaining the head to glory, he therein ordained the members to glory. In destining Christ to eternal life, he destined all parts of Christ to it also. So that we are appointed to eternal life in Christ, being in Christ, his members from eternity. In his being appointed to life, we are appointed to life. So Christ's election is the foundation of ours, as much as his justification and glorification are the foundation of ours, by election in Scripture is sometimes meant this latter part, *viz.* destination to conformity to Christ in life and glory, as [2 Thess. ii. 13](#). "God from the beginning hath chosen you to salvation." And it seems to be spoken of in this sense chiefly, in [Eph. i. 3, 4, 5](#). "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

§ 49. [2 Thess. ii. 13](#). "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Concerning this scripture I observe the following things: 1. The word translated *chosen* is a word that signifies to choose or pick out from many others. 2. That this choosing is given as a reason why those differ from others that believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness, as an instance of the distinguishing grace of God; and therefore the apostle mentions their being chosen, their election as the ground of their sanctification by the Spirit and belief of the truth. 3. The apostle speaks of their being chosen to salvation, as a ground of their perseverance, or the reason why they never shall fall away, as others spoken of before, whereby they failed of salvation. See the



preceding verses. Compare [Heb. vi. 9. 4.](#) They are spoken of as thus chosen from the beginning.

That place, [Matt. xx. 21-23.](#) “Grant that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom; it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father,” affords an invincible argument for particular, personal predestination.

It is an evidence that the apostle, in [chap. ix. of Romans.](#), has not respect solely to an election and dereliction of nations or public societies, that one instance which he produces to illustrate and confirm what he says, is the dereliction of a particular person, even Pharaoh, [Rom. ix. 17.](#) So it is an instance of God’s mercy to a particular person, even Moses. When he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom I will have compassion,” &c. the words cited were used by God on occasion of and with relation to his mercy to a particular person, even Moses; (see [Exod. xxxiii. 19.](#)) And the language in that verse and the next, is suited to particular persons; as, [verse 16 and 18.](#), and [verses 22, 23.](#) And the apostle shows plainly, [verses 27, 29.](#), that it is not an election of nations or public societies, but a distinction of some particular persons from others of the same society; as it was a distinction of particular persons, in preserving some, when others were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar’s armies; and in returning some from captivity, and leaving others. This was not a showing of mercy to one public society in distinction from another. So in [chap. x. 4, 5.](#) where the apostle plainly continues to speak of the same election, it was not by a national election, or election of any public society, that God distinguished the seven thousand that he had reserved, who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

[John vi. 37.](#) “All that the Father hath given me shall come to me. And this is the Father’s will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” “What is this being given to Christ to be raised up again to ever-lasting life, but the election of particular persons to salvation? And since it is the Father’s will, that of all that he has given to Christ, he should lose nothing, this election must be so absolute as to insure their salvation.” *Green’s Friendly Controversies.*

It is plainly and abundantly taught in Scripture, that election is not of works. [Rom. ix. 11.](#) “That the purpose of God according to election might stand, *not of works*, but of him that calleth.” [Verse 11.](#) “Neither of them *having done either good or evil.*” And [Rom. xi. 5, 6.](#) “Even so at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace.* And if by grace, then it is no more of *works*; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.” [2 Tim. i. 9.](#) “Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, *not according to our works*, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

How invincible a proof of the calvinistical doctrine of election is that place in [Rom. xi. 5!](#) “Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of

grace.” Dr. Doddridge observes upon it, that same explain this of having chosen grace, *i. e.* the gospel. But that turn is very unnatural, and neither suits the phrase, nor the connexion with the former clause, or with the next verse, where the apostle comments on his own words.

§ 50. If God does not some way in his providence, and so in his predeterminations, order what the volitions of men shall be, he would be as dependent in governing the world, as a skilful mariner is in governing his ship, in passing over a turbulent, tempestuous ocean, where he meets constantly, and through the whole voyage, with things that agitate the ship, have great influence on the motions of it, and are so cross and grievous to him that he is obliged to accommodate himself in the best manner that he can. He meets with cross winds, violent tempests, strong currents, and great opposition from enemies; none of which things he has the disposal of, but is forced to suffer. He only guides the ship, and, by his skill, turns that hither and thither, and steers it in such a manner as to avoid dangers, as well as the case will allow.

§ 51. As that objection against the election which the apostle speaks of in his epistles, as an election by which such should be distinguished as should certainly be saved at last, *viz.* that many of those whom the apostle calls elect, chosen in Christ, &c. actually turned apostates; what Dr. Doddridge observes in his note on [Eph. i. 4.](#) may be a sufficient answer. The apostle speaks of whole societies in general as consisting of saints and believers, because this was the predominant character; and he had reason, in the judgment of charity, to believe the greater part were such; (compare [Phil. i. 7.](#)) Nor did he always judge it necessary to make exceptions in reference to a few hypocrites who had crept in among them, any more than Christ judged it so to speak of Judas as excluded, when he mentions the twelve thrones of judgment on which the apostles should sit. ([Matt. xix. 28.](#))

§ 52. Many have a notion concerning some things in religion, and, in particular, concerning predestination, that if they be the truth, yet it is not best that they should be known. But many reasons may be offered against this notion.

§ 53. What the devil did to afflict Job, was the exercise and fruit of his devilish disposition, and his acts therein were devilish. And yet it is most apparent, that those acts and effects of the devil towards Job, were appointed by infinite wisdom for holy ends; but not accomplished by God any otherwise than by permission.

§ 54. There were many absolute promises of old, that salvation should actually be accomplished, and that it should be of great extent, or extending to great multitudes of mankind; as, that “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head.” “In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”<sup>488</sup> [Psalm xxii. 30.](#) “A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.” [Isa. liii. 10.](#) “He shall see his

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488 [Genesis 26:4.](#)

seed." [Psalm ii. 6.](#) "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," &c. [Psalm cx.](#) "Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" and innumerable others. And if there were absolute promises of this, then there were absolute purposes of it; for that which is sincerely, absolutely promised, is with an absolute purpose of fulfilling the promise. But how can it be devised, that there should be an absolute, determinate, infallible, unchangeable purpose, that Christ should actually save vast multitudes of mankind; and yet it be not absolutely purposed that he should save any one single person, but that with regard to every individual soul, this was left undetermined by God, to be determined by man's contingent will, which might determine for salvation, or against it, there being nothing to render it impossible concerning any one, that his will would not finally determine against it! Observe, these prophecies are not merely predictions, but are of the nature of promises, and are often so called "Which he hath promised by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," &c. God takes care to fulfil his own promises; but, according to this scheme, it is not God that fulfils these promises; but men, left to themselves, to their contingent wills, fulfil them. Man's will, which God does not determine, determines itself in exclusion of God.

All the promises of God are yea and amen, and God himself makes them so to be; he takes care of that matter.

§ 55. Concerning that grand objection, that this doctrine supposes partiality in God, and is very dishonourable to him, being quite contrary to God's extensive and universal benevolence to his creatures; it may be shown that the Arminian notions and principles in this matter, lead directly to deism; and that on these principles, it is utterly impossible to answer Tindal's objections against revealed religion, especially in his 14th chapter. Besides, unjustifiable partiality is not imputable to a sovereign distributing his favours, though ever so unequally, unless it be done unwisely, and so as to infringe the common good.

§ 56. God has regard to conditions in his decrees, as he has regard to a wise order and connexion of things. Such is his wisdom in his decrees, and all his acts and operations, that if it were not for wise connexion that is regarded, many things would not be decreed. One part of the wise system of events would not have been decreed, unless the other parts had been decreed, &c.

§ 57. God in the decree of election is justly to be considered as decreeing the creature's eternal happiness, antecedently to any foresight of good works, in a sense wherein he does not in reprobation decree the creature's eternal misery, antecedently to any foresight of sin; because the being of sin is supposed in the first place in order to the decree of reprobation, which is, that God will glorify his vindictive justice; and the very notion of revenging justice, simply considered, supposes a fault to be revenged. But faith and good works are not supposed in the first place in order to the decree of election. The first things in order in this decree are, that God will communicate his happiness, and glorify his grace; (for these two

seem to be co-ordinate;) but in neither of these are faith and good works supposed. For when God decrees, and seeks to communicate his own happiness in the creature's happiness, the notion of this, simply considered, supposes or implies nothing of faith or good works; nor does the notion of grace, in itself, suppose any such thing. It does not necessarily follow from the very nature of grace, or God's communicativeness of his own happiness, that there must be faith and good works. This is only a certain way of the appointment of God's wisdom, wherein he will bring men to partake of his grace. But yet God is far from having decreed damnation from a foresight of evil works, in the sense of the Arminians, as if God in this decree did properly depend on the creature's sinful act, as an event, the coming to pass of which primarily depends on the creature's determination; so that the creature's determination in this decree may properly be looked upon as antecedent to God's determination, and on which his determination is consequent and dependent.

§ 58. What divines intend by *prior* and *posterior* in the affair of God's decrees, is not that one is before another in the order of time, for all are from eternity; but that we must conceive the view or consideration of one decree to be before another, inasmuch as God decrees one thing out of respect to another decree that he has made; so that one decree must be conceived of as in some sort to be the ground of another, or that God decrees one because of another; or that he would not have decreed one, had he decreed that other. Now there are two ways in which divine decrees may be said to be in this sense prior one to another. 1. When one thing decreed is the end of another, this must in some respect be conceived of as prior to that other. The good to be obtained is in some respect prior, in the consideration of him who decrees and disposes, to the means of obtaining it. 2. When one thing decreed is the ground on which the disposer goes, in seeking such an end by another thing decreed, as being the foundation of the capableness or fitness that there is in that other thing decreed, to obtain such an end. Thus the sinfulness of the reprobate is the ground on which God goes in determining to glorify his justice in the punishment of his sinfulness; because his sinfulness is the foundation of the possibility of obtaining that end by such means. His having sin is the foundation of both the fitness and possibility of justice being glorified in the punishment of his sin, and therefore the consideration of the being of sin in the subject, must in some respect be prior in the mind of the disposer, to the determination to glorify his justice in the punishment of sin. For the disposer must first consider the capableness and aptness of such means for such an end, before he determines them to such an end.

Thus God must be conceived of, as first considering Adonibezek's cruelty in cutting off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, as that which was to be before he decreed to glorify his justice in punishing that cruelty by the cutting off his thumbs and great toes. For God, in this last decree, has respect to the fitness and aptness of his thumbs and great toes being cut off to glorify his justice. But this aptness depends on the nature of that sin that was punished. Therefore the disposer, in fixing on those means for this end,

must be conceived of as having that sin in view. Not only must God be conceived of as having some end in consideration, before he determines the means in order to that end, but he must also be conceived of as having a consideration of the capableness or aptness of the means to obtain the end before he fixes on the means. Both these, in different respects, may be said to be prior to the means decreed to such an end in the mind of the disposer. Both, in different respects, are the ground or reason of the appointment of the means. The end is the ground or reason of the appointment of the means; and also the capacity and fitness of means to the end, is the ground or reason of this appointment to such an end. So both the sin of the reprobate, and also the glory of divine justice, may properly be said to be before the decree of damning the reprobate. The decree of damnation may properly be said, in different respects, to be because of both these; and that God would not have decreed the damnation of the sinner, had it not been for the respect he had both to the one and the other. Both may properly be considered as the ground of the decree of damnation. The view of the sinfulness of the reprobate must be in some respect prior in the decree, to God's decree to glorify his justice in punishing their sin-fulness. Because sinfulness- is necessarily supposed as already existing in the decree of punishing sinfulness, and the decree of damnation being posterior to the consideration of the sin of men in this latter respect, clears God of any injustice in such a decree. That which stands in the place of the ultimate end in a decree, *i. e.* that which is a mere end, and not a means to any thing further or higher, *viz.* the shining forth of God's glory, and the communication of his goodness, must indeed be considered as prior, in the consideration of the Supreme Disposer, to every thing excepting the mere possibility of it. But this must in some respects be conceived of as prior to that, because possibility is necessarily supposed in his decree. But if we descend lower than the highest end; if we come down to other events decreed, that be not mere ends, but means to obtain that end, then we must necessarily bring in more things, as in some respect prior, in the same manner as mere possibility, is in this highest decree. Because more things must necessarily be supposed or considered as existing in the decree, in order that those things which are decreed may reach the end for which they are decreed. More things must be supposed in order to a possibility of these things taking place as subordinate to their end; and therefore they stand in the same place, in these lower decrees, as absolute possibility does in the decree of the highest end. The vindictive justice of God is not to be considered as a mere or ultimate end, but as a means to that end. Indeed, God's glorifying his justice, or rather his glorifying his holiness and greatness, has the place of a mere and ultimate end. But his glorifying his justice in punishing sin, (or in exercising vindictive justice, which is the same,) is not to be considered as a mere end, but a certain way or means of obtaining an end. Vindictive justice is not to be considered as a certain, distinct attribute to be glorified, but as a certain way and means for the glorifying an attribute. Every distinct way of God's glorifying or exercising an attribute, might as well be called a distinct attribute as this. It is but giving a distinct name



to it, and so we might multiply attributes without end. The considering of the glorifying of vindictive justice as a mere end, has led to great misrepresentations, and undue and unhappy expressions about the decree of reprobation. Hence the glorifying of God's vindictive justice on such particular persons, has been considered as altogether prior in the decree to their sinful-ness, yea, to their very beings Whereas it being only a means to an end, those things that are necessarily presupposed, in order to the fitness and possibility of this means of obtaining the end, must be conceived of as prior to it.

Hence God's decree of the eternal damnation of the reprobate is not to be conceived of as prior to the fall, yea, and to the very being of the persons, as the decree of the eternal glory of the elect is. For God's glorifying his love, and communicating his goodness, stands in the place of a mere or ultimate end, and therefore is prior in the mind of the eternal Disposer to the very being of the subject, and to every thing but mere possibility. The goodness of God gives the being as well as the happiness of the creature, and does not presuppose it. Indeed, the glorifying of God's mercy, as it presupposes the subject to be miserable, and the glorifying his grace, as it presupposes the subject to be sinful, unworthy, and ill deserving, are not to be conceived of as ultimate ends, but only as certain ways and means for the glorifying the exceeding abundance and overflowing fulness of God's goodness and love; therefore these decrees are not to be considered as prior to the decree of the being and permission of the fall of the subject. And the decree of election, as it implies a decree of glorifying God's mercy and grace, considers men as being cursed and fallen; because the very notion of such a decree supposes sin and misery. Hence we may learn, how much in the decree of predestination is to be considered as prior to the creation and fall of man, and how much as posterior; *viz.* that God's decree to glorify his love and communicate his goodness, and to glorify his greatness and holiness, is to be, considered as prior to creation and the fall of man. And because the glory of God's love, and the communication of his goodness, necessarily imply the happiness of the creature, and give both their being and happiness; hence the design to communicate and glorify his goodness and love eternally to a certain number, is to be considered as prior, in both those mentioned respects, to their being and fall. For such a design, in the notion of it, presupposes neither. But nothing in the decree of reprobation is to be looked upon as antecedent in one of those respects to man's being and fall; but only that general decree that God will glorify his justice, or rather his holiness and greatness, which supposes neither their being nor sinfulness. But whatsoever there is in this decree of evil to particular subjects, it is to be considered as consequent on the decree of their creation, and permission of their fall. And indeed, although all that is in the decree of election, all that respects good to the subjects, be not posterior to the being and fall of men, yet both the decree of election and rejection or reprobation, as so styled, must be considered as consequent on the decrees concerning the creation and fall. For both these decrees have respect to that distinction or discrimination that is afterwards actually made amongst men

in pursuance of these decrees. Hence effectual calling, being the proper execution of election, is sometimes in Scripture called election; and the rejection of men in time is called reprobation. Therefore the decrees of election and reprobation must be looked upon as beginning there, where the actual distinction begins, because distinction is implied in the notion of those decrees. And therefore, whatsoever is prior to this actual distinction, the foresight of it, and decree concerning it, or that state that was common, or wherein they were undistinguished, the foresight of that, or decree concerning it, must be considered, in some respect, as prior to the decree concerning the distinction. Because all that is before is supposed or looked upon as already put in the decree. For that is the decree, *viz.* to make such a distinction between those that were before in such a common state. And this is agreeable to the scripture representations of those decrees, [John xv. 19](#). “Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” See also [Ezek. xvi. 1-8](#).

The decrees of God must be conceived of in the same order, and as antecedent to, and consequent on, one another, in the same manner, as God’s acts in the execution of those decrees. If this will not hold, with regard to those things that are the effects of those acts, yet certainly it will hold with respect to the acts themselves. They depend on one another, and are grounded on one another, in the same manner as the decrees that these are the execution of, and in no other. For, on the one hand, the decrees of God are no other than his eternal doing what is done, acted, or executed by him in time. On the one hand, God’s acts themselves, in executing, can be conceived of no otherwise, than as decrees for a present effect. They are acts of God’s will. God brings things to pass only by acts of his will. He speaks, and it is done. His will says, let it be, and it is. And this act of his will that now is, cannot be looked upon as really different from that act of will that was in him before, and from eternity, in decreeing that this thing should be at this time. It differs only relatively. Here is no new act of the will in God, but only the same acts of God’s will, which before, because the time was not come, respected future time; and so were called decrees. But now the time being come, they respect present time, and so are not called by us decrees, but acts executing decrees. Yet they are evidently the same acts in God. Therefore those acts, in executing, must certainly be conceived of in the same order, and with the same dependence, as the decrees themselves. It maybe in some measure illustrated by this The decree of God, or the will of God decreeing events, may be represented as a straight line of infinite length, that runs through all past eternity, and terminates in the event. The last point in the line, is the act of God’s will in bringing the event to pass, and does not at all differ from all the other points throughout the infinite length of the line, in any other respect but this, that this last point is next to the event. This line may be represented as in motion, but yet always kept parallel to itself. The hither end of the line, by its motion, describes events in the order in which they come to pass; or at least represents God’s acts in bringing the events to pas«, in their order and mutual dependence, antecedence, and consequence. By the motion of all

the other points of the line, before the event or end of the line, in the whole infinite length of it, are represented the decrees in their order; which, because the line in all its motions is kept parallel to itself, is exactly the same with the order of the motions of the last point. For the motion of every point of the whole line, is in all respects just like the motions of that last point wherein the line terminates in the event; and the different parts of the motion of every point, are in every respect precisely in the same order. And the maxim, that what is first in intention, is last in execution, does not in the least concern this matter. For, by last in execution, is meant only last in order of time, without any respect to the priority or posteriority that we are speaking of; and it does not at all hinder, but that in God's acts, in executing his decrees, one act is the ground or reason of another act, in the same manner precisely as the decree that related to it was the ground or reason of the other decree. The absolute independence of God no more argues against some of God's decrees being grounded on decrees of some other things that should first come to pass, than it does against some of God's acts in time, being grounded on some other antecedent acts of his. It is just the same with God's acts in executing, as has been said already of his decreeing. In one respect, the end that is afterwards to be accomplished, is the ground of God's acting; in another respect, something that is already accomplished, is the ground of his acting, as it is the ground of the fitness or capableness of the act to obtain the end. There is nothing but the ultimate end of all things, *viz.* God's glory, and the communication of his goodness, that is prior to all first acts in creating the world, in one respect, and mere possibility in another. But, with respect to after-acts, other ends are prior in one respect, and other preceding acts are prior in another, just as I have shown it to be with respect to God's decrees. Now, this being established, it may help more clearly to illustrate, and fully to evince, what we have insisted on concerning the order of the decrees, and that God's decrees of some things that are accomplished first in order of time, are also prior in the order, so as to be the proper ground and reason of other decrees. For, let us see how it is in God's acts in executing his decrees. Will any deny, that God's act in rewarding righteousness, is grounded on a foregoing act of his in giving righteousness? And that he regards righteousness in such a person, because he hath given righteousness to such a person; and that because this latter act necessarily supposes the former act foregoing? So, in like manner, God's decree, in determining to reward righteousness, is grounded on an antecedent decree to give righteousness, because the former decree necessarily supposes the latter decree, and implies it in the very notion or it. So, who will deny, but that God's act in punishing sin is grounded on what God hath antecedently done in permitting sin, or suffering it to be, because the former necessarily supposes the latter, and therefore that the actual permission of sin is prior, in the order of nature, to the punishment of it? So that whatever foregoing act of God is in any respect a ground and reason of another succeeding act, so far is both the act and decree of the act prior to both that other act and decree.



It may be objected to this, that if so, the decree of bestowing salvation on an elect soul, is founded on the decree of bestowing faith on him; for God actually bestows salvation in some respect, because he has bestowed faith; and this would be to make the decree of election succedaneous to the decree of giving faith, as well as that of reprobation consequent on the decree of permitting sin. To this I answer, that both God's act, and also his decree of bestowing salvation on such a fallen creature, is in some respects grounded on God's act and decree of giving faith, but in no wise as the decree or act of eternal punishing is grounded on sin, because punishment necessarily presupposes sin, so that it could not be without. But the decreeing and giving the happiness of the elect, is not so founded on faith. The case is very different. For with respect to eternal punishment, it may be said that God would not, yea, could not, have decreed or executed it, had he not decreed and permitted sin; but it cannot be said, either that God could not, or would not, have decreed or bestowed the eternal happiness of the elect, unless he had decreed and given faith. Indeed, the salvation of an elect soul is, in this respect, grounded on the decree of giving faith as God's decree of bestowing happiness on the elect in this particular way, as a fallen creature, and by the righteousness of Christ made his own, by being heartily received and closed with, is grounded on the decree of bestowing faith in Christ, because it presupposes it, as the act that answers to this decree does. But the decree of bestowing happiness in general, which we conceive of as antecedent to this act, presupposes no such things; nor does just so much without any more in execution presuppose faith, or indeed the righteousness of Christ, or any act or suffering of a mediator, or even the fall of man. And the decree of God's communicating his goodness to such a subject does not so much as presuppose; the being of the subject, because it gives being. [But there is no decree of evil to such a subject which can be conceived of as antecedent to a decree of punishment. For the first decree of evil or suffering, implies that in it. For there is no evil decreed for any other end, but the glory of God's justice. Therefore the decree of the permission of sin is prior to all other things in the decree of reprobation. Due distinctions seem not to have been observed, in asserting that all the decrees of God are unconditional; which has occasioned difficulties in controversies about the decrees. There are no conditional decrees in this sense, *viz.* that decrees should depend on conditions of them, which in this decree, that depends on them as conditions, must be considered, like themselves, as yet undecreed. But yet decrees may, in some sort, be conditions of decrees; so that it may be said, that God would not have decreed some things, had he not decreed others.

§ 59. The objection to the divine decrees will be, that according to this doctrine, God may do evil, that good may come of it.

ANS. I do not argue that God may commit evil, that good may come of it; but that he may will that evil should come to pass, and permit that it may come to pass, that good may come of it. It is in itself absolutely evil, for any being to commit evil that good may come of it; but it would be no evil, but good, even in a creature, to will that evil should come to

pass, if he had wisdom sufficient to see certainly that good would come of it, or that more good would come to pass in that way than in any other. And the only reason why it would not be lawful for a creature to permit evil to come to pass, and that it would not be wise, or good and virtuous, in him so to do, is, that he has not perfect wisdom and sufficiency, so as to render it fit that such an affair should be trusted with him. In so doing he goes beyond his line; he goes out of his province; he meddles with things too high for him. It is every one's duty to do things fit for him in his sphere, and commensurate to his power. God never intrusted this providence in the hands of creatures of finite understandings, nor is it proper that he should.

If a prince were of perfect and all-comprehensive wisdom and foresight, and he should see that an act of treason would be for the great advancement of the welfare of his kingdom, it might be wise and virtuous in him to will that such act of treason should come to pass; yea, it would be foolish and wrong; if he did not; and, it would be prudent and wise in him not to restrain the traitor, but to let him alone to go in the way he chose. And yet he might hate the treason at the same time, and he might properly also give forth laws at the same time, forbidding it upon pain of death, and might hold these laws in force against this traitor.

The Arminians themselves allow that God permits sin, and that if he permits it, it will come to pass. So that the only difficulty about the act of the will that is in it, is that God should will evil to be, that good may come of it. But it is demonstrably true, that if God sees that good will come of it, and more good than otherwise, so that when the whole series of events is viewed by God, and all things balanced, the sum total of good with the evil is more than without it, all being subtracted that needs be subtracted, and added that is to be added; if the sum total of good thus considered, be greatest, greater than the sum in any other case, then it will follow that God, if he be a wise and holy being, must will it.

For if this sum total that has evil in it, when what the evil subtracts is subtracted, has yet the greatest good in it, then it is the best sum total, better than the other sum total that has no evil in it. But if, all things considered, it be really the best, how can it be otherwise than that it should be chosen by an infinitely wise and good being, whose holiness and goodness consists in always choosing what is best? Which does it argue most, wisdom or folly, a good disposition or an evil one, when two things are set before a being, the one better and the other worse, to choose the worse, and refuse the better?

§ 60. There is no inconsistency or contrariety between the decretive and perceptive will of God. It is very consistent to suppose that God may hate the thing itself, and yet will that it should come to pass. Yea, I do not fear to assert that the thing itself may be contrary to

God's will, and yet that it may be agreeable to his will that it should come to pass, because his will, in the one case, has not the same object with his will in the other case. To suppose God to have contrary wills towards the same object, is a contradiction; but it is not so, to suppose him to have contrary wills about different objects. The thing itself, and that the thing should come to pass, are different, as is evident; because it is possible that the one may be good and the other may be evil. The thing itself may be evil, and yet it may be a good thing that it should come to pass. It may be a good thing that an evil thing should come to pass; and oftentimes it most certainly and undeniably is so, and proves so.

§ 61. Objectors to the doctrine of election may say, God cannot always preserve men from sinning, unless he destroys their liberty. But will they deny that an omnipotent, an infinitely wise God, could possibly invent and set before men such strong motives to obedience, and keep them before them in such a manner, as should influence them to continue in their obedience, as the elect angels have done, without destroying their liberty? God will order it so that the saints and angels in heaven never will sin, and does it therefore follow that their liberty is destroyed, and that they are not free, but forced in their actions? Does it follow that they are turned into machines and blocks, as the Arminians say the Calvinistic doctrine turn men?

§ 62. To conclude this discourse; I wish the reader to consider the unreasonableness of rejecting plain revelations, because they are puzzling to our reason. There is no greater difficulty attending this doctrine than the contrary, nor so great. So that though the doctrine of the decrees be mysterious, and intended with difficulties, yet the opposite doctrine is in itself more mysterious, and attended with greater difficulties, and with contradictions to reason more evident, to one who thoroughly considers things; so that, even if the Scripture had made no revelation of it, we should have had reason to believe it. But since the Scripture is so abundant in declaring it, the unreasonableness of rejecting it appears the more glaring.

CHAP. IV.

CONCERNING EFFICACIOUS GRACE.

§ 1. it is manifest that the Scripture supposes, that if ever men are turned from sin, God must undertake it, and he must be the doer of it; that it is his doing that must determine the matter; that all that others can do, will avail nothing, without his agency. This is manifest by such texts as these: *Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.* “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; Thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh,” &c. *Lam. v. 21.* “Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned.”

§ 2. According to Dr. Whitby’s notion of the assistance of the Spirit, the Spirit of God does nothing in the hearts or minds of men beyond the power of the devil; nothing but what the devil can do; and nothing showing any greater power in any respect, than the devil shows and exercises in his temptations. For he supposes that all that the Spirit of God does, is to bring moral motives and inducements to mind, and set them before the understanding, &c. It is possible that God may infuse grace, in some instances, into the minds of such persons as are striving to obtain it in the other way, though they may not observe it, and may not know that it is not obtained by gradual acquisition. But if a man has indeed sought it only in that way, and with as much dependence on himself, and with as much neglect of God in his endeavours and prayers, as such a doctrine naturally leads to, it is not very likely that he should obtain saving grace by the efficacious, mighty power of God. It is most likely that God should bestow this gift in a way of earnest attention to divine truth, and the use of the means of grace, with reflection on one’s own sinfulness, and in a way of being more and more convinced of sinfulness, and total corruption and need of the divine power to restore the heart, to infuse goodness, and of becoming more and more sensible of one’s own impotence, and helplessness and inability to obtain goodness by his own strength. And if a man has obtained no other virtue, than what seems to have been wholly in that gradual and insensible way that might be expected from use and custom, in the exercise of his own strength, he has reason to think, however bright his attainments may seem to be, that he has no saving virtue.

§ 3. Great part of the gospel is denied by those who deny pure efficacious grace. They deny that wherein actual salvation and the application of redemption mainly consists; and how unlikely are such to be successful in their endeavours after actual salvation!

Turnbull’s explanation of *Philip. ii. 12, 13.* “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure,” is this, (*Christian Philosophy*, p. 96, 97.) “Give all diligence to work out your salvation; for it is God, the Creator of all things, who, by giving you, of his good pleasure, the power of willing and doing, with a sense of right and wrong, and reason to guide and direct you, hath

visibly made it your end so to do. Your frame shows, that to prepare yourselves for great moral happiness, arising from a well cultivated and improved mind, suitably placed, is your end appointed to you by your Creator. Consider, therefore, that by neglecting this your duty, this your interest, you contemn and oppose the *good will of God towards you, and his design in creating you.*”

§ 4. If we look through all the examples we have of conversion in Scripture, the conversion of the apostle Paul, and of the Corinthians, (“Such were some of you, but ye are washed,<sup>489</sup>” &c.) and all others that the apostles write to, how far were they from this gradual way of conversion, by contracted habits, and by such culture as Turn-bull speaks of! Turnbull, in his *Christian Philosophy*, p. 470. seems to think, that the sudden conversions that were in the apostles’ days, were instances of their miraculous power, as in these words, “They appealed to the works they wrought, to the samples they gave of their power to foretell future events; their power to cure instantaneously all diseases of the body; their power to cure, in the same extraordinary manner, all diseases of the mind, or to convert bad into good dispositions; their power to bestow gifts and blessings of all sorts, bodily and spiritual.” See again to the like purpose, p. 472.

Now I would inquire, whether those who thus had the diseases of their minds cured, and their had converted into good dispositions, had any virtue; or whether those good dispositions of theirs were virtues, or any thing praiseworthy; and whether, when they were thus converted, they became good men and the heirs of salvation? As Turnbull himself allows, all that are not good men, were called the children of the devil in Scripture; and he asserts that nothing is virtue, but what is obtained by our own culture; that no habit is virtuous, but a contracted one, one that is owing to ourselves, our own diligence, &c.; and also holds, that none are good men but the virtuous; none others are the heirs of future happiness.

§ 5. What God wrought for the apostle Paul and other primitive Christians, was intended for a pattern to all future ages, for their instruction and excitement; [Eph. ii. 7.](#) [1 Tim. i. 16.](#) It is natural to expect, that the first fruits of the church specially recorded in history, and in that book which is the steady rule of the church in all things pertaining to salvation, should be a pattern to after-ages in those things, those privileges, which equally concern all. Or if it be said, that as soon as men take up a strong resolution, they are accepted and looked upon by God as penitents and converts; it may be inquired, is there a good man without good habits, or principles of virtue and goodness in his heart?

§ 6. Turnbull speaks of good men as born again; *i. e.* changed by culture: *Christian Philosophy*, p. 282. Is there a good man without such principles as love to God and men, or charity, humility, &c.? How comes that resolution to be so good, if no principle of virtue be exercised in it?

If it be said, Paul was a good man before he was converted, it may be answered, he did not believe in Christ, and therefore was in a state of condemnation. Besides, he speaks of himself as being then a wicked man.

§ 7. Concerning the supposition advanced by Bishop Butler, and by Turnbull in his *Christian Philosophy*, that all that God does, even miracles themselves, are wrought according to general laws, such as are called the laws of nature, though unknown to us; and the supposition of Turnbull, that all may be done by angels acting by general laws, I observe, this seems to be unreasonable. If angels effect these works, acting only by general laws, then they must do them without any immediate, special interposition at all, even without the smallest intimation of the divine mind, what to do, or upon what occasion God would have any thing to be done. And what will this doctrine bring inspiration to, which is one kind of miracle? According to this, all significations of the divine mind, even to the prophets and apostles, must be according to general laws, without any special interposition at all of the divine agency.

§ 8. [Acts xii. 23.](#) God was so angry with Herod for not giving him the glory of his eloquence, that the angel of the Lord smote him immediately, and he died a miserable death; he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But if it be very sinful for a man to take to himself the glory of such a qualification as eloquence, how much more a man's taking to himself the glory of divine grace, God's own image, and that which is infinitely God's most excellent, precious, and glorious gift, and man's highest honour, excellency, and happiness, whereby he is partaker of the divine nature, and becomes a God-like creature? If God was so jealous for the glory of so small a gift, how much more for so high an endowment, this being that alone, of all other things, by which man becomes like God? If man takes the glory of it to himself, he thereby will be in the greatest danger of taking the glory to himself that is due to God, and of setting up himself as standing in competition with God, as vying with the Most High, and making himself a god, and not a man. If not giving God the glory of that which is least honourable, provokes God's jealousy; much more must not giving God the glory of that which is infinitely the most honourable. It is allowed, the apostle insists upon it, that the primitive Christians should be sensible that the glory of their gifts belonged to God, and that they made not themselves to differ. But how small a matter is this, if they make themselves to differ in that, which the apostle says is so much more excellent than all gifts!

§ 9. How much more careful has God shown himself, that men should not be proud of their virtue, than of any other gift! See [Deut. ix. 4.](#) [Luke xviii. 9.](#) and innumerable other places. And the apostle plainly teaches us to ascribe to God the glory, not only of our redemption, but of our wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification; and that no flesh should glory in themselves in these things, [1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31.](#) Again, the apostle plainly directs, that all that glory in their virtue, should glory in the Lord, [2 Cor. x. 17.](#) It is glorying in virtue and

virtuous deeds he is there speaking of; and it is plain, that the apostle uses the expression of glorying in the Lord, in such a sense, as to imply ascribing the glory of our virtue to God.

§ 10. The doctrine of men's being the determining causes of their own virtue, teaches them, not to do so much, as even the proud Pharisee did, who thanked God for making him to differ from other men in virtue, [Luke xviii.](#)

See [Gen. xli. 15, 16.](#) [Job xi. 12.](#) [Dan. ii. 25.](#), &c. [2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.](#) [2 Cor. iv. 7.](#) [2 Cor. x. 17.](#)

[Prov. xx. 12.](#) "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made, even both of them;" compared with many parallel places that speak about God's giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand, &c.

§ 11. The Arminian doctrine, and the doctrine of our new philosophers, concerning habits of virtue being only by custom, discipline, and gradual culture, joined with the other doctrine, that the obtaining of these habits in those that have time for it, is in every man's power, according to their doctrine of the freedom of will, tends exceedingly to cherish presumption in sinners, while in health and vigour, and tends to their utter despair, in sensible approaches of death by sickness or old age.

§.12. Observe that the question with some is, whether the Spirit of God does any thing at all in these days, since the Scriptures have been completed. With those that allow that he does any thing, the question cannot be, whether his influence be immediate; for, if he does any thing at all, his influence must be immediate. Nor can the question be, whether his influence, with regard to what he intends to do, be efficacious.

The questions relating to efficacious grace, controverted between us and the Arminians, are two: 1. Whether the grace of God, in giving us saving virtue, be determining and decisive. 2. Whether saving virtue be decisively given by a supernatural and sovereign operation of the Spirit of God; or, whether it be only by such a divine influence or assistance, as is imparted in the course of common providence, either according to established laws of nature, or established laws of God's universal providence towards mankind; *i.e.* either, 1. Assistance which is given in all natural actions, wherein men do merely exercise and improve the principles of nature and laws of nature, and come to such attainments as are connected with such exercises by the mere laws of nature. For there is an assistance in all such natural actions; because it is by a divine influence that the laws of nature are upheld; and a constant occurrence of divine power is necessary in order to our living, moving, or having a being. This we may call a natural assistance. Or, 2. That assistance, which though it be something besides the upholding of the laws of nature, (which take place in all affairs of life,) is yet, by a divine, universal constitution in this particular affair of religion, so connected with those voluntary exercises which result from this mere natural assistance, that by this constitution it indiscriminately extends to all mankind, and is certainly connected with such exercises and improvements, as those just mentioned, by a certain, established, known rule, as much as any of the laws of nature. This kind of assistance, though many Arminians call it a supernatural

assistance, differs little or nothing from that natural assistance that is established by a law of nature. The law so established, is only a particular law of nature; as some of the laws of nature are more general, others more particular: but this establishment, which they suppose to be by divine promise, differs nothing at all from many other particular laws of nature, except only in this circumstance, of the established constitutions being revealed in the word of God, while others are left to be discovered only by experience.

The Calvinists suppose otherwise; they suppose that divine influence and operation, by which saving virtue is obtained, is entirely from, and above common assistance, or that which is given in a course of ordinary providence, according to universally established laws of nature. They suppose a principle of saving virtue is immediately imparted and implanted by that operation, which is sovereign and efficacious in this respect, that its effect proceeds not from any established laws of nature. I mention this as an entirely different question from the other, *viz.* Whether the grace of God, by which we obtain saving virtue, is determining or decisive. For that it may be, if it be given wholly in a course of nature, or by such an operation as is limited and regulated perfectly according to established, invariable laws. For none will dispute that many things are brought to pass by God in this manner, that are decisively ordered by him, and are brought to pass by his determining providence.

The controversy, as it relates to efficacious grace, in this sense, includes in it these four questions.

1. Whether saving virtue differs from common virtue, or such virtue as those have that are not in a state of salvation, in nature and kind, or only in degree and circumstances?
2. Whether a holy disposition of heart, as an internal governing principle of life and practice, be immediately implanted or infused in the soul, or only be contracted by repeated acts, and obtained by human culture and improvement?
3. Whether conversion, or the change of a person from being a vicious or wicked man, to a truly virtuous character, be instantaneous or gradual!
4. Whether the divine assistance or influence, by which men may obtain true and saving virtue, be sovereign and arbitrary, or, whether God, in giving this assistance and its effects, limits himself to certain exact and stated rules, revealed in his word, and established *by* his promises?

§ 13. [Eph. i. 19, 20.](#) “What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, according to the working of his mighty power,” or the effectual working, as the word signifies These words, *according to the effectual working of his power*, we shall find applied to conversion, to growth in grace, and to raising us up at last. You have them applied to conversion, [Eph. iii. 7.](#) “Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given to me, by the *effectual working of his power.*” So likewise to grow in grace, [Eph. iv. 10.](#) “The whole body increaseth with the increase of God, by the *effectual working* in the measure of every part.” And to the resurrection to glory at the last day, [Philip. iii. 21.](#) “He will change



our vile bodies, according to the *effectual working* of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.”

And that the power of God in conversion, or in giving faith and the spiritual blessings that attend it, is here meant, may be argued from the apostle’s change of phrase, that whereas in the foregoing verse, he spoke of the riches of the glory of Christ’s inheritance in the saints, he does not go on to say, “and what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards them,” (*i. e.* the saints,) which surely would have been most natural, if he still had respect only to the power of God in bestowing the inheritance of future glory. But, instead of that, we see he changes the phrase; “and what is the exceeding greatness of his power *to us-ward who believe;*” plainly intimating some kind of change of the subject, or a respect to the subject of salvation with regard to something diverse; that whereas before he spoke of saints in their future state only, now he speaks of something that the saints, we that dwell in this world that believe, are the subjects of. And as the apostle includes himself, so it is the more likely he should have the mighty power of God in conversion in his thought; his conversion having been so visible and remarkable an instance of God’s marvellous power.

Again, the apostle, in praying that they “knowing the exceeding greatness of God’s power,” &c. prays for such a knowledge and conviction of the power of God to bring them to life and glory, which was a most special remedy against such doubts as the church in the then present state was most exposed to, *viz.* that their being preserved to glory and salvation through all their trials, persecutions, and the great opposition that was made by the enemies of Christ and their souls. Therefore, after mentioning the glory of their inheritance, he, for their comfort and establishment, mentions the power of God to bring them to the possession of this inheritance, as the apostle Peter does, [1 Pet. i. 4, 5](#). “To an inheritance incorruptible who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” He speaks to their hearts, for here was their difficulty and temptation to doubting. But if the keeping them in faith showed such great power, much more did the first bringing them from heathenism and the power of sin, darkness, and spiritual death and ruin, into a state of faith and salvation, quickening them when dead in trespasses and sins; as it is a greater instance of divine power to raise the dead, than to maintain life that is exposed to danger; a greater work to reconcile us being enemies, than to keep us friends being reconciled. It was natural for the apostle to put them in mind of the power of God manifested in their conversion, as he would strengthen their faith in his power to raise them at the last day, and glorify them to eternity. Dr. Goodwin says, he finds most of the Greek fathers ran this way in interpreting the place. He mentions Theophylact and Chrysostom, and cites these words of Chrysostom: “The apostle’s scope *is* to demonstrate by what already was manifested in them, *viz.* the power of God in working faith, and to raise up their hearts to believe what was not manifested, *viz.* the raising of them from death to life. It being (saith he) a far more wonderful work to persuade a soul to believe in Christ, than to raise up a dead man, a far more admirable work of the two.”

Besides, what the apostle says in the continuation of his discourse, explains his meaning, and puts the matter of his intending to include the power of God manifested in their conversion, out of all doubt, as, in the very next sentence, “and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;” and every word that follows, to the end of the second chapter, confirms the same thing. I shall mention a few of them: [Ver. 2](#). “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh effectually in the children of disobedience.” This shows the exceeding greatness of power in their being delivered from such a state, wherein they were held by the great power of so strong an enemy. [Verses 5 and 6](#). “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” These things tend to show how the power of God in their conversion, and the happy, honourable, and glorious change of their state by it, was according to the power that wrought in Christ when he was quickened, raised up, and made to sit in heavenly places, as [chap. i. 19, 20, 21](#). Now to back this with a parallel place, as here in this place the apostle speaks of the greatness of God’s power in working faith, and parallels it with the power that raised up Christ from the dead; so we find he says the very same thing in [Colossians ii. 12, 13](#). “Ye are buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” In that text in Ephesians the apostle speaks of faith, “the power that works in us that believe.” So in this text in Colossians, “ye are risen through faith.” Again, 2dly, in Ephesians, together with what there follows, [chap. ii](#). he compareth believing to a rising from the dead. So here in Colossians, “ye are risen with him through faith.” Thirdly, as in Ephesians the apostle speaks of the work of God in giving faith, as parallel with his works in raising Christ, so he does here in [Colossians](#): “Ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” Fourthly, as we in Ephesians are said to believe, according to the efficacious working of God, the word **Greek** is also used here in Colossians. It is called faith of the operation or effectual working of God, and as there God is said to be the author, the same that raised up Christ, and to work faith in them, so here it is the faith of the operation of God who raised Christ from the dead, so that, every way, one place is parallel with the other.

Some pretend, that in that expression, *through the faith of the operation of God*, there is no respect to God’s operation as the efficient cause of faith, but only to the operation of God that raised Christ as the object of faith, which believes that power and operation as it was manifested in raising Christ, and which is believed to be sufficient to raise us up also. But that the apostle means the operation of God in giving faith, appears by [verse 11](#). which introduces these words, where the apostle says, “In whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” The phrase, *made without hands*, in Scripture, always denote God’s immediate power, above the course of nature, and above second causes. Thus, when he speaks of

heaven, [2 Cor. v. 1.](#) he calls it “a house not made with hands,” and in [Heb. ix. 11.](#) the human nature of Christ, which was framed by so wonderful and supernatural a power of the Holy Ghost, is said to be a <sup>490</sup> “tabernacle made without hands.”

note. The foregoing remarks, concerning the texts in [Eph. i. 19, 20.](#) and in [Coloss. ii. 11, 12, 13.](#) are taken chiefly from Dr. Goodwin’s Works, vol. 1. p. 298, &c.

§ 14. It is a doctrine mightily in vogue, that God has promised his saving grace to men’s sincere endeavours in praying for it, and using proper means to obtain it; and so that it is not God’s mere will that determines the matter, whether we shall have saving grace or not; but that the matter is left with us, to be determined by the sincerity of our endeavours.

But there is vast confusion in all talk of this kind, for want of its being well explained what is meant by sincerity of endeavour, and through men’s deceiving themselves by using words without a meaning. I think the Scripture knows of but one sort of sincerity in religion, and that is a truly pious or holy sincerity. The Bible suggests no notion of any other sort of sincere obedience, or any other sincerity of endeavours, or any doings whatsoever in religion, than doing from love to God and true love to our duty. As to those that endeavour and take pains, (let them do ever so much,) that yet do nothing freely, or from any true love to or delight in God, or free inclination to virtue, but wholly for by-ends, and from sinister and mercenary views, as being driven and forced against their inclination, or induced by regard to things foreign; I say, respecting such as these, I find nothing in Scripture that should lead us to call them honest and sincere in their endeavours. I doubt not but that the Scripture promises supernatural, truly divine, and saving blessings, to such a sincerity of endeavour as arises from true love to our duty. But then, as I apprehend, this is only to promise more saving grace to him that seeks it in the exercise of saving grace, agreeably to that repeated saying of our Saviour, “to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.” <sup>491</sup> Persons, in seeking grace with this sincerity, ask in faith; they seek these blessings in the exercise of a saving faith, the great condition of the covenant of grace. And I suppose, promises are made to no sincerity, but what implies this. And whoever supposes that divine promises are made to any other sincerity than this, I imagine he never will be able to make out his scheme, and that for two reasons:

1. On such a supposition, the promises must be supposed to be to an undetermined condition. And,

2. Even on the supposition that the promises are made to some other sincerity than a truly pious sincerity, the sovereign grace and will of God must determine the existence of the condition of the promises; and so the whole must still depend on God’s determining grace.

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490 [Heb. ix. 11.](#)

491 [Matthew 13:12.](#)

1. On the supposition that the promises of saving grace are made to some other sincerity of endeavour than that which implies true and saving piety of heart, they must be made to an undetermined condition, and so be in effect no promises at all.

If there be any thing else worthy to be called sincerity in endeavours after holiness, but a free, pious inclination, or true regard or love to holiness, nothing better can be mentioned than this, *viz.* endeavours after holiness, from a real willingness of heart to put forth those endeavours for the agent's own sake, yet for such ends as prudence and self-love would propose; such as his own eternal interest, salvation from everlasting misery, &c.

So that by sincerity here, is not meant any holy freedom or virtuous disposition or desire: but it signifies no more than reality of disposition and will to endeavour for some end, only provided the end be subservient to self-preservation. But the thing that truly in this case denominates the endeavour sincere, is the reality of the will or disposition of heart to endeavour, and not the goodness of the will or disposition. Now if this be the sincerity of endeavour which is meant, when men talk of its being the condition of peremptory and decisive promises of saving grace, then it never has (as I know of) yet been told, and I suppose never will or can be told, what the condition of the promise is.

The thing that needs to be determined, in order to know this condition, is, how great a degree of this sort of sincerity, or real willingness of heart to endeavour, a man must have, to be entitled to the promise. For there can be no question, but that multitudes that live in gross wickedness, and are men of a very debauched, flagitious behaviour, have some degree of it; and there are none, even of those that are the most strict and painful in their endeavour, but have it in a very imperfect degree, and, in many things, fail of this sincerity of endeavour. For it must be kept in mind, that the sincerity of heart we are speaking of, attending religious duties, is only a reality of willingness to use endeavours. And every man whatsoever, that uses any endeavour at all for his salvation, or ever performs any religious duty, to the end that he may go to heaven and not to hell, has this sincerity. For whatever men do voluntarily for this end, they do from a real willingness and disposition of heart to do it; for if they were not willing to do it, they would not do it. There surely are no voluntary actions performed without men's being willing to perform them. And is there any man that will assert that God has absolutely or peremptorily promised his saving grace to any man that ever stirs hand or foot, or thinks one thought in order to his salvation?

And on the other hand, as to those that go farthest in their endeavours, still they fail, in numberless instances, of exercising this kind of sincerity, consisting in reality of will. For such are guilty of innumerable sins; and every man that commits sin, by so doing, instead of being sincerely willing to do his duty, sincerely wills the contrary. For so far as any actions of his are his sin, so far his will is in what he does. No action is imputed to us any further than it is voluntary, and involves the real disposition of the heart. The man, in this painful endeavour, fails continually of his duty, or (which is the same thing) of perfect obedience.

And so far as he does so, he fails of sincerity of endeavour. No man is any further defective in his obedience, than as he is defective in sincerity; for there the defect lies, *viz.* in his will, and the disposition of his heart. If men were perfect in these, that would be the same thing as to be perfect in obedience, or complete in holiness. Nothing, either of omission or commission, is sin, any farther than it includes the real disposition and will; and therefore, no men are any farther sinful, than as they are sincere in sinning; and so far as they are sincere in sinning, so far they are deficient of sincerely endeavouring their duty. Now, therefore, where are the bounds to which men must come in order to be entitled to the promise? Some have a faint sincerity of endeavour, who none do suppose are entitled to the promise. And those that have most sincerity of endeavour, do greatly fail of that degree of sincerity that they ought to have, or fall short of that which God requires. And there are infinite degrees between these two classes. And if every degree of strength of endeavour is not sufficient, and yet some certain degree of it, greatly short of that which God requires, is sufficient, then let it be determined what that degree is.

Some have determined thus, that if men sincerely endeavour to do what they can, God has promised to help them to do more, &c. But this question remains to be resolved, whether the condition of the promise be, that he shall sincerely endeavour to do what he can, constantly, or only sometimes. For there is no man that sincerely endeavours to do his duty to the utmost constantly, with this sort of sincerity consisting in reality of will so to do. If he did, he would perfectly do his duty at all times. For, as was observed before, nothing else is required but the will; and men never fail of their duty, or commit sin, but when their real will is to sin.

But if the condition of the promise be sincerely doing what they can sometimes, then it should be declared how often, or how great a part of the time of man's life, he must exercise this sincerity. It is manifest that men fail of their duty every day, yea continually; and therefore, that there is a continual defect of sincerity of endeavour in the practice of duty.

If it should be said that the condition of the promise of saving grace is, that, take one time with another, and one duty with another, the sincerity of their will should be chiefly in favour of their duty; or, in other words, that they should be sincere in endeavours to do *more* than half their duty, though they sincerely neglect the rest; I would inquire where they find such promises as these in the Bible? Besides, I think it can be demonstrated that there is not a man on earth, that ever comes up halfway to what the law of God requires of him; and consequently, that there is in all more want of sincerity, than any actual possession of it. But whether it be so or no, how does it appear, that if men are sincere in endeavours with respect to more than half their duty, God has promised them saving mercy and grace, though, through a defect of their sincerity, the rest be neglected?

But if we suppose the sincerity to which divine promises are made, implies a true freedom of the heart in religious endeavours and performances, consisting in love to God and holiness,

inclining our hearts to our duty for its own sake, here is something determinate and precise; as a title to the benefit promised does not depend on any particular degree of sincerity to be found out by difficult and unsearchable rules of mathematical calculation, but on the nature of it; this sincerity being a thing of an entirely distinct nature and kind from any thing that is to be found in those men who have no interest in the promises. If men know they have this sincerity, they may know the promises are theirs, though they may be sensible they have very much of a contrary principle in their hearts, the operations of which are as real as of this. This is the only sincerity in religion that the Scripture makes any account of. According to the word of God, then, and then only, is there a sincere universal obedience, when persons love all God's commands, and love all those things wherein holiness consists, and endeavour after obedience to every divine precept, from love and of free choice. Otherwise, in scripture account, there is nothing but sincere disobedience and rebellion, without any sincerity of the contrary. For their disobedience is of free choice, from sincere love to sin, and delight in wickedness. But their refraining from some sins, and performing some external duties, is without the least degree of free choice or sincere love.

If here it should be said, that men who have no piety of heart in a saving degree, yet may have some degree of love to virtue; and it should be insisted that mankind are born with a moral sense, which implies a natural approbation of and love to virtue; and therefore, men that have not the principle of love to God and virtue established to that degree as to be truly pious men, and entitled to heaven, yet may have such degrees of them as to engage them, with a degree of ingenuous sincerity and free inclination, to seek after farther degrees of virtue, and so with a sincerity above that which has been mentioned, *viz.* a real willingness to use endeavours from fear and self-interest. It may be replied, If this be allowed, it will not at all help the matter. For still the same question returns, *viz.* what degree of this sincerity is it that constitutes the precise condition of the promise? It is supposed that all mankind have this moral sense; but yet it is not supposed that all mankind are entitled to the promises of saving mercy. Therefore the promises depend, as above noticed, on the degree of sincerity, under the same difficulties, and with the same intricacies, and all the forementioned unfix-edness and uncertainty. And other things concerning this sincerity, besides the degree of it, are undetermined, *viz.* how constant this degree of sincerity of endeavour must be; how long it must be continued; and how early it must be begun.

Thus, it appears that, on the supposition of God's having made any promises of saving grace to the sincere endeavours of ungodly men, it will follow, that such promises are made to an undetermined condition.

But a supposed promise to an undetermined condition, is truly no promise at all. It is absurd to talk of positive determinate promises made to something not determined, or to a condition that is not fixed in the promise. If the condition be not decided, there is nothing decisive in the affair.

If the master of a family should give forth such a pretended promise as this to his servants, "I promise, that if any of you will do something, though I tell you not what, that I will surely give him an inheritance among my children." would this be truly any promise at all?

I proceed now to observe,

II. On the supposition, that the promises of saving grace are made to some other sincerity of endeavour, than that which implies truly pious sincerity, the sovereign grace and will of God must determine the existence of the condition of the promises; and so the whole must still depend on God's determining grace; and that, of whatever kind this sincerity, short of truly pious and saving sincerity, is supposed to be; whether it consists only in a reality of will, arising from foreign motives, for a certain degree of endeavours or use of means; or whether it be a certain sincerity or reality of willingness to use endeavours, arising from a natural love of virtue. For all suppose the sincerity, to which the promises are made, to be that in which some are distinguished from others; none supposing that all mankind, without exception, have this sincerity which is the condition of the promises. Therefore, this sincerity must be a distinguishing attainment. And how is it that some attain to it, and not others? It must be in one of these two ways; either by the sovereign gift of God's will, or by their endeavours. To say the former, is to give up the point, and to own that the sovereign grace and will of God determines the existence of the condition of the promises. But if it be said, that this distinguishing sincerity of endeavour is obtained by men's own endeavour, then I ask, what sort of endeavour is it attained by? Sincere endeavour, or insincere? None will be so absurd, as to say, that this great condition of saving promises is attained to by insincere endeavours. For what tendency, either natural or moral, can the exercise of insincerity have, to produce or attain to sincerity? But if it be said, that distinguishing sincerity of endeavour is attained to by distinguishing sincere endeavour, this is to run round in a ridiculous circle; and still the difficulty remains, and the question returns, how the distinguishing sincerity that first of all took place in the affair came to have existence, otherwise than by the determining grace of God?

And if it be said, that there is no need of supposing any such thing as any previous, habitual sincerity, or any such sincerity going before, as shall be an established principle, but that it is sufficient that the free will does sincerely determine itself to endeavour after holiness I answer, whether we suppose the sincerity that first entitles to the promises, to be a settled habit or established principle, or not, it does not in the least remove the difficulty, as long as it is something, in which some men are distinguished from others, that precedes the distinguishing endeavour which entitles to the promises, and is the source and spring of those endeavours. This first distinguishing sincerity, which is the spring of the whole affair, must have existence by some means or other; and it must proceed either from some previous sincere endeavour of the man's own, which is a contradiction; or from God, which is the point required; or it must be the effect of chance, in other words, of nothing.

If we suppose that distinguishing sincerity of endeavour by which some men are interested in the promises of saving grace, and not others, to be some certain degree of love to virtue, or any thing else in the disposition or exercise of the heart; yet it must be owned, that all men either are alike by nature, as to love to virtue, or they are not. If they are not, but some have naturally a greater love to virtue than others, and this determines some, rather than others, to the requisite sincerity of endeavour after saving grace; then God determines the affair by his sovereign will; for he, and not men themselves, determines all distinguishing qualifications or advantages that men are born with. Or if there be no difference naturally, but one man is born with the same love to virtue as another; then, how do some men first attain to more of this love to virtue than others, and so possess that distinguishing sincerity of endeavour which consists in it? To say it arises from a previous, distinguishing sincerity of endeavour, attempt, desire, or will, is a contradiction. Therefore, it must proceed from the determining grace of God; which being allowed, the great point in dispute is allowed.

§ 15. [Ephesians ii. 8](#). “By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Mr. Beach observes, “this text does not mean that their faith is so God’s gift, as not to be of themselves, as is most evident to any who reads the original.” This is certainly a great mistake. What I suppose he means, is, that the relative *that*, being of the neuter gender, and the word **Greek** of the feminine, they do not agree together. But if he would translate the Greek relative *that thing*, viz. the thing last spoken of, all the difficulty vanishes. *Vid. Bezn, in loc.* Such Scriptures as these, [1 Cor. xv. 10](#). “Not I, but the grace of God that was with me;” [Gal. ii. 20](#). “Not I, but Christ liveth in me;” prove efficacious grace. The virtuous actions of men that are rewardable, are not left to men’s indifference, without divine ordering and efficacy, so as to be possible to fail. They are often in the Scripture the matter of God’s promises. How often does God promise reformations! How often does God promise that great revival of religion in the latter days! Dr. Whitby seems to deny any physical influence at all of the Spirit of God, on the will; and allows an influence by moral suasion and moral causes only, p. 344. This is to deny that the Spirit of God does any thing at all, except inspiring the prophets, and giving the means of grace, will] God’s ordination of this in his providence. If God do any thing physically, what he does must be efficacious and irresistible. Such an assistance Dr. Whitby maintains, and, concerning it, says the following things p. 221, 222.

1st, “Then I say it must be granted, that in raising an idea in my brain by the Holy Spirit, and the impression made upon it there, the action is truly physical. 2d, That in those actions I am wholly passive; that is, I myself do nothing formally to produce those ideas; but the good Spirit, without my operation, doth produce them in me. 3d, That these operations must be irresistible in their production, because they are immediately produced in us without our knowledge of them, and without our will, and so without those faculties by which we are enabled to act.”





Though it should be allowed that God assists man with a physical assistance, and yet an obliged and promised assistance only; then God does not do, or effect, or give the thing assisted to, any more than if he operated and assisted men only according to the established laws of nature; and men may as properly be said to do it of themselves, and of their own power. The doing of the thing, is in the same manner in their power. The assistance by which God assists a drunkard that goes to the tavern, and there drinks excessively, or by which he assists an adulterer or pirate in their actions, is, that he upholds the laws of nature, the laws of the nature of the human soul, whereby it is able to perform such and such acts in such order and dependence; and the laws of the union of soul and body; and moves the body in such a slated manner in consequence of such acts of the soul, and upholds the laws of motion, and causes that there shall be such and such effects in corporeal things, and also of men's minds in consequence of such motions. All the difference is, that the assistance which he grants in the duties of religion, is according to a newer establishment than the other, according to a method established a little later; and also, that the method of assistance, in the one case, is written and revealed by way of promise or covenant, and not in the other.

But if it be said, that though God has promised assistance, yet he has not promised the exact degree, as, notwithstanding his promise, he has left himself at liberty to assist some, much more than others, in consequence of the very same endeavour. I answer, that this will prove a giving up of their whole scheme, and will infallibly bring in the Calvinistical notion of sovereign and arbitrary grace; whereby some, with the very same sincerity of endeavour, with the same degree of endeavour, and the same use of means, nay, although all things are exactly equal in both cases, both as to their persons and behaviour; yet one has that success by sovereign grace and God's arbitrary pleasure, that is denied another. If God has left himself no liberty of sovereign grace in giving success to man's endeavours, but his consequent assistance be always tied to such endeavours precisely, then man's success is just as much in his own power, and is in the same way the fruit of his own doings, as the effect and fulfilment of his endeavours to commit adultery or murder; and indeed much more. For his success in those endeavours is not tied to such endeavours, but may be providentially disappointed. Although particular motions follow such and such acts of will, in such a state of body, exactly according to certain laws of nature; yet a man's success in such wickedness is not at all tied to his endeavours by any divine establishment, as the Arminians suppose success is to man's endeavours after conversion.

For the Spirit of God, by assisting in the alleged manner, becomes not the efficient cause of those things, as the Scriptures do certainly represent him. If God be not the proper bestower, author, and efficient cause of virtue, then the greatest benefits flow not from him; are not owing to his goodness; nor have we him to thank for them.

“Christ upbraids the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, that they were worse than Sodom, &c. and the Jews of that generation, that they were worse than the men

of Nineveh; and the Pharisees, that the publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God before them. But why did he do this, if the only reason was, that the one was brought to repent by effectual grace, and the other not?" (See *Whitby*, p. 169, 170, 171.) I answer, the unbelief and impenitence of those cities, of that generation, and of those Pharisees, when, on the contrary, the publicans and Nineveh repented, and the men of Sodom would have repented, was an argument that they were worse, more perverse, and hard-hearted than they. Because, though repentance is owing to special, efficacious assistance, yet in his ordinary methods of proceeding with men, God is wont much more rarely to bestow it on those that are more perverse, hard-hearted, and rooted in evil, than others. So much the more as their hearts are hardened, so much the less likely are they to be brought to repentance. And though there be oftentimes exceptions of particular persons, yet it still holds good as a general rule; and especially with regard to societies, nations, cities, and ranks of men: so that Christ might well, from the fact that he mentions, draw an argument of the greater perverseness and stubbornness of those societies and ranks of men that he spoke of.

§ 16. A command and a manifestation of will are not the same thing. A command does not always imply a true desire that the thing commanded should be done. 'So much at least is manifest by the instance of Abraham commanded to offer up Isaac. That command was not such an effect of the divine will, as the commands to believe and repent, Sec.

§ 17. Either the stronger the habitual inclination to good is, the more virtuous; and the stronger the disposition to evil, the more vicious; or, if it be otherwise, then indifference or want of inclination is essential to both virtue and vice.

§ 18. Dr. Whitby's inconsistency appears in that one while, when he is disputing against the decree of election, he maintains that the epistles, where the apostle speaks to the elect, are not written to the converted only; because then it suits his turn that the persons addressed should not be converted. But afterwards, when disputing against efficacious grace, he maintains that where the apostle says, "God worketh in you both to will and to do," &c. [Philip. ii. 13.](#) he speaks only to them that are converted, p. 228. Again, when it suits the Doctor's turn, when writing about perseverance, then all whom the apostles write to are true saints. As particularly those the apostle Peter writes to, that had *precious faith*, p. 399. And the Galatians addressed in Paul's epistle, p. 401, 402.

§ 19. When the psalmist prays, "Make me to go in the way of thy statutes;"<sup>492</sup> is it indeed meaning that God would give him the general grace which he gives to all, and which is sufficient for all if they will but improve it? And is this all?

§ 20. Arminians argue that God has obliged himself to bestow a holy and saving disposition, on certain conditions, and that what is given in regeneration, is given either for natural men's asking, or for the diligent improvement of common grace; because, otherwise, it

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would not be our fault that we are without it, nor our virtue that we have it. But if this reasoning is just, the holy qualities obtained by the regenerate, are only the fruits of virtue, not virtues themselves. All the virtue lies in asking, and in the diligent improvement of common grace.

§ 21. *Prov. xxi. 1.* “The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will.” This shows that the Arminian notion of liberty of will, is inconsistent with the scripture notion of God’s providence and government of the world. See also *Jer. xxxi. 18.* “Turn me, and I shall be turned.” *Matt. vii. 18.* “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” Let us understand this how we will, it destroys the Arminian notion of liberty, and virtue, and vice. For, if it means only a great difficulty; then so much the less liberty, and therefore so much the less virtue or vice. And the preceding verse would be false, which says ” every tree bringeth forth good fruit,” &c. *Rom. viii. 6, 7, 8, 9.* “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” The design of the apostle in this place overthrows Arminian notions of liberty, virtue, and vice. It appears from Scripture, that God gives such assistance to virtue and virtuous acts, as to be properly a determining assistance, so as to determine the effect; which is inconsistent with Arminian notions of liberty. The Scripture shows that God’s influence in the case is such, that he is the cause of the effect; he causes it to be: which shows that his influence determines the matter, whether it shall be or not. Otherwise innumerable expressions of Scripture are exceedingly improper, and altogether without a meaning.

§ 22. Dr. Whitby’s notion of the assistance of the Spirit is of the same sort with inspiration. Whereas that which I suppose is the true notion, is entirely different. Consequently their notion is much more enthusiastical, does much better agree with, and much more expose to, pernicious enthusiasm, than ours. Hence we find that the grossest enthusiasts, such as Quakers and others, are generally Arminians in the doctrine of free will, &c.

§ 23- Scripture expressions are every where contrary to the Arminian scheme, according to all use of language of the world in these days. But then they have their refuge here. They say, the ancient figures of speech are exceedingly diverse from ours; and that we in this distant age cannot judge at all of the true sense of expression used so long ago, but by a skill in antiquity, and being versed in ancient history, and critically skilled in the ancient languages; not considering that the Scriptures were written for us in these ages on whom the ends of the world are come; yea, were designed chiefly for the latter age of the world, in which they shall have their chief, and comparatively almost all their effect. They were written for God’s people in those ages, of whom at least ninety-nine in a hundred must be supposed incapable

of such knowledge, by their circumstances and education; and nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand of God's people, that hitherto have been saved by the Scriptures. It is easy, by certain methods of interpretation, to refine and criticise any book to a sense most foreign to the mind of the author.

§ 24. If God be truly unwilling that there should be any moral evil in the world, why does not he cause less moral evil to exist than really does? If it be answered, as is usual to such kind of objections, that though God is unwilling there should be moral evil, yet he will not infringe on man's liberty, or destroy his moral agency to prevent it; then I ask, if this be all, why does God cause so much less to exist at some certain times; on the contrary, causes virtue gloriously to prevail? Other times are spoken of and promised, wherein it shall prevail yet vastly more. And this is spoken of as of God's effecting, and is abundantly so spoken of and promised, as what God would do, and none should hinder, &c.

The Arminian principles, denying the efficacious, determining grace of God, as the cause of men's virtue and piety, are wholly inconsistent with the promises and prophecies of the future flourishing of religion and virtue in the world, and never can be made consistent therewith. This flourishing of religion is spoken of as what God will effect; and is made the matter of his abundant promise; is spoken of as his glorious work, the work of his almighty power; what he will effect, and none shall hinder; what he will effect against all opposition, removing and overcoming the wickedness of men, &c.

§ 25. Dr. Stebbing says, page 104. " So much grace as is necessary to lead us to that obedience which is indispensably required in order to salvation, God will give to every one, who humbly and devoutly prays to him for it; for this is the condition, and the only condition prescribed by our Saviour, [Luke xi. 9-13](#). "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If then ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? where the promise of the Spirit is made." Here humility and devotion are mentioned as the condition of that obedience which is indispensably required in order to salvation. By that obedience which is required in order to salvation must be meant, either, 1. That sort of virtue and obedience that is requisite, or, 2. Perseverance in it. If he means that sort of virtue which is requisite in order to salvation; then I would ask, what sort of humility and devotion is that, to which God has promised the grace which is necessary to their obtaining that virtue which is the condition of salvation? Must it not be real, sincere humility and devotion? Surely if God has promised so great a gift to any humility and devotion, it must be to that which is sincere and upright. Because that which is not sincere, is nothing; it is hypocritical; a mere show of that which is really wanting. And it would be very unreasonable to suppose that God promises such infinite rewards to hypocrisy, which he has often declared to be abominable to him, and

which only provokes him the more. But if it be true, sincere, upright humility and devotion, it is unreasonable to suppose that God makes this the condition of that grace which is necessary to his obtaining that kind of virtue which is requisite to salvation. Because he, who has this humility and devotion, has that kind of virtue already. The Scripture every where speaks of uprightness and sincerity of heart, as that virtue that is saving. He that sincerely asks for grace to obey, has that sincerity and uprightness of heart that is exercised in sincere obedience; for he that sincerely asks this, is sincerely willing to obey, or sincerely desirous of obeying. Or, 2. If the Doctor, by that obedience that is indispensably required in order to salvation, means perseverance in sincere virtue, and this be promised to devoutly and sincerely asking it; then hereby must be meant, either devoutly and sincerely asking it once, or final perseverance in this sincere asking, or a certain limited continuance in that asking. If a final perseverance in asking be the condition of grace to lead us to persevere, saving virtue is, as said before, the condition of itself. For persevering sincerity is the condition of obtaining persevering sincerity. If it be only once asking, or asked a limited number of times, or a limited continuance in asking, this is contrary to the Arminian doctrine about perseverance. For it supposes a person in this life, on a past condition, to be already, before the end of the day of his probation, so confirmed in obedience that it is impossible for him to fall away.

§ 26. One danger of these Arminian notions is, that they strongly tend to prevent conviction of sin<sup>^</sup>

§ 27. The vast pretences of Arminians to an accurate and clear view of the scope and design of the sacred penmen, and a critical knowledge of the original, will prove for ever vain and insufficient to help them against such clear evidence as the Scripture exhibits concerning efficacious grace. I desire it may be shown, if it can be, that ever any terms, that are fuller and stronger, are used more frequently, or in greater variety, to signify God's being the author, efficient, and bestower of any- kind of benefit, than as to the bestowment of true virtue or goodness of heart; whether concerning the deliverance out of Egypt, or the manna that was rained down from heaven, or the bestowment of the blessings of Canaan, or saving Noah and his family in the ark; or the raising any from the dead, or Christ's giving health to the sick, or sight to the blind, or bread to the hungry in the wilderness, or any thing else whatsoever; or the giving being to mankind in their creation; the giving reason to them, with their other natural faculties; the giving them life and breath; the giving them the beautiful form of their bodies; the giving them life at the general resurrection; the giving them their glory and happiness in heaven; the prophets, and the word of God by the prophets and others; the giving the means of grace and salvation; the giving Christ, and providing means of salvation in him. Yea, I know of no one thing in Scripture wherein such significant. strong expressions are used, in so great variety, or one half so often, as the bestowment of this benefit of true goodness and piety of heart. But after all, we must be faced down in it with vast confidence, that the Scriptures do not imply any more than only exhib-

iting means of instruction, leaving the determining and proper causing of the effect wholly with man, as the only proper, efficient, and determining cause; and that the current of Scripture is all against us, and that it is because we do not understand language, and are bigots and fools for imagining any such thing as that the Scriptures say any thing of that nature, and because the divines on our side do not understand Greek, and do not lay the Scripture before them, nor mind the scope of Scripture, nor consider the connexion, &c. &c. Perhaps it will be said, that every one of those scriptures, which are brought to prove efficacious grace, may have another interpretation, found out by careful and critical examination. But, alas! is that the way of the Most High's instructing mankind, to use such a multitude of expressions, in different languages, and various different ages, all which, in their natural and most common acceptation, in all languages, nations, and ages, must undoubtedly be understood in a particular sense; yea, the whole thread and current of all that God says, according to the use of speech among mankind, tends to lead to such an understanding, and so unavoidably leads his people in all ages into such an understanding; but yet, that he means no such thing; intending only that the true meaning should not be found out, but by the means of acute criticism, which might possibly hit upon the strange, unusual, and surprising meaning?

§ 28. Instead of persons being the determining and efficient causes of their own virtue and piety, after all the moral means God uses with man, let us suppose some third person between God and the subject of this gift of virtue, to be in the very same manner the sovereignty determining cause and efficient of virtue; that he had power to bestow it on us, or cause us to be the subjects of it, just in the same manner as the Arminians suppose we ourselves have power to be the causes of our being the subjects of virtue; and that it depended on this third person's free will, just in the same manner as now they suppose our having virtue depends on our own free will; and that God used moral means with that third person to bestow virtue on us, just in the same manner that he used moral means to persuade us to cause virtue in ourselves, and the moral means had the like tendency to operate on his will as on ours; but finally, it was left entirely to his free will to be the sole determining cause whether we should have virtue, without any such influence on his will as in the least to insure his sovereignty, and arbitrary disposal, and perfectly free self-determination; and it should be left contingent, whether he would bestow it or not; and, in these circumstances, this third person should happen to determine in our favour, and bestow virtue: now I ask, would it be proper to ascribe the matter so wholly to God, in such strong terms, and in such a great variety; to ascribe it so entirely to him as his gift; to pray to him beforehand for it; to give him thanks, to give him all the glory, &c.? On the contrary, would not this determining cause, whose arbitrary, self-determined, self-possessed, sovereign will, decides the matter, be properly looked upon as the main cause, vastly the most proper cause, the truest author and bestower of the benefit? Would not he be, as it were, all in the cause? Would not the



glory properly belong to him, on whose pleasure the determination of the matter properly depended?

§ 29. By regeneration, being new creatures, raised from death in sin, in the New Testament, is not meant merely persons' being brought into the state and privileges of professing Christians, according to Dr. Taylor. When Christ says unto Nicodemus, [John iii. 3](#). "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" he does not mean merely, that unless a man be brought to a participation of the new state and privileges of the Christian church, he cannot enter on the possession and privileges of the Christian church; for that would be nonsense, and only to say, unless a man be born again, he cannot be born again; or, unless a man enter into the new state of things, as erected by the Messiah, he cannot enter on the new state of things as erected by the Messiah. Nor can he mean, that unless a man be a professing Christian, he cannot see the future and eternal privileges of the kingdom of heaven, for he supposes many heathens will see the kingdom of God in that sense.

And how unreasonable would it be to suppose that Christ would teach this doctrine of the necessity of being instated in his new-modelled church, as such a great, important, and main doctrine of his!

Taylor, to make out his scheme, is forced to suppose, that by being born of God is meant two things in the New Testament, (see p. 127. of his *Key*, and on *Original Sin*, p. 144, &c.) So he is forced to suppose, that by the kingdom of God is meant two things, (p. 125. marginal note, and other places,) and so he supposes two senses of our being of the truth, our *being of or in God*, and *knowing God*, (see p. 127. marginal note.) He is forced to suppose that many of the expressions, signifying antecedent blessings, are to be taken in a double sense, (see p. 138. No. 243, &c.) See how evidently being born of God signifies something else than a being brought into the state of professing Christians, [1 John ii. 29](#). "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him." [Chap. iii.](#) "Whatsoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." [Chap. iv. 8](#). "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." [Chap. v. 4](#). "Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world." [Ver. 18](#). "We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself; and that wicked one toucheth him not."

So it is exceeding apparent, that knowing God, and being of God, and in God, having this hope in him, &c. mean something beside our Christian profession, and principles, and privileges. [1 John ii. 3](#), &c. "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him." [Chap. iii.](#) "Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." [Chap. iii. 14](#). "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." [Chap. iv. 12](#). "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us." Taylor

supposes that this same apostle, by being born of God, means being received to the privileges of professing Christians. [John i. 12.](#) (p. 49.) [1 John v. 1.](#) and [ver. 18.](#) (p. 48.) [1 John iii. 1.](#) (p. 49.)

§ 30. Why does the apostle say, concerning apostates, “they were not of us: if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us;”<sup>493</sup> if it be, as Dr. Taylor supposes, that professing Christians are indeed of the society of Christians to all intents and purposes, have all their privileges, are truly the children of God, members of Christ, of the household of God, saints, believers that have obtained like precious faith, are all one body, have one spirit, one faith, one inheritance, have their hearts purified and sanctified, are all the children of light, are all of the household of God, fellow-citizens with the saints, have all fellowship with Christ, &c.?

§ 31. It is true, the nation of the Jews are in the Old Testament said to be elected, called, created, made, formed, redeemed, delivered, saved, bought, purchased, begotten. But particular Jews are no where so spoken of, at least with reference to the same thing, *viz.* their national redemption, when they were brought out of Egypt, &c.

David, in the book of Psalms, though he is so abundant there in giving thanks to God for his mercies, and is also so frequent in praising God for God’s redeeming his people out of Egypt, and the salvation God wrought for the nation and church of Israel at that time; yet he never once blesses God (having respect to that salvation) that God had chosen him and redeemed him, bought him, regenerated him; never (having reference to that affair) speaks in the language of the apostle, “He loved me, and gave himself for me:” though he often speaks of the blessedness of those men God had chose, and caused to come nigh unto him, agreeably to the language of the New Testament, and often blesses God for redeeming and saving him in particular; but never, in any of these things, has he respect to those national privileges, nor indeed any other of the penmen of the Psalms; which is very strange, if the privilege of being bought, made, created, &c. as applied to the nation of the Jews, be that which the apostle in the New Testament applies to himself in particular, and which this and the other apostles applied to many other particular persons.

§ 32. That professing Christians are said to be sanctified, washed, &c. does not argue, that all professing Christians are so in fact. For Taylor himself says, ” it should be carefully observed, that’ll is very common in the sacred writings to express not only our Christian privileges, but also the duty to which they oblige, in the present or preterperfect tense; or to speak of that as done, which only ought to be done, and which, in fact, may possibly never be done: as in [Matt. v. 13.](#) “Ye are the salt of the earth,” that is, ye ought to be. [Rom. ii. 4.](#) “The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance;” that is, ought to lead thee: [chap. vi.](#)

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493 [1 John ii. 19.](#)



2. chap. viii. 9. Col. iii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 6. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice;" *i. e.* ought to rejoice. 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all with open face (enjoying the means of) beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are (ought to be, enjoy the means of being) changed into the same image from glory to glory." 1 Cor. v. 7. "Ye are unleavened," *i. e.* obliged by the Christian profession to be. Heb. xiii. 14. "We seek (*i. e.* we ought to seek, or according to our profession, we seek) a city to come." 1 John ii. 12-15. iii. 9. v. 4-18. and in other places. See *Taylor's Key*, p. 139. No. 244. and p. 144. No. 246. This overthrows all his supposed proofs, that those which he calls antecedent blessings do really belong to all professing Christians.

§ 33. The case was quite otherwise in the Christian church with regard to election, redemption, creation, &c. from what it was with the Jews. With the Jews, election, their redemption out of Egypt, their creation, was a national thing; it began with them as a nation, and descended, as it were, from the nation, to particular persons. Particular persons were first of the nation and church of the Jews; so, by that means, had an interest in their election, redemption, &c. that God wrought of old. The being of the nation and church of Israel, was the ground of a participation in these privileges.<sup>494</sup> But it is evident it is contrariwise in Christians. With regard to them, the election, redemption, creation, regeneration, &c. are personal things. They begin with particular persons, and ascend to public societies. Men are first redeemed, bought, created, regenerated, and by that means become members of the Christian church; and this is the ground of their membership. Paul's regeneration, and Christ's loving him, and giving himself for him, was the foundation of his being of the Christian church, that holy nation, peculiar people, &c. whereas, David's being one of the nation of Israel, is the proper ground of his participation in Israel's redemption out of Egypt, and of that birth and formation of the people that were at that time. It is apparent the case was thus. It cannot be otherwise. It is evident that the new creation, regeneration, calling, and justification, are personal things, because they are by personal influences; influences of God's Spirit on particular persons, and personal qualifications.

Their regeneration was a personal thing, and therefore, it is not called simply an entering into the new creation, or obtaining a part in the new world or new Jerusalem, &c. but a putting off the *old man*, and putting on the *new man*. They are first raised from the dead, and by that means come to belong to the church of Christ. They are first lively or living stones, and by that means come to belong to the spiritual house, and the holy temple; by being lively stones, they come to be parts of the living temple, and capable of it. So that their, being alive, is prior to their belonging to the Christian church. The Christian calling is represented as being the ground of their belonging to the church. They are called into the

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494 It is much to be doubted whether our author is correct in the material distinction he here makes between the Jewish and Christian dispensations. The reader will consider whether privileges and blessings were not personal as much under the one as the other.

church, called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ. Their spiritual baptism or washing, is prior to their being in the church. They are by one spirit baptized into one body. They put on Christ, and so become interested in Christ, and sharers with those that had a part in him. By such a personal work of the Spirit of God, they were first made meet to be partakers with the saints in light, before they were partakers.

§ 34. It will follow from Taylor's scheme, that Simon the sorcerer had an interest in all the antecedent blessings. Yet the apostle tells him he was at that time in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. If he was really justified, washed, cleansed, sanctified; how was he at that time in the bond of iniquity? Justification, forgiveness, &c. is a release from the bond of iniquity. If the heart be purified by faith, it does not remain in the gall of bitterness.

§ 35. Saving grace differs from common grace, in nature and kind. To suppose only a gradual difference, would not only be to suppose, that some in a state of damnation are, within an infinitely little, as good as some in a state of salvation, (which greatly disagrees with the Arminian notion of men's being saved by their own virtue and goodness,) but this, taken with the Arminian notion of men's falling from grace, will naturally lead us to determine, that many that are once in a state of salvation, may be in such a state, and out of it, scores of times in a very short space. For though a person is in a state of salvation, he may be but just in it, and may be infinitely near the limits between a state of salvation and damnation; and as the habits of grace are, according to that scheme, only contracted and raised by consideration and exercise, and the exertion of the strength of the mind, and are lost when a man falls from grace by the intermission or cessation of these, and by contrary acts and exercises; and as the habits and principles of virtue are raised and sunk, brought into being and abolished by those things, and both the degree of them and the being of them wholly depend on them; the consequence will naturally be, that when a man is first raised to that degree of a virtuous disposition, as to be in a state of salvation, and the degree of virtue is almost infinitely near the dividing line, it will naturally be liable to be a little raised or sunk every hour, according as the thoughts and exercises of the mind are; as the mercury in the thermometer or barometer is never perfectly at rest, but is always rising or subsiding, according to the weight of the atmosphere, or the degree of heat.

§ 36. The dispute about grace's being resistible or irresistible, is perfect nonsense. For the effect of grace is upon the will; so that it is nonsense, except it be proper to say, that a man with his will can resist his own will, or except it be possible for him to desire to resist his own will; that is, except it be possible for a man to will a thing and not will it at the same time, and so far as he does will it. Or if you speak of enlightening grace, and say this grace is upon the understanding; it is nothing but the same nonsense in other words. For then the sense runs thus, that a man, after he has seen so plainly that a thing is best for him that he wills it, yet he can at the same time nill it. If you say he can will any thing he pleases, this is most certainly true; for who can deny, that a man can will any thing lie doth already will?

That a man can will any thing that he pleases, is just as certain as what is, is. Wherefore it is nonsense to say, that after a man has seen so plainly a thing to be so much best for him that he wills it, he could have not willed it if he had pleased; that is to say, if he had not willed it, he could have not willed it. It is certain that a man never doth any thing but what he can do. But to say, after a man has willed a thing, that he could have not willed it if he had pleased, is to suppose two wills in a man; the one to will which goes first; the other to please or choose to will. And so with the same reason we may say, there is another will to please; to please to will; and so on to a thousand. Wherefore, to say that the man could have willed otherwise if he had pleased, is just all one as to say, that if he had willed otherwise, then we might be sure he could will otherwise.

§ 37. Those that deny infusion of grace by the Holy Spirit, must, of necessity, deny the Spirit to do any thing at all. By the Spirit's infusing, let be meant what it will, those who say there is no infusion contradict themselves. For they say the Spirit doth something in the soul; that is, he causeth some motion, or affection, or apprehension to arise in the soul, that, at the same time, would not be there without him. Now, God's Spirit doeth what he doeth; he doth as much as he doth; or he causeth in the soul as much as he causeth, let that be how little soever. So much as is purely the effect of his immediate motion, that is the effect of his immediate motion, let that be what it will; and so much is infused, how little soever that be. This is self-evident. For suppose the Spirit of God only to assist the natural powers, then there is something done betwixt them. Men's own powers do something, and God's Spirit doth something; only they work together. Now that part that the Spirit doth, how little soever it be, is infused. So that they that deny infused habits, own that part of the habit is infused. For they say, the Holy Spirit assists the man in acquiring the habit; so that it is acquired rather sooner than it would be otherwise- So that part of the habit is owing to the Spirit; some of the strength of the habit was infused, and another part is owing to the natural powers of the man. Or if you say not so, but that it is all owing to the natural power assisted; how do you mean assisted? To act more lively and vigorously than otherwise? Then that liveliness and vigorousness must be infused; which is a habit, and therefore an infused habit. It is grace, and therefore infused grace. Grace consists very much in a principle that causes vigorousness and activity in action! This is infusion, even in the sense of the opposite party. So that, if any operation of the Holy Spirit at all is allowed, the dispute is only, how much is infused? The one says, a great deal; the other says, but little.

§ 38. 1st. The main thing meant by the word efficacious, is this, it being decisive. This seems to be the main question. 2d. Its being immediate and arbitrary in that sense, as not to be limited to the laws of nature. 3d. That the principles of grace are supernatural in that sense, that they are entirely different from all that is in the heart before conversion. 4th. That they are infused, and not *contracted* by custom and exercise. 5th. That the change is instantaneous, and not gradual. These four last heads may be subdivisions of a second gen-

eral head; so that the divisions may be thus: 1st. The main thing meant is, that it is decisive: 2d. That it is immediate and supernatural. The four last of the heads mentioned above, may be subdivisions of this last.

So that there are two things relating to the doctrine of efficacious grace, wherein lies the main difference between the Calvinists and Arminians as to this doctrine. *First*, That the grace of God is determining and decisive as to the conversion of a sinner, or a man's becoming a good man, and having those virtuous qualifications that entitle to an interest in Christ and his salvation. *Secondly*, That the power, and grace, and operation of the Holy Spirit, in, or towards, the conversion of a sinner, is immediate: that the habit of true virtue or holiness is immediately implanted or infused; that the operation goes so far, that a man has habitual holiness given him instantly, wholly by the operation of the Spirit of God, and not gradually by assistance concurring with our endeavours, so as gradually to advance virtue into a prevailing habit. And besides these, *Thirdly*, It is held by many of late, that there is no immediate interposition of God; but that all is done by general laws.

The former is that which is of greatest importance or consequence in the controversy with Arminians, (though the others are also very important,) and this, only, is what I shall consider in this place; perhaps the others may be considered, God willing, in some other discourse.

§ 39. Concerning what the Arminians say, that these are speculative points; all devotion greatly depends on a sense and acknowledgment of our dependence on God. But this is one of the very chief things belonging to our dependence on God: how' much stress do the Scriptures lay on our dependence on God! All assistance of the Spirit of God whatsoever, that is by any present influence or effect of the Spirit; any thing at all that a person that is converted from sin to God is the subject of, through any immediate influence of the Spirit of God upon him, or any thing done by the Spirit, since the completing and confirming the canon of the Scriptures, must be done by a physical operation, either on the soul or body.

The Holy Spirit of God does something to promote virtue in men's hearts, and to make them good beyond what the angels can do. But the angels can present motives; can excite ideas of the words of promises and threatenings, &c. and can persuade in this way by moral means; as is evident, because the devils in this way promote vice.

§ 40. There is no objection made to God's producing any effects, or causing any events, by any immediate interposition, producing effects arbitrarily, or by the immediate efforts of his will, but what lies equally against his ordering it so, that any effects should be produced by the immediate interposition of men's will, to produce effects otherwise than the established laws of nature would have produced without men's arbitrary interposition.

I beg the reader's attention to the following quotations " That otherwise, the world cannot be the object of inquiry and science, and far less of imitation by arts: since imitation necessarily presupposes a certain, determinate object, or fixed ascertainable relations and

connexions of things; and that, upon the contrary supposition, the world must be absolutely unintelligible. Nature, in order to be understood by us, must always speak the same language to us. It must therefore steadfastly observe the same general laws in its operations, or work uniformly, and according to stated, invariable methods and rules. Those terms, order, beauty, general good, &c. plainly include, in their meaning, analogy; and constancy, uniformity amidst variety; or, in other words, the regular observance of general settled laws, in the make and economy, production, and operations or effects, of any object to which they are ascribed. Wherever order, fixed connexions, or general laws and unity of design take place, there is certainty in the nature of such objects, and so knowledge may be acquired. But where these do not obtain, there can be nothing but unconnected independent parts. All must be disorder and confusion; and consequently such a loose disjointed heap of things must be an inexplicable chaos. In one word, science, prudence, government, imitation, and art, necessarily suppose the prevalence of general laws throughout all the objects in nature to which they reach. No being can know itself, project or pursue any scheme, or lay down any maxims for its conduct, but so far as its own constitution is certain, and the connexion of things relative to it are fixed and constant. For so far only are things ascertainable; and therefore, so far only can rules be drawn from them.” *Turnbull’s Mor. Phil. Part. I. Introd.*

“The exercise of all moral powers, dispositions, and affections of mind, as necessarily presuppose an established order of nature or general laws settled by the author of nature with respect to them, as the exercise of our bodily senses about qualities and effects of corporeal beings do with regard to them. We could neither acquire knowledge of any kind, contract habits, or attain to any moral perfection whatsoever, unless the author of our nature had appointed and fixed certain laws relating to our moral powers, and their exercises and acquisitions.” *Ibid. p. 13, 14.* Yet this Turnbull strenuously holds a self-determining power in the will of man. Such like arguments, if they are valid against any interposition at all, will prevail against all interposition of God or man, and against the interposition of God ever to bring the world to an end, or amend it; and prove that all shall be according to general laws. And they might as well argue that the making of the world top was by general laws. If it be said, that it is of great importance and absolute necessity that God should at last interpose and rectify the course of nature I answer, this is yielding the point, that, in cases of great importance, it is reasonable to suppose there may be an interposition that may be arbitrary, and not by general laws.

§ 41. It is not necessary that men should be able, by the connexions of things, to know all future events; nor was this ever in the Creator’s designs. If it had been so, he could have enabled them to know the future volitions of men, and those events that depend upon them, which are by far the most important.

§ 42. The nature of virtue being a positive thing, can proceed from nothing but God’s immediate influence, and must take its rise from creation or infusion by God. For it must

be either from that, or from our own choice and production, either at once or gradually, by diligent culture. But it cannot begin or take its rise from the latter, »»z. our choice or voluntary diligence. For if there exist nothing at all of the nature of virtue before, it cannot come from cultivation; for by the supposition there is nothing of the nature of virtue “to cultivate, it cannot be by repeated and multiplied acts of virtuous choice, till it becomes a habit. For there can be no one virtuous choice unless God immediately gives it. The first virtuous choice, or a disposition to it, must be immediately given, or it must proceed from a preceding choice. If the first virtuous act of will or choice be from a preceding act of will or choice, that preceding act of choice must be a virtuous act of choice, which is contrary to the supposition. For then there would be a preceding act of choice before the first virtuous act of choice. And if it be said the first virtuous act of choice is from a preceding act of will which is not virtuous, this is absurd. For an act of will not virtuous, cannot produce another act of will of a nature entirely above itself, having something positive in it which the cause has nothing of, and more excellent than it is; any more than motion can produce thought or understanding; or the collision of two bodies can produce thought; or stones and lead can produce a spirit; or nothing can produce something.

§ 43. As to man’s inability to convert himself In them that are totally corrupt there can be no tendency towards their making their hearts better, till they begin to repent of the badness of their hearts. For if they do not repent they still approve of it; and that tends to maintain their badness and confirm it. But they cannot begin sincerely to repent of the badness of their hearts ml their hearts begin to be better, for repentance consists in a change of the mind and heart. So that it is not men’s repentance that first gives rise to their having a better heart; and therefore it cannot be any tendency in them to make their hearts better, that gives rise to it. The heart can have no tendency to make itself better, till it begins to have a better tendency; for therein consists its badness, *vii.* its having no good tendency or inclination. And to begin to have a good tendency, or, which is the same thing, a tendency and inclination to be better, is the same thing as to begin already to be better. And therefore the heart’s inclination to be good, cannot be the thing that first gives rise to its being made good. For its inclination to be better, is the same thing with its becoming better.

§ 44. If there be any immediate influence or action of the Spirit of God at all on any created beings, in any part of the universe since the days of the apostles, it is physical. If it be in exciting ideas of motives, or in any respect assisting or promoting any effect, still it is physical; and every whit as much so, as if we suppose the temper and nature of the heart is immediately changed. And it is as near akin to a miracle. If the latter be miraculous, so is the former.

§ 45. Who ever supposed that the term *irresistible* was properly used with respect to that power by which an infant is brought into being; meaning, irresistible by the infant? Or who ever speaks of a man’s waking out of a sound sleep *irresistibly*, meaning, that he cannot

resist awaking? Or who says, that Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth irresistibly? See what I have said of the use of such terms as *irresistible*, *unfrustrable*, &c. in my Inquiry about Liberty.

§ 46. The opponents of efficacious grace and physical operation, may be challenged to show that it is possible that any creature should become righteous without a physical operation, either a being created with the habit of righteousness, or its being immediately infused. See what I have written in my book of *Original Sin*, in those sections wherein I vindicate the doctrine of original righteousness, and argue, that if Adam was not created righteous, no way can be invented how he could ever become righteous.

§ 47. As to that, [Matthew vii. 7.](#) “Seek and ye shall find;” it is explained by such places as that, [Deut. iv. 29.](#) “But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” And by [Deut. xxx. 2-6.](#) “If thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice with all thy heart and with all thy soul; the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;” which is very parallel with that, “to him that hath shall be given.”

§ 48. The Scripture teacheth that holiness, both in principle and fruit, is from God. “It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”<sup>495</sup> And [Prov. xvi. 1.](#) “The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.” Comparing this with other parts of the book of Proverbs, evinces that it is a moral preparation, and the answer of the tongue in moral regards, that is meant.

§ 49. Reason shows that the first existence of a principle of virtue cannot be from man himself, nor in any created being whatsoever; but must be immediately given from God; or that otherwise it never can be obtained, whatever this principle be, whether love to God or love to men. It must either be from God, or be a habit contracted by repeated acts. But it is most absurd to suppose that the first existence of the principle of holy action, should be preceded by a course of holy actions. Because there can be no holy action without a principle of holy inclination. There can be no act done from love, that shall be the cause of first introducing the very existence of love.

§ 50. God is said to give true virtue and piety of heart to man; to work it in him, to create it, to form it, and with regard to it we are said to be his workmanship. Yea, that there may be no room to understand it in some improper sense, it is often declared as the peculiar character of God, that he assumes it as his character to be the author and giver of true virtue, in his being called the Sanctifier; he that sanctifieth us. “I am he that sanctifieth you.” This is spoken of as the great prerogative of God, [Lev. xx. 8.](#) and other parallel places. He declares expressly that this effect shall be connected with his act, or with what he shall do in order

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495 [Phil. ii.13.](#)

to it. "I will sprinkle clean water, and you shall be clean."<sup>496</sup> What God does is often spoken of as thoroughly effectual; the effect is infallibly consequent. "Turn us, and we shall be turned."<sup>497</sup> Jesus Christ has the great character of a Saviour on this account, that "he saves his people from their sins."<sup>498</sup> See [Rom. xi. 26, 27](#). "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Zion a deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." God says, "I will put my law into their heart; I will write my law in their inward parts, and they shall not depart away from me; I will take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh; I will give them a heart to know me; I will circumcise their hearts to love me; oh, that there were such a heart in them!" And it is spoken of as his work, to give, to cause, to create such a heart, to put it in them. God is said to incline their hearts, not only to give statutes, but to incline their hearts to his statutes.

Moses speaks of the great moral means that God had used with the children of Israel to enlighten them, and convince and persuade them; but of their being yet un-persuaded and unconverted, and gives this as a reason, that God had not given them a heart to perceive, as [Deut. xxix. 4](#). "Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." The Scripture plainly makes a distinction between exhibiting light, or means of instruction and persuasion, and giving eyes to see, circumcising the heart, &c.

§ 51. Why should Christ teach us to pray in the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,"<sup>499</sup> if it is not God's work to bring that effect to pass, and it is left to man's free will, and cannot be otherwise, because otherwise it is no virtue, and none of their obedience, or doing of God's will; and God does what he can oftentimes consistently with man's liberty, and those that enjoy the means he uses, do generally neglect and refuse to do his will? He does so much, that he can well say, what could I have done more? And yet almost all are at the greatest distance from doing his will. See [Colos. i. 9, 10](#).

§ 52. If it be as the Arminians suppose, that all men's virtue is of the determination of their own free will, in-dependent on any prior determining, deciding, and disposing of the event; that it is no part of the ordering of God, whether there be many virtuous or few in the world, whether there shall be much virtue or little, or where it shall be, in what nation, country, or when, or in what generation or age; or whether there shall be any at all: then none of these things belong to God's disposal, and therefore, surely it does not belong to

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496 [Ezek. xxxvi. 25](#).

497 [Lam. v. 21](#).

498 [Matt. i. 21](#).

499 [Matt. vi. 10](#).



him to promise them. For it does not belong to him to promise in an affair, concerning which he/has not the disposal.

And how can God promise, as he oftentimes does in his word, glorious times, when righteousness shall generally prevail, and his will shall generally be done; and yet that it is not an effect which belongs to him to determine; it is not left to his determination, but to the sovereign, arbitrary determination of others, independently on any determination of him; and therefore surely they ought to be the promisers? For him to promise, who has it not in his hand to dispose and determine, is a great absurdity; and yet God oftentimes in promising, speaks of himself as the sovereign disposer of the matter, using such expressions as abundantly imply it. [Isa. lx. 22.](#) “I the Lord do hasten it in its time.” Surely this is the language of a promiser, and not merely a predictor. God promises Abraham, that “all the families of the earth shall be blessed in him.” God swears <sup>500</sup> “every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess.” And it is said to be given to Christ, that every nation, &c. should serve and obey him, [Dan. vii.](#) After what manner they shall serve and obey him, is abundantly declared in other prophecies, as in [Isa. xi.](#) and innumerable others. These are spoken of in the next chapter, as excellent things that God does.

§ 53. If God is not the disposing author of virtue, then he is not the giver of it. The very notion of a giver implies a disposing cause of the possession of the benefit. [1 John iv. 4.](#) “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, (*i. e.* have overcome your spiritual enemies,) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world;” that is, plainly, he is stronger, and his strength overcomes. But how can this be a reason, if God does not put forth an overcoming, effectual strength in the case, but leaves it to free will to get the victory, to determine the point in the conflict?

§ 54. There are no sort of benefits that are so much the subject of the promises of Scripture, as this sort, the bestowment of virtue, or benefits which imply it. How often is the faith of the Gentiles, or their coming into the Christian church, promised to Christ in the Old Testament, [Isa. xlix. 6.](#) and many other places; and he has promised it to his church, [chap. xlix. 18-21.](#) and innumerable other places. See [Rom. xv. 12, 13.](#) What a promise have we, [Isa. lx. 21.](#) “Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand, that I may be glorified” compared with the [next chapter, 3rd verse.](#) “That they may be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” See also [ver. 8th.](#) of the same chapter. Likewise [chap. lx. 17, 18.](#) “I will make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness; violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy border, but thou shall call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” Here it is promised that the rulers shall be righteous; and then, in the [21st verse.](#) following, it is promised that the people shall be so. The change

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500 [Rom. xiv. 11.](#)

of men to be of a peaceable disposition is promised, as in places innumerable, so in [Isa. xi. 6 11](#). “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,” &c. [Isa. Iv. 5](#). “Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee.” [Jer. iii. 15](#). “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.” This implies a promise that there should be such pastors in being, and that they should be faithful to feed the people with knowledge and understanding. [Jer. x. 23](#). “The way of man is not in himself.” Stebbing owns, that on Arminian principles, conversion depending on the determination of free will, it is possible, in its own nature, that none should ever be converted, (p. 235.) Then all the promises of virtue, of the revival of religion, &c. are nothing. [Jer. xxxi. 18](#). “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,” compared with [Jer. xvii. 14](#). “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise.” Which shows the force and meaning of such a phraseology to be, that God alone can be the doer of it; and that if he undertakes it, it will be effectually done. [Jer. xxxi. 32-35](#). “Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” The prophet elsewhere tells what is connected with knowing God, *viz.* doing judgment and justice, and showing mercy, &c. [Chap. xxii. 16](#). [Jer. xxxii. 39, 40](#). “And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good. But I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.” [Jer. xxxiii. 2](#). “Thus saith the Lord, the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it.” [Verse 8](#). “And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me.” [Ezek. xi. 18-20](#). “And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abomination thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

[Zech. xii. 10](#), to the end. “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced,” &c.

So in the [next chapter at the beginning](#), “I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered;” and also, “I will cause the prophets, and also the unclean spirits, to pass out of the land.”

[Mal. iii. 3, 4](#). “And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in the former years.”

§ 55. We are told, [Job xxviii. 28](#). that ” the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.” The same is also abundantly declared in other places. But it is equally declared, that God is the author and giver of wisdom, and that he is the author wholly and only; which is denied of other things. It is also abundantly declared in this [28th chapter of Job](#)., that it cannot be obtained of any creature by any means; and it is implied in the end of the chapter, that it is God that gives wisdom, as is asserted, [Prov. ii. 6](#). “For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” It is the promise of God the Father, [Psalm cx. 2](#). “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” [Psalm cxix. 35](#). ” Make me to go in the way of thy commandments.” [Verse 36](#). “Incline my heart unto thy testimonies.”

§ 56. We are directed earnestly to pray and cry unto God for wisdom, and the fear of the Lord; for this reason, that it is he that giveth wisdom, [Prov. ii.](#) at the beginning. Compare [Job xxviii.](#) with [Prov. xxi. 1](#). “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will.” Here it is represented that the will of God determines the wills of men, and that when God pleases to interpose, he even directs them according to his pleasure, without failure in any instance. This shows that God has not left men’s hearts so in their own hands, as to be determined by themselves alone, independently on any antecedent determination.

[Prov. xxviii. 26](#). “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” A man is to be commended for making a wise improvement of his outward possessions, for his own comfort; yet this is the gift of God. [Eccles. ii. 24-26](#). “There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God.”

[John i. 12, 13](#). “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; which *were* born, not of the will of man, but of God.” Thus also we read, [Luke iii. 8](#). “God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” [John iii. 3](#). “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” [Verse 5](#). “Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” [Verse 8](#). “The wind bloweth where it listeth, in addition to thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh,

and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." [Jam. i. 18.](#) "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

What Christ meant by being born again, we may learn by the abundant use of the like phrase by the same disciple that wrote this gospel, in his first epistle, who doubtless learned his language from his Master; and particularly from those sayings of his concerning the new birth, which he took more special notice of, and which left the deepest impressions on his mind, which we may suppose are those he records, when he writes the history of his life. [Matt. iv. 19.](#) "I will make you fishers of men." So [Mark i. 16, 20.](#) together with [Luke v.](#) "From henceforth thou shall catch men." Compared with the foregoing story of Christ's giving them so great a draught of fishes, which was wholly his doing, and ascribed to him. [Matt. vi. 10.](#) "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done." [Matt. xi. 25-27.](#) "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." So [Luke x. 21, 22.](#) [John vi. 37.](#) "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me." [Verse 44.](#) "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

[John x. 16.](#) "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." [Verse 26-29.](#) "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. My Father which gave them me," &c.

[Acts xv. 3, 4.](#) "Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they declared all things that God had done with them." [Verse 9.](#) "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Therefore it is not probable, that the heart is first purified, to fit it for faith. [John xiv. 12.](#) "Greater works than these shall he do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." The meaning of it is confirmed from [John xii. 23, 24, 28-32.](#) and [John xvii. 1, 2, 3.](#) [Isa. xlix. 3, 5.](#) and [xxvi. 15.](#) and [Isa. xvi. 14.](#) [Isa. xvii. 3, 4, 5.](#) and [16, 17.](#) and [22, 24.](#) (especially [Isa. lv. 4, 5.](#)) [Jer. xxx. 19.](#) [Rom. ix. 16.](#) "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." By such an expression in the apostle's phraseology, from time to time, is meant the use of endeavours, whereby they seek the benefit they would obtain. So what he here says, is agreeable to what he says in [chap. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7.](#) where he particularly shows, that it is God that preserves the remnant, and that it is of the election of his grace and free kindness, and not of their works; but in such a way of freedom, as is utterly inconsistent with its being of their works. And in [verse 7.](#) that it is not determined by their seeking, but by God's election. The apostle here, as Dr. Taylor says, has respect to bodies of men, to the posterity of Esau and Jacob, &c. Yet this he applies to a distinction made in

those days of the gospel, and that distinction made between those that were in the Christian church, and those that were not, and particularly some of the Jews that were in the Christian church, and others of the same nation that were not; which is made by some believing and accepting Christ, and others rejecting him; by that faith which they professed to exercise (will) all their hearts; that faith which was a mercy and virtue, and the want of which was a fault; as appears by the objection the apostle supposes, [verse 19](#). “Why doth he yet find fault;” The want of which faith argued hardness of heart, [verse 18](#). exposed them to wrath and destruction, as a punishment of sin, [verse 22](#). and exposes persons to be like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, [verse 29](#).

[Rom. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7](#). “But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.” [2 Tim. ii. 9](#). [Eph. ii. 9](#). [Tit. iii. 5](#). “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” [Rom. xi. 17, 18](#). “If some of the branches are broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; boast not against the branches.”

[Rom. xi. 25, 26, 27](#). “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” Together with [verses 35, 36](#). “Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever.”

§ 57. That expression, [Rom. i. 7](#). and [1 Cor. i. 2](#). and elsewhere, *called to be saints*, implies that God makes the distinction. Compare this with what Christ says, [John x. 27](#). “My sheep hear my voice.” [Verse 16](#). “Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.” [1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28, to the end.](#); “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of, &c. That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus,” &c. [Rom. xi.](#) latter end. [Heb. xiii. 20, 21](#). [1 Cor. iii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9](#). “Who then is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. We are labourers together with God, ye are God’s husbandry; ye are God’s building.” According to the Arminian scheme, it ought to have been; I have planted, and Apollos watered, and God hath planted and watered more especially. For we have done it only as his servants. But you yourselves

have given the increase; the fruit has been left to your free will: agreeably to what the Arminians from time to time insist on, in what they say upon the parable of the vineyard which God planted in a fruitful hill, &c. and looked that it should bring forth grapes, and says, What could I have done more unto my vineyard?

1 Cor. iii. 3. “Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart.” They were the epistle of Christ, as the effect of the Spirit of God in their hearts held forth the light of truth; of gospel truth with its evidence to the world; as the church is compared to a candlestick, and called the pillar and ground of the truth. This is agreeable to those scriptures in the Old Testament, that speak of writing God’s law in their hearts, &c. Add to this, chap. iv. 6. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Cor. v. 14-18. “If one died for all, then were all dead; that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed

away: behold, all things are become new; and all things are of God.” 2 Cor. vii. 16, 17. “Thanks be to God who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation. But being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.” So the next chapter speaks of the Corinthians forwardness and readiness in their bounty to the poor saints, not as of necessity, but with freedom and cheerfulness, according to the purpose of their own hearts or wills; but yet speaks of their charity as just cause of much thanksgiving to God; and speaks expressly of thanksgiving to him for such a subjection of them to the gospel, and liberal distribution to them.

Gal. i. 15, 16. “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles,” compared with 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. and the account which he gives himself of his conversion, Acts xxvi. 16-18.

Gal. ii. 19, 20. “I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

Gal. v. 22, 23, &c. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

§ 58. The apostle, in Eph. i. 18-20. speaks of some exceeding great work of power, by which they that believe are distinguished. But a bodily resurrection is no such distinguishing work of power. See the words: “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ Jesus, when he



raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places.<sup>501</sup> ” The apostle repeats the same thing in substance again in [chapter iii. 14.](#) and following verses, and tells us what sort of knowledge he desired, and so earnestly prayed that they might receive, and what is the *pouter* that he speaks of: [Eph. iii. 18.](#) “That they may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” And tells us by what means God would dwell in their hearts by faith, &c. [verses 16, 17.](#) And he tells us in [verse 20.](#) what is the power of God he speaks of. See [Rom. xv. 13.](#) [1 Pet. i. 3-5.](#) and [2 Thess. i. 11, 12.](#) See also what the apostle speaks of as an effect of God’s glorious power, [Col. i. 11.](#)

[Eph. i. 18-20.](#) is to be taken in connexion with the words which follow in the beginning of the next chapter; which is a continuation of the same discourse, where the apostle abundantly explains himself. In those words, there is an explanation of what had before been more figuratively represented. He here observes, that those that believe, are the subjects of a like exceeding greatness of power that Christ was, when he was raised from the dead, and set at God’s own right hand in heavenly places. And then in the prosecution of this discourse he shews how, *viz.* in our being raised from the dead, being dead ourselves in trespasses and sins, and raised as Christ was, and made to sit together with him in heavenly places; and this he speaks of, not only as the fruit of the exceeding greatness of his power, but of the riches of his mercy, and exceeding riches of his grace; by grace, in opposition to works; that it is by faith, which is the gift of God. The apostle repeats it over and over, that it is by grace, and then explains how; not of works; and that our faith itself, by which it is, is not of ourselves, but is God’s gift; and that we are wholly God’s workmanship; and that all is owing to God’s foreordaining that we should walk in good works. I know not what the apostle could have said more. See [Eph. ii. 1-10.](#)

§ 59. In [Eph. iii.](#) it is spoken of as a glorious mystery of God’s will, contrived of old, and determined from the foundation of the world, and his eternal purpose, &c. that God would bring in the Gentiles as fellow-heirs, and of the ‘same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. Which confirms the promises of the Old Testament; shews that they were not foretold only as foreseen, but foredetermined, as what God would bring to pass. This is also spoken of elsewhere, as the fruit of God’s eternal purpose, his election, &c. as our adversaries acknowledge.

§ 60. Sincerity itself is spoken of as coming from God. [Phil. i. 10.](#) “That ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence in the day of Christ.” And elsewhere God is represented as “creating a clean heart, renewing a right spirit, giving a heart of flesh,<sup>502</sup> ” &c. The apostle “gives thanks for the faith and love of the Colossians,

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501 [Eph. i. 18-20.](#)

502 [Psa. li. 10.](#)

their being delivered from the power of darkness, &c. and prays that they may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and might, agreeable to their knowledge, being fruitful in every good work; and for their perseverance, and that they might be made meet for the reward of the saints." [Col. i. 3, 4, 9-13](#). This argues all to flow from God as the giver. Their first faith, and their love that their faith was attended with, and their knowledge and spiritual wisdom and prudence, and walking worthy of the Lord, and universal obedience, and doing every good work, and increasing in grace and being strengthened in it, and their perseverance and cheerfulness in their obedience, and being made meet for their reward, all are from God. They are from God as the determining cause; else, why does the apostle pray that God would bestow or effect these things, if they be not at his determination whether they shall have them or not? He speaks of God's glorious power as manifested in the bestowment of these things.

[Col. ii. 13](#). "And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him."

[Col. iii. 10](#). "Have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

See how many things the apostle gives thanks to God for in the Thessalonians, and prays for them. [2 Thess. i. 3, 4, 11, 12](#). and [ii. 17, 18](#). and [iii. 3, 4, 5](#). [1 Thess. i. verse 2, to the end](#)., and [chap. ii. verses 13, 14](#). and [chap. iii. 9, 10, 12, 13](#). [chap. v. 23, 24](#). [1 Thess. iii. 12](#). "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love," &c. [1 Thess. iv. 10](#). "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I should write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it towards all brethren." [1 Thess. v. 23, 24](#). "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it."

[2 Thess. i. 3, 4](#). "We are bound to thank God always for you, because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abound-eth; so that we glory in you, for your faith and patience in all your persecutions and tribulations."

The apostle thanks God for his own prayers, and for others; [2 Tim. i. 3](#). If they are from God, then doubtless our prayers for ourselves, our very prayers for the Spirit, are from him.

The prophet ascribes persons prayers to their having the spirit of grace and supplication. True acceptable prayer is spoken of, [Rom. viii](#). as being the language of the Spirit; not that I suppose that the very words are indited, but the disposition is given. [2 Tim. i. 7](#). "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind."

[2 Tim. ii. 9](#). "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."



Heb. xiii. 20, 21. "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, and to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." See Eph. i. 19, 20. and 1 Cor. i. latter end. Heb. xii. 2. "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," compared with Philip. i. 5. James i. 5-8. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed. For let not that man think he shall obtain any thing of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." So that, in order to a man's having any reason to expect to be heard, he must first have faith, and a sincere, single heart. And what that is which the apostle calls wisdom, may be learnt from chap. iii. 17, 18. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace to them that make peace." In chap. i. 5. &c. above cited, God is spoken of as the giver of this wisdom; and in the following part of the chapter, he is spoken of as the giver of this and every benefit of that kind; every thing that contains any thing of the nature of light or wisdom, or moral good; and this is represented as the fruit of his mere will and pleasure. Verses 16, 17, 18. "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." See John i. 13. and iii. 8.

The scope of the apostle, and connexion of his discourse, plainly show that the apostle means to assert that all moral good is from God. In the preceding verses, he was warning those he wrote to, not to lay their sins, or pride, or lusts, to the charge of God; and on that occasion he would have them be sensible that every good gift is from God, and no evil; that God is the Father of *light*, and only of light; and that no darkness is from him, because there is no darkness in him; no change from light to darkness; no, not the least shadow. What he says is plainly parallel to what the apostle John says, when he would signify God's perfect holiness without any sin; 1 John i. 5, 6. "This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." But if all moral good is from God, cometh down from him, and is his gift; then the very first good determination of the will, and every good improvement of assistance, is so.

1 Pet. i. 2-5. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope," (or a living hope, *i. e.* from the dead; to be begotten from the dead, in the phrase of the New Testament, is the

same as to be raised from the dead. See [Coloss. i. 18.](#) [Rev. i. 5.](#))<sup>503</sup> “by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” See [Eph. i. 18-20.](#) and [ii. at the beginning.](#)

[Philip. ii. 13.](#) “It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” The plain meaning of this text is, that it is God by his operation and efficiency who gives the will, and also enables us to put that will in execution; or that he by his efficiency gives both the will and the deed. And this will remain the plain meaning of this text, after this sort of gentlemen have worked upon it a thousand years longer, if any of them shall remain on earth so long. It will be the indisputable meaning of it, notwithstanding their criticisms on the word **Greek**, &c. I question whether any word can be found, in all the Greek language, more expressive and significant of an effectual operation. Wherever the words *effectual* and *effectually* are used in our translation of the Bible, this is the word used in the original. See the English Concordance.

§ 61. By the disposing or determining cause of a benefit, I mean, a cause that disposes, orders, or determines, whether we shall be actually possessed of the benefit or not: and the same cause may be said to be an efficacious or effectual cause. That cause only can be said to be an efficacious cause, whose efficiency determines, reaches, and produces the effect.

A being may be the determiner and disposer of an event, and not properly an efficient or efficacious cause. Because, though he determines the futurity of the event, yet there is no positive efficiency or power of the cause that reaches and produces the effect; but merely a withholding or withdrawing of efficiency or power.

Concerning the giver’s being a disposer or determiner, let us consider that objection, that when a man gives to a beggar, he does but offer, and leaves it with the determination of the beggar’s will, whether he will be possessed of the thing offered. In answer to this I observe, that in the instance before us, the very thing given is the fruit of the bounty of the giver. The thing given is virtue, and this consists in the determination of the inclination and will. Therefore the determination of the will is the gift of God; otherwise virtue is not his gift, and it is an inconsistency to pray to God to give it to us. Why should we pray to God to give us such a determination of will, when that proceeds not from him but ourselves?

§ 62. Every thing in the Christian scheme argues, that man’s title to, and fitness for, heaven, depends on some great divine influence, at once causing a vast change, and not any such gradual change *as* is supposed to be brought to pass by men themselves in the exercise of their own power. The exceeding diversity of the states of men in another world argues it.

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503 [1Peter i. 4.](#)

§ 63. Arminians make a great ado about the phrase *irresistible grace*. But the grand point of controversy really is, what is it that determines, disposes, and decides the matter, whether there shall be saving virtue in the heart or not; and much more properly, whether the grace of God in the affair be determining grace, than whether it be irresistible.

Our case is indeed extremely unhappy, if we have such a book to be our grand and only rule, our light and directory, that is so exceeding perplexed, dark, paradoxical, and hidden every where in the manner of expression, as the Scriptures must be, to make them consistent with Arminian opinions, by whatever means this has come to pass, whether through the distance of ages, diversity of customs, or by any other cause. It is to be considered that this is given for the rule of all ages; and not only of the most learned, and accurate, and penetrating critics, and men of vast inquiry and skill in antiquity, but for all sorts of persons, of every age and nation, learned and unlearned. If this be true, how unequal and unfit is the provision that is made! How improper to answer the end designed! If men will take subterfuge in pretences of a vast alteration of phrase, through diversity of ages and nations, what may not men hide themselves from under such a pretence! No words will hold and secure them. It is not in the nature of words to do it. At this rate, language in its nature has no sufficiency to communicate ideas.

§ 64. In efficacious grace we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some, and we do the rest. But God does all, and we do all. God produces all, and we act all. For that is what he produces, *viz.* our own acts. God is the only proper author and fountain; we only are the proper actors. We are, in different respects, wholly passive and wholly active.

In the Scriptures the same things are represented as from God and from us. God is said to convert, and men are said to convert and turn. God makes a new heart, and we are commanded to make us a new heart. God circumcises the heart, and we are commanded to circumcise our own hearts; not merely because we must use the means in order to the effect, but the effect itself is our act and our duty. These things are agreeable to that text, “God worketh in you both to will and to do.”

§ 65. Christ says, that no other than those whom “the Father draws, will come to him;” and *Stebbing* supposes none but those whom the Father draws in this sense, *viz.* by first giving them a teachable spirit, &c. But this was false in fact in the apostle Paul and others; at least he did not give it in answer to prayer, as their scheme supposes, and must suppose; else efficacious grace is established, and the liberty of the will, in their sense of it, is overthrown.

§ 66. When Christ says, [John x.](#) “Other sheep have I which are not of this fold;” it is unreasonable to suppose he meant all in the world, that were then of a teachable disposition. Many of them would be dead before the gospel could be spread among the Gentiles; and

many of the Gentiles were doubtless brought in, that at that time were not of a teachable disposition. And unless God's decrees and efficacious grace made a difference, it is unreasonable to suppose any other, than that multitudes, in countries where the apostles never preached, were as teachable as in those countries where they did go; and so they never were brought in according to the words of Christ, "Those whom the Father hath given me, shall come unto me." Christ speaks of the Father's giving them as a thing past, [John x. 29](#). "My Father which gave them me."

When Christ speaks of men being drawn to him, he does not mean any preparation of disposition antecedent to their having the gospel, but a being converted to Christ by faith in the gospel, revealing Christ crucified, as appears by [John xii. 32](#). "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." [Acts xv. 9](#). "Purifying their hearts by faith." Therefore we are not to suppose God first purifies the heart with the most excellent virtues, to fit it for faith.

The apostle says, "without faith it is impossible to please God."<sup>504</sup> Therefore, it is not possible that persons should have, before faith, those virtues that are peculiarly amiable to God, as Stebbing supposes.

§ 67. The apostle James tells us, that if we do not pray in faith, we have no reason to expect to receive any thing, and particularly not to receive divine wisdom. And therefore it is unreasonable to suppose with Stebbing, that persons first pray, even before they have a spirit of meekness, and teachableness, and humility, faith, or repentance, and that God has promised to answer these prayers. Christian virtues being every where spoken of as the special effect of grace, and often called by the name of grace, by reason of its being the peculiar fruit of grace, does not well consist with the Arminian notion of assistance, *viz.* that God is obliged to give us assistance sufficient for salvation from hell, because, forsooth, it is not just to damn us for the want of that which we have not sufficient means to escape; and then, after God has given these sufficient means, our improving them well is wholly from ourselves, our own will, and not from God; and the thing wherein Christian virtue consists, is wholly and entirely from ourselves.

§ 68. Efficacious grace is not inconsistent with freedom. This appears by [2 Cor. viii. 16, 17](#). "Thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you; for indeed he accepted the invitation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you." So that his forwardness being put into his heart by God, and his being forward of his own accord, are not inconsistent one with the other.

§ 69. According to Arminian principles, men have a good and honest heart, the very thing that is the grand requisite in order to God's acceptance, and so the proper grand

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504 [Heb. xi. 6](#).

condition of salvation, and which is often spoken of in the Scriptures as such, before they have the proper condition of salvation.

See Stebbing, page 48. This good and honest, meek and humble, sincere heart, they suppose they have before they have faith, repentance, or obedience. Yea, they themselves hold this previous qualification to be the grand and essential requisite in order to God's acceptance, and salvation by Christ; so that they greatly insist that if men have it, they shall be surely saved, though they live and die in ignorance of the gospel, and without faith, and repentance, and holiness, which are necessary in order for salvation, according to them. *Stebbing*, p. 13.

§ 70. I would ask, how it is possible for us to come by virtue at first, according to Arminian principles, or how we come by our first virtue? Is it natural? Is there some virtuous disposition with which we come into the world? But how is that virtue? That which men bring into the world is necessary, and what men had no opportunity to prevent, and it is not at all from our free will. How then can there be any virtue in it according to their principles? Or is our first virtue wholly from the influence of the Spirit of God without any endeavour or effort of ours, to be partly the cause of it? This to be sure cannot be, by their principles; for, according to them, that which is not at all from us, or that we are not the causes of, is no virtue of ours. Is it wholly from our endeavours, without any assistance at all of the Spirit? This is contrary to what they pretend to hold; for they assert, that without divine assistance there can be no virtue. *Stebbing*, pages 27, 28. and pages 20, 21. and other places. If they say it is partly from the influence of the Spirit of God, and partly from our own endeavours, I would inquire whether those endeavours that our first virtue partly arises from, be good endeavours, and at all virtuous. If the answer be in the affirmative, this contradicts the supposition. For I am now inquiring what the first virtue is. The first virtue we have, certainly does not arise from virtuous endeavours preceding the first virtue; for that is to suppose virtue before the first virtue. If the answer be, that they are no good endeavours, they have nothing at all of the nature of the exercise of any good disposition, or any good aim and intention, or any virtuous sincerity; I ask, what tendency can such efforts of the mind, as are wholly empty of all goodness, have to produce true moral goodness in the heart?

Can an action, that in principles and ends has no degree of moral good, have a tendency to beget a habit of acting from good principles and for good ends? For instance, can a man's doing something purely to satisfy some sensitive appetite of his own, or to increase his own worldly profit, have any kind of tendency to beget a habit of doing something from true, disinterested benevolence, or to excite to any act from such a principle? Certainly an act perfectly void of benevolence, has no more tendency to produce either a habit or act of benevolence, than nothing has a tendency to produce something.

§ 71. Stebbing supposes the assistance God gives, or the operation of the Spirit in order to faith, is to give a good and honest heart, prepared to receive and well improve the word; as particularly meekness, humility, teachableness, &c. and supposes that these effects of the Spirit are to be obtained by prayer; but yet allows, that the prayer must be acceptably made, page 106. which supposes that some degree of virtue must be exercised in prayer. For surely they do not suppose any thing else beside virtue, in prayer or in any other part of religion, is acceptable to God. I suppose they will not deny, that there must be at least some virtuous respect to the Divine Being, as well as some virtuous concern for the good of their own souls, to make any external act of religion in them at all acceptable to God, who is a Spirit, and the Searcher of hearts. And it may be also presumed that they will allow, that there are multitudes of men, who at present are so wicked, so destitute of virtue, that they have not virtue enough for acceptable prayer to God. They have not now so much respect to God or their own souls, as to incline them to pray at all. But they live in a total neglect of that duty. Now I would inquire, how these men shall come by virtue, in order to acceptably praying for it, and so obtain it? But this is contrary to the supposition. For it is supposed, that they now have not virtue enough to pray acceptably, and this is the very thing inquired, how they come by the virtue necessary in order to their making acceptable prayer? Or shall they work the virtue in themselves wholly without God's assistance? But this is contrary to what they pretend, *viz.* that all virtue is from God, or by the grace and assistance of God, which they allow to be evident by that scripture, " *without me ye can do nothing.*" Or is God obliged to give, or to assist them to obtain it, without their praying for it, or having virtue enough to ask it of him? That they do not pretend. For they suppose the condition of our obtaining the heavenly Spirit is our seeking, &c. asking, &c. and besides, if God gives it without their first seeking it, that will make God the first determining efficient, yea, the mere and sole author of it, without their doing any thing toward it, without their so much as seeking or asking for it; which would be entirely to overthrow their whole scheme, and would, by their principles, make this virtue no virtue at all, because not at all owing to them, or any endeavours of theirs.

If they reply, they must in the first place *consider*: They are capable of consideration; and if they would consider as they ought and may, they would doubtless pray to God, and ask his help; and every man naturally has some virtue in him, which proper consideration would put into exercise so far as to cause him to pray in some measure acceptably, without any new gift from God I answer, this is inconsistent with many of their principles. It is so, that men should naturally have some virtue in them. For what is natural is necessary; is not from themselves and their own endeavours and free acts; but prevents them all, and therefore cannot be their virtue. If they say, No; consideration will not stir up any virtue that is naturally in them, to cause them to pray virtuously; but God has obliged himself to give virtue enough to enable them to pray and seek acceptably, if they will consider; I answer, this is more than

they pretend. They do not pretend that God has promised any new grace to any man, on any lower condition than asking, seeking, knowing, &c. and if they should think best at last to pretend any promise on lower terms, they had best produce the promises, and tell us what and where they are. If they say, serious consideration itself is some degree of seeking their own good, and there is an implicit prayer in it to the Supreme Being to guide them into the way to their happiness: I answer, if it be supposed that there is an implicit prayer in their consideration, still they allow that prayer must be in some measure acceptable prayer, in order to its being entitled to an answer; and consequently must have some degree of virtuous respect to God, &c. and if so, then the same question returns with all the aforementioned difficulties over again, *viz.* How came the profane, thoughtless, vain, inconsiderate person by this new virtue, this new respect to God, that he ever exercises in this serious consideration and implicit prayer?

If they say there is no necessity of supposing any implicit prayer in the first consideration; and yet, if the wicked, profane, careless person makes a good improvement of what grace he has, in proper consideration or otherwise, God has obliged himself to give him more, in that general promise,<sup>505</sup> “to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.” then I answer, here is new virtue in his making a good improvement of what common assistance he has, which before he neglected, and made no good improvement of. How came he by this new virtue? Here, again, all the aforementioned difficulties return. Was it wholly from himself? This is contrary to what they pretend. Or is God obliged to give new assistance in order to this new virtue by any promise? If he be, what is the condition of the promise? It is absurd to say, making a good improvement of what assistance they have; for that is the thing we are inquiring after, *viz.* how comes he by that new virtue, making a good improvement of what he has, when before he had not virtue enough to make such an improvement?

Of whatever kind the assistance is, whether it be some afflictive dispensation of Providence, or some other outward dispensation or inward influence, the difficulty is the same. How becomes God obliged to give this assistance; and what is the condition of the promise?

The answer must be, that this new virtue is without any new assistance given, and is from God no otherwise than as the former neglected assistance or grace subserves it. But the question is, whence comes the virtue of not neglecting, but improving, that former assistance? Is it proper to say that a man is assisted to improve assistance by the assistance improved? Suppose a number of men were in the water in danger of drowning, and a friend on shore throws out a cord amongst them, but all of them for awhile neglect it; at length one of them takes hold of it, and makes improvement of it; and any should inquire, how that man come by the prudence and virtue of improving the cord, when others did not, and

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505 [Matt. 13:12](#)

he before had neglected it; would it be a proper answer to say, that he-that threw out the rope, assisted him wisely to improve the rope, by throwing out the rope to him? This would be an absurd answer. The question is not, how he came by his opportunity, but how he came by the virtue and disposition of improvement. His friend on shore gave him the opportunity, and this is all. The man's virtue in improving it was not at all from him.

Would it not be exceedingly impertinent, in such a case, to set forth from time to time, how this man's discretion, and virtue, and prudence, was the gift of his friend on (he shore, his mere gift, the fruit of his purpose and mere good pleasure, and of his power; and yet that it was of his own will?

Man's virtue, according to Arminian principles, must consist wholly and entirely in improving assistance: for in that only consists the exercise of their free will in the affair, and not in their having the assistance, although their virtue must be by their principles entirely from themselves, and God has no hand in it. From the latter part of the above discourse, it appears that, according to Arminian principles, men's virtue is altogether of themselves, and God has no hand at all in it.

§ 72. When I say that the acts and influences of the Spirit determine the effects, it is not meant that man has nothing to do to determine in the affair. The soul of man undoubtedly, in every instance, does voluntarily determine with respect to his own consequent actions. But this determination of the will of man, or voluntary determination of the soul of man, is the effect determined. This determining act of the soul is not denied, but supposed, as it is the effect we are speaking of, that the influence of God's Spirit determines.

§ 73. The Scripture speaks of this as the reason that good men have virtue, *that God hath given it to them*; and the reason why bad men have it not, that *God hath not given it to them*. These two together clearly prove that God is the determining or disposing cause of virtue or goodness in men.

§ 74. Dr. Stebbing insists upon it, that conversion is the effect of God's word; and supposes that therefore it is demonstratively evident, that it must needs be the effect of men's free will, and not the necessary effect of the Spirit of God. But I say, that by their doctrine of self-determination it cannot be the effect of the word of God in any proper sense at all. That it should be the effect of the word, is as inconsistent with their scheme, as they suppose it to be with ours. Self-determination is utterly inconsistent with conversion's being at all the effect of either the word or Spirit.

§ 75. They say that commands, threatenings, promises, invitations, counsels, &c. are to no purpose in our scheme. But indeed they can have no place in their scheme: for their scheme excludes all motives.

§ 76. In many particulars their scheme contradicts common sense. It is contrary to common sense, that a being should continually meet with millions of millions of real, proper disappointments and crosses to his proper desires, and not continually lead a dis-



tressed and Unhappy life. It is contrary to common sense, that God should know that an event will certainly come to pass, whose non-existence he at the same time knows is not impossible. It is contrary to common sense that a thing should be the cause of itself; and that a thing not necessary in its own nature should come to pass without any cause: that the more indifferent a man is in any moral action, the more virtuous he is, &c.

§ 77. If the grace of God is not disposing and determining, then a gracious man's differing in this respect from another, is not owing to the goodness of God. He owes no thanks to God for it; and so owes no thanks to God, that he is saved, and not others.

But how contrary is this to Scripture! Seeing the Scripture speaks of the gift of virtue, and of the possession of it, as a fruit of God's bounty.

§ 78. A man's conformity to the rule of duty, is partly owing to assistance or motive; if his conformity be to ten degrees; and it is in some measure, *v. g.* to the amount of five degrees, owing to sovereign assistance; then only the remaining five degrees are to be ascribed to the man himself, and therefore there are but five degrees of virtue.

§ 79. Dr. Stebbing says, " that a man is indeed both passive and active in his own conversion," and he represents God as partly the cause of man's conversion, and man himself as partly the cause, p. 208.

Again, Stebbing says, p. 254. "Faith and regeneration are our works, as well as his gifts, *i. e.* they arise partly from God and partly from ourselves." But if so, on this scheme, they imply virtue so far only as they are our works.

Men's salvation is attributed wholly and entirely to men in their scheme, and none of the praise of it is due to God, as will most evidently appear, if the matter be considered with a little attention. For, 1. They hold that man's salvation is given as a reward of man's virtue; so is pardon of sin, deliverance from hell, and eternal life and glory in heaven; all is for man's virtue. 2. Rewardable virtue wholly consists in the exercise of a man's own free will. They hold that a man's actions are no farther virtuous nor rewardable, than as they are from man himself. If they are partly from some foreign cause, so far they are not rewardable. It being so, that that virtue which is rewardable in man, is entirely from man himself; hence it is to himself wholly that he is to ascribe his obtaining the reward. If the virtue, which is that thing, and that thing only, which obtains the reward, be wholly from man himself, then it will surely follow, that his obtaining the reward is wholly from himself.

All their arguments suppose, that men's actions are no farther virtuous and rewardable, than as they are from themselves, the fruits of their own free will and self-determination. And men's own virtue, they say, is the only condition of salvation, and so must be the only thing by which salvation is obtained. And this being of themselves only, it surely follows, that their obtaining salvation is of themselves only.

They say, their scheme gives almost all the glory to God. “That matter, I suppose, may easily be determined, and it may be made to appear beyond all contest, how much they do ascribe to the man, and how much they do not.

By them, salvation is so far from God, that it is God that gives opportunity to obtain salvation; it is God that gives the offer and makes the promise: but the obtaining of, the thing promised is of men. The being of the promise is of God; but their interest in it is wholly of themselves, of their own free will. And furthermore, it is to be observed, that even God’s making the offer, and giving the opportunity to obtain salvation, at least that which consists in salvation from eternal misery, is not of God, so as to be owing to any proper grace or goodness of his. For they suppose he was obliged to make the offer, and it would have been a reproach to his justice, if he had not given an opportunity to obtain salvation. For they hold, it is unjust for God to make men miserable for Adam’s sin; and that it is unjust to punish them for that sin that they cannot avoid; and that, therefore, it is unjust for God not to preserve or save all men that do what they can, or use their sincere endeavours to do their duty; and therefore it certainly follows, that it is unjust in God not to give all opportunity to be saved or preserved from misery; and consequently, it is no fruit at all of any grace or kindness in him to give such opportunity, or to make the offer of it. So that, all that is the fruit of God’s kindness in man’s salvation, is the positive happiness that belongs to salvation. But neither of these two things are in any respect whatsoever the fruit of God’s kindness, neither his deliverance from sin, nor from misery in his virtue and holiness; and when hereafter he shall see the misery of the damned, he will have it to consider, that it is owing in no respect to God that he is delivered from that misery. And that good men differ from others that shall burn in hell to all eternity, is wholly owing to themselves. When they, at the day of judgment, shall behold some set on the left hand of the Judge, while they are on his right hand, and shall see how they differ, they may, and, as they would act according to truth, they ought to take all the glory of it unto themselves; and therefore the glory of their salvation belongs to them. For it is evident that a man’s making himself to differ with regard to any great spiritual benefit, and his not receiving it from another, but his having it in distinction from others, being from himself, is ground of a man’s boasting and glorying in himself, with respect to that benefit, and of boasting of it: I say, it is evident by the apostle’s words, “Who maketh thee to differ? Why boastest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?”<sup>506</sup> These words plainly imply it.

It is evident, that it is God’s design to exclude man’s boasting in the affair of his salvation. Now, let us consider what does give ground for boasting in the apostle’s account, and what it is that in his account excludes boasting, or cuts off occasion for it. It is evident by what the apostle says, [1 Cor. i.](#) latter end, that the entireness and universality of our dependence

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506 [1 Corinthians iv. 7.](#)

on God, is that which cuts off occasion of boasting; as, our receiving our wisdom, our holiness, and redemption through Christ, and not through ourselves; that Christ is made to us wisdom, justification, holiness, and redemption; and not only so, out that it is of God that we have any part in Christ; *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus*: nay, further, that it is from God we receive those benefits of wisdom, holiness, &c. through the Saviour that we are interested in.

The import of all these things, if we may trust to scripture representations, is, that God has contrived to exclude our glorying; that we should be wholly and every way dependent on God, for the moral and natural good that belongs to salvation; and that we have all from the hand of God, by his power and grace. And certainly this is wholly inconsistent with the idea that our holiness is wholly from ourselves; and that we are interested in the benefits of Christ rather than others, is wholly of our own decision. And that such a universal dependence is what takes away occasion of taking glory to ourselves, and is a proper ground of an ascription of all the glory of the things belonging to man's salvation to God, is manifest from [Rom. xi. 35, 36.](#) "Or who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

The words are remarkable, and very insignificant. If we look into all the foregoing discourse, from the beginning of [chapter ix.](#) of which this is the conclusion, by not giving to God, but having all this wholly *from, through, and in God*, is intended that these things, these great benefits forementioned, are thus from God, without being from or through ourselves. That some of the Jews were distinguished from others in enjoying the privileges of Christians, was not of themselves; not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. It is of him who has mercy on whom he will have mercy. It is of God who makes of the same lump, a vessel to honour and a vessel unto dishonour. It is not of us, nor our works, but of the calling of God, or of him that calleth, [chap. ix. 11. and 23, 24.](#) Not first of our own choice, but of election, [chap. ix. 11-27.](#) and [chap. xi. 5.](#) It is all of the grace of God in such a manner, as not to be of our works at all; yea, and so as to be utterly inconsistent with its being of our works; [chap. xi. 5, 6, 7.](#) In such a manner as not first to be of their seeking; their seeking does not determine, but God's election; [chap. xi. 7.](#) It is of God, and not of man, that some were gathered in, that were wild olive branches in themselves, and were more unlikely as to any thing in themselves to be branches, than others, [verse 17.](#) Their being grafted in, is owing to God's distinguishing goodness, while he was pleased to use severity towards others, [ver. 22.](#) Yea, God has so ordered it, on purpose that all should be shut up in unbelief; be left to be so sinful, that he might have mercy on all; so as more visibly to show the salvation of all to be merely dependent on mercy. Then the apostle fitly concludes all this discourse, [Rom. xi. 35, 36.](#) "Or who hath first given to him,

and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

Again, in the apostle’s account, a benefit’s being of our works, gives occasion for boasting, and therefore God has contrived that our salvation shall not be of our works, but of mere grace, [Rom. iii. 27.](#) [Eph. ii. 9.](#) And that neither the salvation, nor the condition of it, shall be of our works, but that, with regard to all, we are God’s workmanship and his creation antecedently to our works; and his grace and power in producing this workmanship, and his determination or purpose with regard to them, are all prior to our works and the cause of them. See also [Rom. xi. 4, 5, 6.](#)

And it is evident, that man ‘shaving virtue from himself, and not receiving it from another, and making himself to differ with regard to great spiritual benefits, does give ground for boasting, by the words of the apostle in [Rom. iii. 27.](#) And this is allowed by those men in spiritual gifts. And if so in them, more so in greater things; more so in that which in itself is a thousand times more excellent, and of ten thousand times greater importance and benefit.

By the Arminian scheme, that which is infinitely the most excellent thing, *viz.* virtue and holiness, which the apostle sets forth as being infinitely the most honourable, and will bring the subjects of it to infinitely the greatest and highest honour, that which is infinitely the highest dignity of man’s nature of all things that belong to man’s salvation; in comparison of which, all things belonging to that salvation are nothing; that which does infinitely more than any thing else constitute the difference between them and others, as more excellent, more worthy, more honourable and happy; this is from themselves. With regard to this they have not received of another. With regard to this great thing, they, and they only, make themselves to differ from others; and this difference proceeds not at all from the power or grace of God.

Again, in the apostle’s account, this scheme will give occasion to have a great benefit, that appertains to salvation, not of grace, but of works.

Virtue is not only the most honourable attainment, but it is that which men, on the supposition of their being possessed of it, are more apt to glory in, than in any thing else whatsoever. For what are men so apt to glory in as their own supposed excellency, as in their supposed virtue? And what sort of glorying is that, which, it is evident in feet, the Scriptures do chiefly guard against? It is glorying in their own righteousness, their own holiness, their own good works.

It is manifest, that in the apostle’s account, it is a proper consideration to prevent our boasting, that our distinction from others is not of ourselves, not only in being distinguished in having better gifts and better principles, but in our being made partakers of the great privileges of Christians, such as being engrafted into Christ, and partaking of the fatness of that olive-tree. [Rom. xi. 17, 18.](#) “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being



a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree, boast not against the branches.”

Here it is manifest, it is the distinction that was made between some and others, that is the thing insisted on; and the apostle, [verse 22](#). calls upon them to consider this great distinction, and to ascribe it to the distinguishing goodness of God only. “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness.<sup>507</sup>” And its being owing, not to them, but to God and his distinguishing goodness, is the thing the apostle urges as a reason why they should not boast, but magnify God’s grace or distinguishing goodness. And if it be a good reason, and the scheme of our salvation be every way so contrived (as the apostle elsewhere signifies) that all occasion of boasting should be precluded, and all reasons given to ascribe all to God’s grace; then it is doubtless so ordered, that the greatest privileges, excellency, honour, and happiness of Christians, should be that wherein they do not distinguish themselves, but the difference is owing to God’s distinguishing goodness.

Stebbing strongly asserts, God is not the author of that difference that is between some and others, that some are good, and others bad.

§ 80. The Arminians differ among themselves. Dr. Whitby supposes what God does, is only proposing moral motives; but that in attending, adverting, and considering, we exercise our liberty. But Stebbing supposes, that the attention and consideration is itself the thing owing to the Spirit of God; p. 217.

§ 81. Stebbing changes the question, pages 223, 224. He was considering who was the chief glory of our conversion, or of our virtue; and there, answering objections, endeavours to prove the affirmative of another question, *viz.* whether God is the author of that pardon and salvation, of which conversion and virtue are the condition.

§ 82. Stebbing supposes that one thing wherein the assistance of the Spirit consists, is the giving of a meek, teachable, disinterested temper of mind, to prepare men for faith in Christ; pages 217, 259, and that herein consists that drawing of the Father, [John vi. 44](#). *viz.* in giving such a temper of mind.

This he calls the preventing grace of God, that goes before conversion. He often speaks of a part that we do, and a part that God does. And he speaks of this as that part which God does. Therefore this, if it be the part which God does, in distinction from the part which we do, (for so he speaks of it,) is wholly done by God. And consequently, here is virtue wholly from God, and not at all from the exercise of our own free will; which is inconsistent with his own, and all other Arminian principles. Stebbing speaks of these preparatory dispositions as virtue, p. 30, 31, 32. yea, as that wherein virtue does in a peculiar manner consist, p. 31. And he there also, *viz.* page 259. talks inconsistently with himself; for he supposes that this

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507 [Rom. xi. 22](#).

meeke and teachable temper is given by God, by his preventing grace; and also supposes, that all that have this, shall surely come to the Father. He says, page 256. "It is certainly true of the meeke, disinterested man, that as he will not reject the gospel at first, so he will not be prevailed on by any worldly considerations to forsake it afterwards."

"He who is under no evil bias of mind, by which he may be prejudiced against the truth, (which is the notion of a meeke and disinterested man,) such a one, I say, cannot possibly foil of being wrought upon by the preaching of the word, which carries in it all that evidence of truth which reason requires," &c. and his words, page 259. are, [John vi. 37, 39](#). "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me;" for to be given of the Father signifies the same thing with being drawn of the Father, as has been already shown. And to be drawn of the Father, signifies to be prepared or fitted for the reception of the gospel, by the preventing grace of God, as has also been proved. Now, this preparedness consisting, as has likewise been shown, in being endued with a meeke and disinterested temper of mind; those who are given of the Father, will be the same with Christ's sheep. And the sense of the place is the same with the preceding, where our Saviour says that his sheep hear his voice and follow him, » *e.* become his obedient disciples. This text, therefore, being no more than a declaration of what will be certain, and (morally speaking) the necessary effect of that disposition, upon the account of which men are said to be given of the Father, (to wit, that it will lead them to embrace the gospel, when once proposed to them). By these things, the preventing grace of God, the part that God does, in distinction from the part that we do, and that which prevents or goes before what we do, thoroughly decides and determines the case as to our conversion, or our faith and repentance and obedience, notwithstanding all the hand our free will is supposed to have in the case; and which he supposes is what determines man's conversion; and insists upon it most strenuously and magisterially through his whole book. Stebbing supposes the influence of the Spirit necessary to prepare men's hearts, pages 15-18. He (pages 17,18.) speaks of this as what the Spirit does, and as being his preventing grace; and speaks of it as always effectual; so that all such, and only such as have it, will believe. See also pages 28-30.

That these dispositions must be effectual; see pages 46-48.

This teachable, humble, meeke spirit is what Stebbing speaks of every where as what the Spirit of God gives antecedent to obedience. He insists upon it, that God's assistance is necessary in order to obedience. In pages 20, 21. he plainly asserts that it is necessary in order to our obedience, and declares that our Saviour has asserted it in express terms in these words, [John xv. 5](#). "Without me ye can do nothing;" *i. e.* as he says, no good thing. Hence it follows, that this teachable, humble, meeke disposition, this good and honest heart, is not the fruit of any good thing we do in the exercise of our free will; but is merely the fruit of divine operation. Here observe well what Stebbing says concerning God's giving grace sufficient for obedience, in answer to prayer. Pages 103-106.

§ 83. No reason in the world can be given, why a meek, humble spirit, and sense of the importance of Christian things, should not be as requisite in order to acceptable prayer, as in order to acceptable hearing and believing the word. It is as much so spoken of. A praying without a good spirit in these and other respects, is represented as no prayer, as ineffectual, and what we have no reason to expect will be answered.

§ 84. If that meekness, &c. depends on some antecedent, self-determined act of theirs, and they be determined by that; then their being Christ's, being his sheep, and therein distinguished from others that are not his sheep, is not properly owing to the Father's gift, but to their own gift. The Father's pleasure is not the thing it is to be ascribed to at all; for the Father does nothing in the case decisively; he acts not at all freely in the case, but acts on an antecedent, firm obligation to the persons themselves; but their own pleasure, undetermined by God, is that which disposes and decides in the matter. How impertinent would it be to insist on the gift of the Father in this case, when the thing he speaks of is not from thence!

& 85. He supposes that the assistance that God gives in order to obedience is giving this good and honest heart; see p. 46, 47. together with p. 40. 45.; and therefore, this good and honest heart is not the fruit of our own obedience, but must be the fruit of assistance that precedes our good works, as he often calls it the preventing grace of God. And therefore, if this grace determines the matter, and will certainly be followed with faith and obedience, then all Arminianism, and his own scheme, comes to the ground.

§ 86. Stebbing interprets that passage, [Luke xix. 16, 17.](#) which speaks of our being little children, and receiving the kingdom of God as little children, of that meekness and humility, &c. that is antecedent to conversion, which it is apparent Christ elsewhere speaks of as consequent on conversion, at [Matt. xviii.](#)

§ 87. It is manifest the power of God overcomes resistance, and great resistance of some sort; otherwise there would be no peculiar greatness of power, as distinguishing it from the power of creatures, manifested in bringing men to be willing to be virtuous; which it is apparent there is, by [Matt. xix. 26.](#) "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

§ 88. The Arminian scheme naturally, and by necessary consequence, leads men to take all the glory of all spiritual good (which is immensely the chief, most important, and excellent thing in the whole creation) to ourselves; as much as if we, with regard to those effects, were the supreme, the first cause, self-existent, and independent, and absolutely sovereign disposers. We leave the glory of only the meaner part of creation to God, and take to ourselves all the glory of that which is properly the life, beauty, and glory of the creation, and without which it is all worse than nothing. So that there is nothing left for the great First and Last; no glory for either the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, in the affair. This is not carrying things too far, but in a consequence truly and certainly to be ascribed to their scheme of things.

§89. He may be said to be the giver of money that offers it to us, without being the proper determiner of our acceptance of it. But if the acceptance of an offer itself be the thing which is supposed to be given, he cannot, in any proper sense whatsoever, be properly said to be the giver of this, who is not the determiner of it. But it is the acceptance of offers, and the proper improvement of opportunities, wherein consists virtue. He may be said to be the giver of money or goods that does not determine the wise choice; but if the wise and good choice itself be said to be the thing given, it supposes that the giver determines the existing of such a wise choice. But now, this is the thing that God is represented as the *giver* of, when he is spoken of as the giver of virtue, holiness, &c. for virtue and holiness (as all our opponents in these controversies allow and maintain) is the thing wherein a wise and good choice consists.

§ 90. It is the common way of the Arminians, in their discourses and doctrine, which they pretend are so much more consistent with reason and common sense, than the doctrine of the Calvinists, to give no account at all, and make no proper answer to the inquiries made; and they do as Mr. Locke says of the Indian philosopher, who, when asked what the world stood upon, answered, it stood upon an elephant; and, when asked what the elephant stood upon, he replied, on a broad-backed turtle, &c. None of their accounts will bear to be traced. The first link of the chain, and the fountain of the whole stream, must not be inquired after. If it be, it brings all to a gross absurdity and self-contradiction. And yet, when they have done, they look upon others as stupid bigots, and void of common sense, or at least going directly counter to common sense, and worthy of contempt and indignation, because they will not agree with them.

§91. I suppose it will not be denied by any party of Christians, that the happiness of the saints in the other world consists much in perfect holiness and the exalted exercises of it; that the souls of the saints shall enter upon it at once at death; or (if any deny that) at least at the resurrection; that the saint is made perfectly holy as soon as ever he enters into heaven. I suppose none will say, that perfection is obtained by repeated acts of holiness; but all will grant, that it is wrought in the saint immediately by the power of God; and yet that it is virtue notwithstanding. And why are not the beginnings of holiness wrought in the same manner? Why should not the beginning of a holy nature be wrought immediately by God in a soul that is wholly of a contrary nature, as well as holiness be perfected in a soul that has already a prevailing holiness? And if it be so, why is not the beginning, thus wrought, as much virtue as the perfection thus wrought?

§ 92. Saving grace differs, not only in degree, but in nature and kind, from common grace, or any thing that is ever found in natural men. This seems evident by the following things. 1. Because conversion is a work that is done at once, and not gradually. If saving grace differed only in degree from what went before, then the making a man a good man would be a gradual work; it would be the increasing of the grace that he has, till it comes to



such a degree as to be saving, at least it would be frequently so. But that the conversion of the heart is not a work that is thus gradually wrought, but that it is wrought at once, appears by Christ's converting the soul being represented by his calling of it; [Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30.](#) "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also *called*; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." [Acts ii. 37-39.](#) "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall *call*." [Heb. ix. 15.](#) "That they which are *called* might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." [1 Thess. v. 23, 24.](#) "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that *calleth* you, who also will do it." Nothing else can be meant in these places by *calling*, but what Christ does in a sinner's saving conversion; by which it seems evident that this is done at once, and not gradually. Hereby Christ shows his great power. He does but speak the powerful word, and it is done. He does but call, and the heart of the sinner immediately cometh, as was represented by his calling his disciples, and their immediately following him. So, when he called Peter and Andrew, James and John, they were minding other things, and had no thought of following Christ. But at his call they immediately followed him, [Matt. iv. 18-22.](#) Peter and Andrew were casting a net into the sea. Christ says unto them, as he passed by, Follow me; and it is said, they straightway left their nets and followed him. So James and John were in the ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them; and immediately they left the ship and their father, and followed him. So when Matthew was called; [Matt. ix. 9.](#) "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me: and he arose and followed him." The same circumstances are observed by other evangelists; which, doubtless, is to represent the manner in which Christ effectually calls his disciples in all ages. There is something immediately put into their hearts, at that call, that is new, that there was nothing of there before, which makes them so immediately act in a manner altogether new, and so alien from what they were before.

That the work of conversion is wrought at once, is further evident, by its being compared to a work of creation. When God created the world, he did what he did immediately; he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. Also by its being compared to a raising from the dead. Raising from the dead is not a gradual work, but it is done at once. God calls, and the dead come forth imme-

diately. The change in conversion is in the twinkling of an eye; as that, 1”We shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

It appears by the manner in which Christ wrought all those works that he wrought when on earth, that they were types of his great work of converting sinners. Thus, when he healed the leper, he put forth his hand and touched him, and said, “I will, be thou clean; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” [Matt. viii. 3.](#) [Mark i. 42.](#) [Luke v. 13.](#) So, in opening the eyes of the blind men, [Matt. xx. 30.](#), &c. he touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. And so [Mark x. 52.](#) [Luke xviii. 43.](#) So, when he healed the sick, particularly Simon’s wife’s mother, he took her by her hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto him. So when the woman that had the issue of blood, touched the hem of Christ’s garment, immediately her issue of blood stanch’d; [Luke viii. 44.](#) So the woman that was bowed together with the spirit of infirmity, when Christ laid his hands on her, immediately she was made straight, and glorified God; [Luke xiii. 12, 13.](#) So the man at the pool of Bethesda, when Christ bade him rise and take up his bed and walk, was immediately made whole; [John v. 8, 9.](#) After the same manner Christ raised the dead, and cast out devils, and stilled the winds and seas.

2. There seems to be a specific difference between saving grace or virtue and all that was in the heart before, by the things that conversion is represented by in Scripture; particularly by its being represented as a work of creation. When God creates, he does not merely establish and perfect the things that were made before, but makes them wholly and immediately. The things that are seen, are not made of things that do appear. Saving grace in the heart is said to be the new man, a new creature; and corruption, the old man. If that virtue that is in the heart of a holy man, be not different in its nature and kind, then the man might possibly have had the same seventy years before, and from time to time, from the beginning of his life, and has it no otherwise now, but only in a greater degree: and how then is he a new creature?

Again, it is evident also from its being compared to a resurrection. Natural men are said to be dead: but when they are converted, they are by God’s mighty and effectual power raised from the dead. Now, there is no medium between being dead and alive. He that is dead, has no degree of life. He that has the least degree of life in him, is alive. When a man is raised from the dead, life is not only in a greater degree, but it is all new. And this is further evident by “that representation that is made of Christ’s converting sinners, in [John v. 25.](#) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” This shows conversion to be an immediate and instantaneous work, like to the change made in Lazarus when Christ called him from the grave: there went life with the call, and Lazarus was immediately alive. That immediately before the call they are dead, and therefore wholly destitute of any life, is evident by that

expression, [John 5:25](#) “the dead shall hear the voice;” and immediately after the call they are alive; yea, there goes life with the voice, as is evident not only because it is said they shall live, but also because it is said, they shall hear his voice. It is evident that the first moment they have any life is the moment when Christ calls; and when Christ calls, or as soon as they are called, they are converted; as is evident from what is said in the first argument, wherein it is shown, that to be called and converted, is the same thing.

3. Those that go farthest in religion, that are in a natural condition, have no charity, as is plainly implied in the beginning of the [13th chapter of the first of Corinthians](#); by which we must understand, that they have none of that kind of grace, or disposition, or affection, that is so called. So Christ elsewhere reproves the Pharisees, those high pretenders to religion among the Jews, that they had not the love of God in them.

4. In conversion, stones are raised up to be children unto Abraham. While stones they are wholly destitute of all those qualities that afterward render them the living children of Abraham; and not possessing them, though in a lesser degree.

Agreeably to this, conversion is represented by the taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh. The man, while unconverted, has a heart of stone, which has no degree of that life or sense in it that the heart of flesh has; because it yet remains a stone; than which, nothing is farther from life and sense.

5. A wicked man has none of that principle of nature that a godly man has, as is evident by [1 John iii. 9](#). “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

The natural import of the metaphor shows, that by a seed is meant a principle of action: it may be small as a grain of mustard seed. A seed is a small thing; it may be buried up and lie hid as the seed sown in the earth; it may seem to be dead, as seeds for a while do, till quickened by the sun and rain. But any degree of such a principle, or a principle of such a nature, is what is called the seed; it need not be to such a degree, or have such a prevalency, in order to be called a seed. And it is further evident that this seed, or this inward principle of nature, is peculiar to the saints; for he that has that seed, cannot sin; and therefore he that sins, or is a wicked man, has it not.

6. Natural men, or those that are not savingly converted, have no degree of that principle from whence all gracious actings flow, *viz.* the Spirit of God or of Christ; as is evident, because it is asserted both ways in Scripture, that those who have not the Spirit of Christ, are not his, [Rom. vii. 9](#). and also, that those who have the Spirit of Christ, are his; [1 John iii. 24](#). “Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.” And the Spirit of God is called the earnest of the future inheritance, [2 Cor. i. 22](#). and [v. 5](#). [Eph. i. 14](#). Yea, that a natural man has nothing of the Spirit in him, no part nor portion in it, is still more evident, because the *having of the Spirit* is given as a sure sign of being in Christ. [1 John iv. 13](#). “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

By which it is evident, that they have none of that holy principle that the godly have. And if they have nothing of the Spirit, they have nothing of those things that are the fruits of the Spirit, such as those mentioned in [Gal. v. 22](#). “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” These fruits are here mentioned with the very design, that we may know whether we have the Spirit or no. In the [18th verse](#), the apostle tells the Galatians, that if they are led by the Spirit, they are not under the law; and then directly proceeds, first, to mention what are the fruits or works of the flesh, and then, next, what are fruits of the Spirit, that we may judge whether we are led by the Spirit or no.

7. That natural men, or those that are not born again, have nothing of that grace that is in godly men, is evident by [John iii. 6](#). where Christ, speaking of regeneration, says, [John iii. 6](#). “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” By flesh is here meant nature, and by Spirit is meant grace, as is evident by [Gal. v. 16, 17](#). [Gal. vi. 8](#). [1 Cor. iii. 1](#). [Rom. viii. 7](#). That is Christ’s very argument; by this it is that Christ in those words would show Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration, that by the first birth we have nothing but nature, and can have nothing else without being born again; by which it is exceeding evident, that they that are not born again, have nothing else. And that natural men have not the Spirit is evident, since by this text, with the context, it is most evident that those who have the Spirit, have it by regeneration. It is born in them; it comes into them no otherwise than by birth, and that birth is in regeneration, as is most evident by the preceding and following verses. In godly men there are two opposite principles: the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; as [Gal. v. 25](#). But it is not so with natural men. Rebekah, in having Esau and Jacob struggle together in her womb, was a type only of the true *church*.

8. Natural men have nothing of that nature in them which true Christians have; and that appears because the nature they have is divine nature. The saints alone have it. Not only they alone partake of such degrees of it, but they alone are partakers of it. To be a partaker of the divine nature is mentioned as peculiar to the saints, in [2 Pet. i. 4](#). It is evident it is the true saints the apostle is there speaking of. The words in this verse and the foregoing run thus: According as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature; having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Divine nature and lust are evidently here spoken of as two opposite principles in men. Those that are of the world, or that are the men of the world, have only the latter principle. But to be partakers of the divine nature, is spoken of as peculiar to them that are distinguished and separated from the world, by the free and sovereign grace of God giving them all things that pertain to life and godliness; by giving the knowledge of Christ, and calling them to glory



and virtue; and giving them the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, and enabling them to escape the corruption of the world of wicked men. It is spoken of, not only as peculiar to the saints, but as the highest privilege of saints.

9. A natural man has no degree of that relish and sense of spiritual things, or things of the Spirit, and of their divine truth and excellency, which a godly man has; as is evident by [1 Cor. ii. 14.](#) “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Here a natural man is represented as perfectly destitute of any sense, perception, or discerning of those things. For by the words, he neither does nor can know them or discern them. So far from it, that they are foolishness unto him. He is such a stranger to them, that he knows not what the talk of such things means; they are words without a meaning to him; he knows nothing of the matter, any more than a blind man of colours. Hence it will follow, that the sense of things of religion that a natural man has, is not only not to the same degree, but is not of the same nature with what a godly man has. Besides, if a natural person has that fruit of the Spirit, which is of the same kind with what a spiritual person has, then he experiences within himself the things of the Spirit of God. How then can he be said to be such a stranger to them, and have no perception or discerning of them? The reason why natural men have no knowledge of spiritual things, is, that they have nothing of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. This is evident by the context. For there we are told it is by the Spirit these things are taught, [verse 10-12.](#) Godly persons, in the text we are upon, are called spiritual, evidently on this account, that they have the Spirit; and unregenerate men are called natural men, because they have nothing but nature. Hereby the 6th argument is continued. For natural men are in no degree spiritual; they have only nature and no Spirit. If they had any thing of the Spirit, though not in so great a degree as the godly, yet they would be taught spiritual things, or the things of the Spirit, in proportion; the Spirit that searcheth all things, would teach them in some measure. There would not be so great a difference, that the one could perceive nothing of them, and that they should be foolishness to them, while, to the other, they appear divinely and unspeakably wise and excellent, as they are spoken of in the context, [verses 6-9.](#) and as such, the apostle speaks here of discerning them. The reason why natural men have no knowledge or perception of spiritual things, is that they have none of that anointing spoken of, [1 John ii. 27.](#) “But the anointing, which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”

This anointing is evidently here spoken of, as a thing peculiar to true saints. Sinners never had any of that oil poured upon them; and because ungodly men have none of it, therefore they have no discerning of spiritual things. If they had any degree of it, they would discern in some measure. Therefore, none of that sense that natural men have of spiritual

things, is of the same nature with what the godly have. And that natural men are wholly destitute of this knowledge, is further evident, because conversion is represented in Scripture by opening the eyes of the blind. But this would be very improperly so represented, if a man might have some sight, though not so clear and full, time after time for scores of years before his conversion.

10. The grace of God's Spirit is not only a precious oil with which Christ anoints the believer by giving it to him, but the believer anoints Christ with it, by exercising it towards him; which seems to be represented by the precious ointment Mary poured on Christ's head. Herein it seems to me, that Mary is a type of Christ's church, and of every believing soul. And if so, doubtless the thing in which she typifies the church, has in it something peculiar to the church. There would not be a type ordered on purpose to represent only something that is common to the church and others. Therefore unbelievers pour none of that sweet and precious ointment on Christ.

11. That unbelievers have no degree of that grace that the saints have, is evident, because they have no communion with Christ. If unbelievers partook of any of that Spirit, those holy inclinations, affections, and actings that the godly have from the Spirit of Christ, then they would have communion with Christ. The communion of saints with Christ certainly consist in receiving of his fulness, and partaking of his grace, which is spoken of, [John i. 16](#). "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." And the partaking of that Spirit which God gives not by measure unto him, the partaking of Christ's holiness and grace, his nature, inclinations, tendencies, affections, love, desires, must be a part of communion with him. Yea, a believer's communion with God and Christ, does mainly consist in partaking of the Holy Spirit, as is evident by [2 Cor. xiii. 14](#). But that unbelievers have no communion or fellowship with Christ, appears, 1st, Because they are not united to Christ, they are not in Christ. Those that are not in Christ, or are not united to him, can have no degree of communion with him; for union with Christ, or a being in Christ, is the foundation of all communion with him. The union of the members with the head, is the foundation of all their communion or partaking with the head; and so the union of the branch with the vine, is the foundation of all the communion it has with the vine, of partaking of any degree of its sap or life, or influence. So the union of the wife to the husband, is the foundation of her communion in his goods. But no natural man is united to Christ; because all that are in Christ shall be saved; [1 Cor. xv. 22](#). "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" *i. e.* all that are in Christ; for this speaks only of the glorious resurrection and eternal life. [Phil. iii. 8, 9](#). "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found *in him*, not having on my own righteousness,"

&c. [2 Cor. v. 17](#). “Now, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” [1 John ii. 5](#). “Hereby know we that we are in him.” Chap. ii. 24. “And he that keepeth his commandments, *dwelleth in him, and he in him*, and hereby we know *that he abideth in us*,” &c. and [iv. 13](#). “Hereby we know that *we dwell in him, and he in us*.”

2d, The Scripture does more directly teach, that it is only true saints that have communion with Christ; as, particularly, this is most evidently spoken of as what belongs to the saints, and to them only, in [1 John i. 3-7](#). “That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” And [1 Cor. i. 8, 9](#). “Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” By this it appears that those who have fellowship with Christ are those that cannot fall away, whom God’s faithfulness is bound to confirm to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of Jesus Christ.

§ 93. Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones is a confirmation, that however natural men may be the subjects of great and wonderful influences and operations of God’s great power and Spirit; yet they do not properly partake at all of the Spirit before conversion. In all that is wrought in them, in every respect fitting and preparing them for grace, so that nothing shall be wanting but divine life; yet as long as they are without this, they have nothing of the Spirit. Which confirms the distinctions I have elsewhere made, of the Spirit of God influencing the minds of natural men under common illuminations and convictions, and yet not communicating himself in his own proper nature to them, before conversion; and that saving grace differs from common grace, not only in degree, but also in nature and kind. It is said, [Rev. iii. 8](#), of the church at Philadelphia, which *is* commended above all other churches, *Thou hast a little strength* certainly implying, that ungodly men have none at all.

§ 94. That there is no good work before conversion and actual union with Christ, is manifest from that, [Rom. vii. 4](#). “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married unto another, even to him who is raised from the dead; that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Hence we may argue, that there is no lawful child brought forth before that marriage. Seeming virtues and good works before, are not so indeed. They are a spurious brood, being bastards, and not children.

§ 95. That those that prove apostates, never have the same kind of faith with true saints, is confirmed by what Christ said of Judas, before his apostacy, [John vi. 64](#). “But there are some of you who believe not. For Jesus, knew from the beginning who they were that believed

not, and who should betray him.” By this it is evident, that Judas, who afterwards proved an apostate, (and is doubtless set forth as an example for all apostates,) though he had a kind of faith in Christ, yet did not believe in Christ with a true faith, and was at that time, before his apostacy, destitute of that kind of faith which the true disciples had; and that he had all along, even from the beginning, been destitute of that faith. And by the [70th and 71st.](#) verses of the same chapter, it is evident that he was not only destitute of that degree of goodness that the rest had, but totally destitute of Christian piety, and wholly under the dominion of wickedness; being in this respect like a devil, notwithstanding all the faith and temporary regard to Christ that he had. “Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. For he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.”

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CHAP. V.

CONCERNING THE NECESSITY AND REASONABLENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

§ 1. the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and the reasonableness of that Christian doctrine, may appear from the following considerations:

1. Justice requires that sin be punished, because sin deserves punishment. What the demerit of sin calls for, justice calls for; for it is only the same thing in different words. For the notion of a desert of punishment, is the very same as a just connexion with punishment. None will deny but that there is such a thing, in some cases, as the desert or demerit of a crime, its calling for or requiring punishment. And, to say that the desert of a crime does require punishment, is just the same thing as to say, the reason why it requires it is, that it deserves it. So that the suitableness of the connexion between the crime and the punishment, consists in the desert; and therefore, wherever desert is, there is such suitableness. None will deny that some crimes are so horrid, and so deserving of punishment, that it is requisite that they should not go unpunished, unless something very considerable be done to make up for the crime; either some answerable repentance, or some other compensation, that in some measure at least balances the desert of punishment, and so, as it were, takes it off, or disannuls it: otherwise the desert of punishment remaining, all will allow, that it is fit and becoming, and to be desired, that the crime should be severely punished. And why is it so, but only from the demerit of the crime, or because the crime so much deserves such a punishment? It justly excites so great abhorrence and indignation, that it is requisite there should be a punishment answerable to this abhorrence and indignation that is fitly excited by it. But by this, all is granted that needs to be granted, to show, that desert of punishment carries in it a requisiteness of the punishment deserved. For if greater crimes do very much require punishment, because of their great demerit, lesser crimes will also require punishment, but only in a lesser degree, proportion-ably to their demerit; because the ground of the requisiteness of the punishment of great crimes, is their demerit. It is requisite that they should be punished, on no other account but because they deserve it.

And besides, if it be allowed that it is requisite that great crimes should be punished with punishment in some measure answerable to the heinousness of the crime, without something to balance them, some answerable repentance or other satisfaction, because of their great demerit, and the great abhorrence and indignation they justly excite: it will follow, that it is requisite that God should punish all sin with infinite punishment; because all sin, as it is against God, is infinitely heinous, and has infinite demerit, is justly infinitely hateful to him, and so stirs up infinite abhorrence and indignation in him. Therefore, by what was before granted, it is requisite that God should punish it, unless there be something in some measure to balance this desert; either some answerable repentance and sorrow for it, or

other compensation. Now there can be no repentance of it, or sorrow for it, in any measure answerable or proportionable to the heinousness of the demerit of the crime; because that is infinite, and there can be no infinite sorrow for sin in finite creatures; yea, there can be none but what is infinitely short of it, none that bears any proportion to it. Repentance is as nothing in comparison of it, and therefore can weigh nothing when put in the scales with it, and so does nothing at all towards compensating it, or diminishing the desert or requisiteness of punishment, any more than if there were no repentance. If any ask, why God could not pardon the injury on repentance, without other satisfaction, without any wrong to justice; I ask the same person, why he could not also pardon the injury without repentance? For the same reason, could he not pardon with repentance without satisfaction? For all the repentance men are capable of, is no repentance at all, or is as little as none, in comparison with the greatness of the injury; for it bears no proportion to it. And it would be as dishonourable and unfit for God to pardon the injury without any repentance at all, as to do it merely on the account of a repentance that bears no more proportion to the injury, than none at all. Therefore, we are not forgiven on repentance, because it in any wise compensates, or takes off, or diminishes the desert or requisiteness of punishment; but because of the respect that evangelical repentance has to compensation already made.

If sin, therefore, deserves punishment, that is the same thing as to say, that it is fit and proper that it should be punished. If the case be so, that sin deserves punishment from men; in those cases it is proper it should receive punishment from men. A fault cannot be properly said to deserve punishment from any, but those to whom it belongs to inflict punishment when it is deserved. In those cases, therefore, wherein it belongs to men to inflict punishment, it is proper for them to inflict that punishment that is deserved of them.

Again, if sin's desert of punishment be the proper ground of the fitness of its connexion with punishment, or rather be that wherein fitness of the connexion consists; it will thence follow, not only that it is fit that sin that deserves punishment, should be punished, but also that it should be punished as it deserves.

It is meet that a person's state should be agreeable to the quality of his dispositions and voluntary actions. Suffering is suitable and answerable to the quality of sinful dispositions and actions; it is suitable that they that will evil, and do evil, should receive evil in proportion to the evil that they do or will. It is but justice that it should be so; and when sin is punished, it receives but its own, or that which is suitably connected with it. But it is a contradiction to say that it is suitably connected with punishment, or that it is suitable that it should be connected with it, and yet that it is suitable it should not be connected with it. All sin may be resolved into hatred of God and our neighbour; as all our duty may be resolved into love to God and our neighbour. And it is but meet that this spirit of enmity should receive a return in its own kind, that it should receive enmity again. Sin is of such a nature, that it wishes ill, and aims at ill to God and man; but to God especially. It strikes at God; it would, if it could,



procure his misery and death. It is but suitable, that with what measure it metes it should be measured to it again. It is but suitable that men should reap what they sow, and that the rewards of every man's hand should be given him. This is what the consciences of all men do naturally declare. There is nothing that men know sooner, after they come to the exercise of their reason, than that, when they have done wickedness, they deserve punishment. The consciences not only of Christians, and those who have been educated in the principles of divine revelation, but also the consciences of heathens, inform them of this: therefore, unless conscience has been stupified by frequent violations when men have done wickedness, there remains a sense of guilt upon their minds; a sense of an obligation to punishment. It is natural to expect that which conscience or reason tells them it is suitable should come; and therefore they are afraid and jealous, and ready to flee when no man pursues.

Seeing therefore it is requisite that sin should be punished, as punishment is deserved and just; therefore the justice of God obliges him to punish sin. For it belongs to God, as the Supreme Ruler of the universality of things, to maintain order and decorum in his kingdom, and to see to it that decency and righteousness take place in all cases. That perfection of his nature whereby he is disposed to this, is his justice: therefore his justice naturally disposes him to punish sin as it deserves.

2. The holiness of God, which is the infinite opposition of his nature to sin, naturally and necessarily disposes him to punish sin. Indeed his justice is part of his holiness. But when we speak of God's justice inclining him to punish sin, we have respect only to that exercise of his holiness whereby he loves that holy and beautiful order that consists in the connexion of one thing with another, according to their nature, and so between sin and punishment; and his opposition to that which would be so unsuitable as a disconnexion of these things. But now I speak of the holiness of God as appearing not directly and immediately in his hatred of an unsuitable, hateful disconnexion between sin and that which is proper for it; but in his hatred of sin itself, or the opposition of his nature to the odious nature of sin.

If God's nature be infinitely opposite to sin, then doubtless he has a disposition answerable to oppose it in his acts and works. If he by his nature be an enemy to sin with an infinite enmity, then he is doubtless disposed to act as an enemy to it, or to do the part of an enemy to it. And if he be disposed naturally to do the part of an enemy against sin, or, which is the same thing, against the faultiness or blameworthiness of moral agents; then it will follow, he is naturally disposed to act as an enemy to those that are the persons faulty and blameworthy, or are chargeable with the guilt of it, as being the persons faulty. Indignation is the proper exercise of hatred of any thing as a fault or thing blamable; and there could be no such thing either in the Creator or creature, as hatred of a fault without indignation, unless it be conceived or hoped that the fault is suffered for, and so the indignation be satisfied. Whoever finds a hatred to a fault, and at the same time imputes the fault to him that com-

mitted it, he therein feels an indignation against him for it. So that God, by his necessary infinite hatred of sin, is necessarily disposed to punish it with a punishment answerible to his hatred.

It does not become the Sovereign of the world, a being of infinite glory, purity, and beauty, to suffer such a thing as sin, an infinitely uncomely disorder, an infinitely detestable pollution, to appear in the world subject to his government, without his making an opposition to it, or giving some public manifestations and tokens of his infinite abhorrence of it. If he should so do, it would be countenancing it, which God cannot do; for “he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity;” [Hab. i. 13](#). It is natural in such a case to expect tokens of the utmost opposition. If we could behold the infinite fountain of purity and holiness, and could see what an infinitely pure flame it is, and with what a pure brightness it shines, so that the heavens appear impure when compared with it; and then should behold some infinitely odious and detestable filthiness brought and set in its presence: would it not be natural to expect some ineffably vehement opposition made to it? and would not the want of it be indecent and shocking?

If it be to God’s glory that he is in his nature infinitely holy and opposite to sin; then it is to his glory to be infinitely displeas’d with sin. And if it be to God’s glory to be infinitely displeas’d with sin; then it must be to his glory to exercise and manifest that displeasure, and to act accordingly. But the proper exercise and testimony of displeasure against sin, in the Supreme Being and absolute Governor of the world, is taking vengeance. Men may show their hatred of sin by lamenting it, and mourning for it, and taking great pains, and undergoing great difficulties, to prevent or remove it, or by approving God’s vengeance for it. Taking vengeance is not the proper way of fellow-subjects’ hatred of sin; but it is in the Supreme Lord and Judge of the world, to whom vengeance belongs; because he has the ordering and government of all things, and therefore the suffering of sin to go unpunish’d would in him be a conniving at it. Taking vengeance is as much the proper manifestation of God’s displeasure at sin, as a mighty work is the proper manifestation of his power, or as a wise work is the proper manifestation of his wisdom. There may be other testimonies of God’s displeas’dness with and abhorrence of sin, without testifying his displeasure in condign punishment. He might declare he has such a displeasure and abhorrence. So there might be other testimonies of God’s power and wisdom, besides a powerful wise effect. He might have declared himself to be infinitely wise and powerful. But yet there would have been wanting the proper manifestations of God’s power and wisdom, if God had only declared himself to be possess’d of these attributes. The creatures might have believ’d him to be all-wise and almighty; but by seeing his mighty and wise works, they see his power and wisdom. So if there had been only a declaration of God’s abhorrence and displeasure against sin, the creature might have believ’d it, but could not have seen it, unless he should also take vengeance for it.

3. The honour of the greatness, excellency, and majesty of God's being, requires that sin be punished with an infinite punishment. Hitherto I have spoken of the requisiteness of God's punishing sin, on account of the demerit and hatefulness of it absolutely considered, and not directly as God is interested in the affair. But now, if we consider sin as levelled against God, not only compensative justice to the sinner, but justice to himself, requires that God should punish sin with infinite punishment. Sin casts contempt on the majesty and greatness of God. The language of it is, that he is a despicable being, not worthy to be honoured or feared; not so great, that his displeasure is worthy to be dreaded; and that his threatenings of wrath are despicable. Now, the proper vindication or defence of God's majesty in such a case, is, for God to contradict this language of sin, in his providence towards sin that speaks this language, or to contradict the language of sin in the event and fruit of sin. Sin says, God is a despicable being, and not worthy that the sinner should fear him; and so affronts him without fear. The proper vindication of God's majesty from this is, for God to show, by the event, that he is worthy that the sinner should regard him and fear him, by his appearing in the fearful, dreadful event to the person guilty, that he is an infinitely fearful and terrible being. The language of sin is, that God's displeasure is not worthy that the sinner should regard it. The proper vindication of God from this language is, to show, by the experience of the event, the infinite dreadfulness of that slighted displeasure. In such a case, the majesty of God requires this vindication. It cannot be properly vindicated without it, neither can God be just to himself without this vindication; unless there could be such a thing as a repentance, humiliation, and sorrow for this, proportionable to the greatness of the majesty despised. When the majesty of God has such contempt cast upon it, and is trodden down in the dust by vile sinners, it is not fit that this infinite and glorious majesty should be left under this contempt; but that it should be vindicated wholly from it; that it should be raised perfectly from the dust wherein it is trodden, by something opposite to the contempt, which is equivalent to it, or of weight sufficient to balance it; either an equivalent punishment, or an equivalent sorrow and repentance. So that sin must be punished with an infinite punishment.

Sin casts contempt on the infinite glory and excellency of God. The language of it is, that God is not an excellent being, but an odious one; and therefore, that it is no heinous thing to hate him. Now, it is fit that on this occasion omniscience should declare and manifest that it judges otherwise; and that it should show that it esteems God infinitely excellent; and therefore, that it looks on it as an infinitely heinous thing, to cast such a reflection on God, by infinite tokens of resentment of such a reflection and such hatred.

God is to be considered, in this affair, not merely as the Governor of a world of creatures, to order things between one creature and another, but as the Supreme Regulator and Rector of the universe, the orderer of things relating to the whole compass of existence, including himself; to maintain the rights of the whole, and decorum through the whole, and to maintain

his own rights, and the due honour of his own perfections, as well as to preserve justice among his creatures. It is fit that there should be one that has this office; and this office properly belongs to the Supreme Being. And if he should fail of doing justice to himself in a necessary vindication of his own majesty and glory, it would be an immensely greater failure of his rectoral justice than if he should deprive the creatures (that are beings of infinitely less consequence) of their right.

4. There is a necessity of sin's being punished with a condign punishment, from the law of God that threatens such punishment. All but Epicureans will own, that all creatures that are moral agents, are subjects of God's moral government; and that therefore he has given a law to his creatures. But if God has given a law to his creatures, that law must have sanctions, *i. e.* it must be enforced with threatenings of punishment: otherwise it fails of having the nature of a law, and is only of the nature of counsel or advice; or rather of a request. For one being to express his inclination or will to another, concerning any thing he would receive from him, any love or respect, without any threatening annexed, but leaving it with the person applied to, whether he will afford it or not, whether he will grant it or not, supposing that his refusal will be with impunity; is properly of the nature of a request. It does not amount to counsel or advice; because, when we give counsel to others, it is for their interest. But when we express our desire or will of something we would receive from them, with impunity to them whether they grant it or not, this is more properly requesting than counselling. No doubt it falls far short of the nature of lawgiving. For such an expression of one's will as this, is an expression of will, without any expression of authority. It holds forth no authority, for us merely to manifest our wills or inclinations to another; nor indeed does it exhibit any authority over a person applied to, to promise him rewards. So persons may, and often do, promise rewards to others, for doing those things that they have no power to oblige them to. So may persons do to their equals: so may a king do to others who are not his subjects. This is rather bargaining with others, than giving them laws.

That expression of will only is a law, which is exhibited in such a manner as to express the lawgiver's power over the person to whom it is manifested, expressing his power of disposal of him, according as he complies or refuses; that which shows power over him, so as to oblige him to comply, or to make it be to his cost if he refuses.

For the same reason that it is necessary the divine law should have a threatening of condign punishment annexed, it is also necessary that the threatening should be fulfilled. For the threatening wholly relates to the execution. If it had no connexion with execution, it would be wholly void, and would be as no threatening; and so far as there is not a connexion with execution, whether that be in a greater or lesser degree; so far and in such a degree it is void, and so far approaches to the nature of no threatening, as much as if that degree of unconnexion was expressed in the threatening. As for instance, if sin fails of threatened punishment half the times, this makes void the threatening in one half of it, and brings it

down to be no more than if the threatening had expressed only so much, that sin should be punished half the times that it is committed.

But if it be needful that all sin in every act should be forbidden by law, *i. e.* with a prohibition and threatening of condign punishment annexed, and that the threatening of sin with condign punishment should be universal; then it is necessary that it should be universally executed. A threatening of an omniscient and true being can be supposed to signify no more punishment than is intended to be executed, and is not necessarily to be understood of any more. A threatening, if it signifies any thing, is a signification of some connexion betwixt the crime and the punishment. But the threatening of an omniscient being, cannot be understood to signify any more connexion with punishment than there is.

If it be needful that there should be a divine law, it is needful that this divine law should be maintained in the nature, life, authority, and strength that is proper to it as a law. The nature, life, authority, and strength of every law, consists in its sanction, by which the deed is connected with the compensation; and therefore depends on the Strength and firmness of that connexion. In proportion as that connexion is weak, in such proportion does the law lose its strength, and fails of the proper nature and power of a law, and degenerates towards the nature of requests and expressions of will and desire to receive love and respect, without being enforced with authority.

Dispensing with the law by the lawgiver, so as not to fulfil it or execute it, in its nature does not differ from an abrogation of it, unless the law contains in itself such a clause, that it shall or may be dispensed with, and not fulfilled in certain cases, or when the lawgiver pleases.

But this would be a contradiction. For, in the law contained such a clause; then, not to fulfil it, would be according to the law, and a fulfilment of the law; and therefore there would be no dispensing with the law in it, because it is doing what the law itself directs to. The law may contain clauses of exception, wherein particular cases may be excepted *from* general rules; but it cannot make provision for a dispensation. And therefore, for the lawgiver to dispense with it, is indeed to abrogate it. Though it may not be an abrogating it wholly, *yet* it is in some measure changing it. To dispense with the law, in not fulfilling it on him that breaks it, is making the rule give place to the sinner. But certainly it is an indecent thing, that sin, which provokes the execution, should procure the abrogation of the law.

The necessity of fulfilling the law, in the sense that has been spoken of, appears from [Matt. v. 18](#). “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled.” The words will allow of no other tolerable sense.

It is necessary that the law of God should be maintained and executed, and not dispensed with or abrogated for the sake of the sinner, for the following reasons:

1st. The nature and being of the law requires it. For, as has been already shown, by such dispensation it loses the life and authority of a law, as it respects the subject. But it does not only fail of being a law in this respect; it fails of being a rule to the Supreme Judge. The law is the great rule of righteousness and decorum, that the Supreme and Universal Rector has established and published, for the regulation of things in the commonwealth of the universality of intelligent beings and moral agents, in all that relates to them as concerned one with another; a rule, by which things are not only to be regulated between one subject and another, but between the king and subjects; that it may be a rule of judgment to the one, as well as a rule of duty to the other. It is but reasonable to suppose, that such a rule should be established and published for the benefit of all that belong to this universal commonwealth, to be a rule to direct both their actions towards each other, and their expectations from each other, that they may have a fixed and known rule by which they are to act and to be dealt with, to be both active and passive as members of this commonwealth. The subject is most nearly concerned, not only in the measure of his own actions, but also in the consequences of them, or the method of his judge's determinations concerning him.

None that own the existence of a divine law, with threatening annexed, can deny that there actually is such a rule as this, that relates both to the manner of the creature's acting, and also the judge's acting toward him as subject to that law. For none will deny, that the precepts relate to the manner of the subject's acting, and that the threatenings relate to the manner of the judge's proceeding with the subject, in consequence of his obedience or disobedience.

It is needful that this great rule for managing affairs in this universal commonwealth, should be fixed and settled, and not be vague and uncertain. So far as it fails of this, it ceases to be of the nature of a rule. For it is essential to the nature of a rule, that it be something fixed. But if it be needful that it be something fixed, then it is needful that the author, and he by whom it subsists, should maintain and fulfil it, and not depart from it; because that is in a measure to disannul it. If he doth so, therein the rule becomes unfixed, and it so far ceases to be a rule to the judge.

2d. That the law should be made to give place to the sinner is contrary to the direct design of the law. For the law was made, that the subject should be regulated by it, and give place to it; and not to be regulated by the subject, and to give place to him, especially to a wicked, vile, rebellious subject.

The law is made, that it might prevent sin, and cause it not to be; and not that sin should disannul the law and cause it not to be. Therefore it would be very indecent for the Supreme Rector to cause this great rule to give place to the rebellion of the sinner.

3d. It is in nowise fit that this great rule should be abrogated and give place to the opposition and violation of the rebellious subject, on account of the perfection of the law, and as it is an expression of the perfection of the lawgiver. The holiness and rectitude and



goodness of this great rule, which the Supreme Lawgiver has established for the regulation of the commonwealth of moral agents, and its universal fitness and wisdom, and absolute perfection, render a partial abrogation, for the sake of them that dislike it, and will not submit to it, needless and unseemly. If the great rule should he set aside, for the sake of the rebel, it would carry too much of the face of acknowledgment, in the lawgiver, of want of wisdom and foresight, or of some defect, in point of holiness or righteousness, in his law. He that breaks the law, finds fault with it, and casts that reflection on it, that it is not a good law; and if God should in part abrogate the law upon this, it would have too much the appearance of a conceding to the sinner's objection against it.

But God will magnify his law, and make it honourable, and will give no occasion for any such reflections upon it, nor leave the law under such a reflection.

If this great rule of righteousness be so excellent and good a law, it is not only unfit that it should give place to rebellion, as this would be a dishonour to the excellency of the law and lawgiver; but also a wrong to the public good, which the Supreme Hector of the world has the care, and is the guardian of. If the rule be perfect, perfectly right and just and holy, and with infinite wisdom adapted to the good of the whole; then the public good requires that it be strongly established. The more firmly it is settled, and the more strongly it is guarded and defended, the better, and the more is it for the public good; and every thing by which it is weakened, is a damage and loss to the commonwealth of beings.

But I have already shown how every departure from it weakens it, unfixes it, and causes it to fail of the nature of a settled rule, and in some measure disannuls it.

4th. The sacredness of the authority and majesty of the Divine Lawgiver requires, that he should maintain and fulfil his law, when it is violated by a rebellious subject. I have before spoken of the greatness and majesty of his being, how that is concerned in it. I now would consider the sacredness of his authority, as he stands related to his creatures as their lawgiver. "The majesty of a ruler consists very much in that which appears in him; that tends to strike the subject with reverence and awe, and dread of contempt of him, or rebellion against him. And it is fit that this awe and dread should be in proportion to the greatness and dignity of the ruler, and the degree of authority with which he is vested. But this awe and dread is by an apprehension of the terribleness of the consequences of that contempt and rebellion, and the degree of the danger of those terrible consequences, or the degree of connexion of that rebellion with those consequences. Therefore, if it be meet that this awe or this apprehension should be in proportion to the greatness and dignity of the ruler, then it is fit that the consequences of contempt of the Supreme Ruler of the world should he infinitely terrible, and the danger that it brings of punishment, or connexion that it has with it, be strong and certain, and consequently, that the threatenings which enforce his laws should be sure and inviolable. It is fit the authority of a ruler should be sacred proportionably to the greatness of that authority, *i. e.* in proportion to the greatness of the ruler, and his worthiness of honour and

obedience, and the height of his exaltation above us, and the absoluteness of his dominion over us, and the strength of his right to our submission and obedience. But the sacredness of the authority of a sovereign consists in the strength of the enforcement of it, and guard that is about it, *i. e.* in the consequences of the violation to him that is guilty, and the degree of danger of these consequences. For the authority of a ruler does not consist in the power or influence he has on another by attractives, but coercives. The fence that is about the authority of a prince, that guards it as sacred, is the connexion there is between the violations of it, and the terrible consequences; or, in other words, in the strength or sureness of the threatening. Therefore, if this connexion be partly broken, the fence is partly broken: in proportion as the threatenings are weak, the guard is weak. But certainly it is fit that the authority of the infinitely great and absolute Lord of heaven and earth should be infinitely sacred, and should he kept so with an infinitely strong guard, and a fence without any breach in it. And it is not becoming the sacredness of the majesty and authority of the great **Greek**, that that perfectly holy, just, and infinitely wise and good law, which he has established a the great rule for the regulation of all things in the universal commonwealth of beings, should be set aside, to give place to the infinitely unreasonable and vile opposition that sinners make to it, and their horrid and daring rebellion against it.

5th. The truth of the lawgiver makes it necessary that the threatening of the law should be fulfilled in every punctilio. The threatening of the law is absolute: Thou shall surely die. It is true, the obligation does not lie in the claim of the person threatened, as it is in promises: for it is not to be supposed, that the person threatened will claim the punishment threatened. And indeed, if we look upon things strictly, those seem to reckon the wrong way, that suppose the necessity of the futurity of the execution to arise from an obligation on God in executing, properly consequent on his threatening. For the necessity of the connexion of the execution with the threatening, seems to arise directly the other way, *viz.* from the obligation that was on the omniscient God in threatening, consequent on the futurity of the execution. Though, strictly speaking, he is not obliged to execute because he has threatened, yet he was obliged not absolutely to threaten, if he at the same time knew that he should not and would not execute; because this would not have been consistent with his truth. So that, from the truth of God, there is an inviolable connexion between absolute threatening and execution; not so properly from an obligation on God to conform the execution to the past absolute threatening, as from his obligation to conform his absolute threatening to the future execution. This God was absolutely obliged to do, as he would speak the truth. For if God absolutely threatened contrary to what he knew would come to pass, then he absolutely threatened contrary to what he knew to be truth. And how any can speak contrary to what they know to be the truth, in declaring, promising, or threatening, or any other way, consistently with perfect and inviolable truth, I cannot conceive. Threatenings are significations of something; and, if they are made consistent with truth, or are true significations of any thing, they are

significations of truth, or significations of that which is true. If absolute threatening are significations of any thing, they are significations of the futurity of the thing threatened. But if the futurity of the thing threatened is not true, then how can the threatenings be true significations? And if God in them speaks contrary to what he knows, and contrary to what he intends; how he can speak true, is to me inconceivable. It is with absolute threatenings, as it is with predictions. When God has foretold something that shall come to pass hereafter, which does not concern our interest, and so is of the nature neither of a promise nor threatening, there is a necessary connexion betwixt the prediction and the fulfilment, but not by virtue of any claim we have to make; and so not properly by virtue of any obligation to fulfil, consequent on the prediction, but by virtue of an obligation on an omniscient Being in predicting, consequent on what he knew he would fulfil; an obligation to conform the prediction to the future event. It is as much against the veracity of God, absolutely to threaten what he knows he will not accomplish, as to predict what he knows he will not accomplish: for to do either, would be to declare, that that will be, which he at the same time does not intend shall be. Absolute threatenings are a sort of predictions. God in them foretells or declares what shall come to pass. They do not differ from mere predictions, in the nature of the declaration or foretelling, but partly in the thing declared or foretold, being an evil to come upon us; and a mere prediction being of a thing different; and partly in *the end* of foretelling. In a threatening, the end of foretelling is to deter us from sinning; and predictions of things indifferent are for some other end. Absolute threatenings are God's declarations of something future; and the truth of God does as much oblige him to keep the truth in declarations of what is future, as of what is past or present. For things past, present, and future, are all alike before God all alike in his view. And when God declares to others what he sees himself, he is equally obliged to truth, whether the thing declared be past, present, or to come. And, indeed, there is no need of the distinction between present truth and future, in this case. For if any of God's absolute threatenings are not to be fulfilled, those threatenings are declarations or revelations contrary, not only to future truth, but such a threatening is a revelation of the futurity of a punishment. That futurity is now present with God, when he threatens; present in his mind, his knowledge. And if he signifies that a thing is future, which he knows not to be future; then the signification he gives is contrary to present truth, even contrary to what God now knows is future. Again, an absolute threatening is a signification of the present intention of him that threatens: and therefore, if he threatens what he does not intend to fulfil, then he signifies an intention to be, which is not; and so the threatening is contrary to the present truth. God's absolute threatenings are a revelation to his subjects, of the appointed measures of their Judge's proceeding with respect to their breaches of his law; and if they do not reveal what is indeed the intended method of the Judge's proceeding, then it is not a true revelation.

There is a necessity of the fulfilment of God's absolute promises both ways; *viz.* both by an obligation on God to foretell or declare, or foredeclare the future benefit, according to what he foresaw would be, and be intended should be; and also by an obligation on him to fulfil his promise consequent on his predicting, and by virtue of the claim of the person to whom the promise was made.

And there is also an obligation on God to fulfil his absolute threatenings consequent on his threatenings, *indirectly*, by virtue of many ill and undesirable consequences of the event's being, beside the certain dependence or certain expectations raised by God's threatenings, in the persons threatened, and others that are spectators; which consequences God may be obliged not to be a cause of. But threatenings do not properly bring an obligation on God, that is consequent on them, as threatenings, as it is with promises.

As to those threatenings that are not positive or absolute, they are not necessarily followed with the punishment mentioned in them, because the possibility of escaping the punishment is either expressed or understood in the threatening. But the divine truth makes it necessary that there should be a certain connexion between them, that as much punishment be inflicted as is signified by them. If certain suffering be not signified by them, then there is no necessary connexion between them and certain suffering. If it be "only signified in them, that there is great danger of the suffering, according to God's ordinary method of dealing with men, and that, therefore, they, as they would act rationally, have great reason to fear it, seeing that God does not see cause to reveal what he will do to them: if this be all that is really contained and understood in the threatening, then this is all that the threatening is connected with. Or, if the proper meaning of the threatening be, that such suffering shall come, unless they repent, and this be all that can be fairly understood, then the truth of God makes no more necessary. But God's truth makes a necessary connexion between every threatening and every promise, and all that is properly signified in that threatening or promise.

§ 2. The satisfaction of Christ by his death is certainly a very rational thing. If any person that was greatly obliged to me, that was dependent on me, and that I loved, should exceedingly abuse me, and should go on in an obstinate course of it from one year to another, notwithstanding all I could say to him, and all new obligations continually repeated; though at length he should leave it off, I should not forgive him, unless upon gospel considerations. But if any person that was a much dearer friend to me, and one that had always been true to me, and constant to the utmost, and that was a very near relation of him that offended me, should intercede for him, and, out of the entire love he had to him, should put himself to very hard labours and difficulties, and undergo great pains and miseries to procure him forgiveness; and the person that had offended should, with a changed mind, fly to this mediator, and should seek favour in his name, with a sense in his own mind how much his mediator had done and suffered for him; I should be satisfied, and feel myself inclined, without any difficulty, to receive him into my entire friendship again; but not without the

last-mentioned condition, that he should be sensible how much his mediator had done and suffered. For if he was ignorant of it, or thought he had done only some small matter, I should not be easy nor satisfied. So a sense of Christ's sufficiency seems necessary in faith.

§ 3. The apostle when he would express his willingness to be made a sacrifice for his brethren the Jews, says, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren:" [Rom. ix. 3](#). See, concerning Moses, [Exodus xxxii. 32](#). [2 Sam. xviii. 33](#). "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom I would God I had died for thee." This text expresses substitution; [Matt. xx. 28](#). "To give his life a ransom for many." Concerning this text, and the force of the preposition Greek, see *Montriefs Review and Examination of the Principles of Campbell*, p. 113, 114.

The laying of hands on the head of the sacrifice, was a token of putting the guilt of sin upon a person; agreeably to the customary signification of the imputation of guilt among the Hebrews. Thus the phrase, *his blood shall be upon his own head, or on our heads, &c.* was a phrase for the imputation of the guilt of blood. So [Joshua ii. 19](#). [1 Kings ii. 32, 33](#). "And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Tether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever; but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the Lord." [Verse 37](#). "For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shall know for certain that thou shall surely die; thy blood shall be upon thine own head." [Verse 44](#). "The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father; therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head."

Abigail, when mediating between David and Nabal, when the former was provoked to wrath against the latter, and had determined to destroy him, [1 Sam. xxv. 24](#). "fell at David's feet and said, Upon me let this iniquity be, and let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thy audience, and hear the voice of thy handmaid." And in [verse 28](#). she calls Nabal's iniquity her iniquity. By this it appears, that a mediator's putting himself in the stead of the offender, so that the offended party should impute the offence to him, and look on the mediator as having taken it upon him, looking on him as the debtor for what satisfaction should be required and expected, was in those days no strange notion, or considered as a thing in itself absurd and inconsistent with men's natural notion of things.

[Heb. xii. 24, 25, 26](#). "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall



not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth. But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only," &c.

He that speaketh, whom the apostle warns us not to refuse, who spake once on earth, and whose voice shook the earth, and who now speaketh from heaven, and his voice shakes not only the earth but heaven, is he that is spoken of, [verse 24](#). *Jesus the mediator, &c. whose blood speaketh*. The word **Greek** signifies to *speak divine oracles*, and in Scripture is applied to God alone. When it is said he spake on earth, respect is had to God's giving the law at mount Sinai, when his voice shook the earth. It is plain it was not the voice of Moses, or any created angel that is intended, by the whole history of the affair in Exodus. The people made great preparation to meet with God: God descended on the mount: he was there in the midst of angels; [Psalm lxxviii. 17](#). "From his right hand went the fiery law." [Deut. xxxiii. 2](#). And in giving the law he says, "I am the Lord thy God," &c. He that in the book of [Haggai ii. 6, 7](#), which the apostle refers to, says, "Yet once more I shake the heaven and the earth," <sup>508</sup> is God. See *Owen in loc.* p. 273, 274, 278.

Christ is often represented as bearing our sins for us: [Isaiah liii. 4](#). "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." [Verse 11](#). "For he shall bear their iniquities." [Verse 12](#). "He bare the sin of many." And with an evident reference to this last place, the apostle says, [Heb. ix. 28](#). "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." And with a plain reference to [verses 4, 5. of this 53d. chapter of Isaiah.](#), the apostle Peter says, [1 Pet. ii. 24](#). "Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

The word translated here in [Isaiah liii. 4, and 12.](#) is **Greek** the same word, and the same phrase, of bearing sin and bearing iniquity, is often used concerning things which are the types of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, *viz.* the Levitical priests and sacrifices. It was no uncommon phrase, but usual, and well understood among the Jews; and we find it very often used in other cases, and applied to others besides either Christ or the types of him. And when it is so, it is plain, that the general meaning of the phrase is, lying under the guilt of sin, having it imputed and charged upon the person, as obnoxious to the punishment of it, or obliged to answer and make satisfaction for it; or liable to the calamities and miseries to which it exposes. In such a manner it seems always to be used, unless in some few places it signifies to take away sin by forgiveness. See *Dr. Owen* on [Heb. ix. 28.](#) and *Pool's Synopsis* on [Isaiah liii.](#) And concerning their laying their hands on the head of the sacrifice, see also *Pool's Synopsis* on [Levit. i. 4.](#)

That God in the instituted ceremonies concerning the scape goat, and the other goat that was sacrificed for a sin offering, intended that there should be a representation of laying the guilt of sin on those goats; see *Pool's Synopsis* on [Levit. xvi. 21., 22, 28.](#) It was an evidence

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that the two goats were to appear as if they were made sinful with the sins of the people, or unclean with their uncleanness, or guilt with their guilt, that he that brought the one, and he that let go the other, were both unclean, and were therefore to wash themselves with water, &c. [Levit. xvi. 26, 28.](#)

The translation of guilt or obligation to punishment was not a thing alien from men's conceptions and notions of old in scripture times; neither the times of the Old Testament nor New; as appears by what the woman of Tekoa says, [2 Sam. xiv. 9.](#) "My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me and on my father's house, and the king and his throne be guiltless." And by what the Jews said, when Pilate said of Christ, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it;" [Matt. xxvii. 24, 25.](#) "His blood be on us and on our children." And the words of Rebekah, when Jacob objected against doing as she proposed, that he should bring a curse on himself and not a blessing; [Gen. xxvii. 13.](#) "On me be thy curse, my son, only obey my voice."

[1 Cor. xv. 17.](#) "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins," plainly shows how necessary it was, that there should be something more than reformation, which was plainly in fact wrought, in order to their being delivered from their sins; even that atonement, the sufficiency of which God attested by raising our Great Surety from the grave." *Doddridge in loc.*

*Defin. 1.* By *merit* in this discourse, I mean any thing whatsoever in any person or being, or about him or belonging to him, which appearing in the view of another is a recommendation of him to that other's regard, esteem, or affection. I do not at present take into consideration, whether that which thus recommends be real merit, or something that truly, according to the nature of things, is worthy to induce esteem, &c.; but only what actually recommends and appears worthy in the eye of him to whom it recommends the other; which is the case of every thing that is actually the ground of respect or affection in one towards another, whether the ground be real worth, or only agreement in temper, benefits received, near relation, long acquaintance, &c. &c. Whatever it be that is by the respecting person viewed in the person respected, that actually has influence, and is effectual to recommend to respect, is merit or worthiness of respect or fitness for it in his eyes.

*Defin. 2.* By *patron*, I mean a person of superior dignity or merit, that stands for and espouses the interest of another, interposes between him and a third person or party, in that capacity to maintain, secure, or promote the interest of that other, by his influence with the third person, improving his merit with him, or interest in his esteem and regard for that end. And by *client*, I mean that other person whose interest the patron thus espouses, and in this manner endeavours to maintain and promote.

Having explained how I use these terms, I would now observe the following things:

1. It is not unreasonable or against nature, or without foundation in the reason and nature of things, that respect should be shown to one on account of his relation to, or union

and connexion with, another: or, which is the same thing, that a person should be thought the proper object of respect or regard, viewed in that relation or connexion, which he is not the proper object of, viewed as by himself singly and separately: or, which is still the same thing, that a person should be thought worthy of respect, or meriting respect, on the account of the merit of the other person whom he stands related to, which he would not merit viewed by himself, taking the word Here as it has been explained.

2. Whenever one is thus viewed, as having a merit of respect on the account of the merit of another that he stands related to, who has not that merit considered by himself, the merit of the person he is related to is imputed to him; and these persons so far are substituted the one in the place of the other. This is plain: for the person now accepted as having merit of respect, has not that merit in himself considered alone, but only as related to another that has merit in himself, and so is respected for the sake of the merit of that other; which is the very same thing as, in our view or consideration, transferring that merit from that other person to him, and viewing it in him as his merit, or merit that he is interested in, merit whose recommending influence becomes his in some degree; so that in all such cases here is an imputation and substitution in some degree. The merit of the one becomes the merit of the other in some degree; or, in other words, the recommending property, virtue, and influence of the one, becomes the recommending influence of the other, or influence that prevails to recommend the other; which is the same thing. Thus it is, when any one respects a near relation, or a child, or the spouse of a friend that is very dear and greatly esteemed for such a friend's sake, or shows the relative or friend greater regard, seeks his welfare more, and shows him more kindness, than he would do if he were viewed out of such a relation or connexion, and entirely by himself.

Thus it is reasonable and natural, that one should be respected for the merit of another, and so his merit be in some degree imputed to another, and one person be substituted for another according to the natural sense of all mankind.

3. As it is the relation of one to another, or his union with him, that is the ground of the respect that is shown towards him for the other's sake, and so the ground of substitution of the other in his stead, and of the imputation of the other's merit in some *degree*, as has been observed; so it is manifest, that the greater or nearer that relation is, and the stricter the union, so much the more does it prevail for the acceptance of the person, or the object of respect, for the sake of him to whom he is united; or, in other words, the union, by how much greater and closer it is, by so much more it is a ground of his being accepted, as if he were one with the other, or of the other's being substituted for him, and his merit's being imputed in a greater degree, and more, as if he were the same.

4. If there be any such thing as a union of a person to another, as, for instance, a patron to a client, in such a certain degree, or in such a manner, as that, on the account of the degree and manner, it shall be peculiarly fit to look upon them as completely one and the same, as



to all that concerns the interest of the client, with relation to the regard of the friend of the patron; then especially may the patron be taken by his friend as the substitute of the client, and his merit be imputed to him.

If it be inquired, what degree or manner of union may be looked upon thus complete: I answer, When the patron's heart is so united to the client, that when the client is to be destroyed, he, from love, is willing to take his destruction on himself, or what is equivalent thereto, so that the client may escape; then he may be properly accepted as perfectly one with regard to the interest of the client; for this reason, that his love to the client is such as thoroughly puts him into the place of the client in all that concerns his interest, even so as to absorb or swallow up his whole interest: because his love actually puts him in the room of the beloved, in that suffering or calamity which, being his total destruction, does swallow up and consume all his interest, without leaving the least part of it. Therefore, love that will take that destruction, evidently takes in his whole interest. It appears to be an equal balance for it. His love puts him thoroughly in his client's stead. If his love were such as made him willing to put himself in the other's stead, in many cases where his interest was concerned, but yet not in a case where all is concerned, the union is not complete; he is partially, and not thoroughly, united. But when the love of the patron is such as to go through with the matter, and makes him willing to put himself in the other's stead, even in the case of the last extremity, and where the beloved is to be utterly and perfectly destroyed; then he is, as to his love, sufficiently united, so as to be accepted as completely one by his friend, in all that concerns the client's welfare.

5. If a friend that is very dear to any person, and of great merit in the eyes of any person, not only stands in a strict union with another, but also does particularly express a great desire of that other's welfare, and appears much to seek it; it is agreeable to nature, that the welfare of the person united to him should be regarded for his sake, and on his account, as if it were his own welfare. For, by means of this desire of the other's welfare, his welfare becomes his own. For that good which any one desires, sets his heart upon, and seeks, thereby becomes his own good: it becomes a good that is grateful to him, or which tends to gratify and delight him: for it is grateful to all to have their desires gratified.

In such a case, the dear and worthy person makes the other's interest his own by his explicit choice; by his own act he places his interest in the interest of the other, and so substitutes himself in the other's stead, as to the affair of interest or welfare.

And the greater that desire appears, -the more earnestly he seeks the other's welfare, and the greater things he does to obtain it; so much the more does his interest become his own, and so much the more does he substitute himself in the room of the other.

6. Especially is the client's welfare properly and naturally regarded, for the sake of the patron that is very dear and worthy in the eyes of any person, when the way in which the patron expresses the desire of the client's welfare, that he is closely united to, and in which

he seeks it, is by suffering and being at expense of his own personal and private welfare in any degree, for the welfare of the client. Expending one's good or interest for another, is properly transferring the interest in the good expended, into the good sought: the expended good, which is the means, is properly set aside and removed, in the regard of him that is at the expense, and whose regard is placed on that good which is the end. The good of the price is parted with, for the good of the thing purchased; and therefore, here is proper substitution of one in the place of the other.

In such a case therefore, in a more special manner, will it be proper and natural for one in whose eyes the patron is very worthy, and to whom he is very dear, to have regard to the welfare of the client for the patron's sake, or for the sake of the patron's merit: as, suppose the client of the excellent and dear patron be a child or spouse in captivity, and the patron lays out himself exceedingly for the client's redemption, and goes through many and very great hardships, and is at vast expense for the obtaining of it.

7. If the patron who seeks the welfare of the client, in his seeking of it, does particularly and directly apply himself to the person who has so high an esteem and affection for him, expressing his desires of the client's welfare in request to him, and the endeavours that are used with him, and what is expended for the client's welfare be given to him, expended for him, for his sake, promoting his ends, or for something that his friend regards as his own interest; then especially is it natural that the person, of whom his client's welfare is sought, should be ready to grant it for his sake.

8. It is still more highly proper and natural to regard the client's welfare on account of the patron's merit, or to reckon the merit of the patron to his client's account; if the merit of the patron consists, or especially appears, in what he does for his client's welfare; or if the virtues and worthy qualities have their chief exercise, and do chiefly exhibit their amiableness, in those excellent and amiable acts which he performs in seeking the good of the client, in the deeds he performs on the account of the interest of the client, and in his applying to his friends for it; in the acts he performs as an intercessor with his friend for it, and the service he does him on this account. In this case, it is peculiarly natural to accept the client, on the account of the merit of the patron; for the merit is on his account, and has its existence for the sake of the client.

9. More especially is it natural, when his merit, above all, consists and appears in the very expense the patron is at of his own welfare, for the welfare of the client, or in the act of expending or exchanging the one for the other. For, as was observed before, such expense is properly regarded as a price of the client's welfare; but when such merit is added to the price, this merit becomes the worth, value, or preciousness of the price; preciousness of another kind, besides merely the value of the natural good parted with. It adds a moral good to the price, equal to the natural good expended; so that the worthiness of the patron, and the value expended, are offered both together in one, as the price of the welfare of the client.



10. The thus accepting the patron's merit, as being placed to the account of the client, will be more natural still, if the patron puts himself in the place of that client, undertaking to appear for him, to represent him, and act in his stead by an exceeding great change in his circumstances, clothes himself with the form of his client, goes where he is, takes his place in the universe, puts himself into his circumstances, and is in all things made like unto him, wherein this may be consistent with maintaining his merit inviolable. If the client be unworthy, and an offender, and has deserved ill of the person whose favour he needs, then abating and dismissing resentment, or lessening or withholding the evil deserved, for the sake of the merit of the patron, is equivalent to a positive favour for his sake, in case of no offence and demerit of punishment.

11. If the person that needs favour be an offender and unworthy, then, in order to a proper influence and effect of the union and merit of a patron, to induce his friend to receive him into favour on his account, the union of the patron with his client, and his undertaking and appearing as his patron to seek favour for him, should be in such a manner, and attended with such circumstances, as not to diminish his merit, *i. e.* so as that his union with and intercession for the client, shall not in the least infringe on these two things, *vis.* the patron's own union with his friend, whose favour he seeks for the client, and his merit strictly so called, *i. e.* his own virtue. For if his own worthiness be diminished by his union with one that is unworthy, then his influence to recommend the client one way, is destroyed one way, at the same time that it is established another. For the recommending influence consists in the two things, *viz.* his merit, and his union with the client. Therefore, if one of these is diminished or destroyed, as the other is advanced and established; nothing is done on the whole toward recommending the client. Therefore, in order that, on the whole, the client be effectually recommended, it is necessary that the patron's union to an offending unworthy client should be attended with such circumstances, that it shall not be at all consistent with these two things, his regard to his friend, and his regard to virtue or holiness: for in these two things consists his merit in the eyes of his friend; and therefore it is necessary, that his appearing united to his unworthy and offending client should be with such circumstances as most plainly to demonstrate, that he perfectly disapproves of his offence and unworthiness, and to show a perfect regard to virtue, and to the honour and dignity of his offended injured friend. There is no way that this can be so thoroughly and fully done, as by undertaking himself to pay the debt to the honour and rights of his injured friend, and to honour the rule of virtue and righteousness the client has violated, by putting himself in the stead of the offender, into subjection to the injured rights and violated authority of his offended friend, and under the violated law and rule of righteousness belonging to one in the client's state; and so, for the sake of the honour of his friend's authority, and the rule of righteousness, suffering the whole penalty due to the offender, and which would have been requisite to be suffered by him, for the maintaining the honour and dignity of those things; and himself,

by such great condescension, and under such self-denial, honouring those rights and rules by his obedience and perfect conformity to them; hereby giving the most evident testimony to all beholders, that although he loves his client and seeks his welfare, yet he had rather be humbled so low, deny himself so greatly, and suffer so much, than that his welfare should be in the least diminished, his authority weakened, and his honour and his dignity degraded.

12. If the patron be, in the eyes of him whose favour is sought, of very great dignity, it is agreeable to reason and nature that this should have influence to procure greater favour to the client than if he were of less dignity. And when it is inquired, whether there be a sufficiency in the patron and his relation to his client, to answer such a degree of favour as is proposed to be obtained for him; the dignity of the patron is one thing that is to be estimated and put into the scales, with the degree of favour sought, in order to know whether it be sufficient to countervail it. By dignity, I here intend, not only the degree of virtue and relation to his friend, of whom he seeks favour, but the greatness of the person of the patron.

If, in adjusting this matter, the dignity that is viewed in the patron, and his friend's regard to him, be so great, that, considered with the degree of the patron's union with his client, there is a sufficiency to countervail all the favour that the client needs, or the utmost that he is capable of receiving, then there is a perfect sufficiency in the patron for the client, or a sufficiency completely to answer and support the whole interest of the client; or a sufficiency in his friend's regard to the patron, wholly to receive, take in, and comprehend the client, with regard to his whole interest, or all that pertains to his welfare; or, which is the same thing, a sufficiency fully to answer for him as his representative and substitute, in all that pertains to his welfare.

13. If the patron and client are equals as to greatness of being or degree of existence, and the degree of the patron's union with his client should be such (and that were possible) that he regarded the interest of the client equally with his own personal interest; then it would be natural for the patron's friend to regard the client's welfare for the sake of the patron, as much as he regards the patron's own personal welfare: because, when the case is so, the patron is as strictly united to the client as he is to himself, and his client's welfare becomes perfectly, and to all intents and purposes, his own interest, as much as his personal welfare; and therefore, as the love of his friend to him disposes him to regard whatever is his interest, to such a degree as it is his interest; so it must dispose him to regard the client's welfare in an equal degree with his own personal interest; because, by the supposition, it is his interest in an equal degree. But this must be here provided or supposed, *viz.* not only that so strict a union of the patron and client be possible, but also that it be proper, or that there be no impropriety or unfitness in it; because if it be unfit, then the patron's being so strictly united to him, diminishes his merit; because merit, at least in part, consists in a regard to what is proper and fit; and if the degree of union be unfit, it diminishes the influence of that union to recommend the client one way, as much as it increases it another.

14. If the patron and client are not equals, but the patron be greater and vastly superior as to rank and degree of existence, it gives greater weight to his union, as to its influence with the friend of the patron, to recommend the client; so that a less degree of union of the patron with the client may be equivalent to a greater union, in case of equality. Therefore, in this case, though the union be not so great as that his regard to the client's interest should be equal with his own personal interest, but may be much less, yet his regard to it may be such, that its recommending influence may be equivalent to that which is fully equal in the case of equality of persons; and therefore may be sufficient to answer the same purposes towards the client, and consequently to be perfectly sufficient for the client, with regard to the client's whole interest.

15. From these things, we may gather this as a rule whereby to judge, whether there be a sufficiency in the patron's union with his client, to answer for the whole interest of the client with the patron's friend, with respect to the degree of union of the patron, and the degree of greatness where there is no defect of merit in other respects, *vis.* that the patron's union with the client shall be such, that considering jointly both the degree of greatness, and degree of union, the patron's union with his client shall be as considerable and weighty, and have as much recommending influence, as if, in case of equality of the patron with his client, the union between them was so great, that the patron's regard to the welfare of the client were equal to his own.

16. Then the union of the patron has its measure and proportion according to the rule now mentioned, and so is sufficient to answer his whole interest; when the degree of his regard to his client's interest stands in the same proportion to his regard to his own personal interest, as the degree of the capacity of the client stands in to the degree of his own capacity; for the degrees of capacity are as the greatness or the degrees of existence of the person.

17. When the patron's regard to his client is thus proportioned, that is, when he regards the client's interest as his own, according to the client's capacity, then such a union may most fitly and aptly be represented, by the client's being taken by the patron to be as a part or member of himself, as though he were a member of his body. For men love each part of themselves as themselves, but yet not each part equally with themselves; but each part as themselves, according to the measure of the capacity of the part. A man loves his little finger as himself, but not equally with the head; but yet with the same love he bears to himself, according to the place, measure, and capacity of the little finger.

18. The most proper and plain trial and demonstration of this sufficiency of union of the patron with the client, consisting in such a proportion of regard to his welfare as has been mentioned, is the patron's being willing to bear sufferings for the client, or in his stead, that are equivalent to sufferings which properly belong to the latter; which equivalence of sufferings must be determined by a joint estimation of these two things, *viz.* the degree of suffering, and the greatness of the sufferer. When the effect of the patron's love to the client

is a suffering for the client that is equal in value or weight to the client's suffering, considering the difference of the degree of persons; it shows, that the love to the client, which is the cause of this suffering, is also equal or equivalent to his love for himself, according to the different degree of the persons.

The most proper and clear trial of the measure of love or regard to the interest of another, is the measure of suffering, or expense of personal interest, for the interest of the beloved. So much as the lover regards the welfare of the beloved, so much in value or weight of his own welfare, will he be willing to part with for it. If the value of the welfare obtained, be, in the regard of the sufferer, fully equal to the value of the welfare parted with, then, there being an equal balance, no preponderation of self-love will hinder parting with one for the other. The love therefore is sufficient and equal to self-love, allowing only for the difference of capacity or greatness of the persons; as the sufferings are equal, allowing for the same difference of the degree of persons.

19. There can be but one thing more requisite, according to the nature of things, in order to its being to all intents and purposes proper and suitable that the patron should be accepted as one with the client, in what pertains to the client's interest, and his merits being imputed to the client, and his having favour on the account of it; which is this, that seeing the client is an intelligent being, capable of act and choice, he should therefore actively and cordially concur in the affair; that the union between the patron and him should be mutual; that as the patron's heart is united to the client, so the client's heart should be united to the patron; that as there is that disposition and those acts appearing in the patron that are proper to the character and relation of a patron, in undertaking for the client to appear for him before his friend, as his representative, guardian, deliverer, and saviour, and condescending to him to do and suffer all for him needful for his help and advancement; so there must also appear in the client those dispositions and acts that are proper to the character and relation of a client, cleaving to him, committing his cause to him, and trusting in him, in an entire approbation of the patron's friendship, kind under-taking, and patronage: and not only an approbation of the patron's union to him, by which he avails for his being looked upon as one with him, but also of the patron's union to his friend, whose favour he seeks, which union with his friend avails to the acceptance of the patron; and also an entire approbation of the benefits which the patron seeks of his friend for the client; or, in one word, a cordial and entire faith of the client in his patron. When there is thus a mutual union between the patron and client, and a union throughout between them both, and the friend whose favour is sought, together with those things before mentioned, there is every thing requisite in order to the fitness of the acceptance of the client on the account of the patron, and his receiving such favour from the patron's friend, as is requisite to all that pertains to the client's welfare; so that such acceptance and such favour shall be in all respects proper, according to the

nature of things, and common sense of intelligent beings, and of no evil or improper consequence.

§ 4. “Besides the dignity of Christ’s sufferings directly arising from the dignity of his person, there is another consideration, by which the value of our Saviour’s sufferings ought to be estimated. As an indignity is always rated by the presumption, and as the presumption bears an exact proportion to the meanness of the person insulting, and to the greatness of the party insulted; so, in like manner, all acts of condescension are estimated by the humility, and that again by the dignity, of the condescending person, and by the lowness and demerit of the party condescended to.” *Deism Revealed*, edit. 2. vol. i. p. 252, 253.

§ 5. “It were (as an excellent writer has expressed it) manifestly more honourable and worthy of God, not to have exacted any recompence at all, than to have accepted, in the name of a sacrifice, such as were unproportionable, and beneath the value of what was to be remitted and conferred. What had been lower, must have been infinitely lower. Let any thing be supposed less than God, and it falls immensely short of him. Such is the distance between created being and uncreated, that the former is as nothing to the latter. And therefore, bring the honour and majesty of the Deity to any thing less than an equal value, and you bring it to nothing. And this had been quite to lose the design of insisting upon a recompence: it had been to make the majesty of heaven cheap, and depreciate the dignity of the divine government, instead of rendering it august and great.” *Rawlin on Justification*, p. 104, 105.

§ 6. It is said, that God is not obliged to fulfil his threatenings of punishment of sin. Not to dispute about the import of the word *obliged*, let it be considered, whether it is not fit that God should fulfil his threatenings. If any answer, no; then I would inquire further, whether the fitness of things does not require that God should pay some regard to his threatenings that belong to his law as its sanction; whether the law with its sanctions be not published or exhibited, that his subjects may view it as a rule of proceeding between the Lawgiver and his subjects; and whether it can have the influence intended, or indeed any significancy, if it be not understood as such in some measure. Therefore, if it be not fit that God should act impertinently and insignificantly, it surely is fit that some regard should be paid to the law, not only in the actions of the subject, but also in the proceedings of the Judge. And if it be fit that some regard should be paid to it, how great a regard? If the rule may be set aside and departed from in one instance, why not in two? and why not in four? where are the limits? The threatenings are no farther sanctions, than they are supposed to be declarations of truth. Therefore is it not fit that the threatenings of the law should be neglected. Truth is a thing which should always attend them in an inviolable manner. If God has reserved to himself the liberty of departing from the rule at his pleasure, without any signification beforehand, or any reason given to determine what his pleasure will be; then, how can the subject know but that he will always depart from it?

§ 7. *Texts taken from Rawlin on justification, which show that the holiness and justice of God insist on sin's being punished.* [Levit. x. 3.](#) "Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." [Psal. xi. 6, 7.](#) "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright." [Exodus xxxiv. 7.](#) "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." [Job xxxiv. 10,11.](#) "Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding. Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways." [Job x. 14.](#) "If I sin, then thou makest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity." [Chapter vii. 20.](#) "I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?" [Joshua xxiv. 19.](#) "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins."

§ 8. It was needful, that he that was a Mediator between two parties, that are distant and alienated one from the other, to be the middle person to unite them together, should himself be united to both. Otherwise he could not, by coming between them, be a bond of union between them. And if he be a Mediator between God and guilty men, it was necessary that he should unite himself to them, or assume them as it were to himself. But if he unites himself to guilty creatures, he of necessity brings their guilt on himself. If he unites himself to them that are in debt, he brings their debt on himself. He cannot properly unite himself to a rebel against God, and one that is obnoxious to God's wrath, and is condemned to condign punishment, to be a Mediator to bring God to be at peace with him, without voluntarily taking his sufferings on himself; because otherwise his undertaking for such a one, and uniting himself to such a one, will appear like countenancing his offence and rebellion. But if at the same time that he unites himself to him, he takes it upon himself to bear his penalty, it quite takes off all such appearance. He shows, that though he loves the rebel that has affronted the Divine Majesty, yet he at the same time has the greatest possible abhorrence of the injury to God's majesty, and dishonour to his name, in that he regards the honour of God's majesty so much as to be willing to endure so extreme sufferings, that the divine glory and majesty may not be injured, but fully maintained.

§ 9. Christ suffered the wrath of God for men's sins in such a way as he was capable of, being an infinitely holy person, who knew that God was not angry with him personally, knew that God did not hate him, but infinitely loved him. The wicked in hell will suffer the wrath of God, as they will have the sense, and knowledge, and sight of God's infinite dis-



pleasure towards them and hatred of them. But this was impossible in Jesus Christ. Christ therefore could bear the wrath of God in no other but these two ways.

I. In having a great and clear sight of the infinite wrath of God against the sin of men, and the punishment they had deserved. This it was, most fit that he should have, at the time when he was suffering in their stead, and paying their ransom to deliver them from that wrath and punishment. That he might know what he did, that he might act with full understanding at the time when he made expiation and paid a ransom for sinners to redeem them from hell, *first*, It was requisite that at that time he should have a clear sight of two things, *viz.* of the dreadful evil and odiousness of that sin that he suffered for, that he might know how much it deserved the punishment; that it might be real and actual grace in him, that he undertook and suffered such things for those that were so unworthy and so hateful; which it could not be, if he did not know how unworthy they were. *Secondly*, It was requisite he should have a clear sight of the dreadfulness of the punishment that he suffered to deliver them from, otherwise he would not know how great a benefit he vouchsafed them in redeeming them from this punishment; and so it could not be actual grace in him to bestow so great a benefit upon them; as, in the time that he bestowed, he would not have known how much he bestowed; he would have acted blindfold in giving so much. Therefore Christ, doubtless, actually had a clear view of both those things in the time of his last suffering: every thing in the circumstances of his last suffering concurred to give him a great and full sight of the former, *viz.* the evil and hateful nature of the sin of man. For its odious and malignant nature never appeared so much in its own proper colours, as it did in that act of murdering the Son of God, and in exercising such contempt and cruelty towards him. Likewise, every thing in the circumstances of his last sufferings tended to give him a striking view of the dreadful punishment of sin. The sight of the evil of sin tended to this, and so did the enduring of temporal death, that is a great image of eternal death, especially under such circumstances, with such extreme pain, God's hiding his face, his dying a death that by God's appointment was an accursed death, having a sight of the malice and triumph of devils, and being forsaken of his friends, &c. As God ordered external circumstances to help forward this purpose; so, there is all reason to think, that his own influences on Christ's mind were agreeable hereto, his spirit acting with his providence to give him a full view of these things. Now the clear view of each of these must of necessity be inexpressibly terrible to the man Christ Jesus. His having so clear an actual view of sin and its hateful-ness, was an idea infinitely disagreeable to the holy nature of Christ; and therefore, unless balanced with an equal sight of good that comes by this evil, must have been an immensely disagreeable sensation in Christ's soul, or, which is the same thing, immense suffering. But that equally clear idea of good, to counterbalance the evil of sin, was not given at that time; because God forsook Christ, and hid himself from him, and withheld comfortable influences, or the clear ideas of pleasant objects. Thus, Christ bare our sins; God laid on him the iniquities of us all, and he bare the

burden of them; and so, his bearing the burden of our sins may be considered as something diverse from his suffering God's wrath. For his suffering wrath consisted more in the sense he had of the other thing, *viz.* the dreadfulness of the punishment of sin, or the dreadfulness of God's wrath inflicted for it. Thus, Christ was tormented not only in the fire of God's wrath, but in the fire of our sins; and our sins were his tormentors; the evil and malignant nature of sin, was what Christ endured immediately, as well as more remotely, in bearing the consequences of it.

Thus Christ suffered that which the damned in hell do not suffer. For they do not see the hateful nature of sin. They have no idea of sin in itself, that is infinitely disagreeable to their nature, as the idea of sin was to Christ's holy nature; though conscience in them be awakened to behold the dreadful guilt and desert of sin. And as the clear view of sin in its hatefulness necessarily brought great suffering on the holy soul of Christ; so also did the view of its punishment. For both the evil of sin and the evil of punishment are infinite evils, and both infinitely disagreeable to Christ's nature: the former to his holy nature, or his nature as God; the latter to his human nature, or his nature as man. Such is human nature, that a great, and clear, and full idea of suffering, without some other pleasant and sweet idea to balance it, brings suffering; as appears from the nature of all spiritual ideas, They are repetitions (in a degree at least) of the things themselves of which they are ideas. Therefore, if Christ had a perfectly clear and full idea of what the damned suffer in hell, the suffering he would have had in the mere presence of that idea, would have been perfectly equal to the thing itself, if there had been no idea in Christ in any degree to balance it; such as, some knowledge of the love of God, of a future reward, future salvation of his elect, &c. But pleasant ideas in this clearness being in a great measure withholden by reason of God's hiding his race; hence, the awful ideas of eternal death which his elect people deserved, and of the dismal wrath of God, of consequence filled the soul of Christ with an inexpressible gloom.

Though Christ knew the love of God to him, and knew he should be successful in his sufferings; yet when God forsook him, those dismal views, those gloomy ideas, so fixed and swallowed up his mind, that though he had the habitual knowledge of those other objects, yet he could not attend to them; he could have comparatively but little comfort and support from them; for they could afford support no farther than they were attended to, or were in actual view.

Christ's great love and pity to the elect (that his offering up himself on the cross was the greatest act and fruit of, and consequently which he was then in the highest exercise of) was one source of his suffering. A strong exercise of love excites a lively idea of the object beloved. And a strong exercise of pity excites a lively idea of the misery under which he pities them. Christ's love then brought his elect infinitely near to him in that great act and suffering wherein he especially stood for them, and was substituted in their stead: and his



love and pity fixed the idea of them in his mind, as if he had really been they; and fixed their calamity in his mind, as though it really was his. A very strong and lively love and pity towards the miserable, tends to make their case ours; as in other respects, so in this in particular, as it doth in our idea place us in their stead, under their misery, with a most lively, feeling sense of that misery, as it were feeling it for them, actually suffering it in their stead by strong sympathy.

*Coroll.* 1. Hence we may see how the same thing, the same ideas that distressed the soul of Christ and brought on his amazing sufferings, engaged him to go through them. It was ordered that the bitterness of the cup, though exceedingly dreadful, was of that nature, or consisted in that, that the tasting of that bitterness was the thing that engaged him to go on to drink up the cup; and that as the bitterness of it arose from each of the forementioned things. (1.) As it arose from the clear idea he had then given him of the infinitely hateful and dreadful nature of sin. The more lively this idea was, the more dreadful was it to the soul of Christ; and yet, the more lively his idea of the hatefulness and dreadfulness of sin was, which consist in disobedience to God, the more did it engage him not to disobey, himself, that great command he had received of his Father, *viz.* That he should drink this cup, and go through those sufferings.

The more he had a sense how dreadful it is to contemn the authority of God, and to dishonour his holy name; the more would he be engaged to remove and abolish this dishonour, and to honour the authority of God himself. The more he had a sense of what an odious and dreadful thing sin was, the more would his heart be engaged to do and suffer what was necessary to take away this dreadful and odious thing, from those his heart was united to in love, *viz.* those that the Father had given him. (2.) It was the lively exercise of love and pity to those that the Father had given him, that was one thing that occasioned so lively a view of the punishment they had exposed themselves to, whereby his soul was filled with a dismal sense, and so he suffered. But this lively love and pity at the same time engaged him to suffer for them, to deliver them from their deserved punishment that he had an idea of. And as pity towards his elect excited a lively idea of their misery: so, on the other hand, the increase of his idea of their misery excited strong exercises of pity, and this pity engaged him still to endure those sufferings in their stead.

*Coroll.* 2. From what has been said, we may learn how Christ was sanctified in his last sufferings. The suffering of his soul in great part consisted in the great and dreadful sense and idea that he then had given him of the dreadful, horrid odiousness of sin; which was done by the Spirit of God. But this could not be, without a proportionable increase of his aversion to and hatred of sin; and consequently of his inclination to the contrary, which is the same thing as an increase of the holiness of his nature. Beside the immediate sight he had given him of the odious nature of sin, he had that strong sense and that great experience of the bitter fruit and consequences of sin, to confirm his enmity to it. Moreover he was

then in the exercise of his highest act of obedience or holiness, which, tending to increase the principle, the bringing forth of such great and abundant fruit, tended to strengthen and increase the root. Those last sufferings of Christ, were in some respect like a fire to refine the gold. For though the furnace purged away no dross or filthiness, yet it increased the preciousness of the gold; it added to the finite holiness of the human nature of Christ. Hence Christ calls his offering himself up, his sanctifying himself; [John xvii. 19](#). “And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.” Hence he call’s those last sufferings a baptism that he was to be baptized with. It was a baptism to him in two respects, as it purged him from imputed guilt, and as it increased his holiness by the Spirit of God, that gave him those terrible but sanctifying views. And so this is one way in which the Captain of our salvation is made perfect by sufferings; [Heb. ii. 10](#). and [v. 9](#). and [Luke xiii. 22](#). Thus Christ, before he was glorified, was prepared for that high degree of glory and joy he was to be exalted to, by being first sanctified in the furnace.

II. Another way in which it was possible that Christ should endure the wrath of God was, to endure the effects of that wrath. All that he suffered was by the special ordering of God. There was a very visible hand of God, in letting men and devils loose upon him at such a rate, and in separating from him his own disciples. Thus it pleased the Father to bruise him and put him to grief. God dealt with him as if he had been exceedingly angry with him, and as though he had been the object of his dreadful wrath. This made all the sufferings of Christ the more terrible to him, because they were from the hand of his Father, whom he infinitely loved, and whose infinite love he had had eternal experience of. Besides, it was an effect of God’s wrath, that he forsook Christ. This caused Christ to cry out once and again, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”<sup>509</sup> This was infinitely terrible to Christ. Christ’s knowledge of the glory of the Father, and his love to the Father, and the sense and experience he had had of the worth of the Father’s love to him, made the withholding the pleasant ideas and manifestations of his Father’s love as terrible to him, as the sense and knowledge of his hatred is to the damned, that have no knowledge of God’s excellency, no love to him, nor any experience of the infinite sweetness of his love.

It was a special fruit of the wrath of God against our sins, that he let loose upon Christ the devil, who has the power of death, is God’s executioner, and the roaring lion that devours the damned in hell. Christ was given up to the devil as his captive for a season. This antitype of Jonah was thrown to this great leviathan, to be swallowed up as his prey. The time of Christ’s suffering, was the time of the prevalency of the power of the devil, wherein Christ was delivered up to that power, as implied in [Luke xxii. 53](#). “When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” And therefore, when Christ’s last sufferings were approaching, Christ said, [John xiv](#).

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509 [Matt. 27. 46](#).

30. “The prince of this world cometh.” He was let loose to torment the soul of Christ with gloomy and dismal ideas. He probably did his utmost to contribute to raise his ideas of the torments of hell.

§ 10. That God should all along require sacrifices in his church, and that something should be done by all that came near to him and worshipped him, or appeared in his presence to make atonement for their sins; insomuch that sacrificing obtained throughout the world in all nations and ages; and that such a multitude of sacrifices should be appointed; that sacrifices should be offered so continually, and on so many occasions, and joined with all their public worship; was a plain testimony of God, that a real atonement or satisfaction to his justice was necessary, and that God did not design, that, in his manner of dealing with mankind, men should be pardoned and accepted without atonement. And if there was nothing of true and real atonement and sacrifice, in those beasts that were offered, then doubtless they were an evidence, that there was to be some other greater sacrifice, that was to be a proper atonement or satisfaction, of which they were only the presage and signs; as those symbolical actions which God sometimes commanded the prophets to perform, were signs and presages of great events which they foretold.

God abundantly testified by the sacrifices from the beginning of the world, that an atonement for sin was necessary, and must be insisted on in order to his acceptance of the sinner. This proves that a sacrifice of infinite value was necessary, and that God would accept of no other.

For an atonement that bears no proportion to the offence is no atonement. An atonement carries in it a payment or satisfaction in the very notion of it. And if satisfaction was so little necessary, that the Divine Majesty easily admitted one that bears no proportion at all to the offence, *i. e.* was wholly equivalent to nothing, when compared with the offence, and so was no payment or satisfaction at all; then he might have forgiven sin without any atonement; and an atonement could not be so greatly to be insisted upon, as is represented by all the prodigious expense and labour, and multitude of services, and ceremonies, and so great an apparatus, and so great pomp, which, with so much exactness, were prescribed to be continued through so many ages, respecting their typical sacrifices and atonements, and from God’s church were propagated through the world of mankind.

That no mere creature could offer to God that true sacrifice of real atonement, of which the Old-Testament sacrifices were resemblances or shadows, is evident by the Old Testament. For by the Old Testament it is evident, that that is not sufficient to be looked upon by God as any real atonement or sacrifice for sin, which is God’s before it is offered to him. In the [Psal. l. fiftieth Psalm](#) we have a prophecy of Christ’s coming to set up his kingdom in the world. There it is said in the [5th and following verses](#), “Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice” (where we may observe that the necessity of sacrifices is implied). “And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God

is judge himself. Selah. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.” But no mere creature can have any thing to offer to God which is not his already: for all that he has is God’s gift to him.

§11. That Christ indeed suffered the full punishment of the sin that was imputed to him, or offered that to God that was fully and completely equivalent to what we owed to divine justice for our sins, is evident by [Psalm lxix. 5](#). “Oh God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins” (my *guiltiness* it is in the Hebrew) “are not hid from thee. That the person that is the subject of this Psalm, and that is here speaking, is the Messiah, is evident from many places in the New Testament, in which it is applied to Christ; as, [John xv. 25](#). and [John ii. 17](#). and [Rom. xv. 3](#). [2 Cor. vi. 2](#). [John xix. 28, 29, 30](#). with [Matt. xxvii. 34, 48](#). and [Mark xv. 23](#). and [Rom. xi. 9, 10](#). [Acts i. 20](#). And by the Psalm itself, especially when compared with other Psalms and prophecies of the Old Testament, it is plain that David, in this Psalm, did not speak in his own name, but in the name of the Messiah. See *Of the Prophecies of the Messiah, in a succeeding part of this volume*.

But if it be the Messiah that is here speaking, then by the sin and guiltiness that he here speaks of, must be intended, not sin that he himself committed, but that sin that was laid upon him, or that he took upon him, spoken of [Isaiah liii](#). And when Christ says, <sup>510</sup> “O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my guiltiness is not hid from thee;” thereby must be meant, that God did not forgive that which was imputed to him, but punished it. When God forgives sin, and does not execute punishment for it, then he is said not to behold iniquity, nor see perverseness; and to cover, and hide, and bury their sins, so that they cannot be seen or found; and to turn away his face from beholding them, and not to remember them any more. But when God does not remit sin, but punishes it, then, in the language of the Old Testament, he is said to find out their sins, to set them before him in the light of his countenance, to remember them, to bring them to remembrance, and to know them. And therefore, when it is said here, “O God, thou hast known my foolishness, and my guiltiness hast thou not hid;” thereby is intended, that he forgives nothing to the Messiah, but beholds all his guiltiness by imputed sin, has set all in the light of his countenance, and does not cover or hide the least part of it.

§ 12. Satisfaction for sin must be complete. God declares, that those sinners that are not forgiven, shall pay the uttermost farthing, and the last mite; and that all the debt shall be

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510 [Psalms lxix 5](#).

exacted of them, &c. Now, it seems unreasonable to suppose, that God, in case of a surety, and of his insisting on an atonement made by him, will show mercy, by releasing the surety without a full atonement, any more than that he will show mercy to the sinner that is punished, by not insisting on the complete punishment.

§ 13. Christ's knowing his own infinite dignity and glory, and having it in view in the time of his humiliation, is mentioned as a circumstance that is important and of great consequence in that humiliation; "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God," &c.

§ 14. "Those expressions of the apostle [concerning Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, and the operations of the Spirit] are to be understood in the common sense and meaning of the words, and not as far-fetched metaphors. For it is evident, that in all this he does not affect the arts of oratory, nor assume a magnificent air of writing, nor does he raise himself into sublimity of style, nor rant in an enthusiastic manner, when he treats of these subjects. But while he is explaining to us these great things of the gospel, he avoids the wisdom of words and oratory, and he talks in a plain, rational, argumentative method, to inform the minds of men, and give them the clearest knowledge of the truth." *Watts's Orthodoxy and Charity*.

§ 15. Let us consider how a perfectly wise, holy, and disinterested Arbiter, whose office it should be to regulate all things within the whole compass of existence according to the most perfect propriety, would determine, in case the creature should injure the Most High, should cast contempt on the majesty, and trample on the authority of the infinite Lord of the universe, whether he would not determine, that in such a case the injury should be repaired, his majesty vindicated, and the sacredness of the authority thoroughly supported; and that it was very requisite, in order to things being regulated and disposed most fitly and beautifully, that such injuries should not be forgiven in the neglect of this, or without due care taken of this matter. If it be fit that the honour of God's majesty should be maintained at all in any degree, (which I suppose none will deny,) then why is it not most fit that it should be maintained fully? If it would be quite improper and unsuitable, that the dignity of the Supreme Being, the sacredness of the authority of the infinitely great Governor of the world, should be entirely neglected, should be suffered at all times, and to the greatest degree, to be trampled on, without any care to defend or support it; and that the majesty of this great King, as to the manifestation of it, should be obscured by his enemies to the greatest degree, and that continually and for ever, without any vindication or reparation at all; then why is it not most suitable and most becoming, that the vindication of it should be thorough, and the reparation complete and perfect?

What has been observed, may serve to show the reasonableness of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ; and that it is most rational to suppose, that if God did determine to forgive such as had cast contempt on his infinite majesty, and on his authority, as the infin-

itely high Lord over all, and to take such into favour, Infinite Wisdom would some way or other so contrive the matter, that the injury done to the appearance or exhibition of the dignity and sacred authority of the great *King*, should be fully repaired, and his majesty entirely vindicated, and set forth in all awfulness, inviolable sacredness, and worthiness of regard and reverence. It cannot here be reasonably objected, that God is not capable of properly receiving any benefit; that a price offered to men satisfies for an injury, because it may truly be a price to them, or a thing valuable and beneficial, but that God is not capable of receiving a benefit. For God is as capable of receiving satisfaction as injury. It is true, he cannot properly be profited; so neither can he be properly hurt. But as rebelling against him may properly be looked upon as of the nature of an injury or wrong done to God, and so God is capable, in some proper sense, of being the object of injuriousness; so he is as capable of being the object of that which is the opposite of injuriousness, or the repairing of an injury. If you say, what need is there that God have any care, for repairing the honour of his majesty, when it can do him no good, and no addition can be made to his happiness by it? You might as well say, what need is there that God care when he is despised and dishonoured, and his authority and glory trampled on; since it does him no hurt? It is a vain thing here to pretend, that God cares only, because it hurts creatures' own happiness for them to cast contempt on God. Is that agreeable to the natural light of all men's minds, to the natural sense of their hearts, and to the dictates of conscience, which unavoidably and necessarily arise, after some very direct, most profane, and daring opposition to and reproach of the Most High, that God is now angry and much provoked, only because the audacious sinner has now greatly hurt himself, and hurt his neighbours, that happen to see him? No, this is entirely diverse from the voice of natural sense in such a case, which inevitably suggests, that God is provoked, as one will regard himself for himself, as having a direct respect for his dignity and majesty. And this is agreeable to the strictest reason. It is impossible, if God infinitely loves and honours himself, as one infinitely worthy to be loved and esteemed, but that he should, from the same principle, proportionably abhor and oppose opposition to himself, and contempt of himself. And if it be in its own nature decent and proper for him thus to love himself, then it is in its own nature fit and becoming in him to hate opposition to himself. And for the same reason, and from the same principle, God, when he is contemned and injured, and his authority and glory are trampled in the dust, will be disposed to repair the injury done to his honour, and raise his injured majesty out of the dust again.

§ 17. The satisfaction of Christ, by suffering the punishment of sin, is properly to be distinguished, as being in its own nature different from the merit of Christ. For merit is only some excellency or worth. But when we consider Christ's sufferings merely as the satisfaction for the guilt of another, the excellency of Christ's act in suffering does not all come into consideration; but only those two things, *viz.* Their equality or equivalence to the punishment that the sinner deserved; and, *2ndly*, The union between him and them, or the propriety of





his being accepted in suffering, as the representative of the sinner. Christ's bearing our punishment for us, is not properly meriting that we should not bear it, any more than, if it had been possible for us ourselves to have borne it all, that would have been meriting that we should not be punished any more. Christ's sufferings do not satisfy by any excellency in them, but by a fulfilment. To satisfy by a fulfilment, and to satisfy by worthiness or excellency, are different things. If the law be fulfilled, there is no need of any excellency or merit to satisfy it; because it is satisfied by taking place and having its course. Indeed, how far the dignity or worthiness of Christ's person comes into consideration, in determining the propriety of his being accepted as a representative of sinners, so that his suffering, when equivalent, can be accepted as theirs, may be matter of question and debate; but it is a matter entirely foreign to the present purpose.

§ 18. The blood of Christ washes away sin. So it is represented in the Scripture, that we are washed from our filthiness in Christ's blood. Whereas, although the blood of Christ washes from our *guilt*, yet it is the Spirit of Christ that washes from the *pollution* and *stain* of sin. However, the blood of Christ washes also from the filth of sin, as it purchases sanctification; it makes way for it by satisfying, and purchases it by the merit of obedience implied in it. The sacrifices under the law typified Christ's sacrifice, not only as a satisfaction, but as meritorious obedience. They are called a sweet savour upon both these accounts. And therefore we find obedience compared with sacrifice, [Psal. xl. 6.](#), &c.

The sacrifice of Christ is a sweet savour, because as such it was a great honour done to God's majesty, holiness, and law, and a glorious expression of Christ's respect to that majesty, &c. That when he loved man, and so greatly desired his salvation, he had yet so great respect to that majesty and holiness of God, that he had rather die than that the salvation of man should be any injury or dishonour unto those attributes. And then, *2ndly*, It was a sweet savour, as it was a marvellous act of obedience, and some expression of a wonderful respect to God's authority. The value of Christ's sacrifice was infinite, both as a propitiation, and as an act of obedience; because he showed an infinite regard to the majesty, holiness, &c. of God, in being at infinite expense from regard to those divine attributes.

§ 19. The sacrifices under the law are said to be most holy; but the sacrifice of Christ may properly be said to be infinitely holy, as it was an expression of an infinite regard to the holiness, majesty, &c. of God.

§ 20. Late philosophers seem ready enough to own the great importance of God's maintaining steady and inviolable the laws of the natural world. It may be worthy to be considered, whether it is not of as great or greater importance, that the law of God, that great rule of righteousness between the supreme moral Governor and his subjects, should be maintained inviolate.

§ 21. If the threatening of death be not executed, the devil's horrid suggestion, and our first parents' wise suspicion, will be verified and fulfilled; *viz.* that God said otherwise than what he knew, when he threatened, *Thou shalt surely die.*

§ 22. "Had God violated his word in the threatening of death for sin, he had justified the devil in his arguments for man's rebellion. The devil's argument is a plain contradiction to God's threatening. God affirms the certainty of death; the devil affirms the certainty of life. 'Ye shall not surely die.' Had no punishment been inflicted, the devil had not been a liar from the beginning. God would have honoured the tempter, and justified the charge he brought against him, and owned that envy the devil accused him of, and thereby have rendered the devil the fittest object for love and trust. As the devil charged God with a lie; so, had no punishment been inflicted, God would have condemned himself, and declared Satan, instead of a lying tempter, to be the truest counsellor. He had exposed himself to contempt, and advanced the credit of his enemy, and so set up the devil as God instead of himself. It concerned God therefore to manifest himself true, and the devil a liar, and acquaint the world, that not himself, but the evil spirit, was their deceiver; and that he meant as he spoke." *Charnock*, vol. ii. p. 924.

As to any objection that may be made against the force of the foregoing arguments, from the practice of all, and even the wisest of human legislators, their dispensing with their own laws, and forbearing to execute them, and pardoning offenders, without any one's being made to suffer in their stead; the case is vastly different in the Supreme Lawgiver and subordinate lawgivers, and in the Supreme Judge and subordinate judges. The case is vastly different in them that give rules only to a certain small part of the commonwealth of moral agents, and with relation only to some few of their concerns, and for a little while in lawgivers that are weak and fallible, and very imperfect in the exercises of a limited, subordinate, and infinitely inferior authority; from what is in him, who is the great, infinitely wise, omniscient, holy, and absolutely perfect, Rector of all; to whom it belongs to establish a rule for the regulation of the whole university of beings, throughout all eternity, in all that concerns them in the exercise of an infinitely strong right of supreme, absolute dominion and sovereignty. The laws of men may be dispensed with, who cannot foresee all cases that may happen; and if they could, have not both the laws and the state of the subject perfectly at their own disposal, so that it is possible for them universally and perfectly to suit one to the other. And moreover, there is a superior law, *i. e.* the divine law, that all are subject to, and a superior tribunal, to which all are obnoxious; to which inferior tribunals, when the exigency of affairs, or any thing extraordinary in the case, requires it, may refer offenders, dispensing with inferior subordinate laws made by men. But there is no wise and good law, but that care should be taken that it ordinarily be put in execution: and the nearer any human law approaches to the supreme or divine law in perfection, and in extent of jurisdiction, the more care should be taken of its execution: the wisdom of nations teaches this. And besides,

persons' repentance may be proportionable and answerable, at least in some measure, to offences against men. And as to the public truth which is to be upheld in execution of the threatening of human laws, there ought to be great care to uphold it, according to the true intent and meaning of those threatenings. If all that is meant by them, and all that, by the very nature of the public constitution, (that is the foundation on which all their laws stand,) is to be understood by those threatening, is, that the punishment shall be inflicted, excepting when the exigence of the public requires otherwise, or when the pleasure of the prince is otherwise; then the public truth obliges to no more; and this being done, the public truth is maintained.

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## CHAP. VI.

## CONCERNING FAITH.

§ 1. faith is a belief of a testimony; “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.” It is an assent to truth, as appears by the 11th of Hebrews; and it is saving faith that is there spoken of, as appears by the last verses of the foregoing chapter: “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect.” “Saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name.” “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.”

§ 2. It is the proper act of the soul towards God, as faithful. “For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”

§ 3. It is a belief of truth from a sense of glory and excellency, or at least with such a sense. “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” “She said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.” “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man, sneaking by the Spirit of God, call-eth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

§ 4. It is a belief of the truth, from a spiritual taste and relish of what is excellent and divine. [Luke xii. 57.](#) “Yea, and why, even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?” Believers receive the truth in the love of it, and speak the truth in love. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”

§ 5. The object of faith is the gospel, as well as Jesus Christ. “And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” “For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they received them, and have known surely that I came from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” “But they have not obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

§ 6. Faith includes a knowledge of God and Christ. “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

§ 7. A belief of promises is faith, or a great part of faith. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,” &c. “And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” A depending on promises is an act of faith. “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

§ 8. Faith is a receiving of Christ. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

§ 9. It is receiving Christ into the heart. “But the righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, (that is, the word of faith, which we preach,) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

§ 10. A true faith includes more than a mere belief; it is accepting the gospel, and includes all acceptation. “And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” “For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached; or if you receive another Spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”

§ 11. It is something more than merely the assent of the understanding, because it is called an obeying the gospel. “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who has believed our report?” “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin. at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? ”

It is obeying the doctrine from the heart; “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,” &c.

§ 12. This expression of obeying the gospel, seems to denote the heart s yielding to the gospel in what it proposes to us in its calls: it is something more than merely what may be called a believing the truth of the gospel. “Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should

be put out of the synagogue.” And Philip asked the eunuch, whether he believed with all his heart? It is a fully believing, or a being fully persuaded: this passage evidences that it is so much at least.

§ 13. There are different sorts of faith that are not true and saving, as is evident by what the apostle James says, “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works:” where it is supposed that there may be a faith without works, which is not the right faith. When he says, “I will show thee my faith by my works,” nothing else can be meant, than that I will show thee that my faith is right.

§ 14. It is a trusting in Christ. “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ: in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

Many places in the Old Testament speak of trusting in God as the condition of his favour and salvation; especially “Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel; because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation.” It implies submission; “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse; and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust.” “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.” “For which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” “Which Jesus, when he perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?” “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he hear-eth us.” Believing in Christ in one verse, is called confidence, in the text.

§ 15. It is a committing ourselves to Christ; “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” This is a scripture sense of the word *believe*, as is evident by “Jesus did not commit himself to them.” In the original it is **Greek**.

§ 16. It is a gladly receiving the gospel; “Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” It is



approving the gospel; “But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. But wisdom is justified of all her children.” It is obeying the doctrine; “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” It is what may be well understood by those expressions of coming to Christ, of looking to him, of opening the door to lei him in. This is very evident by Scripture. It is a coming and taking the waters of life, eating and drinking Christ’s flesh and blood, hearing Christ’s voice and following him. “But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

§ 17. Faith consists in two things, *viz.* in being persuaded of, and in embracing, the promises: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” “Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things.” If that faith, hope, and charity, spoken of in this verse, be the same with those that are compared together in the last verse, then faith arises from a charitable disposition of heart, or from a principle of divine love. “But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you,” with the context. “Thou shall not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.” “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

§ 18. It is a being reconciled unto God, revealing himself by Christ in the gospel, or our minds being reconciled. “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” “And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.” It is the according of the whole soul, and not merely of the understanding. “Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.”

§ 19. There is contained in the nature of faith a sense of our own unworthiness. “Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith.” See concerning the centurion, [Luke vii. 6-9.](#); this woman which was a sinner, *ib.* [vii. 37, 38.](#) and especially [50.](#); the prodigal son, [Luke xv.](#);

the penitent thief, [Luke xxiii. 41](#). Consult also “Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.” [Prov. xxviii. 25](#). [Psal. xl. 4](#). and [Psal. cxxxi](#).

§ 20. It is a being drawn to Christ. None can come unto Christ, but whom the Father draws. The freeness of the covenant of grace is represented thus, that the condition of finding is only seeking; and the condition of receiving, asking; and the condition of having the door opened, is knocking. From whence I infer, that faith is a hearty applying unto God by Christ for salvation, or the heart’s seeking it of God through him. See also “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” And [Luke xxiii. 42](#). it is calling on Christ; it is the opposite unto disallowing and rejecting Christ Jesus. “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” “Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.”

§ 21. Love either is what faith arises from, or is included in faith, by ” He that believeth not is condemned already; and this is their condemnation, that men loved darkness) rather than light.” “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

§ 22. The being athirst for the waters of life is faith, [Rev. xxi. 6](#). It is a true cordial seeking of salvation by Christ. Believing in Christ is heartily joining ourselves to Christ and to his party, as is said of the followers of Theudas, [Acts v. 36](#). And we are justified freely through faith, *i.e.* we are saved by Christ only on joining ourselves to him. It is a being persuaded to join ourselves to him, and to be of his party. “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” To believe in Christ, is to hearken to him as a prophet; to yield ourselves subjects to him as a king; and to depend upon him as a priest. Desiring Christ, is an act of faith in Christ, because he is called the desire of all nations; [Hag. ii 7](#). that is, he that is to be the desire of all nations, when all nations shall believe in him and subject themselves to him, according to the frequent promises and prophecies of God’s word: though there are other things included in the sense, yet this seems to be principally intended. There belongs to faith a sense of the ability and sufficiency of Christ to save, and of his fitness for the work of salvation: [2, and 28, 29, and 21](#). “And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he is able to perform.” Of his fidelity, “But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou



doubt?” Of his readiness to save, [Matt. xv. 22.](#), &c. “Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: and I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.” Of his ability, “And behold, there came a leper, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” “The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.”

§ 23. It is submitting to the righteousness of God. [Rom. x. 3.](#) “For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” It is what may be well represented by flying for refuge, by the type of flying to the city of refuge. “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” It is a sense of the sufficiency and the reality of Christ’s righteousness, and of his power and grace to save. [John xvi. 8.](#) “He shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.” It is a receiving the truth with a love to it. It is receiving the love of the truth. “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” The heart must close with the new covenant by dependence upon it, and by love and desire. “Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. This is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.”

§ 25. Upon the whole, the best, and clearest, and most perfect definition of justifying faith, and most according to the Scripture, that I can think of, is this, faith is the soul’s entirely embracing the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour. The word *embrace* is a metaphorical expression; but I think it much clearer than any proper expression whatsoever; it is called believing, because believing is the first act of the soul in embracing a narration or revelation: and embracing, when conversant about a revelation or thing declared, is more properly called believing, than loving or choosing. If it were conversant about a person only, it would be mote properly called *loving*. If it were only conversant about a gift, an inheritance, or reward, it would more properly be called receiving or accepting, &c.

The definition might have been expressed in these words: faith is the soul’s entirely adhering and acquiescing in the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour Or thus: faith is the soul’s embracing that truth of God, that reveals Jesus Christ as our Saviour Or thus: faith is the soul’s entirely acquiescing in, and depending upon, the truth of God, revealing Christ as our Saviour.

It is the whole soul according and assenting to the truth, and embracing of it. There is an entire yielding of the mind and heart to the revelation, and a closing with it, and adhering

to it, with the belief, and with the inclination and affection. It is admitting and receiving it with entire credit and respect. The soul receives it as true, as worthy, and excellent. It may be more perfectly described than defined by a short definition, by reason of the penury of words; a great many words express it better than one or two. I here use the same metaphorical expressions; but it is because they are much clearer than any proper expressions that I know of.

It is the soul's entirely acquiescing in this revelation, from a sense of the sufficiency, dignity, glory, and excellency of the author of the revelation.

Faith is the whole soul's active agreeing, according, and symphonizing with this truth; all opposition in judgment and inclination, so far as he believes, being taken away. It is called believing, because fully believing this revelation, is the first and principal exercise and manifestation of this accordance and agreement of soul.

§ 25. The adhering to the truth, and acquiescing in it with the judgment, is from a sense of the glory of the revealer, and the sufficiency and excellency of the performer of the facts. The adhering to it, and acquiescing in it with the inclination and affection, is from the goodness and excellency of the thing revealed, and of the performer. If a person be pursued by an enemy, and commit himself to a king or a captain, to defend him, it implies his quitting other endeavours, and applying to him for defence, and putting himself under him, and hoping that he will defend him. If we consider it as a mere act of the mind, a transaction between spiritual beings, considered as abstracted from any external action, then it is the mind's quitting all other endeavours, and seeking and applying itself to the Saviour for salvation, fully choosing salvation by him, and delivering itself to him, or a being willing to be his, with a hope that he will save him. Therefore, for a person to commit himself to Christ as a Saviour, is quitting all other endeavours and hopes, and heartily applying himself to Christ for salvation, fully choosing salvation by him, and acquiescing in his way of salvation, and a hearty consent of the soul to be his entirely, hoping in his sufficiency and willingness to save.

§ 26. The first act cannot be hoping in a promise, that is, as belonging to the essence of the act. For there must be the essence of the act performed, before any promise belongs to the subject. But the essence of the act, as it is exercised in justifying faith, is a quitting other hopes, and applying to him for salvation, choosing, and with the inclination closing with, salvation by him in his way, with a sense of his absolute, glorious sufficiency and mercy. Hope in the promises may immediately follow in a moment; but it is impossible that there be a foundation for it, before the essence of faith be performed; though it is the same disposition that leads the soul to lay hold on the promise afterwards. It is impossible that a man should be encouraged by a conditional promise, to trust in Christ, if you mean by trusting in Christ, a depending upon his promises to the person trusting; for that is to suppose a dependence upon the promise antecedent to the first dependence upon it; and that the first

time a man depends upon the promise, he is encouraged to do it by a dependence upon the promise. The conditional promise is this, that if you will trust in Christ, you shall be saved: and you suppose the essence of this trust is depending upon this promise; and yet that the soul is encouraged to trust in Christ by a dependence thereupon; which is to say, that the first time the soul depends upon Christ's promises, it is encouraged to do it *by a* dependence on his promises.

§ 27. Faith is the soul's entirely adhering to and acquiescing in the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, from a sense of the excellent dignity and sufficiency of the revealer of the doctrine and of the Saviour. God is the revealer, and Christ is also the revealer. Christ's excellency and sufficiency include the excellency of his person, and the excellency of the salvation he has revealed, and his adequateness to the performance, &c. and the excellency of his manner of salvation, &c. From the excellency and sufficiency of the revealer and performer, we believe what is said is true, fully believe it; and from the glorious excellency of the Saviour and his salvation, all our inclination closes with the revelation. To depend upon the word of another person, imports two things: first, to be sensible how greatly it concerns us, and how much our interest and happiness really depend upon the truth of it; and, secondly, to depend upon the word of another, is so to believe it, as to dare to act upon it *us* if it were really true. I do not say, that I think these words are the only true definition of faith. I have used words that most naturally expressed it, of any I could think of. There might have been other words used, that are much of the same sense.

§ 28. Though hope does not enter into the essential nature of faith, yet it is so essential to it, that it is the natural and necessary, and next immediate, fruit of true faith. In the first act of faith the soul is enlightened with a sense of the merciful nature of God and of Christ, and believes the declarations that are made in God's word of it; and it humbly and heartily applies and seeks to Christ: and it sees such a congruity between the declared mercy of God, and the disposition he then feels towards him, that he cannot but hope, that that declared mercy will be exercised towards him. Yea, he sees that it would be incongruous, for God to give him such inclination and motions of heart towards Christ as a Saviour, if he were not to be saved by him.

§ 29. Any thing that may be called a receiving the revelation of the gospel is not faith, but such a sort of receiving it, as is suitable to the nature of the gospel, and the respect it has to us. The act of reception suitable to truth, is believing it. The suitable reception of that which is excellent, is choosing it and loving it. The proper act of reception of a revelation of deliverance from evil, and the conferring of happiness, is, acquiescing in it and depending upon it. The proper reception of a Saviour, is, committing ourselves to him and trusting in him. The proper act or reception of the favour of God, is, believing and esteeming it, and rejoicing in it. He that suitably receives forgiveness of his fault, does with an humble sense of his fault rejoice in the pardon.



Thus, for instance, he that reads a truth that no way concerns his interest, if he believes it, it is proper to say he receives it, But if there be a declaration of some glorious and excellent truth, that does nearly concern him, he that only believes it. cannot be said to receive it. And if a captain offers to deliver a distressed people, they that only believe what he says, without committing themselves to him, and putting themselves under him, cannot be said to receive him. So, if a prince offers one his favour, he that does not esteem his favour, cannot be said heartily to accept thereof. Again, if one offended offers pardon to another, he cannot be said to receive it, if he be not sensible of his fault, and does not care for the displeasure of the offended.

The whole act of reception suitable to the nature of the gospel, and its relation to us, and our circumstances with respect to it, is best expressed (if it be expressed in one word) by the word **Greek** or *fides*.

He that offers any of these things mentioned, and offers them only for these proper acts of reception, may be said to offer them freely, nay, perfectly so.

§ 30. For man to trust in his own righteousness, is to hope that God's anger will be appeased or abated, or that he will be inclined to accept him into favour, upon the sight of some excellency that belongs to him; or to have such a view of things, that it should appear no other than a suitable and right thing for God's anger to be abated, and for him to be inclined to take him into favour, upon the sight of, or out of respect to, some excellency belonging to him.

§ 31. The word **Greek**, *faith*, seems to be the most proper word to express the cordial reception of Christ and of the truth, for these reasons. First, this revelation is of things spiritual, unseen, strange, and wonderful, exceedingly remote from all the objects of sense, and those things which we commonly converse within this world, and also exceedingly alien from our fallen nature; so that it is the first and principal manifestation of the symphony between the soul and these divine things, that it believes them, and acquiesces in them as true. And, secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the gospel, appeals principally under the character of a Saviour, and not so much of a person absolutely excellent; and therefore, the proper act of reception of him, consists principally in the exercise of a sense of our need of him, and of his sufficiency, his ability, his mercy and love, his faithfulness, the sufficiency of his method of salvation, the sufficiency and completeness of the salvation itself, of the deliverance, and of the happiness, and an answerable application of the soul to him for salvation; which can be expressed so well by no other word but faith, or affiancance, or confidence, or trust, and others of the same signification; of which, **Greek** or faith is much the best, the most significant; because the rest, in their common significations, imply something that is not of the absolute essence of faith. Thirdly, we have these things exhibited to us, to be received by us, only by a divine testimony. We have nothing else to hold them forth to us.

§ 32. Justifying faith is the soul's sense and conviction of the reality and sufficiency of Jesus Christ as a Saviour, implying a cordial inclination of soul to him as a Saviour. It is the soul's conviction and acknowledgment of God's power in the difficult things, of his mercy in the wonderful things, of his truth in the mysterious and unseen things, of the excellency of other holy things, of the salvation of Christ Jesus. Faith prepares the way for the removal of guilt of conscience. Guilt of conscience is the sense of the connexion between the sin of the subject and punishment; 1st, by God's law; and 2d, by God's nature and the propriety of the thing. The mind is under the weight of guilt, as long as it has a sense of its being bound to punishment, according to the reason and nature of things, and the requirements of the divine government.

Faith prepares the way for the removal of this. Therefore there must be in faith, 1. A belief that the law is answered and satisfied by Jesus Christ; and 2. Such a sense of the way of salvation by Christ, that it shall appear proper, and be dutiful, and according to the reason of things, that sin should not be punished in us, but that we nevertheless should be accepted through Christ. When the mind sees a way that this can be done, and there is nothing in the law, nor in the divine nature, nor nature of things, to hinder it; that of itself lightens the burden, and creates hope. It causes the mind to see that it *is* not for ever bound by the reason of things to suffer; though the mind does not know that it has performed the condition of pardon. This is to have a sense of the sufficiency of this way of salvation. When a man commits sin and is sensible of it, his soul has a natural sense of the propriety of punishment in such a case, a sense that punishment, according to the reason of things, belongs to him; for the same reasons as all nations have a sense of the propriety of punishing men for crimes.

The blood of bulls, and goats, and calves, could never make them that offered them perfect as to the conscience, because the mind never could have a sense of the propriety and beauty, and fitness in reason, of being delivered from punishment upon their account. This kind of sense of the sufficiency of Christ's mediation, depends upon a sense of the gloriousness and excellency of gospel things in general; as, the greatness of God's mercy; the greatness of Christ's excellency and dignity, and dearness to the Father; the greatness of Christ's love to sinners, &c. That easiness of mind which persons often have, before they have comfort from a sense of their being converted, arises from a sense they have of God's sovereignty. They see nothing either in the nature of God, or of things, that will necessarily bind them to punishment; but that God may damn them, if he pleases; and may save them, if he pleases. When persons are brought to that, then they are fit to be comforted; then their comfort is like to have a true and immovable foundation, when their dependence is no way upon themselves, but wholly upon God. In order to such a sense of the sufficiency of this way of salvation, it must be seen, that God has no disposition and no need to punish us. The sinner, when he considers how he has affronted and provoked God, looks upon it, that the case is such, and the affront is such, that there is need, in order that the majesty, and honour, and

authority of God may be vindicated, that he should be punished, and that God's nature is such, that he must be disposed to punish him.

COROLL. Hence we learn, that our experience of the sufficiency of the doctrine of the gospel, to give peace of conscience, is a rational inward witness to the truth of the gospel. When the mind sees such a fitness in this way of salvation, that it takes *off* the burden, that arises from the sense of its being necessarily bound to punishment, through proper desert, and from the demands of reason and nature; it is a strong argument, that it is not a thing of mere human imagination. When we experience its fitness to answer its end, this is the third of the three that bear witness on earth. The Spirit bears witness, by discovering the divine glory, and those stamps of divinity that are in the gospel. The water bears witness; that is, the experience of the power of the gospel to purify and sanctify the heart, witnesseth the truth of it: and the blood bears witness by delivering the conscience from guilt. Any other sort of faith than this sense of the sufficiency of Christ's salvation, does not give such immediate glory and honour to Christ, and does not so necessarily and immediately infer the necessity of Christ's being known. Nothing besides makes all Christianity to hang upon an actual respect to Christ, and centre in him. Surely, the more the sinner has an inward, an immediate, and sole, and explicit dependence upon Christ, the more Christ has the glory of his salvation from him.

In order to this sort of sense of the congruity of our sins being forgiven, and of punishment's being removed, by the satisfaction of Christ, there must of necessity be a sense of our guiltiness. For it is impossible any congruity should be seen, without comparison of the satisfaction with the guilt. And they cannot be compared, except there be a sense of them both. There must not only be such a sense of God's being very angry, and his anger being very dreadful, without any sense of the reasonableness of that anger; but there must be a proper sense of the desert of wrath, such as there is in repentance. Indeed it is possible there may be such a sense of the glory of the Saviour and his salvation, that if we had more of a sense of guilt than we have, we should see a congruity.

§ 33. Sinners, under conviction of their guilt, are generally afraid that God is so angry with them, that he never will give them faith in Christ. They think the majesty and jealousy of God will not allow of it. Therefore, there goes with a sense of the sufficiency of Christ, a sense of God's sovereignty with respect to mercy and judgment, that he will and may have mercy in Christ, on whom he will have mercy, and leave to hardness whom he will. This eases of that burden.

§ 34. For a man to trust in his own righteousness, is to conceive hopes of some favour of God, or some freedom from his displeasure, from a false notion of his own goodness or excellency, and the proportion it bears to that favour; and of his own badness, and the relation it bears to his displeasure. It is to conceive hopes of some favour of God, from a false notion of the relation which our own goodness or excellency bears to that favour; whether this

mistaken relation be supposed to imply an obligation in natural justice, or propriety and decency, or an obligation in point of wisdom and honour; or if he thinks that, without it, God will not do excellently, or according to some one at least of his declared attributes, or whether it be any obligation by virtue of his promise; whether this favourable respect be the pardon of sin, or the bestowment of heaven, or the abating of punishment, or answering of prayers, or mitigation of punishment, or converting grace, or God's delighting in us, prizing of us, or the bestowing of any temporal or spiritual blessing. This excellency we speak of, is either real or supposed; either negative, in not being so bad as others, and the like, or positive. Whether it be natural or moral excellency, is immaterial: also, whether the sinner himself looks upon it as an excellency, or suppose God looks upon it as such. For men to trust in their own righteousness, is to entertain hope of escaping any displeasure, or obtaining any positive favour from God, from too high a notion of our own moral excellency, or too light a notion of our badness, as compared with or related to that favour or displeasure.

§ 35. This is to be observed concerning the scriptures that I have cited respecting faith, that they sometimes affix salvation to the natural and immediate effects of faith as well as to faith itself. Such as, asking, knocking, &c. [Rom. x. 12,13, 14](#). In the [14th verse](#)., faith is distinguished from calling upon him.

§ 36. All trusting to our own righteousness, indeed, is expecting justification for our own excellency. But they that expect that God will convert them for their excellency, or do any thing else towards their salvation upon that account, do trust in their own righteousness. Because, the supposing that God will be the more inclined to convert a man, or enable him to come to Christ, for his excellency, is to suppose, that he is justified already, at least in part. It supposes, that God's anger for sin is at least partly appeased, and that God is more favourably inclined to him for his excellency's sake, in that he is disposed to give him converting grace, or do something else towards his conversion upon that account.

§ 37. The difficulty in giving a definition of faith is, that we have no word that clearly and adequately expresses the whole act of acceptance, or closing of the soul or heart with Christ. Inclination expresses it but partially; conviction expresses it also but in part; the sense of the soul does not do it fully. And if we use metaphorical expressions, such as embrace, love, &c. they are obscure, and will not carry the same idea with them to the minds of all. All words that are used to express such acts of the mind, are of a very indeterminate signification. It is a difficult thing to find words to exhibit our own ideas. Another difficulty is to find a word, that shall clearly express the whole goodness or righteousness of the Saviour and of the gospel. To be true, is one part of the goodness of the gospel. For the Saviour to be sufficient, is one part of his goodness. To be suitable, is another part. To be bountiful and glorious, is another part. To be necessary, is another part. The idea of a real good or lovely object, that is conceived to be real, possesses the heart after another manner, than a

very lovely idea that is only imaginary. So that there is need of both a sense of goodness and reality, to unite the heart to the Saviour.

Faith is the soul's embracing and acquiescing in the revelation which the word of God gives us of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, in a sense and conviction of his goodness and reality as such. I do not consider the sense of the goodness and reality of Christ as a Saviour, as a distinct thing from the embracing of him, but only explain the nature of the embracing by it. But it is implied in it; it is the first and principal thing in it. And all that belongs to embracing the revelation, an approbation of it, a love to it, adherence to it, acquiescence in it, is in a manner implied in a sense of Christ's goodness and reality and relation to us, or our concern in him. I say, as our Saviour; for there is implied in believing in Christ, not only and merely that exercise of mind, which arises from a sense of his excellency and reality as a Saviour; but also that which arises from the consideration of his relation to us, and of our concern in him, his being a Saviour for such as we are; for sinful men; and a Saviour that is offered with his benefits to us. The angels have a sense of the reality and goodness of Christ as a Saviour, and may be said with joy to embrace the discovery of it. They cannot be said to believe in Christ. The spirit that they receive, the notice that they have of Christ the Saviour, is the same; but there is a difference in the act, by reason of the different relation that Christ, as a Saviour stands in to us, from what he doth to them.

§ 38. objection 1. It may be objected, that this seems to make the revelation more the object of the essential act of faith than Christ. I answer, no; for the revelation is no otherwise the object by this definition, than as it brings and exhibits Christ to us. It is embracing the revelation in a sense and conviction of the goodness and reality of the Saviour it exhibits. We do not embrace Christ by faith any otherwise, than as brought to us in a revelation: when we come to embrace him as exhibited otherwise, that will not be faith. A man is saved by that faith, which is a reception of Christ in all his offices; but he is justified by his receiving Christ in his priestly office.

§ 39. To believe, is to have a sense and a realizing belief of what the gospel reveals of the mediation of Christ, and particularly as it concerns ourselves. There is in faith a conviction, that redemption by that mediation of Christ which the gospel reveals, exists, and a sense how it does so, and how it may with respect to us in particular. There is a trusting to Christ that belongs to the essence of true faith. That quiet and ease of mind that arises from a sense of the sufficiency of Christ, may well be called a trusting in that sufficiency. It gives a quietness to the mind, to see that there is a way wherein it may be saved, to see a good and sufficient way, wherein its salvation is very possible, and the attributes of God cannot be opposite to it. This gives ease, though it be not yet certain that he shall be saved. But to believe Christ's sufficiency, so as to be thus far easy, may be called a trusting in Christ, though it cannot be trusting in him that he will save us. To be easy in any degree, on a belief or persuasion of the sufficiency of any thing for our good, is a degree of trusting. There is in faith



not only a belief of what the gospel declares, that Christ has satisfied for our sins, and merited eternal life; but there is also a sense of it; a sense that Christ's sufferings do satisfy, and that he did merit, or was worthy that we should be accepted for his sake. There is a difference between being convinced that it is so, and having a sense that it is so- There is in the essence of justifying faith, included a receiving of Christ as a Saviour from sin. For we embrace him as the author of life, as well as Saviour from misery. But the sum of that eternal life which Christ purchased is holiness; it is a holy happiness. And there is in faith a liking of the happiness that Christ has procured and offers. The Jews' despising the pleasant land, is mentioned as part of their unbelief. It must be as the gospel reveals Christ, or in the gospel notion of him, the soul must close with Christ. For whosoever is offended in Christ, in the view that the gospel gives us of him, cannot be said to believe in him; for he is one that is excluded from blessedness, by that saying of Christ, "Blessed is he whosoever is not offended in me."

§ 40. There is implied in faith, not only a believing of Christ to be a real, sufficient, and excellent Saviour for me, and having a complacency in him as such; but in a complete act of faith, there is an act of the soul in this view of him, and disposition towards him, seeking to him, that he would be my Saviour; as is evident, because otherwise prayer would not be the expression of faith. But prayer is only the voice of faith to God through Christ: and this is further evident, as faith is expressed by a coming to Christ, and a looking to him to be saved.

§ 41. There is hope implied in the essence of justifying faith. Thus there is hope that I may obtain justification by Christ, though there is not contained in its essence a hope that I have obtained it. And so there is a trust in Christ contained in the essence of faith. There is a trust implied in seeking to Christ to be my Saviour, in an apprehension that he is a sufficient Saviour; though not a trust in him, as one that has promised to save me, as having already performed the condition of the promise. If a city was besieged and distressed by a potent enemy, and should hear of some great champion at a distance, and should be induced by what they hear of his valour and goodness, to seek and send to him for relief, believing what they have heard of his sufficiency, and thence conceiving hope that they may be delivered; the people, in sending, may be said to trust in such a champion; as of old the children of Israel, when they sent into Egypt for help, were said to trust in Egypt. It has by many been said, that the soul's immediately applying Christ to itself as its Saviour, was essential to faith; and so that one should believe him to be his Saviour. Doubtless, an immediate application is necessary. But that which is essential, is not the soul's immediately applying Christ to itself so properly, as its applying itself to Christ.

§ 42. Good works are in some sort implied in the very nature of faith, as is implied in [1 Tim. v. 8.](#) where the apostle, speaking of them that do not provide for their parents, says, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith."

§ 43. Faith is that inward sense and act, of which prayer is the expression; as is evident, 1. Because in the same manner as the freedom of grace, according to the gospel covenant, is often set forth by this, that he that believes, receives; so it also oftentimes is by this, that he that asks, or prays, or calls upon God, receives; [Matt. vii. 7, 8, 9, 10](#). “Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask *in prayer, believing*, ye shall receive.” [Mark xi. 23, 24](#). To the same purpose with that last-mentioned place in Matthew. “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.” “The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.” The prophet, speaking there of gospel-times, says, “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved:” quoting the forementioned place in Joel.

2. The same expressions that are used in Scripture for faith, may be well used for prayer also; such as coming to God or Christ, and looking to him. “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.”

3. Prayer is often plainly spoken of as the expression of faith. As it very certainly is in [Rom. x. 11, 12, 13, 14](#). “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?” Christian prayer is called the prayer of faith, [James v. 15](#). And believing is often mentioned as the life and soul of true prayer, as in the forementioned place. [Matt. xxi. 21, 22](#). “I will that men every where lift up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” And “Draw near in full assurance of faith.” “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.”

Faith in God, is expressed in praying to God. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is expressed in praying to Christ, and praying in the name of Christ; [John xiv. 13, 14](#). And the promises are made to asking in Christ’s name, in the same manner as they are to believing in Christ. “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing; in my name, I will do it.” [Chap. xvi. 23, 24](#). “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name: ask, and receive, that your joy may be full.”

§ 44. Trusting in Christ, is implied in the nature of faith; as is evident by “As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on

him, shall not be ashamed.” The apostle there in the context is speaking of justifying faith; and it is evident, that trusting in Christ is implied in the import of the word *believeth*. For being ashamed, as the word is used in Scripture, is the passion that arises upon the frustration of truth or confidence. There is implied in justifying faith, a trusting to Christ’s truth and faithfulness, or a believing what he declares and promises; as is evident, in that it is called not only believing in Christ, and believing on Christ, but believing Christ; “He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life.” Trusting in Christ is often implied in faith, according to the representations of Scripture; “Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.”

§ 45. Why is this reception or union of the soul properly expressed by faith? *Answer.* Not so much, merely from the nature of the act, more abstractedly considered, which is union, reception, or closing; but from the nature of the act, conjunctly with the state of the agent and the object of the act, which qualifies and specifies the act, and adds certain qualifications to the abstract idea of union, closing, or reception. Consider the state of the receiver; guilty, miserable, undone, impotent, helpless, unworthy; and the nature and worth of the received, he being a divine, invisible Saviour: the end for which he is received, the benefits invisible: the ground on which he is received or closed with, the word of God, and his invitations and promises: the circumstances of those things that are received, supernatural, incomprehensible, wonderful, difficult, unsearchable: the proper act of union or reception in such a case, is most aptly expressed by the word *faith*. Fearfulness is opposite to faith, “Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” And “But the fearful and the unbelieving.” Justifying faith is sometimes called hope in Scripture.

§ 46. The condition both of the first and second covenant, is a receiving, compliance with, or yielding to, a signification or declaration from God, or to a revelation made from God. A receiving or yielding to a signification of the will of God, as our sovereign Lord and Lawgiver, is most properly called obedience. The receiving and yielding to a strange, mysterious revelation and offer which God makes of mercy to sinners, being a revelation of things spiritual, supernatural, invisible, and mysterious, through an infinite power, wisdom, and grace of God, is properly called *faith*. There is indeed obedience in the condition of both covenants, and there is faith or believing God in both. But the different name arises from the remarkably different nature of the revelation or manifestations made. The one is a law; the other a testimony and offer. The one is a signification of what God expects that we should do towards him, and what he expects to receive from us; the other a revelation of what he has done for us, and an offer of what we may receive from him. The one is an expression of God’s great authority over us, in order to a yielding to the authority; the other is a revelation of God’s mysterious and wonderful mercy, and wisdom, and power for us, in order to a reception answerable to such a revelation.

The reason why this was not so fully insisted upon under the Old Testament, under the denomination of faith, was, that the revelation itself of this great salvation, was not thus explicitly and fully made.

It must most naturally be called faith, 1. Because the word that is the object of it, is a revelation which most nearly concerns our interest and good; and that a revelation not of a work to be done by us, but an offer made to us only to be received by us.

If it were a manifestation otherwise than by testimony, a receiving of it, and yielding to it, would not so naturally be called faith; and if a mere manifestation of something not nearly concerning us, it would not naturally be called faith. For idle stories, that do not concern us, are not the object of trust or dependence. If it were a manifestation in order to something expected from us; some work to be done by us; a yielding to it would not so properly be called faith. For yielding, then, would imply something more than just receiving the testimony.

2. Because the person that is the object of it, is revealed in the character of a wonderful Saviour. A receiving of a person in the character of a Saviour, is a proper act of trust and affiance. And a receiving a divine, invisible Saviour, that offers to save us by infinite power, wisdom, and mercy, and by very mysterious, supernatural works, is properly faith.

3. The benefits that are revealed, which are the objects of faith, are things spiritual, invisible, wonderful, and future; and therefore, embracing and depending on these, is properly faith.

§ 47. Faith implies a cleaving to Christ, so as to be disposed to sell and suffer all for him. See “Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.” “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?”

§ 48. Faith is not all Kind of assent to the word of God as true and divine. For so the Jews in Christ’s time assented to the books of Moses, and therefore Christ tells them, that they trusted in Moses; “There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.” Yet the very thing that Moses accuses them for, was not believing in him, *i. e.* believing so as to yield to his sayings, and comply with him, or obey him, as the phrase in the New Testament is concerning Christ. And therefore Christ says in the next verse, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.” There may be a strong belief of divine things in the understanding, and yet no saving faith; as is manifest by “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.” Not only trusting in Christ, as one that has undertaken to save us, and as believing that he is our Saviour, is faith; but applying to him, or seeking to him, that he would become our Saviour, with a sense of his reality and goodness as a Saviour, is faith; as is evident by “In him shall the Gentiles trust.” Compared with the place whence it is cited, “To it shall the Gentiles seek;” together

with “And they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.” Which agrees well with faith’s being called a looking to Christ, or coming to him for life, a flying for refuge to him, or flying to him for safety. And this is the first act of saving faith. And prayer’s being the expression of faith, confirms this. This is further confirmed by “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither *seek* the Lord.” When it is said, “Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake:” it is equivalent to that scripture, “He that believeth shall never be confounded.” And when it is said, [verse 32](#). “And your heart shall live that seek the Lord;” it is equivalent to that scripture, “The just shall live by faith.” So [Psalm xxii. 26.](#) and [Psalm lxx. 4.](#) And so [verse 6](#). “Seek the Lord, and ye shall live.” And [ver. 8](#). “Seek him that made the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning.” “Look from the top of Amana.” “At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel, and he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands: neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves or the images.” “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” “I will look again towards thine holy temple.” “Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.” “They looked unto “him, and were lightened; their faces were not ashamed.”

§ 49. Faith is a taking hold of God’s strength; “O let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.” Faith is expressed by stretching out the hand to Christ; “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.” So Christ said to the man that had the withered hand, “Stretch forth thine hand.” Promises of mercy and help are often in Scripture made to rolling our burden, and rolling ourselves, or rolling our way on the Lord. “Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.” [Psal. xxii. 8.](#) and [xxxii. 5.](#) “He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.” “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.”

§ 50. That there are different sorts of faith, and that all believing that Christ is the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, &c. is not true and saving faith, or that faith which most commonly has the name of faith appropriated to it in the New Testament, is exceedingly evident by “But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.” Here all false disciples, that had but a temporary faith, that thought him to be the Messiah, but would fall away, as Judas and others, are said to be those that believed not, making an essential difference between their belief, and that grace that has the term faith, or believing, appropriated to it. Faith is a receiving of Christ into the heart, in such a sense as to believe that he is what he declares himself to be, and to have such a high esteem of him as an excellent Lord and Saviour, and

so to prize him, and so to depend upon him, as not to be ashamed nor afraid to profess him, and openly and constantly to appear on his side. See [Rom. x.8-13](#).

§ 51. Trusting in riches, as Christ uses the expression concerning the rich young man, and as the expression is used elsewhere, is an extensive expression, comprehending many dispositions, affections, and exercises of heart towards riches; so faith in Christ, or trusting in Christ, is as extensive. The soul's active closing or uniting with Christ, is faith. But the act of the soul, in its uniting or closing, must be agreeable to the kind and nature of the union that is to be established between Christ and the saints, and that subsists between them, and is the foundation of the saints' communion with Christ. Such *is* the nature of it, that it is not merely like the various parts of a building, that are cemented and cleave fast together; or as marble and precious stones may be joined, so as to become one: but it is such a kind of union as subsists between the head and living members, between stock and branches; between which, and the head or stock, there is such a kind of union, that there is an entire, immediate, perpetual dependence for, and derivation of, nourishment, refreshment, beauty, fruitfulness, and all supplies; yea, life and being. And the union is wholly for this purpose; this derivation is the end of it; and it is the most essential thing in the union. Now such a union as this, when turned into act, (if I may so say,) or an active union of an intelligent rational being, that is agreeable to this kind of union, and is a recognition and expression, and as it were the active band of it, is something else besides mere love. It is an act most properly expressed by the name of faith, according to the proper meaning of the word so translated, as it was used in the days when the Scriptures were written.

§ 52. Trusting in a prince or ruler, as the phrase was understood among the Jews, implied in it faithful adherence and entire subjection, submission, and obedience. So much the phrase plainly implies; "And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and, if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." We have an account of the fulfilment of this parable in the sequel. How the men of Shechem did not prove faithful subjects to Abimelech, according to their covenant or agreement with him, but dealt treacherously with him. [Ver. 23](#). And how accordingly Abimelech proved the occasion of their destruction. The like figure of speech is used to signify the nation's obedience to the king of Assyria, "All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations." So also it signifies the subjection of the nations to Nebuchadnezzar; "The tree grew, and it was strong: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh fed of it." The benefit that those who are the true subjects of Christ have by him, is expressed by the very same things; "In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they

dwell.” Our trusting in God and Christ, is often expressed by our trusting in his shadow, and under the shadow of his wings, and the like; [Psal. xvii. 8.](#) and [xxxvi. 7.](#) and [lvii. 1.](#) and [lxiii. 7.](#) and [xci. 1.](#) [Cant. ii. 3.](#) [Isa. iv. 6.](#) and [xxv. 4.](#) Here see [Ruth ii. 12.](#) compared with [chap. i. 16.](#) [John iii. 36.](#) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: he that believeth not the Son **Greek** The force of the word may in some measure be learned from [Acts v. 36, 37.](#) and “And to him they agreed or *obeyed*,” the word is the same in the Greek. And “But do not thou *yield* unto them;” the word is the same in the **Greek**. “I was not disobedient (**Greek**) to the heavenly vision;” “Disobedient to parents, **Greek**.” See also “Some of them believed (in the Greek **Greek**,) and consorted with Paul and Silas.” “The unbelieving Jews, **Greek**.” “The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, **Greek**.” We may judge something of the force of the word **Greek**, by the signification of the word whence it comes; **Greek**. is the passive of **Greek**, which signifies, to counsel, to move or entice, draw or persuade unto.

§ 53. That a saving belief of truth arises from love, or a holy disposition and relish of heart, appears by [Phil. i. 9.](#)

10. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment, that ye may approve things that are excellent.” That this approving of the things that are excellent, is mentioned as an instance of the exercise of that knowledge and judgment that is spoken of as the fruit of love, appears more plainly in the original, as the connexion is evident, **Greek**, unto the approving. The same thing appears by “That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

§ 54. It is fit that, seeing we depend so entirely and universally, visibly, and remarkably, on God, in our fallen state, for happiness, and seeing the special design of God was to bring us into such a great and most evident dependence; that the act of the soul, by which it is interested in this benefit, bestowed in this way, should correspond; *viz.* a looking and seeking to, and depending on God for it; that the union of heart, that is the proper term, should imply such an application of the soul to God, and seeking his benefits only and entirely, and with full sense of dependence on him, that as the condition before was obedience, or rendering to God, so now it should be seeking and looking to him, drawing and deriving from him, and with the whole heart depending on him, on his power and free grace, &c. Faith is the proper active union of the soul with Christ as our Saviour, as revealed to us in the gospel. But the proper active union of the soul with Christ as our Saviour, as revealed to us in the gospel, is the soul’s active agreeing, and suiting or adapting itself, in its act, to the exhibition God gives us of Christ, and his redemption; to the nature of the exhibition, being pure revelation, and a revelation of things perfectly above our senses and reason; and to Christ himself in his person as revealed, and in the character under which he is revealed to us; and to our state with regard to him in that character; and to our need of him, and concern with him, and his relation to us, and to the benefits to us, with which he is exhibited and offered

to us in that revelation; and to the great design of God in that method and divine contrivance of salvation revealed. But the most proper name for such an action, union, or unition of the soul to Christ, as this, of any that language affords, *is faith*.

§ 55. The revelation or exhibition that God first made of himself, was of his authority, demanding and requiring of us, that we should render something to him that nature and reason required. The act of the soul that is suitable to such an exhibition, may be expressed by submitting, doing, obeying, and rendering to God. The exhibition which God makes of himself, since our fall, in the gospel, is not of his power and authority, as demanding of us, but of his sufficiency for us, as needing, empty, helpless; and of his grace and mercy to us, as unworthy and miserable. And the exhibition is by pure revelation of things quite above all our senses and reason, or the reach of any created faculties, being of the mere good pleasure of God. The act in us, that is proper and suitable to, and well according to, such an exhibition as this, may be expressed by such names as believing, seeking, looking, depending, acquiescing, or in one word, *faith*.

§ 56. That believing, in the New Testament, is much the same as trusting, in the Old, is confirmed by comparing “Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord [ver. 7](#).” “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is” with “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.” It also is confirmed by this, that trusting in God, and hoping in him, are used in the Old Testament as expressions of the same import. So hope is often in the New Testament used to signify the same thing that, in other places, is signified by faith. “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust.” “Now the God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Compare [Dan. iii. 38](#). with [Dan. vi. 23](#). and [Heb. xi. 33, 34](#).

It is manifest, that trusting in God is a phrase of the same import with believing in him, by comparing “They shall not be ashamed that wait for me;” with [Isa. xxviii. 16](#). and [Rom. ix. 33](#). and [x. 11](#). [1 Pet. vi. 6, 7, 8](#). These places show, that waiting for God, signifies the same as believing on him. And it is evident, by various passages of Scripture, that waiting on God, or for God, signifies the same as trusting in him.

§ 57. That saving faith implies in its nature divine love, is manifest by “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.” The apostle’s design in this verse seems to be, to show the connexion there is between a true and sincere respect to God, and a respect to and union with Christ; so that he who is united to the Son, is so to the Father, and vice versa. As he believes in Christ, and so loves him, it is evident that he is a child of God, and *vice versa*. He whose heart is united to the Father, is so to the Son too. He that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. (Compare [chap. ii. 22, 23, 24](#). and [chap. iv.](#)



15. with [John xiv. 1.](#) and [John xv. 23, 24.](#)) The same is further manifest again by the following verses of this [chapter, 3, 4, 5.](#) “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous;” *i. e.* this is a good evidence that we have true love to God, that we are enabled to triumph over the difficulties we meet with in this evil world, and not to esteem the yoke of denial of our worldly lusts a grievous and heavy yoke, and on that account be unwilling to take it upon us. “For whosoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” This is explaining what he had said before, that our love to God enables us to overcome the difficulties that attend keeping God’s commands; which shows that love is the main thing in saving faith, the life and power of it, by which it produces great effects; agreeably to what the apostle Paul says, when he calls saving faith, “*faith effectual by love.*”

§ 58. Seeking God is from time to time spoken of as the condition of God’s favour and salvation, in like manner as trusting in him; “He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him; that seek thy face, O Jacob.” “Glory ye in his holy name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” See the same words in [Psal. cv. 3.](#) “The meek shall eat and be satisfied. They shall praise the Lord that seek him. Your heart shall live for ever.” “The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

They that seek God are spoken of as those that love God’s salvation. “Let all those that seek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee; and let such as love thy salvation, say continually, Let the Lord be magnified.” We have the same words again, [Psal. xl. 16.](#) The expression seems to be in some measure parallel with trusting in God’s salvation; “Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation.” And hoping in God’s salvation, “I have hoped for thy salvation.” And waiting for God’s salvation, “I have waited for thy salvation, O God.” “The Lord is good unto them that wait for him; to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” “I will wait for the God of my salvation.” *faith effectual by love* Agreeably to this, despising the pleasant land, is spoken of as an exercise of the spirit of unbelief; “Yea, they despised the pleasant land; they believed not his word.”

§ 59. Flying, resorting, or running to, as to a refuge, are terms used as being equivalent to trusting; “My refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, God is a refuge for us.” [Psal. xci. 2.](#) “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” “In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.” “Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort. Thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.” “Who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.”

§ 60. Waiting on the Lord, waiting for his salvation, and the like, are terms used as being equivalent to trusting in God in the Scripture. “O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed.” [Verse 5.](#) “On thee do I wait all the day.” [Verse 21.](#) “Let integrity and uprightness

preserve me, for on thee do I wait.” Trust in the Lord.” **Ver. 5.** “Trust also in him.” **Verse 7.** “Rest on the Lord, and wait patiently for him.” “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.”

§ 61. Hoping in God, hoping in his mercy, &c. are used as terms equivalent to trusting in God. “That they might set their hope in God.” “Happy is that man that hath the God of Jacob for his aid; whose hope is in the Lord his God.” “O the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.” “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord; whose hope the Lord is.” **Verse 13.** “O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed.” **Verse 17.** “Thou art my hope in the day of evil.” &c. “Hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, &c. who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, wherein ye greatly rejoice; that the trial of your faith being much more precious whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, &c. receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” **Verse 13.** “Be ye sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ,” **verse 21, 22.** “Who by him do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God: seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.” **Chap. iii. 15.** “And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.” “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.” **Matt. xii. 21.** “In his name shall the Gentiles trust;” in the original **GREEK**, hope.

§ 62. Looking to, or looking for, are used as phrases equivalent to trusting, seeking, hoping, waiting, believing on, &c. “And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived;” together with “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.” “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” “Unto thee I lift up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the band of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.”

§ 63. Rolling oneself, or burden, on the Lord, is an expression used as equivalent to trusting. “He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him in the original, “He rolled himself on the Lord.” “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.” In the Hebrew, *Roll thy way upon the Lord.* “Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.” In the Hebrew, *Roll thy works.*

§ 64. Leaning on the Lord, and staying ourselves on him, are of the same force. “Yet will they lean on the Lord.” “Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?”

§ 65. Relying on God, “Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed; because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers;” compared with [verses 14, 15](#). wherein it is said, “And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind; and they cried unto the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Then the men of Judah gave a shout, and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel, before Abijan and Judah.”

§ 66. Committing ourselves, our cause, &c. unto God, is of the same force. “I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause, who doth great things, and unsearchable, marvellous things without number.”

§ 67. The distinction of the several constituent parts or acts of faith, in assent, consent, and affiancing, if strictly considered and examined, will appear not to be proper and just, or strictly according to the truth and nature of things; because the parts are not all entirely distinct one from another, and so are in some measure confounded one with another: for the last, *viz.* affiancing, implies the other two, assent and consent; and is nothing else but a man’s assent and consent, with particular relation or application to himself and his own case, together with the effect of all in his own quietness and comfort of mind, and boldness in venturing on this foundation, in conduct and practice.

Affiancing consists in these five things: 1. Consent to something proposed, to be obtained by another person, as good, eligible, or desirable, and so for him. 2. Assent of the judgment to the reality of the good, as to be obtained by him; that he is sufficient, faithful, &c. 3. The mind’s applying itself to him for it, which is no other than the soul’s desiring him to possess us of this good consented to, expressing these desires before him, that he may see and take notice of them, *i. e.* expressing these desires with an apprehension that he sees our hearts, and designedly spreading them before him, to the end that they might be observed by him and gratified. 4. Hoping that the good will be obtained in this way; which hope consists in two things, *viz.* expectation of the good in this way; and in some, ease, quietness, or comfort of mind, arising from this expectation. 5. Adventuring some interest on this hope in practice; which consists either in doing something that implies trouble, or brings expense or suffering, or in omitting something that we should otherwise do; by which omission some good is foregone, or some evil is brought on.

If these acts cannot in strictness all take place at the same moment of time, though they follow one another in the order of nature, yet they are all implied in the act that is exercised the first moment, so far as that act is of such a nature as implies a necessary tendency to what follows. In these last three especially consists man’s *committing himself to Christ as a Saviour*. In the third and fourth especially consists the soul’s *looking to Christ as a Saviour*.

§ 60. In that consent to the way or method of salvation, which there is in saving faith, the heart has especially respect to two things in that method, that are the peculiar glory of it, and whereby it is peculiarly contrary to corrupt nature: 1. Its being away wherein God is

so exalted and set so high, and man so debased and set so low. God is made all in all, and man nothing. God is magnified as self-sufficient, and all-sufficient, and as being all in all to us; his power and grace, and Christ's satisfaction and merits, being all: and man is annihilated; his power, his righteousness, his dignity, his works, are made nothing of.

2. Its being so holy a way; a way of mere mercy, yet of holy mercy; mercy in saving the sinner, by showing no favour or countenance to sin; a way of free grace, yet of holy grace; not grace exercised to the prejudice of God's holiness, but in such a way as peculiarly to manifest God's hatred to sin and opposition to it, and strict justice in punishing it, and that he will by no means clear the guilty; every way manifesting the infinite evil and odiousness of sin, much more than if there had been no salvation offered. Therefore, humiliation and holiness are the chief ingredients in the act of consent to this way of salvation.

In these things I have spoken only of a consent to the way or method of salvation. But in saving faith is included also a consent to the salvation itself, or the benefits procured. What is peculiarly contrary to this in corrupt nature, is a worldly spirit; and therefore in order to this act of consent there must be mortification to or weaned-ness from the world, and a selling of all for the pearl of great price.

*Lastly.* Besides all these, there is in saving faith a consent to Christ himself, or a closing of the heart or inclination with the person of Christ. This implies each of the three things forementioned, *viz.* humiliation, holiness, and renouncing the world. It implies humiliation; for as long as men deify themselves, they will not adore Jesus Christ. It implies sanctification; for Christ's beauty, for which his person is delighted in and chosen, is especially his holiness. It implies forsaking the world; for as long as men set their hearts on the world as their chief good, and have that as the chief object of the relish and complaisance of their minds, they will not relish and take complaisance in Christ, and set their hearts on him as their best good. The heart of a true believer consents to three things exhibited in the gospel of salvation. 1. The person who is the author of the salvation. 2. The benefit, or the salvation itself. 3. The way or method in which this person is the author of this benefit.

§ 69. Faith implies a cleaving of the heart to Christ; because a trusting in others is spoken of as a departing of the heart from the Lord. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, whose heart departeth from the Lord." So a heart of unbelief is a heart that departeth from the Lord. "Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Faith has a double office. It accepts Christ from God, and presents Christ to God. It accepts Christ in the word, and makes use of him in prayer. In the word, God offereth him to you as Lord and Saviour, to give you repentance and remission of sins. Now, when you consent to God's terms, this is to believe in him. Faith presents Christ to God; "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith of him." All religion lieth in coming to God by him. "Wherefore he is able also to save them unto the uttermost, that

come unto God through him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” *Dr. Manton*, vol. v. p. 382.

§ 70. We often read in the New Testament of the calling of Christians, of their high calling; and that effect of God’s word and Spirit, by which they are brought to a saving faith, is called their calling; and true believers are spoken of as the called of God, called saints, &c. And this call is often represented as an invitation, an invitation to come to Christ, to come and join themselves to him, to come to follow him, to continue with him, to be of his party, his society, seeking his interest, &c. To come to him for his benefits, to come for deliverance from calamity and misery, to come for safety, to come for rest, to come to eat and drink; an invitation to come into his house, to a feast. And faith is often called by the name of **GREEK**, hearing, hearkening, yielding to, and obeying the gospel, obeying Christ, being obedient to the faith, obeying the form of doctrine, &c. Hence we *may* learn the nature of saving faith; that it is an accepting, yielding to, and complying with the gospel, as such a call and invitation; which implies the hearing of the mind, *i. e.* the mind’s apprehending or understanding the call; a believing of the voice, and the offer and promises contained in it; and accepting, esteeming, prizing the person and benefits invited to; a falling in of the inclination, the choice, the affection, &c.

§ 71. Faith, as the word is used in Scripture, does not only signify dependence, as it appears in venturing in practice”, but also appears in the rest of the mind, in opposition to anxiety; as appears by “take no thought shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” So “Take no thought how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith! Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” compared with [Philip. iv. 6, 7.](#) and [1 Peter v. 7.](#) This is agreeable to that phrase used in the Old Testament for trusting, “Roll thy burthen on the Lord.” “But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”

§ 72. The following inquiries concerning saving faith, are proper and important:

1. Whether justifying faith, in its proper essence, implies, besides the act of the judgment, also an act of the inclination and will?
2. Whether it properly implies love in its essence?
3. What are the scripture descriptions, characters, and representations of justifying faith?
4. What is the true definition of justifying faith, a definition which agrees with the scripture representation of faith, and takes all in?
5. Whether the word *faith*, as used in the gospel, has a signification diverse from what it has in common speech?
6. Why the word *faith* is used to signify this complex act of the mind?

7. How far trusting in Christ is of the nature and essence of faith?
8. Whether assent, consent, and affiance, be a proper distribution of the various and distinct acts of faith?
9. Whether hope, as the word is used in the New Testament, be properly distinct from saving faith?
10. What does the word *trust* imply in common speech?
11. What it implies as used in the Scriptures?
12. In what sense faith implies obedience?
13. What is the nature of self-righteousness?
14. How self-righteousness is peculiarly opposite to the nature of faith?
15. In what sense there must be a particular application in the act of saving faith?
16. Whether the first act of faith is certainly more lively and sensible, than some of the weakest of the consequent acts of saving faith?
17. In what sense perseverance in faith is necessary to salvation?
18. What sort of evidence is it which is the principal immediate ground of that assent of the judgment which is implied in saving faith?

§ 73. Calling on the name of Christ, is often spoken of as the proper expression of saving faith in Christ. [Acts ii. 21.](#) [Rom. x. 13, 14.](#) [1 Cor. i. 2.](#) [Acts ix. 14, 21, 22, 16.](#) Faith is trusting in Christ. See *Doddridge's* note on [Acts xvi. 31.](#)

What in that prophecy of the Messiah in is expressed thus, "The isles shall wait for his law," is, as cited in "In his name shall the Gentiles trust."

Coming to Christ, and believing in him, are evidently used as equipollent expressions, in [John vi. 29, 30. 35. 37, 40, 44, 45, 47, 64, 65.](#) This coming, wherein consists believing, implies an attraction of the heart, as is manifest by [verses 44, 45.](#)

Christ, by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, evidently means the same thing that he intends in the same chapter, by believing in him, and coming to him. Compare [John vi. 50, 51-54. 56-58.](#) with [verses 29, 30, 35-37, 40, 44, 45, 47, 64, 65.](#)

Saving faith is called in **Greek**, "The confidence and the rejoicing of the hope." Well expressing the act of the whole soul that is implied in saving faith, the judgment, the will, and affections. So in "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith." In the original it is **Greek**, hope.

Justifying faith is nothing else but true virtue in its proper and genuine breathings adapted to the case, to the revelation made, the state we are in, the benefit to be received, and the way and the means of it, and our relation to these things.

Faith is a sincere seeking righteousness and salvation, of Christ, and in Christ. "Hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." See also the promises made, both in the Old Testament and New, to them that seek the Lord. To saving faith in Christ belongs adoration, submission,

and subjection, as appears by “Unto me every knee shall bow,” with the foregoing and following verses.

The general description of justifying faith is a proper reception of Christ and his salvation, or a proper active union of the soul to Christ as a Saviour. I say, a proper reception, which implies that it is a receiving him in a manner agreeable to his office and character and relation to us, in which he is exhibited and offered to us, and with regard to those ends and effects for which he is given to mankind, was sent into the world, and is appointed to be preached; and in a manner agreeable to the way in which he is exhibited, made known, and offered, *i. e.* by divine revelation, without being exhibited to the view of ourselves; and the nature of his person, character, offices, and benefits; and the way of salvation, as related to our faculties, mysterious and incomprehensible; and in a manner agreeable to our circumstances, and our particular necessities, and immediate and infinite personal concern with the revelation and offer of the Saviour. A union of soul to this Saviour, and a reception of him and his salvation, which is proper in these respects, is most aptly called by the name of faith.

§ 74. That love belongs to the essence of saving faith, is manifest by comparing “Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, &c. what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him,” as cited by the apostle, “It is for them that love him.” Now it is evident that waiting for God, in the Old Testament, signifies the same with faith in God, or trusting in God.

Dr. Goodwin, in vol. 1. of his Works, p. 286. says, “The papists say, wickedly and wretchedly, that love is the form and soul of faith.” But how does the truth of this charge of wickedness appear?

It was of old the coming to the sacrifice, as one consenting to the offering, active in choosing and constituting that as his offering, and looking to it as the means of atonement for his sins, that interested him in the sacrifice; as appears by “Could never make the comers thereunto perfect. For then, the worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins.” Compare [chap. ix. 9](#).

Believing in one for any benefit, as sufficient for the benefit, and disposed to procure it, and accordingly leaving our interest with him, with regard to that benefit, is implied in trusting in him, “Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour with him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?”

As the whole soul in all its faculties is the proper subject and agent of faith, so undoubtedly there are two things in saving faith, *viz.* belief of the truth, and an answerable disposition of heart. And therefore faith may be defined, a thorough believing of what the gospel reveals of a Saviour of sinners, as true and perfectly good, with the exercise of an answerable disposition towards him. That true faith, in the scripture sense of it, implies not only the exercise of the understanding, but of the heart or disposition, is very manifest. Many important things pertaining to saving religion, which the Scripture speaks of under

the name of some exercise of the understanding, imply the disposition and exercise of the heart also. Such as, knowing God understanding the word of God having eyes to see, and a heart to understand. And piety is called wisdom. So men's wickedness is called ignorance, folly, &c. A being wise in one's own eyes, implies a high opinion of himself, with an agreeable or answerable disposition.

It is evident that trust in Christ implies the disposition or will, the receiving and embracing or the heart. For we do not trust in any person or thing for any thing but good, or what is agreeable to us; what we choose, incline to, and desire. Yea, trusting commonly is used with respect to great good: good that we choose, as what we depend upon for support, satisfaction, happiness, &c.

§ 75. The following things concerning the nature of faith, are extracted from Dr. Sherlock's *Several Discourses, preached at Temple. Church*; discourse 14. page 257, &c. "Faith, as some think, is no proper subject for exhortation. For if faith is a mere act of the mind judging upon motives of credibility, it is as reasonable to exhort a man to see with his eyes, as to judge with his understanding. But then, if this be the true notion of faith, how comes it that in every rage we find the praises of it in the gospel? What is there in this to deserve the blessings promised to the faithful? Or whence is it that the whole of our salvation is put upon this foot? How come all these prerogatives to belong to faith, if faith be nothing else but believing things in themselves credible? Why are we not said to be justified by light as well as by faith? For is not there the same virtue in seeing things visible, as in believing things credible? Tell me then, what is faith, that it should raise men above the level of mortality, and make men become like the angels of heaven? But further, if it be only an act of the understanding formed upon due reasons, how comes it to be described in Scripture as having its seat in the heart? The apostle in the text ([Heb. iii. 12.](#)) cautions against an evil heart of unbelief; and the same notion prevails throughout the books of Scripture, and is as early as our Saviour's first preaching. Faith, which is the principle of the gospel, respects the promises and declaration of God, and includes a sure trust and reliance on him for the performance. Beyond this, there is no further act of faith. We are not taught to believe this, in order to our believing something else; but here, faith has its full completion, and leads immediately to the practice of virtue and holiness. For this end was the Son of God revealed, to make known the mind and will of the Father, to declare his mercy and pardon, and to confirm the promises of eternal life to mankind. He that believes and accepts this deliverance from the bondage of sin, and through patience and perseverance in well doing, waits for the blessed hope of immortality; who passes through the world as a stranger and pilgrim, looking for another country, and a city whose builder is God; this is he whose faith shall receive the promise, whose confidence shall have great recompence of reward."

Here Dr. Sherlock speaks of that true Christian faith, which is the principle of the gospel, as including a sure trust and reliance on God. The same author elsewhere, in the same book,



page 251. speaks of reliance or dependence on God, as arising from a principle of love to God, in the words following: "The duties we owe to God, are founded in the relation between God and us. I observed likewise to you, that love naturally transforms itself into all relative duties, which arise from the circumstances of the person related. Thus, in the present case, if we love God, and consider him as Lord and Governor of the world, our love will soon become obedience. If we consider him as wise, and good, and gracious, our love will become honour and adoration. If we add to these our own natural weakness and infirmity, love will teach us dependence, and prompt us in all our wants to fly for refuge to our Great Protector."

§ 76. That expression in "Gather my saints, that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," seems to show that such is the nature of true faith in Christ, that believers do therein, by the sincere, full act of their minds and hearts, appoint Christ to be their sacrifice; as such, bring him an offering to God; *i. e.* they entirely concur with what was done in his offering himself a sacrifice for sinners, as a real sacrifice sufficient and proper for them, trusting in this sacrifice. Faith is the believer's coming to God, and giving himself up to God, hoping for acceptance by this sacrifice, and taking God for his God, hoping for an interest in him as such by this sacrifice, that so God may be his God, and he one of his people.

§ 77. It does not seem congruous, and in itself it is not proper, for God quite to pass over sin, rebellion, and treachery, and receive the offender into his entire favour, either without a repentance and sorrow, and detestation of his fault, adequate to the aggravation of it, (which can never be,) or, if there be another that appears in his stead, and has done and suffered so much as fully to satisfy and pay-the debt, it will not be proper to forgive him, whatever is done for him by his representative for his expiation, unless there be an accepting of it by the offender for that end, a sense of its being adequate to the offence, and an applying of the mind to him, and a recumbence upon him for satisfaction. This now seems to me evident from the very light of nature.

§ 78. Justifying faith is more properly called faith than acceptance, because the things received are spiritual and unseen, and because they are received as future, and entirely the free gift of God.

§ 79. Even the being of a God can be made most rationally and demonstratively evident, by divine revelation, and by gracious spiritual illumination; after the same manner as we have shown the Christian religion, the superstructure built upon that foundation, is evident. Suppose all the world had otherwise been ignorant of the being of a God before, yet they might know it, because God has revealed himself; he has shown himself; he has said a great deal to us, and conversed much with us. And this is every whit as rational a way of being convinced of the being of God, as it is of being convinced of the being of a man who comes from an unknown region, and shows himself to us, and converses with us for a long time. We have no other reason to be convinced of his being, than only that we see a long series of external concordant signs of an understanding, will, and design, and various affections.

The same way God makes known himself to us in his word. And if we have a full and comprehensive knowledge of the revelation made, of the things revealed, and of the various relations and respects of the various parts, their harmonies, congruities, and mutual concordances, there appear most indubitable signs and expressions of a very high and transcendent understanding, together with a great and mighty design, an exceeding wisdom, or most magnificent power and authority, a marvellous purity, holiness, and goodness. So that if we never knew there was any such being before, yet we might be certain that this must be such a one.

§ 80. One that is well acquainted with the gospel, and sees the beauties, the harmonies, the majesty, the power, and the glorious wisdom of it and the like, may, only by viewing it, be as certain that it is no human work, as a man that is well acquainted with mankind and their works, may, by contemplating the sun, know it is not a human work; or, when he goes upon an island, and sees the various trees, and the manner of their growing, and blossoming, and bearing fruit, may know that they are not the work of man.

§ 81. Faith is very often in the Scripture called *trust*, especially in the Old Testament. Now, trusting is something more than mere believing. Believing is the assent to any truth testified; trusting, always respects truth that nearly concerns ourselves, in regard of some benefit of our own that it reveals to us, and some benefit that the revealer is the author of. It is the acquiescence of the mind in a belief of any person, that by his word reveals or represents himself to us as the author of some good that concerns us. If the benefit be a deliverance or preservation from misery, it is a being easy in a belief that he will do it. So, if we say, a man trusts in a castle to save him from his enemies, we mean, his mind is easy, and rests in a persuasion that it will keep him safe. If the benefit be the bestowment of happiness, it is the mind's acquiescing in it, that he will accomplish it; that is, he is persuaded he will do it; he has such a persuasion, that he rejoices in confidence of it.

Thus, if a man has promised a child to make him his heir, if we say he trusts in him to make him his heir, we mean he has such a belief of what he promises, that his mind acquiesces and rejoices in it, so as not to be disturbed by doubts and questions whether he will perform it. These things all the world means by trust. The first fruit of trust is being willing to do and undergo in the expectation of some thing. He that does not expect the benefit, so much as to make him ready to do or undergo, dares not trust it; he dares not run the venture of it. Therefore, they may be said to trust in Christ, and they only, that are ready to do and undergo all that he desires, in expectation of his redemption. And the faith of those that dare not do so, is unsound. Therefore, such trials are called the trials of faith.

But this is to be considered, that Christ does not promise that he will be the author of our redemption, but upon condition; and we have not performed that condition, until we have believed. Therefore, we have no grounds, until we have once believed, to acquiesce in it that Christ will save us. Therefore the first act of faith is no more than this, the acquiescence

of the mind in him in what he does declare absolutely. It is the soul's resting in him, and adhering to him, so far as his word does reveal him to all as a Saviour for sinners, as one that has wrought out redemption, as a sufficient Saviour, as a Saviour suited to their case, as a willing Saviour, as the author of an excellent salvation, &c. so as to be encouraged heartily to seek salvation of him, to come to him, to love, desire, and thirst after him as a Saviour, and fly for refuge to him. This is the very same thing in substance, as that trust we spoke of before, and is the very essence of it. This is all the difference, that it was attended with this additional belief, *viz.* that the subject had performed the condition, which does not belong to the essence of faith. That definition which we gave of trust before, holds, *viz.* the acquiescence of the mind in the word of any person who reveals himself to us as the author of some good that nearly concerns us. Trusting is not only believing that a person will accomplish the good he promises: the thing that he promises may be very good, and the person promising or offering may be believed, and yet not properly trusted in; for the person to whom the offer is made, may not be sensible that the thing is good, and he may not desire it. If he offers to deliver him from something that is his misery, perhaps he is not sensible that it is his misery; or, he may offer to bestow that which is his happiness, but he may not be sensible that it is happiness. If so, though he believes him, he does not properly trust in him for it; for he does not seek or desire what he offers; and there can be no adherence or acquiescence of mind. If a man offers another to rescue him from captivity, and carry him to his own country; if the latter believes the former will do it, and yet does not desire it, he cannot be said to trust in him for it. And if the thing be accounted good, and be believed, yet if the person to whom it is offered does not like the person that does it, or the way of accomplishment of it, there cannot be an entire trust, because there is not a full adherence and acquiescence of mind.

§ 82. There are these two ways in which the mind may be said to be sensible that any thing is good or excellent: 1. When the mind judges that any thing is such as, by the agreement of mankind, is called good or excellent, *viz.* that which is most to general advantage, and that between which and reward there is a suitableness; or that which is agreeable to the law of the country or law of God. It is a being merely convinced in judgment that a thing is according to the meaning of the word, good, as the word is generally applied. 2. The mind is sensible of good in another sense, when it is so sensible of the beauty and amiableness of the thing, that it is sensible of pleasure and delight in the presence of the idea of it. This kind of sensibleness of good, carries in it an act of the will, or inclination or spirit of the mind, as well as of the understanding.

§ 83. The conditions of justification are, repentance and faith; and the freedom of grace appears in the forgiving of sin upon repentance, or only for our being willing to part with it, after the same manner as the bestowment of eternal life, only for accepting of it. For to make us an offer of freedom from a thing, only for quitting of it, is equivalent to the offering

the possession of a thing for the receiving of it. God makes us this offer, that if we will. in our hearts quit sin, we shall be freed from it, and all the evil that belongs to it, and flows from it; which is the same thing as the offering us freedom only for accepting it. Accepting, in this case, is quitting and parting with, in our wills and inclination. So that repentance is implied in faith; it is a part of our willing reception of the salvation of Jesus Christ; though faith, with respect to sin, implies something more in it, *viz.* a respect to Christ, as him by whom we have deliverance. Thus by faith we destroy sin, [Gal. ii. 18.](#)

§ 84. As to that question, Whether closing with Christ in his kingly office be of the essence of justifying faith? I would say, 1. That accepting Christ in his kingly office, is doubtless the proper condition of having an interest in Christ's kingly office, and so the condition of that salvation which he bestows in the execution of that office; as much as accepting the forgiveness of sins is the proper condition of the forgiveness of sin. Christ, in this kingly office, bestows salvation; and therefore, accepting him in his kingly office, by a disposition to sell all and suffer all in duty to Christ, and giving proper respect and honour to him, is the proper condition of salvation. This is manifest by "And being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him;" and by "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The apostle speaks of such a confessing of Christ, or outward and open testifying our respect to him, and adhering to our duty to him as exposed to suffering, reproach, and persecution. And that such a disposition and practice is of the essence of saving faith, is manifest by "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God;" compared with "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

2. Accepting Christ as a priest and king, cannot be separated. They not only cannot be separated, or be asunder in their subject, but they cannot be considered as separate things in their natures; for they are implied one in another. Accepting Christ as a king, is implied in accepting him as a priest; for, as a priest, he procures a title to the benefits of his kingly office; and therefore, to accept him as a priest, implies an accepting him in his kingly office: for we cannot accept the purchase of his priesthood, but by accepting the benefits purchased. If faith is supposed to contain no more immediately, than only an accepting of Christ as a Mediator for our justification; yet that justification implies a giving a title to the benefits of his kingly office, *viz.* salvation from sin, and conformity to his nature and will, and actual salvation by actual deliverance from our enemies, and the bestowment of glory.

§ 85. Faith divine, is a spiritual conviction of the truth of the things of religion. Some have objected against a spiritual sight of divine things in their glorious, excellent, and divine form, as being the foundation of a conviction of the truth or real existence of them, because, say they, the existence of things is in the order of nature before forms or qualities of them

as excellent or odious; and so the knowledge of their existence must go before the sight of their form or quality; they must be known to be before they are seen to be excellent. I answer, It is true, things must be known to be before they are known to be excellent, if by this proposition it be understood, that things must be known really to exist, before they can be known really to exist excellent, or really to exist with such and such beauty. And all the force of the objection depends on such a meaning of this assertion. But if thereby be intended, that a thing must be known to have a real existence, before the person has a clear understanding, idea, or apprehension of the thing proposed or objected to his view, as it is in its qualities either odious or beautiful, then the assertion is not true; for his having a clear idea of something proposed to his understanding or view, as very beautiful or very odious, as is proposed, does not suppose *its* reality; that is, it does not presuppose it, though its real existence may perhaps follow from it. But, in our way of understanding things in general of all kinds, we first have some understanding or view of the thing in its qualities, before we know its existence. Thus it is in things that we know by our external senses, by our bodily sight for instance. We first see them, or have a clear idea of them by sight, before we know their existence by our sight. We first see the sun, and have a strong, lively, and clear idea of it in its qualities, its shape, its brightness, &c. before we know there actually exists such a body.

§ 86. Faith in Christ is the condition of salvation. It is observable, that as trusting in God, hoping in him, waiting for him, &c. are abundantly insisted on in the Old Testament, as the main condition of God's favour, protection, deliverance, and salvation, in the book of Psalms and elsewhere; so, in most of those places where these graces of trust and hope are so insisted upon, the subjects of them are represented as being in a state of trial, trouble, difficulty, danger, opposition, and oppression of enemies, and the like. And the clearer revelation, and more abundant light of the New Testament, bring into clearer view the state that all mankind are in with regard to those things that are invisible, the invisible God, an invisible world, and invisible enemies, and so show men's lost, miserable, captivated, dangerous, and helpless state, and reveal the infinite mercy of God, and his glorious all-sufficiency to such wretched, helpless creatures, and also exhibit Christ in the character of the Saviour of the miserable, the great Redeemer of captives, &c. Hence faith, trust, and hope, are most fitly insisted on as the duty and qualification peculiarly proper for all mankind, and the virtue proper to be exercised in their circumstances towards God and Christ, as they reveal themselves in the gospel, as belonging to them in their character and relation to us, and concern with us, in which they are there exhibited; and as the grand condition of our salvation, or our receiving those benefits, which we, as sinful, miserable, and helpless creatures, need from them, and which Christ, as a Redeemer, appears ready to bestow.

§ 87. Dr. Manton reconciles the apostle James and the apostle Paul in the following manner, in his 5th volume of Sermons, p. 374. "Justification hath respect to some accusation: now, as there is a twofold law, there is a twofold accusation and justification; the law of

works, and the law of grace. Now, when we are accused as breakers of the law of works, that is, as sinners obnoxious to the wrath of God, we plead Christ's satisfaction as our righteousness, no works of our own. But when we are accused as non-performers of the conditions of the covenant of grace, as being neglecters and rejecters of Christ the Mediator, we are justified by producing our faith or sincere obedience; so that our righteousness by the new covenant is subordinate to our universal righteousness, with respect to the great law of God; and that we have only by Christ. If we are charged that we have broken the first covenant, the covenant of works, we allege Christ's satisfaction and merit. If charged not to have performed the conditions of the law of grace, we answer it by producing our faith, repentance, and new obedience, and so show it to be a false charge. Our first and supreme righteousness consists in the pardon of our sins, and our acceptance in the beloved, and our right to impunity and glory. Our second and subordinate righteousness, in having the true condition of pardon and life. In the first sense, Christ's righteousness alone is our justification and righteousness. Faith and repentance, or new obedience, is not the least part of it. But, in the second, believing, repenting, and obeying, is our righteousness in their several respective ways, *viz.* that the righteousness of Christ may be ours, and continue ours." See also *Dr. Manton on James*, p. 310, 311, 312, and p. 331, &c.

Faith is connected with obedience. The very acceptance of Christ in his priestly office, making atonement for sin by his blood, and fulfilling the law of God by his perfect obedience unto death; and so the very approbation of the attribute of God, as it is there exhibited, an infinitely holy mercy: I say, merely the soul's acceptance and approbation of these things, do thoroughly secure holiness of heart and life in the redeemed of Jesus Christ. They will secure their conformity to the law of God, though, by this very mercy, and this very Saviour, they are set at liberty from the law, and are no longer under the law, as a law with its sanctions immediately taking hold of them, and binding them by its sanctions or threatenings, connecting and binding together its fulfilment and life, and its violation and death. Our hearts approving of that holy mercy of God that appears in his showing mercy to sinners, in the way of perfectly satisfying the law, suffering all the penalty of it, and of perfectly fulfilling and answering the precepts of it, implies a heart fully approving the law itself, as most worthy to be fulfilled and satisfied, approving the authority that established the law, and so its infinite worthiness of being obeyed; in that we approve of it, that so great a person should submit to that authority, and do honour to it, by becoming a servant to obey God, and a sacrifice to satisfy for the contempt done his authority, and that we approve the holy law itself as worthy of such great honour to be done it. It implies a heart entirely detesting sin, and in some sort, sensible of the infinite detestableness of it; that we approve of God's making such a manifestation of his detestation of it, and approve of the declared fitness and necessity of its being punished with so great a punishment as the sufferings of Christ. Our accepting such sufferings as an atonement for our sin, implies a heart fully repenting of and renouncing

sin; for it implies not only a conviction that we deserve so great a punishment, and not only a mere conviction of conscience, but an approbation of heart of the connexion of such sin with such punishment, which implies a hatred of the sin punished; and the heart's entire approbation of such methods perfectly to fulfil the obedience of the law, by so great a person, and by his doing so great things, and denying himself so much, implies a very high approbation of this law, and the authority of the lawgiver. Therefore, this acceptance of Christ as a Saviour, by his obedience and atonement, and an acceptance of God's holy mercy, forgiving sin, and giving life in this way, does well secure universal obedience to the law of God, as a law of liberty, and with a free and ingenuous spirit, by the obedience of children, and not of slaves. Thus, the faith that justifies the sinner, destroys sin; and the heart is purified by faith. So far as this evangelical spirit prevails, so far fear, or a legal spirit, will be needless to restrain from sin, and so far will such a legal spirit cease and be driven away.

*Coroll.* What has been observed, is a confirmation that this is the true nature of justifying faith, and that the essence of it lies very much in the approbation and acceptance of the heart.

§ 88. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith." It is a doctrine taught in this text, that saving faith differs from all common faith in its nature, kind, and essence. This doctrine is inferred from the text, thus: it is said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is son of God;" by which is manifest, that there was some great virtue that the apostles and Christians in those days used to call by the name of faith or believing, believing that Jesus is the Christ, and the like; which was a thing very peculiar and distinguishing, and belonging only to those that were born of God. Thereby cannot be meant, therefore, only a mere assent to the doctrine of the gospel, because that is common to saints and sinners, as is very evident. The apostle James plainly teaches in chapter ii. that this faith may be in those that are not in a state of salvation. And we read in the Evangelists, of many that in this sense believed, to whom Christ did not commit himself, because he knew what was in them; [John ii.](#) at the latter end, and many other places. When it is said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;" thereby cannot be meant, whosoever has such an assent as is perfect, so as to exclude all remaining unbelief; for it is evident, that the faith of good men does not do this. Thus, a true believer said, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief;" and Christ is often reproving his true disciples, that they have so little faith. He often says to them, "O ye of little faith;" and speaks sometimes as if their faith were less than a grain of mustard-seed. Nor can the apostle, when he says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," mean,

that whosoever has a predominant assent, or an assent that prevails above his dissent, or whose judgment preponderates that way, and has more weight in that scale than the other; because it is plain that it is not true that every one that believes in this sense, is born of God. Many natural, unregenerate men, have such a preponderating judgment of the truth of the doctrine of the gospel; without it there is no belief of it at all. For believing, in the lowest sense, implies a preponderating judgment; but it is evident, as just now was observed, that many natural men do believe; they do judge that the doctrine is true, as the devils do.

And again, when the apostle says, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;” all that he intends, cannot be only, that whosoever is come to a certain particular intermediate degree of assent between the lowest degree of preponderating assent and a perfect assent, excluding all remains of unbelief; he cannot mean any certain particular intermediate degree of assent, still meaning nothing but mere assent by believing. For he does not say, he that believes or assents that Jesus is the Christ, to such a certain degree is born of God; but whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; by which must be understood, that whosoever at all performs that act which the apostle calls by that name, or whosoever has any thing at all of that kind of virtue which the apostle calls believing, is born of God; and that he that is not born of God has not that virtue that he meant, but is wholly without it. And besides, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that by this believing, which the apostle there and elsewhere lays down as such a grand note of distinction between those that are born of God, and those that are not, is meant only a certain degree of assent, which such have, that differs less from what those may have that are not born of God, than nine hundred and ninety-nine from a thousand; yea, that differs from it an infinitely little. For this is the case, if the difference be only gradual, and it be only a certain degree of faith that is the mark of being born of God. If this was the apostle’s meaning, he would use words in a manner not consistent with the use of language, as he would call things infinitely nearly alike by such distant and contrary names; and would represent the subjects in whom they are, as of such different and contrary characters, calling one believer, and the other unbeliever, one the children of God, and those that are born of God, and the other the children of the devil, as this apostle calls all that are not born of God, in this epistle, ([see chapter iii. 9, 10.](#)) and would represent one as setting to his seal that God is true, and the other as making him a liar, as in the [10th verse.](#) of the context. And besides, if this were the case, if believers in this sense only, with such an infinitely small gradual difference, was all that he meant, it would be no such notable distinction between those that are born of God and those that are not, as the apostle represents, and as this apostle, and other apostles, do every where signify. Nay, it would not be fit to be used as a sign or characteristic for men to distinguish themselves by; for such minute gradual differences, which in this case would be alone certainly distinguishing, are altogether undiscernible, or at least with great difficulty determined; therefore, are not fit to be given as distinguishing notes of the Christian character. If words are every



where used after this manner in the Bible, and, by faith in Christ, as the word is generally used there, is meant only the assent of the understanding, and that not merely a predominant assent, nor yet a perfect assent, excluding all remaining unbelief, but only a certain degree of assent between these two, rising up just to such a precise height, so that he that has this shall every where be called a believer; and he whose assent, though it predominates also, and rises up as high as the other within an infinitely little, shall be called an unbeliever, one that wickedly makes God a liar, &c. this is in effect to use words without any determinate meaning at all, or, which is the same thing, any meaning proportioned to our understandings; therefore, there is undoubtedly some great and notable difference between the faith of those who are in a state of salvation, and that of those who are not: insomuch that, without that very faith, according to the common use of language in these days, those who were not in a state of salvation, may be said not to believe at all. And besides, that virtue that the apostle here speaks of as such a great and distinguishing note of a child of God, he plainly speaks of as a supernatural thing, as something not in natural men, and given only in regeneration or being born of God, which is the great change of men from that which is natural to that which is supernatural. Men may have what is natural, by their being born, born in a natural way; but they have what is supernatural, by being born again, and born of God. But says the apostle, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” The same faith is plainly spoken of as a supernatural thing in the foregoing chapter, [ver. 15](#). “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”

But common faith is not a supernatural thing, any more than a belief of any history. It is obtained by the same means. If one be natural, and the other supernatural, then undoubtedly the difference is not only such a gradual difference, differing but an infinitely little. If all lies in the degree of assent, let us suppose that a thousand degrees of assent be required to salvation, and that there is no difference in kind in the faith of others; how unreasonable is it to say, that when a man can naturally raise his assent to nine hundred and ninety-nine degrees, yet he cannot reach the other degree by any improvement, but there must be a new birth in, order to the other degree I And as it is thus evident, that the faith or believing that Jesus is the Christ which the apostle speaks of in the text, is some virtue intended by the apostle, differing not only in degree, but in nature and kind, from any faith that unregenerate men have; so I would observe, that it is evident that this special faith, of which the apostle speaks, that so differs from common faith, is not only a faith that some Christians only have obtained, but that all have it that are in a state of salvation; because the same faith is often spoken of as that which first brings men into a state of salvation, and not merely as that which Christians attain to afterwards, after they have performed the condition of salvation.

How often are we taught that it is by faith in Christ we are justified; and that he that believes not, is in a state of condemnation; and that it is by this men pass from a state of

condemnation to a state of salvation. Compare “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life;” with [chapter iii. 18.](#) “He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” And this faith that thus brings into a state of life, is expressed in the same words as it is in the text, in “But these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name.” Thus it is manifest that the faith spoken of in the text, is the faith that all men have that are in a state of salvation, and the faith by which they first come into salvation, and that it is a faith especially differing in nature and kind from all common faith.

In the further prosecution of this discourse, I shall, 1. Bring some further arguments to prove, that saving faith differs from common faith in nature and essence. 2. Show wherein the essential difference lies, confirming the same from the Scriptures, which will further prove the truth of the doctrine.

FIRST. I am to bring some further arguments to prove the doctrine: and here I would observe, that there is some kind of difference or other, is most apparent from the vast distinction made in Scripture, insomuch, that those who have faith, are all from time to time spoken of as justified, and in a state of salvation, having a title to eternal life, &c. “The gospel is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth.” And [chapter iii. 22.](#) “Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe.” [Rom. x. 4.](#) “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” “And by him all that believe are justified.” In these and other places, a state of salvation is predicted of every one that believeth or hath faith. It is not said of every one that believeth and walks answerably, or of every one that believeth and takes up an answerable resolution to obey; which would be to limit the proposition, and make an exception, and be as much as to say, not every one that is a believer, but to such believers only as not only believe, but obey. But this does not consist with these universal expressions: “The gospel is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth.” The righteousness of God is unto all and upon all them that believe.” “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” And by the supposition, they that have not saving faith are in a state of damnation; as it is also expressly said in Scripture, “He that believeth not, shall be damned,” and the like. So that it is evident that there is a great difference between the virtue that the Scripture calls by the *name faith*, and speaks of as saving faith, let it be what it will, and all that is or can be in others. But here I would observe particularly: the difference must either be only in the degree of faith, and in the effects of it, or it is in the nature of the faith itself. And I would,

I. Show that it is not merely a difference in degree.



1. There are other scriptures, besides the text, that speak of saving faith as a supernatural thing. "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This must evidently be understood of a supernatural way of coming by this belief or faith; such a way as is greatly distinguished from instruction or judgment in other matters, such as the wise and prudent in temporal things had. So "In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." So, to the same purpose is "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they all shall be taught of God: every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." And what is meant, is not merely that God gives it in his providence; for so he gives the knowledge of those wise and prudent men mentioned in the fore-cited passage. It is said, that he gives it by the teachings of his Spirit, as appears by "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And the common influences of the Spirit, such as natural men, or men that are unregenerated, may have, are not meant, as appears by what the same apostle says in the same epistle, [chap. ii. 14](#). "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The things of the Spirit of God, to which the apostle has a special respect, are the doctrine of Christ crucified, as appears by the beginning of the chapter, and by the foregoing chapter, which he says is to the Jews a *stumbling* block, and to the Greeks foolishness. And that the influence of the Spirit, in which this saving faith is given, is not any common influence, or any thing like it, but is that influence by which men are God's workmanship, made over again, or made new creatures, is evident, by "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God bath before ordained that we should walk in them." And so it is manifest by the text, that this influence, by which this faith is given, is no common influence, but a regenerating influence, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments," &c. It is spoken of as a great work, so wrought by God, as remarkably to show his power, "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would Count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." And that which makes the argument yet more clear and demonstrative

is, that it is mentioned as one of the distinguishing characters of saving faith, that it is the faith of the operation of God; “You are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” Now, would this faith be any distinguishing character of the true Christian, if it were not a faith of a different kind from that which others may have? And besides, it is evidently suggested in the words, that it is by a like wonderful operation as the raising of Christ from the dead; especially taken with the following verse. The words taken together are thus, [verse 12, 13](#). “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” Let this be compared with “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.” Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that such distinctions as these would be taught, as taking place between saving faith and common faith, if there were no essential difference, but only a gradual difference, and they approached infinitely near to each other?

2. The distinguishing epithets and characters ascribed to saving faith in Scripture, are such as denote the difference to be in nature and kind, and not in degree only. One distinguishing epithet is *precious*, “Like precious faith with us.” Now, preciousness is what signifies more properly something of the quality, than of the degree. As preciousness in gold is more properly a designation of the quality of that kind of substance, than the quantity. And therefore, when gold is tried in the fire to see whether it be true gold or not, it is not the quantity of the substance that is tried by the fire, but the precious nature of the substance. So it is when faith is tried to see whether it be a saving faith or not. “That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” If the trial was not of the nature and kind, but only of the quantity of faith, how exceedingly improper would be the comparison between the trial of faith and the trial of gold! Another distinguishing scripture note of saving faith is, that it is the faith of Abraham. “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.” Now, the faith of Abraham cannot be the faith of that degree of which Abraham’s was; for undoubtedly multitudes are in a state of salvation, that have not that eminency of faith. Therefore, nothing can be meant by the faith of Abraham, but faith of the same nature and kind. Again, another distinguishing scripture note of saving faith is, that it is faith *unfeigned*. “Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and

I am persuaded that in thee also.” Now this is an epithet that denotes the nature of a thing, and not the degree of it. A thing may be unfeigned, and yet be but to a small degree To be unfeigned, is to be really a thing of that nature and kind which it pretends to be; and not a false appearance, or mere resemblance of it. Again, another note of distinction between saving faith and common faith, plainly implied in Scripture, is, that it differs from the faith of devils. It is implied in “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is. one God; thou dost well: the devils also believe and tremble.” Here it is first implied, that there is a difference between saving faith and common, that may be shown by works; a difference in the cause, that may be shown by the effects; and then it is implied this difference lies in something wherein it differs from the faith of devils; otherwise there is no force in the apostle’s reasoning. But this difference cannot lie in the degree of the assent of the understanding; for the devils have as high a degree of assent as the real Christian. The difference then must lie in the peculiar nature of the faith.

3. That the difference between common faith and saving faith does not lie in the degree only, but in the nature and essence of it, appears by this; that those who are in a state of damnation *i. e.* spoken of as being wholly destitute of it, as wholly without that sort of faith that the saints have. They are spoken of as those that believe not, and having the gospel hid from them, being blind with regard to this light; as ” But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” Now, can these things be said with any propriety, of such as are lost in general, if many of them, as well as the saved, have the same sort of faith of the same gospel, but only in a less degree, and some of them falling short in degree, but very little, perhaps one degree in a million? How can it be proper to speak of the others, so little excelling them in the degree of the same light, as having the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining unto them, and beholding as with open face the glory of the Lord, as is said of all true believers in the context? While those are spoken of as having the gospel hid from them, their minds blinded, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them, and so as being lost, or in a state of damnation? Such interpretations of Scripture are unreasonable.

4. That the difference between saving faith and common faith is not in degree, but in the nature and kind, appears from this, that in the Scripture, saving faith, when weakest, and attended with very great doubts, yet is said never to fail. “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” The faith of Peter was attended with very great doubts concerning Christ and his cause. Now, if the distinction between saving faith and other faith be only in the degree of assent, whereby a man was brought fully to assent to the truth, and to cease greatly to question it;

then Peter's faith would have failed. He would have been without any saving faith. For he greatly questioned the truth concerning Christ and his kingdom, especially when he denied him. Other disciples did so too; for they all forsook him and fled. Therefore it follows, that there is something peculiar in the very nature of saving faith, that remains in times even of greatest doubt, and even at those times distinguishes it from all common faith.

I now proceed, II. To show that it does not consist only in the difference of effects. The supposition that I would disprove is this, That there is no difference between saving faith and common faith as to their nature: all the difference lies in this, that in him that is in a state of salvation, faith produces another effect; it works another way; it produces a settled determination of mind, to walk in a way of universal and persevering obedience. In the unregenerate, although his faith be the same with that of the regenerate, and he has the same assent of his understanding to the truths of the gospel, yet it does not prove effectual to bring him to such a resolution and answerable practice. In opposition to this notion, I would observe,

1. That it is contrary to the reason of mankind, to suppose different effects, without any difference in the cause. It has ever been counted to be good reasoning from the effect to the cause; and it is a way of reasoning that common sense leads mankind to. But if, from a different effect, there is no arguing any difference in the cause, this way of reasoning must be given up. If there be a difference in the effect, that does not arise from some difference in the cause, then there is something in the effect that proceeds not from its cause, that diversity; because there is no diversity in the cause to answer it: therefore, that diversity must arise from nothing, and consequently is no effect of any thing; which is contrary to the supposition. So this hypothesis is at once reduced to a contradiction. If there be a difference in the effect, that difference must arise from something; and that which it arises from, let it be what it will, must be the cause of it. And if faith be the cause of this diversity in the effect, as is supposed, then I would ask, what is there in faith, that can be the cause of this diversity, seeing there is no diversity in the faith to answer it? To say that the diversity of the effect arises from likeness or sameness in the cause, is a gross and palpable absurdity; and is as much as to say, that difference is produced by no difference: which is the same thing as to say, that nothing produces something.

2. If there were a difference in the effects of faith, but no difference in the faith itself, then no difference of faith could be showed by the effects. But that is contrary to Scripture, and particularly to "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." The apostle can mean nothing else by this, than that I will show thee by my works that I have a right sort of faith. I will show thee that my faith is a better faith than that of those who have no works. I will show thee the difference of the causes, by the difference of the effect. This the apostle thought good arguing. Christ thought it was good arguing to argue the difference of the trees from

the difference of the fruits; “A tree is known by its fruit.” How can this be, when there is no difference in the tree? When the nature of the tree is the same, and when, indeed, though there be a difference of the effects, there is no difference at all in the faith that is the cause? And if there is no difference in the faith that is the cause, then certainly no difference can be shown by the effects. When we see two human bodies, and see actions performed and works produced by the one, and not by the other, we determine that there is an internal difference in the bodies themselves: we conclude that one is alive, and the other dead; that one has an operative nature, an active spirit in it, and that the other has none; which is a very essential difference in the causes themselves. Just so we argue an essential difference between a saving and common faith, by the words or effects produced; as the apostle in that context observes, in the last verse of the chapter, “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

I come now, in the second place, to show wherein saving faith differs essentially from common faith: and shall endeavour to prove what I lay down from the Scripture, which will give farther evidence to the truth of the doctrine.

There is, in the nature and essence of saving faith, a receiving of the object of faith, not only in the assent of the judgment, but with the heart, or with the inclination and will of the soul. There is in saving faith, a receiving of the truth, not only with the assent of the mind, but with the consent of the heart; as is evident by “Received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.” And the apostle, describing the nature of saving faith, from the example of the ancient patriarchs, [Heb. xi.](#) describes their faith thus, verse 13. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises; but, having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them.” And so the evangelist John calls faith a receiving of Christ;” But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Here, the apostle expressly declares, that he whom he means by a receiver, was die same with the believer on Christ, or one that has saving faith. And what else can be meant by receiving Christ, or accepting him, than an accepting him in heart? It is not a taking him with the hand, or any external taking or accepting him, but the acceptance of the mind. The acceptance of the mind is the act of the mind towards an object as acceptable, but that in a special manner, as the act of the inclination or will. And it is further evident, that saving faith has its seat not only in the speculative understanding or judgment, but in the heart or will; because, otherwise it is not properly of the nature of a virtue, or any part of the moral goodness of the mind: for virtue has its special and immediate seat in the will; and that qualification, that is not at all seated there, though it be a cause of virtue, or an effect of it, yet is not properly any virtue of the mind, nor can properly be in itself a moral qualification, or any fulfilment of a moral rule. But it is evident, that saving faith is one of the chief virtues of a saint, one of the greatest virtues prescribed in the moral law of God. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise,



and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” It is a principal duty that God required, “Then said they unto him, What shall we do that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom God hath sent.” “And this is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.” And therefore it is called most holy faith, [Jude 20](#). But if it be not seated in the will, it is no more a holy faith, than the faith of devils. That it is most holy, implies, that it is one thing wherein Christian holiness does principally consist.

An objection may be raised against this last particular, *viz.* that the words, faith and believing, in common language, signify no more than the assent of the understanding.

*Answer 1.* It is not at all strange, that in matters of divinity and of the gospel of Christ, which are so exceedingly diverse from the common concerns of life, and so much above them, some words should be used in somewhat of a peculiar sense. The languages used among the nations of the world, were not first framed to express the spiritual and supernatural things of the gospel of Christ, but the common concerns of human life. Hence it comes to pass, that language in its common use, is not exactly adapted to express things of this nature; so that there is a necessity, that when the phrases of common speech are adopted into the gospel of Christ, they should some of them be used in a sense somewhat diverse from the most ordinary use of them in temporal concerns. Words were first devised to signify the more ordinary concerns of life: hence, men find a necessity, even in order to express many things in human arts and sciences, to use words in something of a peculiar sense; the sense being somewhat varied from their more ordinary use; and the very same words, as terms of art, do not signify exactly the same thing that they do in common speech. This is well known to be the case in innumerable instances; because the concerns of the arts and sciences are so diverse from the common concerns of life, that unless some phrases were adopted out of common language, and their signification something varied, there would be no words at all to be found to signify such and such things pertaining to those arts. But the things of the gospel of Christ are vastly more diverse from the common concerns of life, than the things of human arts and sciences: those things being heavenly things, and of the most spiritual and sublime nature possible, and most diverse from earthly things. Hence the use of words in common language, must not be looked upon as a universal rule to determine the signification of words in the gospel: but the rule is the use of words in Scripture language. What is found in fact to be the use of words in the Bible, by comparing one place with another, that must determine the sense in which we must understand them.

*Answer 2.* The words in the original, translated faith, and believing, such as **GREEK**, and **GREEK**, as often used in common language, implied more than the mere assent of the understanding: they were often used to signify affiance or trusting; which implies an act of



the will, as well as of the understanding: it implies, that the thing believed is received as good and agreeable, as well as true. For trusting always relates to some good sought and aimed at in our trust; and therefore ever more implies the acceptance of the heart, and the embracing of the inclination, and desire of the soul. And therefore, trusting in Christ for salvation, implies, that he and his redemption, and those things wherein his salvation consists, are agreeable and acceptable to us.

*Answer 3.* Supposing saving faith to be what Calvinistical divines have ordinarily supposed it to be, there seems to be no one word in common language, so fit to express it, as faith, **GREEK**, as it most commonly is in the original. Orthodox divines, in the definitions of faith, do not all use exactly the same terms, but they generally come to the same thing. Their distinctions generally signify as much as a person's receiving Christ and his salvation as revealed in the gospel, with his whole soul; acquiescing in what is exhibited as true, excellent, and sufficient for him. And to express this complex act of the mind, I apprehend no word can be found more significant than faith, which signifies both assenting and consenting: because the object of the act is wholly supernatural, and above the reach of mere reason, and therefore exhibited only by revelation and divine testimony: and the person to be believed in, is exhibited and offered in that revelation, especially under the character of a Saviour, and so, as an object of trust: and the benefits are all spiritual, invisible, wonderful, and future. If this be the true account of faith, beware how you entertain any such doctrine, as that there is no essential difference between common and saving faith; and that both consist in a mere assent of the understanding to the doctrine of religion. That this doctrine is false, appears by what has been said; and if it be false, it must needs be exceedingly dangerous. Saving faith, as you well know, is abundantly insisted on in the Bible, as in a peculiar manner the condition of salvation; being the thing by which we are justified. How much is that doctrine insisted on in the New Testament! We are said to be "justified by faith, and by faith alone: By faith we are saved"; and this is the work of God, that we believe in him whom he hath sent: The just shall live by faith: We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ: He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Therefore, doubtless, saving faith, whatsoever that be, is the grand condition of an interest in Christ, and his great salvation. And if it be so, of what vast importance is it, that we should have right notions of what it is! For certainly no one thing whatever, nothing in religion, is of greater importance, than that which teaches us how we may be saved. If salvation itself be of infinite importance, then it is of equal importance that we do not mistake the terms of it; and if this be of infinite importance, then that doctrine that teaches that to be the term, that is not so, but very diverse, is infinitely dangerous. What we want a revelation from God for chiefly, is, to teach us the terms of his favour, and the way of salvation. And that which the revelation God has given us in the Bible teaches to be the way, is faith in Christ. Therefore, that doctrine that teaches something else to be saving faith, that is essentially another thing, teaches entirely another

way of salvation: and therefore such doctrine does in effect make void the revelation we have in the Bible; as it makes void the special end of it, which is to teach us the true way of salvation. The gospel is the revelation of the way of life by faith in Christ. Therefore, he who teaches something else to be that faith, which is essentially diverse from what the gospel of Christ teaches, he teaches another gospel; and he does in effect teach another religion than the religion of Christ. For what is religion, but that way of exercising our respect to God, which is the term of his favour and acceptance to a title to eternal rewards? The Scripture teaches this, in a special manner, to be saving faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, he that teaches another faith instead of this, teaches another religion. Such doctrine as I have opposed, must be destructive and damning, *i. e.* directly tending to man's damnation; leading such as embrace it, to rest in something essentially different from the grand condition of salvation. And therefore I would advise you, as you would have any regard to your own soul's salvation, and to the salvation of your posterity, to beware of such doctrine as this.



## CHAP. VII.

## CONCERNING THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.5

§ 1. there is just the same reason for those commands of earnest care and laborious endeavours for perseverance, and threatenings of defection, notwithstanding its being certain that all that have true grace shall persevere, as there is for earnest endeavours after godliness, and to make our calling and election sure, notwithstanding all that are elected shall undoubtedly be saved. For as the case with respect to this is the same, decree or no decree, every one that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned. They that will not live godly lives, find out for themselves that they are not elected; they that will live godly lives, have found out for themselves that they are elected. So it is here: he that to his utmost endeavours to persevere in ways of obedience, finds out that his obedience and righteousness are true; and he that does not, discovers that his is false.

§ 2. As persons are commanded and counselled to repent and be converted, though it is already determined whether they shall be converted or no; after the same manner, and with the same propriety, persons are commanded and counselled to persevere, although by their being already converted, it is certain they shall persevere. By their resolutely and steadfastly persevering through all difficulties, opposition, and trials, they obtain an evidence of the truth and soundness of their conversion; and by their unstableness and backsliding, they procure an evidence of their unsoundness and hypocrisy. And it always happens, that persons who have the most need of being cautioned and counselled against falling and apostacy, by reason of the weakness of their grace, have most need of an evidence of the truth of their grace. And those who have the least need of any evidence, by reason of the strength and lively exercise of grace, have least need of being warned against falling, they being least in danger of it. And so the same persons, when they are most in danger of falling by reason of the languishing of their graces, their ill-temper and workings of corruption have *most* need of evidence; and, when in least need of care and watchfulness not to fall, by reason of the strength and vigorous actings of grace, they have *least* need of evidence. So that there is as much need of persons exercising care and diligence to persevere in order to their salvation, as there is of their attention and care to repent and be converted. For our own care and diligence is as much the proper and decreed means of perseverance, as of any thing else; and the want of perseverance, as of any thing else; and the want of perseverance, is as much an evidence of the want of true conversion, as the want of conversion is a sign of the want of election. Labour and diligence to persevere, is as rational a way to make sure of the truth of grace, as they are to make sure of the truth of election. God's wrath and future punishment are proposed to all sorts of *men*, as motives to an universal and constant obedience, not only to the wicked, but also to the godly. Indeed, those that have obtained full assurance of their safe estate, are not capable of this motive, and they have no need of it. But when persons are most capable of the fear of hell, through their want of assurance and their uncertainty,

whether or no they are not exposed to damnation by reason of the weakness of their grace, then they have most need of caution.

*Coroll.* Here we may observe, that it is not the scripture way of judging of the truth of grace, to be determined principally by the *method and steps of the first work*, but by the exercise and fruits of grace in a holy life.

§ 3. *Perseverance* in faith is, in one sense, the condition of justification; that is, the promise of acceptance is made only to a persevering sort of faith; and the proper evidence of its being of that sort is actual perseverance. Not but that a man may have good evidences that his faith is of that sort, before he has finished his perseverance, yea, the first time that he exercises such a faith, if the exercises of it are lively and vigorous. But when the believer has those vigorous exercises of faith, by which he has clear evidences of its being of a persevering kind, he evermore feels most disposition and resolution to persevere, and most of a spirit of dependence upon God and Christ to enable him so to do.

§ 4. As to passages of Scripture like that, [Ezekiel xviii. 24.](#) wherein are declared the fatal consequences of turning or railing away from righteousness, they do not at all argue but that there is an essential difference, in the very nature of the righteousness of those that persevere, and the righteousness of those that fall away. The one is of a lasting sort, the other not; and so, falling away or holding out, are in those places respected as natural fruits or discoveries of the nature of the righteous or of the wicked. If a man that had a prospect of being ere long in calamitous circumstances, of being poor, and the object of general contempt, and should make this declaration concerning his friend, or him that now appeared to be such, that it his friend would cleave to him through all his circumstances, he would receive him and treat him ever after as his true friend, but otherwise he would utterly desert him as a false friend; this would not argue, that he thought there was no difference between the love of friendship that was persevering, and that which fails when it is tried; but only, that those difficulties discover the difference, and show whose love is of a lasting sort, and whose not. The promises in Scripture are commonly made to the signs of grace; though God knows whether men be sincere or not, without the signs whereby men know it.

§ 5. God, when he had laid out himself to glorify his mercy and grace in the redemption of poor fallen men, did not see meet, that those who are redeemed by Christ, should be redeemed so imperfectly, as still to have the work of perseverance left in their own hands. They had been found already insufficient for this even in their perfect state, and are now ten times more liable than formerly to fall away and not to persevere, if, in their fallen broken state, with their imperfect sanctification, the care of the matter be trusted with them. Man, though redeemed by Christ, so as to have the Holy Spirit of God, and spiritual life again restored in a degree; yet is left a poor, piteous creature, because all is suspended on his perseverance as it was at first; and the care of that affair is left with him as it was then; and he is ten times more likely to fall away than he was then, if we consider only what he was in

*himself* to preserve him from it. The poor creature sees his own insufficiency to stand, from what has happened in time past; his own instability has been his undoing already; and now he is vastly more unstable than before. The great thing wherein the first covenant was deficient, was, that the fulfilment of the righteousness of the covenant, and man's perseverance, was intrusted with man himself, with nothing better to secure it than his own strength. And therefore, God introduces a better, which should be an everlasting covenant, a new and living way; wherein that which was wanting in the first should be supplied, and a remedy should be provided against that, which under the first covenant proved man's undoing, *viz.* man's own weakness and instability; by a Mediator being given, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; who cannot fail; who should undertake for his people, and take care of them. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him; and ever lives to make intercession for them. God did not see it fit that man should be trusted to stand in his own strength a second time. It is not fit that in a covenant of grace, wherein all is of mere, free, and absolute grace, that the reward of life should be suspended on the perseverance of man, as dependent on the strength and steadfastness of his own will. It is a covenant of works, and not a covenant of grace, that suspends eternal life on what is the fruit of a man's own strength. Eternal life was to have been of works in those two respects, *viz.* as it was to have been for man's own righteousness, and as it was suspended on the fruit of his own strength. For, though our first parent depended on the grace of God, the influence of his Spirit in his heart; yet that grace was given him already, and dwelt in him constantly, and without interruption, in such a degree as to hold him above any lust or sinful habit or principle. Eternal life was not merely suspended on that grace that was given him, and dwelt in him, but on his improvement of that grace which he already had. For, in order to his perseverance, there was nothing further promised beyond his own strength; no extraordinary occasional assistance was promised. It was not *promised* but that man should be left to himself as he was. But the new covenant is of grace, in a manner distinguishing from the old, in both these respects, that the reward of life is suspended neither on his own strength nor worthiness. It provides something above either. But if eternal life under the new covenant was suspended on man's own perseverance, or his perseveringly using diligent endeavours to stand without the promise of any thing farther to ascertain it than his own strength, it would herein be farther from being worthy to be called a covenant of grace than the first covenant; because man's strength is exceedingly less than it was then, and he is under far less advantages to persevere. And if he should obtain eternal life by perseverance in his own strength now, eternal life would, with respect to that, be much more of himself than it would have been by the first covenant; because perseverance now would be a much greater thing than under those circumstances; and he has but an exceeding small part of that grace dwelling in him, to assist him, that he had then: and that which he has, does not dwell in him in the exercise

of it by such a constant law as grace did then, but is put into exercise by the spirit of grace, in a far more arbitrary and sovereign way.

§ 6. Again, Christ came into the world to do that in which mere men failed. He came as a better surety, and that in him those defects might be supplied, which proved to be in our first surety, and that we might have a remedy for the mischief that came by those defects. But the defect of our first surety was, that he did not persevere. He wanted stedfastness; and therefore God sent us, in the next surety, one that could not fail; but should surely persevere. But this is no supply of that defect to us, if the reward of life be still suspended on perseverance, which has nothing, as to ourselves, greater to secure it still, than the strength of mere man; and the perseverance of our second surety is no remedy against the like mischief, which came by failure of our first surety; but on the contrary, we are much more exposed to the mischief than before. The perseverance on which life was suspended, depended then indeed on the strength of *mere* man; but now (on the supposition) it would be suspended on the strength of *fallen* man.

In that our first surety did not persevere, we fell in and with him; for doubtless, if he had stood, we should have stood with him. And therefore when God in mercy has given us a better surety to supply the defects of the first, a surety that might stand and persevere, and one that has actually persevered through the greatest imaginable trials; doubtless we shall stand and persevere in him. After all this, eternal life will not be suspended on our perseverance by our own poor, feeble, broken strength. Our first surety, if he had stood, would have been brought to eat of the tree of life, as a seal of a confirmed state of life in persevering and everlasting holiness and happiness; and he would have eat of this tree of life as a seal of persevering confirmed life, not only for himself, but as our head. As when he eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he tasted as our head, and so brought death on himself and all his posterity; so, if he had persevered, and had eat of the tree of life, he would have tasted of that as our head, and therein life and confirmed holiness would have been sealed to him and all his posterity. But Christ, the second Adam, acts the same part for us that the first Adam was to have done, but failed. He has fulfilled the law, and has been admitted to the seals of confirmed and everlasting life. God, as a testimony and seal of his acceptance of what he had done as the condition of life, raised him from the dead, and exalted him with his own right hand, received him up into glory, and gave all things into his hands. Thus the second Adam has persevered, not only for himself, but for us; and has been sealed to confirmed and persevering and eternal life, as our head; so that all those that are his, and who are his spiritual posterity, are sealed in him to persevering life. Here it will be in vain to object, that persons' persevering in faith and holiness is the condition of their being admitted to the state of Christ's posterity, or to a right in him; and that none are admitted: as such till they have first persevered. For this is as much as to say, that Christ has no church in this world; and that there are none on this side the grave admitted as his children or people;

because they have not yet actually persevered to the end of life, which is the condition of their being admitted as his children and people; which is contrary to the whole Scripture.

Christ having finished the work of Adam for us, does more than merely to bring us back to the probationary state of Adam, while he had yet his work to finish, knowing his eternal life uncertain, because suspended on his uncertain perseverance. That alone is inconsistent with Christ's being a second Adam. For if Christ, succeeding in Adam's room, has done and gone through the work that Adam was to have done, and did this as our representative or surety, he has not thereby set us only in Adam's probationary, uncertain state, but has carried us, who are in him, and are represented by him, through Adam's working probationary state, unto that confirmed state that Adam should have arrived at, if he had gone through his own work.

§ 7. That the saints shall surely persevere, will necessarily follow from this, that they have already performed the obedience which is the righteousness by which they *have justification* unto life; or it is already performed for them, and imputed to them: for that supposes, that it is the same thing in the sight of God as if they had performed it. Now, when the creature has once actually performed and finished the righteousness of the law, he is immediately sealed and confirmed to eternal life. There is nothing to keep him off from the tree of life. But as soon as ever a believer has Christ's righteousness imputed to him, he has virtually finished the righteousness of the law.

It is evident the saints shall persevere, because they are already justified. Adam would not have been justified till he had fulfilled and done his work; and then his justification would have been a confirmation. It would have been an approving of him as having done his work, and as standing entitled to his reward. A servant that is sent out about a work, is not justified by his master till he has done; and then the roaster views the work, and seeing it to be done according to his order, he then approves and justifies him as having done his work, and being now entitled to the promised reward; and his title to his reward is no longer suspended on any thing remaining. So, Christ having done our work for us, we are justified as soon as ever we believe in him, as being, through what he has accomplished and finished, now already actually entitled to the reward of life. And justification carries in it not only remission of sins, but also being adjudged to life, or accepted as entitled by righteousness to the reward of life; as is evident, because believers are justified by communion with Christ in his justification. But the justification of Christ did most certainly imply both these things, *viz.* his being now judged free of that guilt which he had taken upon him, and also his having now fulfilled all righteousness his having perfectly obeyed the Father, and done enough to entitle him to the reward of life as our head and surety and therefore he then had eternal life given him as our head. That life which was begun when he was raised from the dead, was eternal life. Christ was then justified in the same sense that Adam would have been justified, if he had finished his course of perfect obedience; and therefore implies in it con-

firmation in a title to life, as that would have done; and thus, all those that are risen with Christ, and have him for their surety, and so are justified in his justification, are certainly in like manner confirmed. And again, that a believer's justification implies not only a deliverance from the wrath of God, but a title to glory, is evident by [Rom. v. 12](#). where the apostle mentions both these as joint benefits implied in justification: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand, *and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*"<sup>511</sup> So, remission of sins and *inheritance* among them that are sanctified, are mentioned together, as what are jointly obtained by faith in Christ: [Acts xxvi. 18](#). "That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in me." Both these are undoubtedly implied in that passing from death unto life, which Christ speaks of as the fruit of faith, and which he opposes to condemnation: [John v. 24](#). "Verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

To suppose that a right to life is suspended on our own perseverance, which is uncertain, and has nothing more sure and stedfast to secure it than our own good-wills and resolutions, (which way soever we suppose it to be dependant on the strength of our resolutions and wills, either with assistance, or in the improvement of assistance, or in seeking assistance,) is exceedingly dissonant to the nature and design of the gospel scheme. For, if it were so, it would unavoidably deprive the believer of the comfort, hope, and joy of salvation: which would be very contrary to God's design in the scheme of man's salvation, which is to make the ground of our peace and joy in all respects strong and sure: or else, he must depend much on himself, and the ground of his joy and hope must in a great measure be his own strength, and the stedfastness of his own heart, the unchangeableness of his own resolutions, &c.; which would be very different from the gospel scheme.

§ 8. It is one act of faith to commit the soul to Christ's keeping in this sense, *viz.* to keep it from falling. The believing soul is convinced of its own weakness and helplessness, its inability to resist its enemies, its insufficiency to keep itself, and so commits itself to Christ, that he would be its keeper. The apostle speaks of his committing his soul by faith to Christ, under great sufferings and trials of his perseverance; [Tim. i. 12](#). "For which cause also I suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." And we are commanded to commit our way and our works unto the Lord; [Psalm xxxvii. 5](#). [Prov. xvi. 3](#). Faith depends on Christ for all the good we need, and especially good of this kind, which is of such absolute necessity in order to the salvation of our souls. The sum of the good that faith looks for, is the Holy Spirit. It looks for spiritual and eternal life; for

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511 [Rom. v. 1, 2.](#)



perfect holiness in heaven, and persevering holiness here. For the just shall live by faith. It seems to be because continuance in faith is necessary to continuance in justification, at least in part, that the apostle expresses himself as he does, [Rom. i. 17](#). “For therein the righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” For it is by faith that we first perceive and know this righteousness, and do at first receive and embrace it; and being once interested in it, we have the continuance of faith in future persevering exercises of it made sure to us. And thus that is fulfilled, “The just shall live by faith.”<sup>512</sup> Agreeable to [1 Pet. i. 5](#). “We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” And also [Heb. x. 35-39](#). “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Now, the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

§9. Perseverance is acknowledged by Calvinian divines, to be necessary to salvation. Yet it seems to me, that the manner in which it is necessary has not been sufficiently set forth. It is owned to be necessary as a *sine qua non*: and also, that though it is not that by which we first come to have a title to eternal life, yet it is necessary in order to the actual possession of it, as the way to it; that it is as impossible we should come to it without perseverance, as it is impossible for a man to go to a city or town, without travelling throughout the road that leads to it. But we are really saved by perseverance; so that salvation has a dependence on perseverance, as that which influences in the affair, so as to render it congruous that we should be saved. Faith (on our part) is the great condition of salvation; it is that *by* which we are justified and saved. But in this faith, the perseverance that belongs to it is a fundamental ground of the congruity that faith gives to salvation. Perseverance indeed comes into consideration, even in the justification of a sinner, as one thing on which the fitness of acceptance to life depends. For, God has respect to perseverance as being virtually in the first act. And it is looked upon as if it were a property of that faith by which the sinner is then justified. God has respect to continuance in faith; and the sinner is justified by that, as though it already were; because by divine establishment it shall follow; and so it is accepted, as if it were a property contained in the faith that is then seen. Without this, it would not be congruous that a sinner should be justified at his first believing; but it would be needful that the act of justification should be suspended till the sinner had persevered in faith. There is the same reason why it is necessary that the union between Christ and the soul should remain in order to salvation, as that it should be begun; for it is begun to the end that it might remain. And if it could be begun without remaining, the beginning would be in vain.

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512 [Rom. i. 17](#).

The soul is saved no otherwise than by union with Christ, and so is fitly looked upon as his. It is saved *in him*; and in order to that, it is necessary that the soul *now* be in him, even when salvation is actually bestowed, and not merely that it should *once*, have been in him; and therefore God, in justifying a sinner, even in the first act of faith, has respect to the congruity between justification and perseverance of faith. So that perseverance is necessary to salvation, not only as a *sine qua non*, or as the way to possession; but it is necessary even to the congruity of justification.

§ 10. That perseverance is thus necessary to salvation, not only as a *sine qua non*, but by reason of such an influence and dependence, seems manifest from Scripture; as particularly, [Heb. x. 38, 39](#). “Now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe unto the saving of the soul.” [Rom. xi. 20](#). “Well, because of unbelief they were broken off. But thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear.” [John xv. 7](#). “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you [Heb. iii. 14](#). “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.” [Chap. v. 12](#). “Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” So that not only the first act of faith, but subsequent acts of faith, and perseverance in faith, do justify the sinner; although salvation is in itself sure and certain after the first act. For the way in which the first act of faith justifies, is not by making the futurity of salvation certain in itself; for that is as certain in itself by the divine decree, before the first act of faith, as afterwards. Salvation is in some sense the sinner’s right, before he believes. It was given him in Christ, before the world was. But before a sinner believes, he has not any thing from God that he can lay hold of, so as to either challenge it, or on good grounds hope for it. He cannot be said to have any right, because he has no congruity; and as to the promise made to Christ, he has no hold to that, because that is not revealed to him. If God had declared and promised to the angels that such a man should be saved; that would not give him any right of his own, or any ground of challenge. A promise is a manifestation of a person’s design of doing some good to another, to the end that he may depend on it, and rest in it. The certainty in him arises from the manifestation; and the obligation in justice to him arises from the manifestation being made to him, to the effect that he might depend on it. And therefore subsequent acts of faith may be said to give a sinner a title to salvation, as well as the first. For, from what has been said, it appears that the congruity arises from them, as well as the first; they in like manner containing the nature of union to Christ as mediator; and they may have as great, nay, a greater hand in the manifestation of the futurity of salvation to us for our dependence, than the first act. For our knowledge of this may proceed mainly from after-acts, and from a course of acts. The Scripture speaks of after-acts of faith in both Abraham and Noah, as giving a title to the righteousness which is the matter of justification. See [Rom. iv. 3](#). [Heb. xi. 7](#).

§ 11. The doctrine of perseverance is manifest from the nature of the *mediation* of Christ. For as Christ is a mediator to reconcile God to man, and man to God, and as he is a middle person between both, and has the nature of both, so he undertakes for each, and, in some respect, becomes surety for each with the other. He undertakes and becomes a surety for man to God. He engages for him, that the law, that was given him, shall be answered; and that justice, with respect to him, shall be satisfied, and the honour of God's majesty vindicated. So he undertakes and engages for the Father with man, in order to his being reconciled to God, and induced to come to him, to love him, and trust confidently in him, and rest quietly in him. He undertakes for the Father's acceptance and favour, [John xiv. 21](#). "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." He undertakes that the Father shall hear and answer their prayers. He becomes surety to see that their prayers are answered; [John xiv. 13](#). " whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." He undertakes that they shall have all necessary supplies of grace from the Father; and he engages for the continuance of God's presence with them, and the continuance of his favour, and of the supplies of grace necessary to uphold and preserve them, and keep them from finally perishing; [John xiv. 16](#). "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." And [ver. 23](#). "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." Christ does not only declare that God will give us needed grace, but he himself undertakes to see it done. He promises that he will bestow it from the Father; [John xv. 26](#). "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send you from the Father." It was necessary that some one should thus undertake for God with man, for the continuance of his pardoning and sanctifying grace, in order to the sinner's being fully reconciled to God, and brought fully and quietly to rest in him as his God: otherwise the sinner, conscious of his own weakness and sinfulness, could have no quiet rest in God, for fear of the union being broken between God and him, and for fear of incurring God's displeasure and wrath, and so having God an enemy for ever. He is in a capacity to undertake for us, and be surety for us, with the Father, because he puts himself in our stead. He also is in a capacity to undertake for the Father, and be surety for him with us, because the Father hath put him in his stead. He puts himself in our stead as priest, and answers for us, and does and suffers in that office what we should have done and suffered; and God puts him in his stead as King. He is appointed to the government of the world, as God's vicegerent, and so, in that office, answers for God to us, and does, and orders, and bestows, that which we need from God. He undertakes for us in things that are expected of us as subjects, because he puts himself into our subjection. He appears in the form of a servant for us. So he undertakes for the Father, in that which is desired and hoped for of him as king; for the Father hath put him into his kingdom and dominion, and has committed all authority and power unto him. He

is in a capacity to undertake for the Father with us, because he can say, as in [John xvi. 15](#). “All things that the Father hath are mine.”

§ 12. The first covenant failed of bringing man to the glory of God, through man’s instability, whereby he failed of perseverance. Man’s changeableness was the thing wherein it was weak. It was weak through the *flesh*.<sup>513</sup> But God had made a second covenant in mercy to fallen man, that in the way of this covenant he might be brought to the glory of God, which he failed of under the other.

But it is God’s manner, in things that he appoints and constitutes, when one thing fails of its proper end, he appoints another to succeed in the room of it; to introduce that the second time, in which the weaknesses and defects of the former are supplied, and which never shall fail, but shall surely reach its end, and so shall remain as that which needs no other to succeed it. So God removed the first dispensation by Moses, [Heb. viii. 7-13](#). “For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second,” &c. So the priesthood of the order of Aaron ceases, because of the weakness and insufficiency of it to answer the ends of priesthood, which are, to reconcile God to man. Therefore God introduces another priesthood, of the order of Melchizedec, that is sufficient, and cannot fail, and remains for ever. [Heb. vii](#). So Moses, the first leader of Israel, failed of bringing them into Canaan; but Joshua, the second leader, did not fail. The kingdom of Saul, the first anointed of the Lord, did not continue; but the kingdom of the second anointed remains for ever. The first sanctuary that was built in Israel, was a movable tabernacle, and therefore ready to vanish away, or be removed finally: and God forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh. But the second sanctuary was a firm building, an immovable temple, which was typically an everlasting sanctuary, and that which God would never forsake; [2 Sam. vii. 10, 11](#). So the first covenant, that God made with Adam, failed, because it was weak through the weakness of human nature, to whose strength and stability the keeping was intrusted. Therefore God introduces another better covenant, committed not to his strength, but to the strength of one that was mighty and stable, and therefore is a sure and everlasting covenant. God intrusted the affair of man’s happiness on a weak foundation at first, to show man that the *foundation* was weak, and not to be trusted to, that he might trust in God alone. The first was only to make way for the second. God lighted up a divine light in man’s soul at the first; but it remained on such a foundation, that Satan found means to extinguish it; and therefore, when God lights it up a second time, it is that it may never be extinguished.

§ 13. Some things may yet remain, that are properly the conditions of salvation; on which salvation may be suspended, that it may well excite to the utmost caution, lest we should come short of eternal life, and should perish for the want of them, after it is already

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513 Not properly through the flesh, but through that passive power, that of liability to fail, that want of essential perfection (the only ground of infallibility) which belonged to the whole man, prior to any moral defect. W.

become impossible that we should fail of salvation. For the condition on which the man Christ Jesus was to obtain eternal life, was his doing the work which God had given him to do; his performing perfect persevering obedience, and his therein conquering Satan and the world, and all opposition, and enduring all sufferings that he met with. Therefore Christ used the utmost diligence to do this work, and used the utmost caution lest he should fail of it; and prayed with strong crying and tears, and wrestled with God in a bloody sweat, that he might not fail, but might have God's help to go through. Yet it was impossible he should fail of eternal life, and the whole reward that had been promised him. The joy that was set before him, was not only certain to him, but he had a proper title to it as God's heir, by reason of his relation to God the Father, as being his only-begotten Son. It was impossible that he should fail in the work to which he was appointed, as God had promised him sufficient and effectual grace and help to persevere, and already had made known his election: [Psal. cx. 7.](#) "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head." [Isa. xlii. 1.](#) "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." [Verse 4.](#) "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." And [verse 6.](#) "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness: I will hold thine hand and keep thee." So it was in effect promised in the revelations that were made to Mary and Joseph, Zechariah, &c. and so to himself in answer to his prayers, by a voice from heaven. "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."<sup>514</sup> It appears that all was certain beforehand, by God's actually saving great numbers beforehand, on the ground of his future perseverance in his work.

§ 14. Grace is that which God implants in the heart against great opposition of enemies, great opposition from the corruption of the heart, and from Satan and the world. Great are the efforts of all these against the implantation of it, and they all labour to the utmost to keep it out. Seeing therefore that God manifests his all-conquering power in giving grace a place in the heart in spite of those enemies, he will doubtless maintain it there against their united efforts to root it out. He that has so gloriously conquered them in bringing in grace, will not at last suffer himself to be conquered, by their expelling that which he has so brought in by his mighty power. He that gloriously subdued those enemies under his feet, by bringing this image of his into the soul, will not suffer this image of his finally to be trampled under their feet. God alone could introduce it. It was what he undertook; and it was wholly his work, and doubtless he will maintain it. He will not forsake the work of his own hands. Where he has begun a good work, he will carry it on to the day of Christ. Grace shall endure all things, and shall remain under all things; as the expression **GREEK**, literally signifies, in [1 Cor. xiii. 7.](#)



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514 [John xii. 28.](#)

§ 15. The Spirit of God was given at first, but was lost. God gives it a second time, never to be utterly lost. The Spirit is now given in another manner than it was then. Then indeed it was communicated, and dwelt in their hearts. But this communication was made without conveying at the same time any proper right or sure title to it. But when God communicates it the second time, as he does to a true convert, he withal gives it to him to be his own; he finally makes it over to him in a sure covenant. He is their purchased and promised possession. Man, in his first estate, had no benefit at all properly made over to him: for God makes over benefits only by covenant: and then the condition of the covenant had not been fulfilled. Rut now, man, at his first conversion, is justified and adopted: he is received as a child and an heir, as a joint heir with Christ. His fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. God is theirs, and Christ is theirs; and the Holy Ghost is theirs; and all things are theirs. The Holy Spirit, who is the sum of all good, is their inheritance; and that little of it that they have in this life, is the earnest of their future inheritance, till the redemption of the purchased possession. Heaven is theirs: their conversation is there. They are citizens of that city, and of the household of God. Christians are represented as being come already to heaven, to mount Zion, the city of the living God; to an innumerable company of angels, &c. Heaven is the proper country of the church. They are raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together in heavenly places: [Eph. ii. 6](#). “They are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.” The whole tenor of the gospel shows, that Christians have actually a full and final right made over to them, to spiritual and heavenly blessings.

§ 16. That the saints should be earnestly exhorted and pressed to care and caution, and earnest endeavours to persevere, is most reasonable; and it cannot be otherwise, notwithstanding their having an absolute, unchangeable promise, that they shall persevere. For still perseverance is their duty, and what they are to do in obedience to God. For that is the notion of perseverance, their holding out in the way of God’s commandments. But if it were absurd to command them to persevere, as the work they have to do, then how would they do it in obedience to him? The angels in heaven are confirmed, and it is promised unto them that they never shall sin: yet it is proper for God to give them commands, though in so doing he requires the improvement of their care and endeavours to obey and fulfil his will exactly. It is not obedience, if they do not take care and endeavour to obey. If they should cease to take care, that very thing would prove their fall. So, in this case, if Christians cease to take care to persevere, that very thing is falling away.

§ 17. It shows the infallible perseverance of true Christians, that their spiritual life is a participation with Christ in the life that he received as risen from the dead. For they live by Christ’s living in them: [Gal. ii. 20](#). “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me:” that is, by the life that he has received since his resurrection, and by his communicating to them that fulness which he received

when he rose from the dead. When he rose, he received the promise of the Father, the Spirit of life without measure, and he sheds it forth on believers. The oil poured on the risen head goes down to the skirts of the garments; and thus Christ lives in believers by his Spirit dwelling in them. Believers, in their conversion, are said to be risen with Christ; [Col. ii. 12, 13](#). “Ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins, and the circumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him.” And [chap. iii. 1](#). “If ye then be risen with Christ,” &c. And [Eph. ii. 5, 6](#). “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together.” [Rom. v. 10](#). “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” This spiritual resurrection and life is procured and purchased for Christ’s members, by Christ’s suffering obedience, in the same manner as his own resurrection and life is purchased by it. And they receive life as united to him, as members of a risen Saviour, and as being married in their conversion to him.

§ 18. The perseverance of faith is necessary to a congruity to salvation. For it is implied in several places of Scripture, that if true believers should fail in persevering in faith, they would be in a lost state; [John xviii. 8, 9](#). “Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, “Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none:” *i. e.* Christ took care that they might go away, that they might not be in the way of such temptations as would be in danger of overthrowing them, so that they should not persevere. And it is implied, that if they were overthrown, and should not persevere, Christ would have lost them; the saving relation that they stood in to Christ would have been dissolved. The same seems fully implied in Christ’s prayer in the [17th chapter of John](#). Thus, he makes use not only of their having received God’s word, and believed that God had sent him, but their having kept his word, as a good plea for their title to that favour and acceptance of the Father, which he asks of the Father for them; as [ver. 6, 7, 8.](#) &c. The same is implied in the [11th verse.](#): “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” This implies, that their being one, or their standing in a saving relation to him, and in union with his mystical body, depends on the perseverance of their faith even that union on which a title to all spiritual and saving benefits depends, which is more fully spoken of in the 21st and following verses. This perseverance of believers seems to be the benefit, which is the principal subject of this whole prayer. And in [Luke xxii. 31, 32](#). it is implied, that if Peter’s faith had railed, Satan would have had him: “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” [1 Pet. i. 5](#). “Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.” Where it seems implied, that if they were not kept through faith, or if their faith did not persevere, they never would come to salvation. So, believers being overthrown in their faith,

or their not knowing Christ's voice and following him, is called a being plucked out of Christ's hand; and it is implied, that the consequence would be their perishing. It also seems to be implied, that their possession of eternal life by Christ's gift depends on their perseverance; [John x. 27, 28](#). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." And in the [15th chapter of John](#), believers persevering in faith in Christ, or their abiding in him, is spoken of as necessary to the continuance of the saving union and relation that is between Christ and believers, and Christ's abiding in them; as [ver. 4, 5](#). "Abide in me, and I in you. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." And in the 6th verse, it is spoken of as the necessary consequence of their not abiding in Christ, if that were possible; that the union should be utterly broken between Christ and them, and that damnation should be the consequence. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned."<sup>515</sup> And in the [7th verse](#), this perseverance of faith is spoken of as the necessary means of the success of faith as expressed in prayer, which is faith's voice, necessary to obtain those good things which faith and prayer seek, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."<sup>516</sup> And in the [9th and 10th](#) verses, it is implied, that Christ's acceptance of us, and favour to us as his, depends on our perseverance: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you. Continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."<sup>517</sup> So, the same perseverance is spoken of as necessary to our continuing in the favour and grace of God.<sup>518</sup> "Now, when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." And so it is spoken of as necessary to continuing in the goodness of God; and being cut off, is spoken of as a certain consequence of the contrary. [Rom. xi. 22](#). "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise, thou also shall be cut off." That expression, of standing fast *in the Lord*, [1 Thess. iii 8](#), and [Phil. iv. 1](#), implies that perseverance is necessary to a continuing in Christ, or in a saving relation to him; and more plainly still in [1 John ii. 24](#). "Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in

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515 [John xv. 6](#).

516 [John xv. 7](#)

517 [John xv. 9, 10](#).

518 [Act xiii. 43](#).



you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.” See [1 Cor. xv. 2.](#) and [2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.](#) and [Heb. xii. 28.](#) See also [Jer. iii. 19.](#)

§ 19. Concerning the objection from [Ezekiel xviii. 24.](#) “If the righteous shall fail from his righteousness and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but in the iniquity which he hath done shall he die,” and the like; God saying this does not at all prove, that it is supposed possible that a truly righteous man should fall from his righteousness; any more than God’s saying, [Levit. xviii. 4, 5.](#) “Ye shall do my judgments and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.” The Scripture in saying, He that doeth these things shall live in them, does not design to teach us, that in the present state of things, it is possible for us to do those things in a legal sense, (in which sense the words are certainly proposed, as the apostle teaches,) but only teaches the certain connexion there is between doing these things and living in them, for wise ends; particularly to lead us, by such a legal proposal, to see our utter inability to obtain life by our own doings. So the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The Scripture in saying, If the righteous shall fall away from his righteousness, he shall die; does not teach us, that in the present state of things, since the fall, it is possible for a truly righteous man to fall from his righteousness; but only teaches us the certain connexion between the antecedent and the consequent, for wise ends; and particularly, that those who think themselves righteous, may beware of falling from righteousness. For it is not unreasonable to suppose that God should put us on bewareing of those things that are already impossible, any more than that he should direct us to seek and pray for those things that are promised and certain.

§ 20. With respect to those texts in Ezekiel that speak of a righteous man’s falling away from his righteousness the doctrine of perseverance was not so fully revealed under that dispensation. It was of service to the godly to make them wary; but especially to those who were legally righteous, and trusted in their own righteousness, as Ezekiel’s hearers did; to convince them of this, that there was a connexion between the antecedent, falling away, and the consequent, the dying in their iniquity.

[Jer. xxxii. 39, 40.](#) “And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” And it is so spoken of once and again by this very prophet, [chap. xi. 17-21.](#) and [chap. xxxvi. 24-29.](#) Yea, in this very chapter, after he had been declaring the danger of falling away from righteousness, the children of Israel seem to be exhorted to this very thing as a remedy against falling away; [ver. 31.](#) “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” They needed not only to turn from their transgressions, but to cast them away utterly, to have finally done with them, and

to make them a new heart; for the prophet declares, that their old heart was a backsliding heart, bent to backslide, as the prophet often complains.

§ 21. The godly themselves were really exposed to die in their iniquity, *i. e.* they were liable to be destroyed by God's awful judgments in this world. The prophet has a special eye to those destroying judgments that God had lately brought on the nation of the Jews, which are very much the subject of the prophecy, and seem to have given occasion for it, and which the Jews had respect to in the proverb which they used, and which gave occasion to what is said in this chapter. If the sinner turned from his outward wickedness, unto an outward righteousness only, he would save his soul alive with regard to those outward calamities; and if the righteous fell away outwardly by committing some grievous sin, and getting into a bad way, they exposed themselves to die by this their iniquity in this manner.

§ 22. That there is a real difference between them that fell away, and them that persevere, even before they fall away, is evident by the things that are given as a reason of their falling away: because they have no root in themselves; because they have not counted the cost, and because they have no oil in their vessels. Those that have no root, differ from those who have root, before there be the *effect* of their having no root: and so those that have no oil, &c. And it appears again, by what is said, [John ii. 23.](#) that "when Christ was at Jerusalem at the passover, on the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." And so, [1 John ii. 19.](#) "They went out from us, because they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."

§ 23. *Objection.* But it is in the same chapter said, "That if a wicked man turn from his wickedness and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live: <sup>519</sup>" where doubtless must be understood by "doing that which is lawful and right," sincere and gracious righteousness, because there is a promise of life. And we must doubtless understand doing that which is lawful and right here, in the same sense as before. *Answer.* We may understand it in the same sense, for an external, visible, material righteousness. When it is said, if he turn from his iniquity and do that which is lawful and right, it must be understood, if he continue so to do, and do not turn from it again. According to the schemes of both Arminians and Calvinists, this must be understood. Whereby the objection is overthrown.

Visible Christians are in Scripture called saints, or holy; which is equivalent to the calling them righteous. The Jews are called an holy nation; the land is a land of uprightness; when only visibility is intended. By righteous, sometimes is meant only innocent, or materially righteous in some particular. "Wilt thou also destroy a righteous nation?" [Gen. xx. 4.](#) [Exod. xxiii. 7.](#) "The innocent and the righteous, slay thou not:" [Deut. xxv. 1.](#) "Ye shall justify the

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519 [Ezek. xviii. 21.](#)

righteous, and condemn the wicked:" 1 Sam. iv. 11. "How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person?" 2 Kings x. 9. By the righteous man that the prophet Ezekiel speaks of, he certainly does not speak in so limited a sense as to mean those that are of perfect and upright hearts, but so as to include those of an unsound heart, that trust in their own righteousness to commit iniquity; see Ezek. xxxiii. 13. *i. e.* those whose motive is only self-love, and their own safety, and so trust that they have righteousness enough to render them safe, though they do commit sin. Those that are only restrained from committing sin by fear, and are ready to embrace, and are glad of opportunities of committing sin with impunity; these cannot be such as the sincerely righteous are often described to be, *viz.* such as love God with all their hearts and souls; that love the way of his commandments; that choose the way of his commands, &c. The reason why some do not persevere, is, that there is not now a right heart in them; as is evident by Deut. v. 29. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my commandments!" &c.

§ 24. When it is said, <sup>520</sup> "If a righteous man turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, his righteousness shall not be remembered, but he shall die in his iniquity;" we need not, according to the scripture manner of expression, understand any thing, but his seeming righteousness, or the righteousness that he *seemeth* to have. Christ has often such an aphorism as this, <sup>521</sup> "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath;" which he applies to that apparent godliness, grace, or piety, which natural men have, as is evident by the contexts, and the occasions of his using this aphorism; as Matt. xiii. 12. and Matt. xxv. 29. and Mark iv. 25. This, in another place, is explained thus, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he *seemeth* to have;" Luke viii. 18. Being a righteous man, does indeed commonly signify to be one that is truly and sincerely godly. And so is believing in Christ mentioned frequently as the distinguishing character of one that is truly Christ's disciple. Yet we read of some that are said to believe, who, even at that very time, are spoken of as wanting something necessary to make them true disciples: John ii. 23, 24, 25. "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all men; and needed not that any should testify of men, for he knew what was in man These words intimate, that though they believed, yet Christ knew that they had not that in them then, that was to be depended on for perseverance: which implies, that if they were true believers, of a right principle, their perseverance might be depended on. And we are elsewhere told, why some that believe, endure but for a while, and do not persevere, *viz.* because they have *no root* in themselves.

520 Ezek. xviii. 26.

521 Matt. xiii. 12.

§ 25. That there is an essential difference between the faith and seeming grace of such professors as fall away, and such as persevere, even before any distinction appears as to perseverance, or while both retain their religion, is exceedingly manifest by [John vi. 64, 65](#). “But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.” And [verse 70](#). “And Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Here, before Judas had fallen away, he is said not to believe, and to be a devil. Now Judas was a professing disciple and a distinguished one. He was a visible believer. Christ speaks of him as one that had forsaken all and followed him in the regeneration, as is evident in. [Matt. xix. 27, 28](#).; and as one that had continued with Christ in his temptations, [Luke xxii. 28](#). compared with [verse 30](#). There were great appearances of true grace in him, as there were in Ahitophel, his type, with whom David took sweet counsel, &c. And therefore, as a righteous man, Christ had given him the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and sent him forth to preach the gospel, and heal the sick, and cast out devils. Yet he, even before he fell away, is said not to believe, but to be then a devil; which is agreeable to what the apostle says of apostates, “They went out from us, because they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.”<sup>522</sup> »

§ 26. That they who once truly believe in Christ, never fall away finally and perish, is evident, because they that now believe not, and are in a state of condemnation, are spoken of as those that *never have* believed, [John iii. 18](#). “Because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” Which supposes, that none of those that have believed, are now unbelievers, or are now in a state of condemnation. So again, those who shall be condemned at the day of judgment, are represented as those, not only whom Christ then will know not, but as those whom he never knew, [Matt. vii. 23](#). But how can this be a true representation, if some of them were once true Christians, and so were known and owned by Christ, but only have since apostatized? “When St. Paul kept under his body lest he should be a castaway, [1 Cor. ix. 27](#). he did no otherwise than he was wont to do in temporal concerns, in cases wherein he was beforehand certain of the event. So he sent word to the chief captain of the Jews lying in wait to kill him, lest he should be murdered by them, though it was revealed to him from God, but the very night before, that he should live to see Rome; [Acts xxiii. 12-21](#). So he would not allow the sailors to leave the ship. &c. *Bellamy’s True Religion, Disc. 1. Inference 9.* [1 John iii. 6](#). “Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.” This could not be true, if a man who has truly seen him, and known him, might finally fall away to sin.

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522 [John ii. 19](#).

§ 27. As to scripture *cautions* against falling away, lest it should issue in damnation; we may observe that God had been pleased to connect eternal life with eating the fruit of the tree of life; and therefore, although it was utterly impossible that Adam should have eternal life in himself, after he had fallen, as God's peremptory declaration and unalterable constitution had made it impossible; yet we are told, that after the fall, God placed cherubims and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life, lest the man should put forth his hand, and take and eat of the fruit of the tree, and live for ever. So God has connected damnation with living in allowed sin, and being overcome by sin, and brought under its power. And therefore, although it be impossible, that men, after they are once truly converted, should ever perish, yet they are warned against falling away and yielding to the power of sin, lest they should perish: and the apostle Paul kept under his body, lest he should be a cast-away.

§ 28. As to *objections* from such hypothetical propositions as those, [Heb. x. 27.](#), &c. "If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth." [Heb. vi. 4.](#), &c. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, if they fall away," &c. Such hypothetical propositions may be true, when one or both parts of it are impossible, as the truth of such a proposition consists in the connexion of the antecedent and consequent; as when our Lord said to the Jews, "If I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you."<sup>523</sup> See *Gill against Whitby*, vol. i. page 271.

§ 29. *Objection.* That we are required to take care and to pray that we may persevere. It was impossible for Christ to fail under his *trials*; and yet how evident is it that he used means, endeavours, care, labour, and earnest prayers, that he might persevere? In order to show, that an absolute promise of perseverance does consist with counsels and exhortations to *endeavour*, and *care* to persevere, I would lay down the following positions.

*Position I.* What it is proper for us to seek by earnest and importunate prayer, it is proper for us to use means, *labour, and care, for that end.* The reason is plain: prayer is one kind of seeking the thing; it is using means, and one way of labouring for it, taking care to obtain it, and pursuing after it. There are many instances of prayer, and commands to pray, for things promised. Christ on earth prayed for things promised; and he continually intercedes in heaven for things promised.

*Position II.* What it is proper that persons should use endeavours, means, and care for, they are properly *exhorted* to use those means and endeavours.

*Position III.* That which it is proper for another to use means, labours, and care for, that he may obtain it, though he knows it is certainly promised, it is proper that we should use means, &c. to obtain for ourselves, though it is promised. But Christ used means, endeavours, labour, &c. for the salvation of sincerely good men, though it be promised. He laboured, took care, denied himself, and suffered for the salvation of sincerely good men; which yet

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523 [John vii. 55.](#)

had been before abundantly promised to him, and promised to men in the Old Testament; and Christ himself had promised it. The Scripture represents, that Christ ran a race to win a prize, and endured the cross for the joy that was set before him.

§ 30. If it were left to the freedom of men's own will, whether men should persevere, in the sense that the Arminians suppose; *i. e.* to a will not determined by God, but self-determined, then it would be absurd to pray to God that we may persevere; that he would keep us from falling, and that he would uphold our goings in his paths, &c.

§ 31. If grace implanted in the heart be not an infallible sign that a man shall have eternal life, how is the Spirit of God an earnest of glory? when a man may have the Spirit, and yet have no assurance, that he shall be glorified. For every one who has the grace of God implanted in his heart, has the Holy Spirit of God in his sanctifying influences.

**MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.**



I CANNOT see why it should be thought more disagreeable to reason to suppose, that angels may have influence on matter so as to cause those alterations in it, which are beyond the established laws of matter, more than to suppose that our spirits should have such an influence. And I do not see why other spirits should not have influence on matter according to other laws; or why, if we suppose spirits have an influence on matter, that it must necessarily be according to the same established rules as our spirits. We find that from such motions of mind there follows such an alteration in such and such matter, according to established rules; and those rules are entirely at the pleasure of him that establishes them. And why we should not think that God establishes other rules for other spirits, I cannot imagine. And if we should suggest, that according to established laws, angels do make alterations in the secret springs of bodies, and so of minds, that otherwise would not be, I cannot see why it should be accounted more of a miracle than that our souls can make alterations in the matter of our hands and feet, which otherwise would not be.

[442] *Angels confirmed.* The angels that stood are doubtless confirmed in holiness, and their allegiance to God; so that they never will sin, and they are out of every danger of it. But yet I believe God makes use of means to confirm them. They were confirmed by the sight of the terrible destruction that God brought upon the angels that fell. They see what a dreadful thing it is to rebel. They were further confirmed by the manifestation God had made of his displeasure against sin, by the eternal damnation of reprobates amongst men, and by the amazing discovery of his holy jealousy and justice in the sufferings of Christ. They are confirmed by finding, by experience, their own happiness in standing, and finding the mistake of the angels that fell, with respect to that which was their temptation, and by new and greater manifestations of the glory of God, which have been successively made in heaven, and by his dispensations towards the church, and above all, by the work of redemption by Jesus Christ. [Eph. iii. 10.](#) [1 Tim. iii. 16.](#) [1 Peter i. 12.](#) *Vide* No. 515.

*Corol.* Hence we learn that the angels were not concerned in the work of redemption by Jesus Christ.

So I believe the saints in heaven are made perfectly holy and impeccable, *by means, viz.* By the beatific vision of God in Christ in glory; by experiencing so much the happiness of holiness, its happy nature and issue; by seeing the wrath of God on wicked men, &c.

[681] The angels of heaven, though a superior order of being, and of a more exalted nature and faculties by far than men, are yet all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be the heirs of salvation; and so in some respect are made inferior to the saints in honour. So likewise the angels of the churches, the ministers of the gospel that are of a higher order and office than other saints, yet they are, by Christ's appointment, ministers and servants to others, and are least of all, as [Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27.](#) "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon



them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." [Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.](#) "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." And [Mark ix. 35.](#) "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." It is as it is in the body natural, those parts that we account more noble and honourable are, as it were, ministers to the more inferior, to guard them, and serve them, as the apostle observes, [1 Cor. xii. 23, 24.](#) "And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked." God's ways are all analogous, and his dispensations harmonize one with another. As it is between the saints that are of an inferior order of beings, and the angels which are of more exalted natures and degrees, and also between those Christians on earth that are of inferior order, and those who are of superior, being ministers of Christ; so without doubt it also is in some respects in heaven, between those that are of lower and those that are of higher degrees of glory. There, those that are most exalted in honour and happiness, though they are above the least, yet in some respects they are the least; being ministers to others, and employed by God to minister to their good and happiness. These sayings of Christ, in [Matt. xx. 25,](#) &c. and [Mark ix. 35.](#) were spoken on occasion of the disciples manifesting an ambition to be greater in his kingdom, by which they meant his state of exaltation and glory; and so it is in some sort, even with respect to the man Christ Jesus himself, who is the very highest and most exalted of all creatures, and the head of all. He, to prepare himself for it, descended lowest of all, was most abased of any, and in some respects became least of all. Therefore, when Christ in these places directs that those that would be greatest among his disciples, should be the servants of the rest, and so, in some respects, least; he enforces it with his own example. [Matt. xx. 26, 27, 28.](#) "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even so the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." And [Luke xxii. 26, 27.](#) "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve, for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth." None in the kingdom of heaven ever descended so low as Christ did, who descended as it were into the depths of hell. He suffered shame and wrath, and was made a curse. He went lower in these things than ever any other did, and this he

did as a servant not only to God, but to men, in that he undertook to serve us, and minister to us in such dreadful drudgery, while we sit at meat in quietness and rest, and partake of those dainties which he provides for us. Christ took upon him to minister to us in the lowest service, which he represented and typified by that action of washing the disciples' feet, which he did chiefly for that end. Thus Christ is he that seems to be intended in [Matt. xi. 11.](#) by him "that is least in the kingdom of heaven;" who is there said to be greater than John the Baptist.

The design of God in thus ordering things, is to teach and show that he is all, and the creature nothing, and that all exaltation and dignity belong to him; and therefore those creatures that are most exalted shall in other respects be least and lowest. Thus, though the angels excel in wisdom and strength, and are advanced to glorious dignity, and are principalities and powers, and kings of the earth, yet God makes them all ministers to them who are much less than they, of inferior nature and degree. Thus, also, the saints who are most exalted in dignity are servants to others. The angelic nature is the highest and most exalted created nature; yet God is pleased to put greater honour upon our inferior nature, *viz.* the human, by causing that the Head and King of all creatures should be in the human nature, and that the saints in that nature in Christ, should be in many respects exalted above the angels, that the angelic nature may not magnify itself against the human; and the man Christ Jesus, that creature who is above all, owes his superiority and dignity, not at all to himself, but to God; *viz.* to his union with a divine person. Though he be above all, yet in some respects he is inferior; for he is not in the highest created nature, but in a nature that is inferior to the angelic. To prepare him for his exaltation above all, he was first brought lowest of all in suffering and humiliation, and in some respects in office, or in those parts of the office that were executed by him in his state of humiliation. Though the saints are exalted to glorious dignity, even to union and fellowship with God himself; to be in some respects divine in glory and happiness, and in many respects to be exalted above the angels; yet care is taken that it should not be in themselves, but in a person who is God, and they must be as it were emptied of themselves in order to it. And though the angels are exalted in themselves, yet they are ministers to them who are not exalted in themselves, but only in communion with a divine person as of free grace partaking with them. Thus wisely hath God ordered all things for his own glory, that however great and marvellous the exercises of his grace, and love, and condescension are to the creature, yet he alone may be exalted, and that he may be all in all. And though the creature be unspeakably and wonderfully advanced in honour by God's grace and love; yet it is in such a way and manner, that even in its exaltation it might be humbled, and so as that its nothingness before God, and its absolute dependence on God, and subjection to him, might be manifested. Yet this humiliation or abasement, which is joined with the creatures' exaltation, is such as not to detract from the privilege and happiness of the exaltation. So far as exaltation is suitable for a creature, and is indeed a privilege and



happiness to the creature, it is given to the creature and nothing taken from it. That only is removed that should carry any shadow of what belongs only to the Creator, and which might make the difference between the Creator and creature, and its absolute, infinite dependence on the Creator, less manifest. That humiliation only is brought with the exaltation that is suitable to that great humility that becomes the creature before the Creator. This humiliation does not detract any thing from the happiness of elect holy creatures, but adds to it, for it gratifies that humble disposition that they are of, it is exceeding sweet and delightful to them to be humbled and abased before God, to cast down their crowns at his feet as the four and twenty elders do in [Rev. iv. 10](#). And to abase themselves, and appear nothing, and ascribe all power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing to him. They will delight more in seeing God exalted than themselves, and they will not look on themselves the less honoured because that God appears to be all, even in their exaltation, but the more. These creatures that are most exalted will delight most in being abased before God, for they will excel in humility as much as in dignity and glory, as has been elsewhere observed. The man Christ Jesus, who is the head of all creatures, is the most humble of all creatures. That in [Matt. xviii. 4](#). “Whosoever therefore humbleth himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven,” is true, with respect to the humility that they exercise, both in this and in another world. They that have most humility in this world, will continue to excel in humility in heaven; and the proposition is reciprocal. They that have the greatest humility, shall be most exalted, and shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and they that are greatest in the kingdom of heaven, are most humble.

*Corol. I* What has been said above, confirms the conclusion that some in heaven will be a kind of ministers in that society: teachers; ministers to their knowledge and love, and helpers of their joy, as ministers of the gospel are here.

*Corol. II.* Hence we may learn the sweet and perfect harmony that will reign throughout that glorious society, and how far those that are lowest will be from envying those that are highest, or the highest from despising the lowest, for the highest shall be made ministers to the happiness of the lowest, and shall be even below them in humility, and the lowest shall have the greatest love to the highest for their superior excellency, and for the greater benefit which they shall receive from their ministration, as it is the disposition of the saints to love and honour their faithful ministers here in this world.

[838] *Angels why called Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers.* As the angels are made to be employed as the ministers of God’s providence of the government of the world, and as they are beings of a limited understanding, and not equally capable of understanding and managing the affairs of the whole universe, or of the whole extent and compass of divine providence, or of any part indifferently, as they may be of affairs of some particular kind, or system, or series of events, or of some particular part of the universe; (for it must needs be so with all that are of limited understanding, that they must be more capable of

the care and management of things in a certain particular sphere than of any thing indifferently without any fixed limits;) so it is very reasonable to suppose from hence that the different angels are appointed to different kinds of work, and that their ministry more especially respects some certain limited parts of the universality of things which God has in some respect committed to their care, so that over these things they have a ministerial dominion, some of larger and others of lesser extent; some in a more exalted, others a less humble station. So they are a kind of princes under God, over such and such parts of the creation, or within such a certain sphere. Though their dominion be only ministerial, (as the dominion of ministers of the gospel, or angels of the churches is,) yet it is very honourable and exalted. It is a very honourable work in which they are employed, an image of the work of the Son of God, as God man, who has the vicegerency of the whole universe, and so they as well as the princes of Israel are called gods, *Etohim*, [Ps. xcii. 7](#). “Worship him, all ye gods,” which is rendered by the apostle, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” And they are called “The sons of God,” as they are, [Job xxxviii](#). “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. “They may, on this account also, be fitly compared to stars, (as they are here, and also in the song of Deborah, “The stars in their courses fought against Sisera,)” not only for their brightness in wisdom and holiness, and for their being the native inhabitants of heaven, and obeying the commands of God, as the stars do, but because they have their particular dominion set them in the lower universe, as the stars have, [Job xxxviii. 33](#). “Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?”. And also because they have their certain sphere and course to which they are limited in heaven. These seem in part to be signified by the kings of the earth, that shall bring their honour and glory into the church. They are made chiefly for a ministerial dominion over, and management of, the world of mankind on the earth, as ministering spirits unto Christ; and on the account of their honourable place and trust in heaven, they may be called *ministers of the new earth*, there spoken of in that chapter. God hath concealed the particular spheres of the angels’ dominion and ministry, that we might not be tempted to idolatry. They, therefore, that worship angels under a notion of such and such angels having a superintendency over such particular persons or affairs, intrude into those things that they have not seen.

It is not reasonable to suppose that the angels are called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, merely for the honour they have in their great abilities and excellent qualifications, for the words do properly denote rate and authority. Earthly rulers are called principalities and powers. [Tit. iii. i](#). “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates.”

[937] *Angels elect their dependence on Christ.*

Two questions may be raised with respect to the elect angels.

*Ques. I.* How far the elect angels are dependent on Christ for eternal life?

*Ans.* I. Probably the service appointed them as the great trial of their obedience, was serving Christ, or ministering to him in his great work that he had undertaken with respect to mankind.

II. When Lucifer rebelled and set up himself as a head in opposition to God and Christ, and drew away a great number of the angels after him, Christ, the Son of God, manifested himself as an opposite head, and appeared graciously to dissuade and restrain by his grace the elect angels from hearkening to Lucifer's temptation, so that they were upheld and preserved from eternal destruction at this time of great danger by the free and sovereign distinguishing grace of Christ. Herein Christ was the Saviour of the elect angels, for though he did not save them as he did elect men from the ruin they had already deserved, and were condemned to, and the miserable state they were already in, yet he saved them from eternal destruction they were in great danger of, and otherwise would have fallen into with the other angels. The elect angels joined with him, the glorious Michael, as their captain, while the other angels hearkened to Lucifer and joined with him, and then was that literally true that was fulfilled afterwards figuratively. *Rev. xii.* "When there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was there place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

III. They were dependent on the sovereign grace of Christ to uphold them and assist them in this service, and to keep them from ruining themselves, as the fallen angels had done; by the fall of the angels, especially of Lucifer, the greatest, brightest, and most intelligent of all creatures, they were taught their own emptiness and insufficiency for themselves, and were led humbly in a self-diffidence to look to Christ, to seek to him, and depend on him, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell to preserve them. So that they all along hung upon him. Through the whole course of their obedience during their time of trial, having no absolute promise, as believers in Christ have amongst men of perseverance in one act of faith, but only God the Father had revealed to them that if they were preserved, it must be by influence and help from his Son, and also made known to them the infinite riches of the grace of his Son, and its sufficiency for them, and given the experience of it in preserving them when the other angels fell, and God directed them to seek to his Son for help. But this humble dependence was part of their duty or work by which they were to obtain eternal life, and it was not as it is with men, the fruit of the purchase of life already made, the first act of which entitles to all other fruits of this purchase through eternity. Thus angels did depend on Christ, and they were supported by strength and grace from him freely communicated; it was sovereign grace that he was not obliged to afford them, for he was not obliged to afford them any more grace than he did the angels that fell, so that it can truly be said of the angels, that they have eternal life by sovereign grace through Christ in a way

of self-emptiness, self-diffidence, and humble dependence on him. So far is the way of the elect angels' receiving eternal life like that of elect men's receiving of it.

IV. Christ is their Judge, and they actually receive their reward at his hands as their Judge, as I have elsewhere shown.

V. They not only have the reward of eternal life adjudged to them by Christ, but actually, continually, and eternally derive it from him as their head of life and divine influence, the Spirit is given them through him.

VI. They have their Happiness in him in this brightness of God's glory and express image. It is that they behold the glory and love of God, and so have eternal life in the enjoyment of God. Thus Christ is the tree of life in paradise, on whose fruit all its inhabitants live to all eternity, and the Lamb is the light of that glorious city.

*Quest.* II. How far the angels are dependent on Christ as God man, and have benefit by his incarnation, sufferings, and exaltation, and the work of redemption that he wrought out for mankind?

*Ans.* I. The work of redemption is their end; they were created to be subservient to Christ in this affair.

II. Their work and service that was appointed them, that was the trial of their obedience, was to serve Christ and his elect people in this affair, and it was by obeying Christ as his servants in this affair, that they actually obtained eternal life.

III. Especially did the angels obtain life by attending on Christ, and being faithful to him during the time of his humiliation, which was the last and most trying part of their obedience.

IV. The Lord Jesus Christ God man is the Judge of the angels, that gives them the reward of eternal life. They did not enjoy perfect rest till he descended and confirmed them, so that the angels, as well as men, have rest in Christ God man. (See the next.)

V. They have this benefit by the incarnation of Christ, that thereby God is immediately united with a creature, and so is nearer to them, whereby they are under infinitely greater advantages to have the full enjoyment of God.

VI. Jesus Christ God man is he through whom, and in whom, they enjoy the blessedness of the reward of eternal life, both as the Head of influence through whom they have the Spirit, and also as in Christ God man they behold God's glory, and have the manifestations of his love.

VII. As the perfections of God are manifested to all creatures, both men and angels, by the fruits of those perfections, *i.e.* by God's works, (the wisdom of God appears by his wise works, and his power by his powerful works; his holiness and justice by his holy and just acts, and his grace and love by the acts and works of grace and love,) so the glorious angels have the greatest manifestations of the glory of God by what they see in the work of man's redemption, and especially in the death and sufferings of Christ.

[940] The elect angels have greatly increased both in holiness and happiness, since the fall of those angels that fell, and are immensely more holy than ever Lucifer and his angels were; for perfection and holiness, *i.e.* a sinless perfection, is not such in those that are finite, but that it admits of infinite degrees. The fall of the angels laid a foundation for the greater holiness of the elect angels, as it increased their knowledge of God and themselves, gave them the knowledge of good and evil, and was a means of their being emptied of themselves and brought low in humility, and they increased in holiness by persevering in obedience. What they behold of the glory of God in the face of Christ as men's Redeemer, and especially in Christ's humiliation, greatly increased their holiness; and their obedience, through that last and greatest trial, contributed above all things to an increase of their holiness. This further shows how the elect angels are dependent on Christ God man.

[941] Christ's humiliation many ways laid a foundation for the humiliation of all elect creatures. By seeing one infinitely above them descending so low, and abasing himself so much, they are abundantly made sensible how no abasement is too great for them. Lucifer thought what God required of him too great an abasement for so high and worthy a creature as he; but in Christ Jesus they see one infinitely higher than he descending vastly lower than was required of him. It tends to humble the angels, and to set them for ever at an immense distance from any thought that any thing that God can require of them can be too great an abasement for them; and then it tended to humble them, as this person that appeared in such meanness, and in so despicable a state, is appointed to be their Lord and their God, and as they were required humbly to minister to him in his greatest abasement. It tends to abase elect men two ways.

1. As here is the example of the voluntary humiliation of one infinitely more worthy than they; and,

2. As here is the greatest manifestation of the evil, dreadful nature of sin, and particularly as here is the effects of their sin. Here appears the venomous nature of their corruption, as it aims at the life of God, and here appears the infinite greatness of its demerit in such sufferings of a person of infinite glory. So that all elect creatures are as it were humbled and abased in their head. This shows further how the elect angels are dependent on Christ God man.

[938] *Heaven How the elect angels know good and evil.* It is a thing supposed, without proof, that the glorious inhabitants of heaven never felt any such thing as *trouble* or *uneasiness* of any kind. Their present innocence and holiness does not prove it. God may suffer innocent creatures to be in trouble for their greater happiness. The nature and end of that place of glory does not prove it, for if that did not hinder *sin* from entering, neither will it necessarily hinder *trouble* from entering there.

The elect angels probably felt great fear at the time of the revolt of Lucifer and the angels that followed him. They were then probably the subjects of great surprise, and a great sense

of their own danger of falling likewise; and when they saw the wrath of God executed on the fallen angels, which they had no certain promise that they should not suffer also by their own disobedience, being not yet confirmed, it probably struck them with fear. And the highest heavens was not a place of such happiness and rest before Christ's ascension as it was afterwards; for the angels were not till then confirmed. So that it was in Christ God man that the angels have found rest. The angels, therefore, have this to sweeten their safety and rest, that they have it after they have known what it is to be in great danger, and to be distressed with fear.

[1098] That the angels in the times of the Old Testament did not fully understand the counsels and designs of God with regard to men's redemption, may be argued from that text, [Isa. lxiv. 4](#). "For since the beginning of the world they have not heard, (*men* is not in the original,) nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." In the original, what "he hath *made* or *done* for him that waiteth for him." It is rendered in the margin, "*hath seen a God besides thee which doth so for him that waiteth for him.*" But our translation gives the sense more agreeable to the citation of the apostle, [1 Cor. ii. 7 9](#). It is manifest by this text, if we take it in a sense agreeable to the apostle's understanding of it, that none of old understood the mystery of man's redemption by Jesus Christ, it never entered into the hearts of any; and if this be the sense, it will follow from the words of the text, not only that it had not entered into the hearts of any of mankind, but also of the angels, for all are expressly excluded but God himself; *none* have heard, seen, or perceived, O God, *beside thee*. The meaning is not only that no works had been already done that ever any had seen or heard of parallel to this work; for if the meaning was, that no works that were past had been seen or heard of like this work, those words, *O God, beside thee*, would not be added; for if that were the sense, these words would signify, That, though others had not seen any past works parallel with this, yet God had, which would not have been true; for God himself had not seen any past works parallel with this. The same may also be argued from [Eph. iii. 9-11](#). compared with [Rom. xvi. 25, 26](#). and [Col. i. 26](#). Not only are the words of [Eph. iii. 10](#). very manifestly to my present purpose, but those words in the verse preceding are here worthy of remark. *The mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been HID IN GOD*; which seems plainly to imply, that it was a secret which God kept within himself, which was hid and sealed up in the divine understanding, and never had as yet been divulged to any other, which was hid in God's secret counsel, which as yet no other being had ever been made acquainted with; and so the words imply as much as those in the forementioned place in Isaiah, that none had perceived it beside God.

[1247] *Angels*. That they are as the nobles and barons of the court of heaven, as dignified servants in the palace of the King of kings, is manifest by [Matt. xviii. 10](#). See my Notes. So in their being called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.



[1276] *Angels ignorant of the majesty of the gospel till Christ's coming.*

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you the hope of glory. Dr. Goodwin says, "This doctrine of the gospel he kept hid and close in his own breast; not a creature knew it; no, not the angels, who were his nearest courtiers and dearest favourites, it lay hid in God, [Eph. iii. 9.](#) even hid from them, [ver. 10.](#) A mystery, which when it should be revealed, should amaze the world, put the angels to school again, as if they had known nothing in comparison of this, wherein they should know over again all those glorious riches which are in God, and that more perfectly and fully than ever yet. And so after they had a little studied the catechism and compendium, there should come out a large volume, a new system of the riches of the glory of God, the mystery of Christ in the text, which is the last edition, also, now set out enlarged, perfected, wherein the large inventory of God's glorious perfections is more fully set down with additions. (Dr. Goodwin's Works, vol. i. part iii. p. 64. on [Col. i. 26, 27.](#))

## FALL OF THE ANGELS.

[438] So it was also with the angels, their judgment was likewise decreed. Probably they thought it would be degradation and misery to be ministers to a creature of an inferior nature, whom God was about to create, and subjects and servants to one in that nature, not knowing particularly how it was to be, God having only in general revealed it to them. They thought it would be best for themselves to resist, and endeavour to be independent of God's government and ordering; and, having an appetite to their own honour, it overcame holy dispositions, which when once overcome, immediately wholly left them to the full and unrestrained rage of the principles that overcome, and their holy inclination to subjection was greatly damped by their opinion of God, as though he intended to deal unbecomingly by them in subjecting them to one of such a nature, and so it was the more easily *overcome*.

[320] *Devils*. It seems to me probable that the temptation of the angels, which occasioned their rebellion, was, That when God was about to create man, or had first created him, God declared his decree to the angels that one of that human nature should be his Son, his best beloved, his greatest favourite, and should be united to his eternal Son, and that he should be their Head and King, that they should be given to him, and should worship him, and be his servants, attendants, and ministers: and God having thus declared his great love to the race of mankind, gave the angels the charge of them as ministering spirits to men. Satan, or Lucifer, or Beelzebub, being the archangel, one of the highest of the angels, could not bear it, thought it below him, and a great debasing of him. So he conceived rebellion against the Almighty, and drew away a vast company of the heavenly hosts with him. But he was cast down from the highest pitch of glory to the lowest hell for it. and himself was made an occasion of bringing that to pass which his spirit so rose against, yea, his spite and malice was made an occasion of it, and that same act of his by which he thought he had entirely overthrown the design, and that same person in human nature which they could not bear should rule over them in glory, and should be their King and Head, to communicate happiness to them, by this means proves their King in spite of them, and becomes their Judge; and though they would not be his willing subjects, they shall be his unwilling captives, he shall be their sovereign to make them miserable and pour out his wrath upon them; and mankind whom they so envied and so scorned, are by occasion of them advanced to higher glory and honour, and greater happiness, and more nearly united to God; and though they disdained to be ministering spirits to them, yet now they shall be judged by them as assessors with Jesus Christ.

[833] *Occasion of the fall of the angels*. Christ had his delegated dominion over the world committed to him as soon as the creation of the world was finished; for though Christ did not actually begin the work and business of a Mediator till man had fallen, yet the world, even in its very creation, was designed to be for the use of Christ in the great affair of redemption, and his purpose in that work was the end of the creation, and of all God's providences

in it from the beginning. Therefore the government of the world was committed into his hands from the very beginning; for even the very creation was committed into his hands for that reason, as the apostle intimates, [Eph. iii. 9, 10.](#) Much more have we reason to think that the disposal of it was committed into his hands when it was made, because it was created for his disposal and use. It was therefore most fit that it should be committed to him, not only in the actual accomplishment of that great work of his, the work of redemption, but also in those antecedent dispensations that were preparatory to it during that short space of time that was taken up in the preparation before the work of redemption actually began. It was most meet that Christ should have the disposal of those things that were to prepare the way for his own work, otherwise the work would not wholly be in his hands; for the accomplishing of the work itself, so as best to suit his own purpose and pleasure, depends in a great measure on the preparation that was made for it, and so there is the same reason that the preparation should be in his hands as the work itself. There is the same reason, that those things that are without the limits of the work itself, *as to time*, should be in the hands of Christ, because of the relation they have to that work, as that those things that are without the limits of the work itself, *as to place, and nature, and order of being*, should be in his hands; as the angels in heaven, and indeed all the works of God that were before the fall of man, were parts of the work of preparation for the work of redemption. The creation itself was so; and for this reason the creation of the world was committed into his hands; and there is no reason to suppose that one part of this work of preparation was committed into Christ's hands, because it was a preparation for his work, and not other parts of the preparation for the same work. All things are for Christ, for his use; and therefore God left it with him to prepare all things for his own use, that in every thing he might have the pre-eminence, and that in him might all fulness dwell, a perfect sufficiency every way for the design that he had to accomplish; and therefore by the will and disposition of the Father, all things were made by him, and all things consist by him, and he was made Head over all things to the church, and for the purposes of the work of redemption that he was to accomplish for the church. [Colos. i. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#) "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things are created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." [Eph. i. 22.](#) "And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church. "It is manifest by these things that not only the creation of the world, but the upholding and government of the world, were committed into the hands of Christ, and doubtless it was so from the beginning. As Christ's delegated dominion over the world will not be at an end till his use of it is finished, and he has completed that work, in which its great use consists, and has fully obtained his

end of it, which will be at the *end of the world*, when he will *deliver up THAT kingdom to the Father*. So doubtless the delegated dominion over the world began when his use of it began, which was at the *beginning of the world*, or as soon as the world was finished, and then *the kingdom was committed to him of the Father*.

[936] *Fall of the angels. Satan, the prince of the devils*. It seems manifest by the Scripture, that there is one of the devils that is vastly superior to all the rest. His vast superiority appears in his being so very often spoken of singly, as the grand enemy of God and mankind, the grand adversary, the accuser of the brethren, and the great destroyer. He is more frequently spoken of singly, in Scripture, than *devils* are spoken of in the plural number, as though he were more than all the rest. He seems commonly in Scripture to be spoken of *instar omnium*. It seems to be from his great superiority above all the rest, that he is so often spoken of under so many peculiar names that are never found in the plural number, as *Satan, Diabolos, Beelzebub, Lucifer, The Dragon, The Old Serpent, The Wicked One, The God of this world, The Prince of this world, John xii. 31. The Prince of the power of the air, The Accuser of the brethren, The Tempter, The Adversary, Abaddon, Apollyon, The Enemy, and The Avenger*. His strength and subtlety are very great indeed; so much superior to the rest, that he maintains a dominion over them, and is able to govern and manage them, that they durst not raise rebellion against him, agreeable to [Job xli. 25](#). “When he raiseth up himself the mighty are afraid. “But he is king in hell, the prince of the devils; as Leviathan is said. [Job xli. 34](#). to be “king over all the children of pride.” See [Rev. ix. 11](#). All the rest of the devils are his servants, his wretched slaves, they are spoken of as his possession, [Matt. xxv. 41](#). “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and HIS angels.” They are his attendants and possession, as the good angels are Christ’s attendants and possession, [Rev. xii. 7](#). “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought, and his angels.”

This angel, before his fall, was the chief of all the angels, of greatest natural capacity, strength, and wisdom, and highest in honour and dignity, the brightest of all those stars of heaven, as is signified by what is said of him, under that type of him, the king of Babylon, [Isa. xiv. 12](#). “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” This signifies his outshining all the other stars, as the morning star outshines the rest. It is yet more manifest from what is said of the king of Tyrus, as a type of the devil, in [Ezek. xxviii. 12-19](#). Here I would observe several things. (See note on the place.)

I. It is exceeding manifest that the king of Tyrus is here spoken of as a type of the devil, or the prince of the angels or cherubim that fell.

1. Because he is here expressly called an *angel* or *cherub*, once and again, [Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16](#). And is spoken of as a *fallen cherub*.

2. He is spoken of as having been in heaven under three different names; by which names heaven is often called in Scripture, *viz. Eden, The Garden of God, or the Paradise of*

God; Ezek. xxviii. 13. *The Holy Mountain of God*, Ezek. xxviii. 14,16.; and *The Sanctuary*, Ezek. xxviii. 18.

3. He is spoken of as having been in a most happy state in the paradise of God, and holy mountain of God, in great honour, and beauty, and pleasure.

4. He is spoken of as in his first estate, or the state wherein he was created, to be perfectly *free from sin*, but afterwards *falling by sin*. Ezek. xxviii. 15. “Thou wast perfect in thy ways, from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.”

5. The iniquity by which he fell was *pride*, or his being lifted up by reason of his superlative beauty and brightness. Ezek. xxviii. 17. “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty. Thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.”

6. He is represented as being cast out of heaven, and cast down to the earth for his sin. Ezek. xxviii. 16. “Therefore I will cast thee, as profane, out of the mountain of God, and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the flames of fire.” Ezek. xxviii. 17. “I will cast thee to the ground.”

7. He is represented as being destroyed by fire here, in this earthly world. Ezek. xxviii. 18. “I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee: it shall devour thee; and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the midst of all that behold thee.”

8. His great wisdom is spoken of as being corrupted by sin, *i.e.* turned into a wicked craftiness. Ezek. xxviii. 17. “Thou hast corrupted thy wisdom because of thy brightness.” If the king of Tyrus were not here expressly called “*a cherub*,” “*in the paradise of God*,” and “*in God’s holy mountain*,” by which it is most evident that he is spoken of as a *type* of a cherub in the paradise of God; yet I say if it had not been so, the matter would have been very plain, for the things here spoken of cannot be applied to the king of Tyrus with any beauty, nor without the utmost shining, any other way than as a type of the devil that was once a glorious angel in paradise. For how could it be said of the king of Tyrus, in any other sense, but as a type of the anointed angel, that he had been in God’s holy mountain, and in Eden, the garden of God, and in God’s sanctuary, and there been first perfect in his ways? (For the original word is a kind of expression that is ever used in Scripture to signify *holiness*, or *moral perfection*.) And how in any other sense was he afterwards cast, as profane, out of the mountain of God?

II. It is evident that this cherub or angel is spoken of as the highest of all the angels. This is evident by several things.

1. He is called the *anointed* cherub. This expression alone shows him to have sat higher than any other cherub; for his being *anointed*, must signify his being distinguished from all others. Anointing of old was used as a note of distinction, to show that that person was marked out and distinguished from all the rest for a higher dignity. *The Lord’s anointed*, in Israel, was he that God of his mere good pleasure had appointed to the chief dignity in Israel; so the Lord’s anointed among the cherubim, is the cherub that God had appointed to the



highest dignity of all. It is said, [Ezek. xxviii. 14.](#) “Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so;” *i.e.* plainly, “It has been my pleasure to set thee, by my anointing, in the highest dignity of all.”

2. He is called, [Ezek. xxviii 14.](#) “The cherub that covereth, on God’s holy mountain,” and, [Ezek. xxviii. 16.](#) “The *covering* cherub, in the midst of the flames of fire,” In which there seems to be a reference to the cherubim in the temple in the holy of holies, next to the throne of God that covered the throne with their wings. [Exod. xxv. 19, 20; xxvii. 9.](#) From this it appears, that by *the covering cherub* is meant the cherub next to the throne of God himself, having a place *in the very holy of holies*. There were represented two cherubim that covered the mercy-seat in the temple, that are called by the apostle, “cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat,” [Heb. ix. 5.](#) which represent the great dignity and honour of the cherubim that are next to God’s throne, and are *covering cherubim*. But before the fall of this cherub he is spoken of as being alone entitled to this great honour and nearness to God’s throne in heaven, that he was anointed to be above his fellows. (See note on [Matt. xviii. 10.](#))

3. This covering cherub is here spoken of as the top of all the creation, or the summit and height of all creature perfection in wisdom and beauty. [Ver. 12.](#) “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect beauty.” He is spoken of not only as being in the midst of many things that are very bright and beautiful, [ver. 13, 14.](#) and as walking up and down among them, but as having the sum of all their beauty completed, perfected, and sealed up in himself. [It seems implied, that no being is stronger than Beelzebub, and able to bind him, but God himself. [Matt. xii. 29.](#) with the context.]

*Corol. I.* Hence learn that Satan before his fall was the Messiah or Christ, as he was the *anointed*. The word anointed is radically the same in Hebrew as the word Messiah: so that in this respect our Jesus is exalted into his place in heaven.

*Corol. II.* These things show another thing, wherein Jesus is exalted into the place of Lucifer; that whereas he had the honour to dwell in the holy of holies continually, so Jesus is there entered, not as the high priests of old, but to be there continually, but in this respect is exalted higher than Lucifer ever was; that whereas Lucifer was only near the throne, or kneeling on the mercy-seat in humble posture, covering it with his wings, Jesus is admitted to sit down for ever with God on the throne.

*Corol. III.* From what is said in this passage of Scripture, we may learn that the angels were created *in time*. Though we have no particular account of their creation in the story of Moses, we read here, once and again, of the day wherein this anointed cherub was created, [ver. 13, 15.](#) This is also implied in [Gen. ii. 1.](#) “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all *the hosts* of them. “The angels are often in Scripture spoken of as *the host* of heaven, and the angels are expressly spoken of as *created* by Christ, in [Col. i. 16.](#) “For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and

for him.” So [Psal. civ. 4](#). “Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;” which is meant of proper angels, as appears by [Heb. i. 7](#). It appears also further, because they are called *the sons of God*, in [Job xxxviii](#). which cannot be meant by eternal generation, for so Christ is God’s only-begotten Son. See [Psal. cxlviii. 2, 3, 4, 5](#).

*Corol. IV.* In another respect also Jesus succeeds Lucifer, *viz.* in being the *covering* cherub. The word translated *cover*, often and commonly signifies to *protect*. It was committed to this archangel especially, to have the care of protecting the beloved race, elect man, that was God’s jewel, his first-fruits, his precious treasure, laid up in God’s ark, or cabinet, hid in the secret of his presence. That was the great business the angels were made for, and therefore was especially committed to the head of the angels. But he fell from his innocency and dignity, and Jesus in his stead becomes the Cherub that covereth, the great Protector and Saviour of elect man, that gathereth them as a hen her chickens under his wings.

*Corol. V.* Lucifer, while a holy angel, in having the excellency of all those glorious things that were about him, all summed up in him, was a type of Christ, in whom all the glory and excellency of all elect creatures is more properly summed, as the head and foundation of all, just as the brightness of all, that reflects the light of the sun, is summed up in the sun.

And as the devil was the highest of all the angels, so he was the very highest of all God’s creatures; he was the top and crown of the whole creation; he was the brightest part of the heaven of heavens, that brightest part of all the creation; he was the head of the angels, that most noble rank of all created beings; and, therefore, when spoken of under that type of him, the *Behemoth*, he is said to be “the chief of the ways of God,” [Job xl. 19](#). And since it is revealed that there is a certain order and government among the angels, the superior angels having some kind of authority over others that are of lower rank; and since Lucifer was the chief of them all, we may suppose that he was the head of the whole society, the captain of the whole host. He was the archangel, the prince of the angels, and all did obeisance unto him. And as the angels, as the ministers of God’s providence, have a certain superintendency and rule over the world, or at least over some parts of it that God has committed to their care, hence they are called *thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers*. Therefore, seeing Lucifer was the head, and captain, and prince of all, and the highest creature in the whole universe, we may suppose that he had, as God’s chief servant, and the grand minister of his providence, and the top of the creation, in some respect committed to him power, dominion, and principality over the whole creation, and all the kingdom of providence; and as all the angels are called *the sons of God*, Lucifer was his first-born, and was the firstborn of every creature. But when it was revealed to him, high and glorious as he was, that he must be a ministering spirit to the race of mankind which he had seen newly created, which appeared so feeble, mean, and despicable, so vastly inferior, not only to him, the prince of the angels, and head of the created universe, but also to the inferior angels, and that he must be subject to one of that race that should hereafter be born, he could not bear it. This occasioned his

fall; and now he, with the other angels whom he drew away with him, are fallen, and elect men are translated to supply their places, and are exalted vastly higher in heaven than they. And the Man Jesus Christ, the Chief, and Prince, and Captain of all elect men, is translated and set in the throne that Lucifer, the chief and prince of the angels, left, to be the head of the angels in his stead, the head of principality and power, that all the angels might do obeisance to him; for God said,<sup>524</sup> "Let all the angels of God worship him;" and God made him his first-born instead of Lucifer, higher than all those thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and made him, yea, made him in his stead the first-born of every creature, or of the whole creation, and made him also in his stead the bright and morning star, and head and prince of the universe; yea, gave this honour, dignity, and power unto him, in an unspeakably higher and more glorious manner than ever he had done to Lucifer, and appointed him to conquer, subdue, and execute vengeance upon that great rebel. Lucifer aspired to be "like the Most High," but God exalted one of mankind, the race that he envied, and from envy to whom he rebelled against God, to be indeed like the Most High, to a personal union with the eternal Son of God, and exalted him in this union to proper divine honour and dignity, set him at his own right hand on his own throne, and committed to him proper divine power and authority, constituting him as God man, the supreme, absolute, and universal Lord of the universe, and Judge of every creature, the darling of the whole creation, the brightness of God's glory, and express image of his person; as, in his divine nature, he is the NATURAL IMAGE of God. God, in his providence, was pleased thus to show the emptiness and vanity of the creature, by suffering the insufficiency of the highest and most glorious of all creatures, the head and crown of the whole creation, to appear, by his sudden fall from his glorious height into the lowest depth of hatefulness, deformity, and misery. God's design was first to show the creature's emptiness in itself, and then to fill it with himself in eternal, unalterable fulness and glory. To show the emptiness of the creature, the old creation, or the old heavens and earth, were to go to ruin and perish, in some sense, or at least all was to be emptied. Great part of the old creation was actually to sink into total and eternal perdition, as fallen angels and some of fallen men; all mankind was in a sense to be totally: though some of them were to be restored, after they had sensibly been emptied of themselves. And though the highest heaven never was to be destroyed, yet, before it should have its consummate and immutable glory, the highest and most glorious part of it was to perish, and a considerable part of the glorious heavenly inhabitants; and the rest were hereby to be brought to see their own emptiness and utter insufficiency, and so as it were to perish or die as to self-dependence and all self-fulness, and to be brought to an entire dependence on the sovereign grace and all-sufficiency of God, to be communicated to them by his Son as their head. And thus the whole old creation, both heaven and earth, as to all its natural

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524 [Heb. i. 6.](#)



glory and creature-fulness, was to be pulled down; and thus, way was to be made for the creation of the new heavens and new earth, or the setting forth of the whole elect universe in its consummate, everlasting, immutable glory in the fulness of God, in a great, most conspicuous, immediate, and universal dependence on his power and sovereign grace, and also on the glorious and infinitely excellent nature and essence of God, as the infinite fountain of glory and love; the beholding and enjoying of which, and union with which, being the elect creature's all in all, all its strength, all its beauty, all its life, its fruit, its honour, its blessedness.

*Corol. I.* From the last paragraph. This may show us the necessity of a work of *humiliation* in men as the necessity of man's being emptied of himself in order to a partaking of the benefits of the new creation, and the redemption of Jesus Christ.

*Corol. II.* This shows that even the elect angels have their eternal life in a way of *humiliation*, and also dependence on sovereign grace, as well as elect men, though not the same sort of humiliation and dependence in all respects.

To show the emptiness of all creatures in themselves, the ruin of the creation began in heaven, in the very best and highest part of the creation, and in the highest creature in it, the crown and glory of the whole creation; because it was the will of God that a mere creature should not be the head of the creation, but a divine person, and that he should be the crown and glory of the creation. Heaven was the first of the creation that was subject to ruin, and it shall be the last part that shall be renewed or amended by a new creation. There are two parts of the creation connected with the work of redemption; one is the world of man, and that is this visible world; and the other is the world of angels, and that is heaven. The whole is to be changed: the former shall be destroyed, because all men fell, and only an elect number are saved out of it; the other shall not be destroyed, because all the angels did not fall, those that stood supported it, a blessing was left in it, and therefore God said, Destroy it not, and therefore the change that is to be made in that is to be of a contrary nature to destruction; it is to be made infinitely more glorious by a new creation. And therefore God's dealings with respect to the world of angels, are contrary to his dealings with the world of men. The world of men is to be destroyed, and therefore, elect men are taken out of it, and carried into the world of angels, and reprobate men left in it to perish and sink with it. The world of angels is not to be destroyed, but renewed and glorified; and therefore, reprobate angels are taken out of it, and cast into the world of men, and elect angels are kept in it, to be renewed and glorified with it.

Because God's design was to show the emptiness of the creature, and its exceeding insufficiency, therefore God suffered both angels and men quickly to fall, and the old creation quickly to go to ruin.

Some may be ready to think it to be incredible, and what the wisdom of the Creator would not suffer, that the most glorious of all his creatures should fall and be eternally

ruined, or that it should be so that the elect angels, those that are beloved of God, should none of them be of equal strength and largeness of capacity with the devil. To this I would say,

1. That the man Christ Jesus that is exalted into the place of Lucifer in heaven, though he be of a rank of creatures of a nature far inferior in capacity to that of the angels, and especially far below the highest of all the angels, yet God can and hath exalted that little worm of littleness and weakness to an immensely greater capacity, dignity, and glory, than Lucifer ever had.

2. God can reward the elect angels that originally are inferior to Lucifer, and can increase their capacity and strength; and there is no reason to think but that he has rewarded, or will reward, elect angels, as well as elect men, with a great exaltation of their nature. And probably Christ did, at his ascension, exalt the natures of some of them at least, so as to exceed all that ever Lucifer had. It seems probable, by [Rev. xx.](#) at the beginning; and probably at the day of judgment, the natures of all the angels will be so exalted as to be above the devil in capacity.

Seeing that this was the case with the devil, that before his fall he was the head of the creation, the captain and prince of the angels, and had some kind of superintendency over the whole universe, and seeing his sin was his pride, and affecting to be like the Most High, no wonder that he seeks to reign as god of this world, and affects to be worshipped as God.

That the devil so restlessly endeavours to set p himself in this world, and maintain his dominion here, and to oppose God, and fight against him to the procuring his own continual disappointment and vexation, and to work out his own misery, and at last to bring on his own head his own greatest torment, his everlasting and consummate misery, is the fruit of a curse that God has laid him under for his first ambition, and envy, and opposition to God in heaven. He is therefore made a perfect slave to those lusts that reign over him, and torment him, and will pull down on him eternal destruction.

[930] *Occasion of the fall of the angels.* We cannot but suppose that it was made known to the angels, at their first creation, that they were to be ministering spirits to men, and to serve the Son of God in that way, by ministering to them as those that were peculiarly beloved of him, because this was their proper business for which they were made; this was the end of their creation. It is not to be supposed that seeing they were intelligent creatures, that were to answer the end of their beings as voluntary agents, or as willingly falling in with the design of their Creator, that God would make them, and not make known to them what they were made for, when he entered into covenant with them, and established the conditions of their eternal happiness, and especially when they were admiring spectators of the creation of this beloved creature for whose good they were made, and this visible world that God made for his habitation. Seeing God made the angels for *a special service*, it is reasonable to suppose that *the faithfulness of the angels in that special service* must be the condition of



their reward or wages; and if this was the great condition of their reward, then we may infer that it was their violating this law, and refusing and failing of this condition, which was that by which they fell. Hence we may infer, that the occasion of their fall was *God's revealing this their end and special service to them, and their not complying with it*. That must be the occasion of their fall.

COROL. *Confirmation of the angels at Christ's ascension.*

Hence it is rendered exceedingly probable that the angels were not confirmed till Christ's ascension. For, by what has been now said, it appears that the proper condition of their reward or wages must be *their faithfulness in that special service for which God made them*, or which was the end of their being; but that was to be ministering spirits to Christ in the great work of his exalting and glorifying beloved mankind. But the angels had not any great opportunity to do this business till this work of Christ's glorifying mankind had been carried on considerably in the world; nor had they the proper and chief trial whether they would submit to that service of being subservient to Christ in the work of redemption of fallen men, till that work of redemption was wrought, and Christ had gone through his humiliation, and it was seen whether they would submit to serve, obey, and adore their appointed Head and King in his abject meanness, and when set at nought and abased to hell for beloved, though sinful, vile men.

[1057] *Occasion of the fall of the angels*. How it is agreeable to the opinions of many divines, that their refusing to be ministering spirits to beings of inferior rank, and to be subject to Jesus Christ in our nature, when the design of his incarnation was first revealed in heaven, and how that as man he was to be the head of the angels; see Mr. Charles Owen's *Wonders of Redeeming Love*, p. 74, &c. in our young people's library. See also Mr. Glass's *Notes on Scripture Texts*, Num. 3. p. 1-7.

[1261] *Occasion of the fall of the angels*. It is supposed by some, and very rationally and probably by Zanchius, whom I account the best of protestant writers in his judgment, and likewise by Suarez, the best of the school-men, that upon the very setting up, or at least upon the first notice that the angels had of the setting up, of a kingdom for the man Christ Jesus predestinated for to come, (and this, whether it was without the fall predestinated as some suppose, or upon supposition of the fall, as others, yet so much might be revealed to them,) and of the divine purpose that the human nature was to be assumed by, and united to, the second person of the Trinity, and that he was to be the head of all principality and power, and that angels and men should have their grace from him; it is supposed, I say, that on this being declared to be the will of God, that the rejection of this kingdom on the part of many of the angels, and their refusing to be subject unto Christ, as man thus assumed, was their first sin. And now in opposition hereunto they did set up another kingdom against him. Thus those writers whom I have mentioned do think; and they allege that place in the epistle of *Jude. ver. 6*. where, the sin of the angels being described, it is said they kept not their first

estate, but left their own habitation, (which, say they, is not there brought in as their punishment,) they left the station God had set them in, and they left their dwelling in heaven, to set up a kingdom here below in opposition to Christ, and so to have an independent kingdom of themselves; for which God hath condemned them into eternal torments, and to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment, [2 Peter ii. 4](#). And to set up this great kingdom is their business, and therefore they do now associate themselves together, not out of love, but as becometh rational creatures that would drive on a project and design. These writers not only go upon this place in Jude, but on that in [John viii. 44](#), where Christ lays open both the devil's sin and the sin of the Jews. The sin of the Jews was this, they would not receive that truth which Christ had delivered to them, as he tells them, [ver. 45](#). "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not;" and not receiving it, they sought to kill him. Now, if you ask what that truth was which Christ had so much inculcated upon them, you shall see, [ver. 25](#), what it is. They asked him there, *Who he was*; "Even the same," saith he, "that I have told you from the beginning, THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD. If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed," [ver. 36](#). This was the great truth that these Jews would not receive. Now he tells them, likewise, [ver. 44](#), that Satan, their father, the devil, abode not in the truth. He was the first, saith he, that opposed and contradicted this great truth, and would not be subject to God who revealed this, nor would he accept, or embrace, or continue, or stand; he would quit heaven first; and so from hence come to be a murderer, a hater of this man Christ Jesus, and of this kingdom, and of mankind. For he that hateth God, or he that hateth Christ, he is, in what in him lieth, a murderer of him, and he showed it in falling upon man. And they backed it with this reason, why it should be so meant, because otherwise the devil's sin which he compares them to, had not been so great as theirs. There had not been a likeness between the sin of the one and that of the other; his sin would have been only telling a lie, a lie merely in speech, and theirs had been a refusing that great truth, JESUS CHRIST IS THE MESSIAH AND HEAD; and so the devil's sin would have been less than theirs. Whereas he is made the great father of this great lie, of this great stubbornness to receive Christ, and to contradict this truth; and this, saith he, he hath opposed from the beginning with all his might, and he setteth your hearts at work to kill me. But I say I will not stand upon this, because I only deliver it as that which is the opinion of some, and hath some probability. However, this is certain, whatsoever his sin was, he hath now, being fallen, set up his kingdom in a special manner against Christ; and so Christ hath been the great stumbling-stone, and angels fall upon it, and men fall upon it. So that indeed the first quarrel was laid in this; God himself proclaimed it at the very beginning. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" which, though spoken to the serpent, comes in by way of curse, as striking at the very spirit of the devil's sin. "He shall break thy head," saith he. "Thou wouldest have lifted up thyself. He shall crush thee." God, I say, proclaimed the war, and the quarrel hath continued from the beginning of the

world to this day, and will do, till Satan be put out of the air, for so long he is to have his kingdom, though Christ beateth him out of it every day in the world, and so will continue to do till he hath won the world from him, and then he will chain him up in the bottomless pit. This from Dr. Goodwin, vol. 1. of his Works, part ii. p. 32, 33.

[1266] Fall of the angels. The same Dr. Goodwin, in the 2d vol. of his Works, in his Discourse on the Knowledge of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, speaking of the pride of some, has these words: "A lower degree of accursed pride fell into the heart of the devil himself, whose sin in his first apostatizing from God, is conceived to be a stomaching that man should be one day advanced unto the hypostatical union, and be one person with the Son of God, whose proud angelical nature (then in actual existence, the highest of creatures) could not brook."

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## THE DEVIL.

[48] SEEING the devil is so cunning and subtle, it may seem a paradox why he will endeavour to frustrate the designs of an Omniscient Being, or to pretend to controvert him that is omnipotent, and will not suffer any thing but what is for his own glory, seeing that God turns every thing he does to the greater and more illustrious advancement of his own honour. And seeing he has experience of it, for so long a time, all his deep-laid contrivances have at last come out to his own overthrow, and the work has been directly contrary to his design. To this I say, that although the devil be exceeding crafty and subtle yet he is one of the greatest fools and blockheads in the world, as the subtlest of wicked men are. Sin is of such a nature, that it strangely infatuates and stultifies the mind. Men deliberately choose eternal torments rather than miss of their pleasure of a few days; and to esteem a little silver and gold above eternal happiness, makes men choose a few minutes' pleasure, though eternal misery be joined thereunto, rather than not have it; this do the cunningest of wicked men. Sin has the same effect on the devils to make them act like fools, and so much the more as it is greater in them than in others. The devil acts here according to his deliberate judgment, being driven on to his own inexpressible torment by the fury of sin, malice, revenge, and pride, and is so entirely under the government of malice, that although he never attempted any thing against God but he was disappointed, yet he cannot hear to be quiet and refrain from exercising himself with all his might and subtlety against the increase of holiness; though, if he considered, he might know that it will turn to its advantage.

[220] *Devils.* It is probable one reason why men have the offer of a Saviour, and the devils never had, was because their sin was attended with that malice, and spite, and haughty scornfulness, that was equivalent to that sin against the Holy Ghost. Their sin was a downright spiteful rebellion, and a direct malicious war against God, a scorn of subjection, and a proud seeking of his throne.

[353] *Angels.* The fall and misery of the rebel angels contributes exceedingly to the happiness of the faithful angels; it greatly exalts and gives life to their joy, their love, and admiration, and praise; not, however, by any pleasure they take in their misery, but by seeing the miserable state of those of the same kind, from whom they are distinguished by God's electing love, which leads them to reflect what evil they have escaped, by withstanding the temptation of the chief of the rebel angels.

CONFIRMATION OF THE ANGELS.

[442] SEE .

[515] The fall of the angels that fell, was a great establishment and confirmation to the angels that stood. They resisted a great temptation by which the rest fell, whatever that temptation was, and they resisted the entreaties of the ringleaders which drew away multitudes: and the resisting and overcoming great temptation naturally tends greatly to confirm in righteousness. And probably they had been engaged on God's side in resisting those that fell when there was war and rebellion raised in heaven against God. All the hosts of heaven soon divided, some on one side, and some on the other, and standing for God in opposition and war against those that are his enemies, naturally tended to confirm their friendship to God; and then they saw the dreadful issue of the fallen angels' rebellion, how much it was to their loss; they saw how dreadful the wrath of God was, which tended to make them dread rebellion, and sufficiently careful to avoid it. They now learnt more highly to prize God's favour by seeing the dreadfulness of his displeasure; they now saw more of the beauty of holiness, now they had the deformity of sin to compare it with. But when their time of probation was at an end, and they had the reward of certain confirmation by having eternal life absolutely made certain to them, is in some degree uncertain. However, there are many things that make it look exceedingly probable to me, that whenever this was done, it was through the Son of God, that he was the immediate dispenser of this reward, and that they received it of the Father through him.

1. We have shown before, in No. 320, that it was in contempt of the Son of God that those of them that fell, rebelled; it was because they would not have one in the human nature to rule over them. How congruous, therefore, is it, that those that stood should be dependent on him for their reward of confirmation in contempt of whom the others had rebelled. It was congruous that Christ, who was despised and rejected by a great number of the angels, should become the foundation upon which the rest should be built for eternal life, [Ps. cxviii. 22.](#) "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

That God should thus honour his Son in the sight of the angels, who had been thus condemned by the angels that fell in their sight, this makes it seem probable to me that the time of their confirmation was when Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; for,

*First.* It was *Jesus Christ in the human nature*, that was despised and rejected by the rebelling angels. It was congruous therefore, that it should be *Jesus Christ in the human nature* that should confirm them that stood.

*Secondly.* It was also congruous that their confirmation should be deferred till that time, that before they were confirmed they might have a thorough trial of their obedience in that particular, wherein the rebelling angels were guilty, *viz.* in their submission to Jesus Christ in the human nature. It was congruous therefore that their confirmation should be deferred

till they had actually submitted to Christ in man's nature as their King, as they had opportunity to do when Christ in man's nature ascended into heaven.

*Thirdly.* It seems very congruous that this should be reserved to be part of Christ's exaltation. We often read of Christ's being set over the angels when he ascended, and set at the right hand of God, and of his being then made head of all principality and power, that then all things were put under his feet, that then God the Father said, "Let all the angels of God worship him."<sup>525</sup> It was very congruous that Christ should have this honour immediately after such great humiliation and sufferings.

*Fourthly.* It was fit that the angels should be confirmed after they had seen Christ in the flesh, for this was the greatest trial of the angels' obedience that ever was. If the other angels rebelled only at its being *foretold* that such an one in man's nature should rule over them, if that was so great a trial that so many mighty angels fell in it; how great a trial was it when they *actually* saw a poor, obscure, despised, afflicted man, one whom they had just seen so mocked, and spit upon, and crucified, and put to death like a vile malefactor! This was a great trial to those thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, those mighty, glorious, and exalted spirits, whether or no they would submit to such an one for their sovereign Lord and King.

It was also very fit that God should honour the day of the ascension and glorious exaltation of his Son, which was a day of such joy to Christ, with joining with it such an occasion of joy to the angels as the reception of their reward of eternal life: that when Christ rejoiced, who had lately endured so much sorrow, the heavenly hosts might rejoice with him.

*Object. I.* It may be objected, That it was a long time for the angels to be kept in a state of trial from the beginning of the world till the ascension of Christ, but there might very fitly be a longer time of trial for those mighty spirits than for others.

*Object. II.* That the angels could not enjoy quiet and undisturbed happiness for all that while, if they were all the time unconfirmed, and did not certainly know that they should not fall.

I answer, there was no occasion for any distressing fears, for they never could be guilty of rebellion without knowing, when they were going to commit it, that it was rebellion, and that thereby they should forfeit eternal life, and expose themselves to wrath by the terror of God's covenant; and they could not fall, but it must be their voluntary act; and they had perfect freedom of mind from any lust; and they had been sufficiently warned, and greatly confirmed when the angels fell, so that there was a great probability that they should not fall, though God had not yet declared and promised absolutely that they should not: they were not absolutely certain of it; this was an occasion of joy reserved for the joyful and glorious day of Christ's ascension.

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525 [Heb. i. 6.](#)



*Fifthly.* The angels are now confirmed, and have been since Christ's ascension.

I. For Christ, since he appeared in the flesh, gathered together, and united into one society, one family, one body, all the angels and spirits in heaven, and the church on earth. Now it is not to be supposed that part of this body are in a confirmed state, and part still in a state of probation. But,

II. The second argument that the angels are confirmed by Christ, is, that we learn by Scripture that Christ is the head of the angels, and that the angels are united to him as part of his body, which holds forth that he is not only their head of *government*, but their head of communication too. Christ is therefore the head, from whence the angels receive *communication* of good: but how well doth this agree with their receiving their reward of obedience from him? God in making Christ head of angels and men, hath made him his dispenser of his benefits to all universally. It is therefore most probable that he, who now dispenses the blessings of the angels' reward to them, is he from whom they first received that reward; that God bestowed it upon them at first through his hands. And this also confirms that the time of the angels' confirmation was at Christ's ascension; for then was he made the head of the angels, then were *all things* put under his feet.

III. It is most congruous that that person who is to judge the angels, who shall publicly declare the unalterable condemnation of those that fell, and also shall publicly declare the unalterable confirmation of those that stood, should be the same person who acted the part of a Judge before, when they were first confirmed. He that is the Judge of the angels at the last day, publicly before heaven, earth, and hell, to confirm them, is probably the same person who was their Judge when they were first confirmed in heaven. The Father hath committed *all judgment* to the Son, and this he did to Christ God man; for the committing all judgment to him was done at Christ's first exaltation, and the first fruits of it was probably his confirming the angels, as their Judge.

IV. Christ's being called [Rev. ii. 7.](#) "the tree of life, that groweth in the midst of the paradise of God," If we consider the use of the tree of life that grew in the midst of the earthly paradise, it was to confirm man in life in case of obedience. If he had stood, he was to have received the reward in that way, by eating the fruit of that tree. Christ, being the tree of life in the heavenly paradise, is so to all the inhabitants of that paradise.

[570] *Confirmation of angels.* We learn by [the first chap. of Coloss. 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th verses.](#), that it was the design of the Father, that his Son should have the pre-eminence *in all things*, not only with respect to *men*, but with respect to *angels* thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; and there are some *things* there mentioned, wherein he has the pre-eminence, *viz.* that they were created by him and for him, and that they consist by him, and that every creature has all fulness in him. Why then hath not Christ the pre-eminence with respect to the angels, as he is the dispenser of God's benefits to them, so that they should have all fulness in him; and particularly that the gift of eternal life should

be from his hands? One thing mentioned, wherein God's will that his Son in all things should have the pre-eminence, and that all fulness should dwell in him, is, that by him, he reconciles all things to him, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth. If this be understood only to extend to men; yet, if it be one thing wherein God wills that his Son should in all things have the pre-eminence, and that all fulness should dwell in him, that it is by him that men are brought to an union with God; why would it not be another, that by him the angels also are brought to their confirmed union with him, when it is plainly implied in what the apostle says, that it is the Father's design that Christ should in all things have the pre-eminence with respect to *the angels* as well as with respect to *men*, and that both angels and men should have all their fulness in him? If they have their *fulness* in him, I do not see how it can be otherwise than that they should have their reward and eternal life and blessedness in him.

Again, it is said, [1 Cor. viii. 6.](#) that all things are *of* God the Father, and all things *by* Jesus Christ. God gave the angels their being by Jesus Christ; and I do not see why this would not be another instance of all things being *by* him that he gives them their eternal life by Jesus Christ. This very thing giving eternal life, is one instance of *men's* being by him, and is intended in those words that follow, "and we *by* him."

[591] *Confirmation of the angels.* It is an argument that it was Christ that confirmed the angels, and adjudged to them their reward; that this was an act of judgment; was the proper act of a judge, whereby judgment was passed, whether they had fulfilled the law or no, and were worthy of the reward of it by the tenor of it. But Christ is constituted Universal Judge of all, both angels and men. [John v. 22.](#) "For the Father judgeth none, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;" and Christ is not only constituted the judge of *men*, but of *angels*. [1 Cor. vi. 3.](#) "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" If this be meant only of the evil angels, yet that shows that Christ's power of judging is extended beyond mankind to the angelic nature; and if he be constituted the Judge of *the evil* angels, that will confirm me that he is of *the good* too, as he is the Judge of both good and bad of mankind, and Christ tells us that all power is given him in *heaven* and in *earth*. [Matt. xxviii. 18.](#) And we are often particularly told as to the good angels, that he is made their Lord and Sovereign, and that they are put under him. The apostle, in [Romans xiv. ver. 10 12.](#) speaking of Christ's being universal Judge, before whose judgment-seat all must stand, and to whom all must give an account, speaks of it as meant by those words in the Old Testament, "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God;" which place of the Old Testament the apostle refers to in [Philip. ii. 9-11.](#) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And these things are spoken of Christ, *as God man*; for in this last-mentioned place, it is mentioned as the

reward of his being found in fashion as a man, and humbling himself, and in that other place, and in the place in Romans, his being universal Judge, and every knee bowing to him, and every tongue confessing to him, is spoken of him *as God man*; for it is said that he “died, rose, and revived,” that he might have this honour and authority. So in [John v. at the 27th verse](#), it is said that the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of God: so that if he has acted the part of a *Judge*, towards the elect angels, it must be since his incarnation: and we know that he is to judge angels at the last day as God man.

*Corol. I.* Hence Christ is *the tree of life in the heavenly paradise*, to all the inhabitants of it. If our first parents had stood in their obedience, and were found meet for their reward of eternal life; then they were to be brought to the tree of life, and were to receive it from that tree, by eating the fruit of it, as the eternal life was the fruit of that tree. Thus it is in the earthly paradise, the dwelling-place of men. And there was also a tree of life in the heavenly paradise, the dwelling-place of angels. When they had stood in their obedience, and were looked upon of God meet for the reward of eternal life, they were brought to Jesus, to receive the reward at his hands, which they in God’s account especially become worthy of by their being willing to be subject to him as God man, and being willing to depend on him as their absolute Lord and supreme Judge.

*Corol. II.* Here we may observe the wonderful *analogy* there is in God’s dispensations towards angels and men.

*Corol. III.* Here we may take notice of the manifold wisdom of God; what glorious and wonderful ends are accomplished by the same events in heaven, earth, and hell, as particularly by those dispensations of Providence in Christ’s incarnation, death, and exaltation. How manifold are the wise designs that are carried on in different worlds by the turning of one wheel!

*Corol. IV.* Here we may observe how the affairs of the church on earth, and of the blessed assembly of heaven, are *linked together*. When the joyful times of the gospel began on earth, which began with Christ’s exaltation, then joyful times began also in heaven among the angels there, and by the same means. When we have such a glorious occasion given us to rejoice, they have an occasion given them. So long as the church continued under a legal dispensation, so long the angels continued *under law*; for since their confirmation, the angels are not under law, as is evident by what I have said in my Notes on [Gal. v. 18](#). So doubtless at the same time there was a great addition to the happiness of the separate spirits of the saints, of which the resurrection of many of them at Christ’s resurrection is an argument. And in the general, when God gradually carries on the designs of grace in this world, by accomplishing glorious things in the church below, there is a new occasion of joy and glory to the church in heaven; thus the matter is represented in John’s Revelations, and it is fit that it should be thus, seeing they are *one family*.



[744] *Confirmation of the angels by Jesus Christ.* That Christ in his ascension into heaven, gave to the angels the reward of eternal life, or of confirmed immutable happiness, may be argued from [Eph. iv. 10](#). “He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,” *i.e.* all things not only on the face of earth, but all things in the world where he dwelt before he descended into the lower parts of the earth, as in the foregoing verse: all things in the lower parts of the earth whither he descended, and all things in heaven. By “all things,” agreeably to the apostle’s way of using such an expression, is meant all *persons* or *intelligent beings*, as in [Philip. ii. 9, 10](#). “Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;” as there, so here, the apostle is speaking of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, as appears by comparing this with the foregoing verse; and the apostle there in Philippians mentions these three, as therein enumerating all things whatsoever; for certainly, whatever things there are, they must be either in heaven, or in the earth, or under the earth; and doubtless by all things there, that are spoken of as being included in these three, is intended the same with all things spoken of here, as included in the same three divisions of the universe. But it is evident, that by *things* there, is meant *persons*, or *intelligent creatures*: it is certainly they who shall bow the knee to him, and whose tongues shall confess to him. And as there, God is said highly to have exalted Christ, and to have given him a name above every name, *i.e.* above the highest angels in heaven, as well as above the highest prince upon earth; so here, he is said to have ascended up far *above all heavens*, or *above the highest part of heaven*, and therefore, *above the seat of the highest angel*, that he might fill *all universally*, the highest as well as the lowest, that all might depend on him and receive their fulness from him. By *things in heaven*, in that place in Philippians, and so doubtless here, is meant *the angels*; and by *things in earth*, is meant *elect men living on earth*; and by *things under the earth*, or in the lower parts of the earth, is meant *the souls of departed saints, whose bodies are gone under the earth*, and especially *the saints that were dead and buried before Christ came, or before Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth*. Christ died and was buried, that he might fill those that were dead and buried. [Rom. xiv. 9](#). “For to this end Christ doth died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” That by *things or creatures under the earth*, is meant *souls of buried saints*, and not *devils*; and *damned souls in hell*, is manifest from [Rev. v. 13](#). “And every creature which is in heaven, and un the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” This would not be said of *devils* and *wicked, damned souls*, who are far from thus praising and extolling God and Christ with such exultation: instead of that, they are continually blaspheming them.

And again; by all things, is meant *all elect intelligent creatures*: Eph. i. 10. “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.” And if he means all intelligent elect creatures there, by all things in heaven and earth, doubtless he also does, when he speaks of all things in heaven and on the earth, and the lower parts of the earth, in this [4th chap. of the same epistle.](#), where he is treating of the same thing, *viz.* the glory of Christ’s exaltation. So again, Colos. i. 20. “And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” In these two places last referred to, are mentioned only things in heaven and things in earth. Those, which in those other places are called *things under the earth*, being here ranked among things in heaven, because their souls are in heaven, though their bodies are in the lower parts of the earth.

Christ is said to have descended and ascended, that he might *fill* all things not only in earth and under the earth, but in the highest heavens. Now by his *filling* all things, or all elect creatures, according to the apostle’s common use of such an expression, must be understood *filling them with life, and the enjoyment of their proper good giving them blessedness, and perfecting their blessedness making them complete in a happy state*; as in the [3d chap. of this epistle, 19th verse.](#) “And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be *filled with all the fulness* of God.” Colos. ii. 10. “Ye are *complete* in him.” Rom. xi. 12. “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!” So that when we are put in mind that Christ, who dwelt once on the earth, descended into the lower parts of the earth, and then ascended far above all heavens, that he might *fill* all things, the meaning is, that Christ came down from heaven and dwelt among us on the earth; the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; that we might *partake of his fulness*, and might be made *happy by him and in him*; agreeably to John i. 14, 16. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, *full of grace and truth*: and of his *fulness* have all we received, and grace for grace;” and then Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth in a state of death, that he might bless those that were in a state of death; agreeably to Rom. xiv. 9. “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” So we read, that when he died, the graves of many saints were opened, and that many bodies of saints that slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many; and then Christ ascended into heaven, and *filled* them, *bestowing eternal life and blessedness upon them*, that the angels in heaven might all receive the reward of confirmed and eternal glory from him and in him.

That Christ, at his ascension into heaven, thus filled the angels of heaven, is also plainly taught in the last verse of the first chapter of this epistle, “Which is his body, the fulness of

him that *fillet* all in all.<sup>526</sup> ” The apostle here has a special respect to his filling the angels, and particularly to their being subjected to him to receive their fulness from him as their head and as their Lord, at his ascension; for he in those foregoing verses is speaking of Christ’s being made the Lord and head of the angels at his ascension, “Which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church.<sup>527</sup> ” By *all things*, is here meant, as in the verse we are upon, especially *all intelligent creatures, men and angels*, as in that verse in the 4th chap. that we are upon. God has given him to be head over the angels to the church; agreeably to [Heb. i. 14](#). “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be the heirs of salvation?” The same all things that Christ is here said *to be made head over*, he is said in the next verse to *Jill*. By this it appears that the angels at Christ’s ascension received their *fulness*, *i.e.* their whole reward, all their confirmed life and eternal blessedness, from Christ, as their Judge, because they received it from him as their Lord, or head of government; for they are said to be put under his feet, and also that they received it *in* him as the fountain of communication. He did not only adjudge it to them, but he gives it to them, and they possess it as united to him in a constant dependence on him, and have that more full enjoyment of God than they before had, as beholding God’s glory in his face, and as enjoying God in him; for he is here spoken of not only as their Lord, but their Head, as a natural head to a body, as appears by comparing the two last verses together.

This is confirmed again by the [10th verse](#)., “That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.” The apostle adds, *even in him*, at the end of the verse, because it might seem wonderful that not only things on earth, but even things in heaven, or the angels, should be gathered together in him, who was one that existed in the human nature. By *gathering together in one*, is meant making *happy together in our head*, or *uniting all in one fountain of life and happiness*; as appears by [John xvii. 20, 21, 22, 23](#).

The same thing is taught again in [Colos. ii. 9, 10](#). “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are *complete* in him, who is the head of all principality and power. ” What is rendered *complete in him*, in the original properly signifies *filled up*, or *filled full, in him*. He is he in whom all the *fulness* of the Godhead dwells, and in whom the creature receives that *fulness*; and he is the head of communication whence ye receive *fulness*,

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526 [Eph. i. 23](#).

527 [Eph. i. 20](#).

or in whom we are *filled full*, who is the same person, who is also the head, in whom the angels receive their fulness, as it is added, “who is the head of all principality and power.”

This is very agreeable to what the apostle says, [Colos. i. 18, 19](#). “And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, for it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell.” By this it appears that it was the design of God so to exalt and glorify his Son, that all his intelligent creatures should in every thing be after him, inferior to him, subject to him, and dependent on him, and should have all their fulness, all their supplies from him, and in him; especially if we compare this verse with the context, and with many other places in the New Testament.

That the angels have their fulness, or their eternal good and happiness, not only from the hands of Christ, but also in him as the head and fountain of it, and as enjoying God in him, and that they have their confirmation in and by him, is confirmed in Christ’s being called angels’ food. The Psalmist, speaking of *manna*, says, [Ps. lxxviii. 26](#). “Man did eat angels’ food;” which can be understood no otherwise than that that, of which manna was the type, was angels’ food; but this Christ tells us is himself, in [John vi. 31, 32](#). There Christ tells us that that bread from heaven spoken of in this very place in the [78th Psalm](#), is himself; for the Jews quote the beginning of this passage, that is, the verse immediately preceding in the psalm, [Psal. lxxviii. 31](#). “Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, as it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat;” and then we have Christ’s answer in the two next verses. “Moses gave you not *that* bread from heaven, (*i.e. that* bread from heaven spoken of in that place that you cite,) but my Father giveth you *the true bread* from heaven; for *the bread* of God is he which cometh down, and giveth life unto the world.<sup>528</sup>” Christ is called the tree of life that grows in the midst of the paradise of God; but we know that the use of the tree of life in paradise was that they that ate of that fruit might have confirmed life, and never die, but live for ever. And the same is signified by Christ’s being called, in the 6th chap, of John, *the bread of life*, viz. that he that eats of this bread should have confirmed life, and not die, but live for ever, as Christ himself there teaches, [John vi. 48.](#) &c. “I am the bread of life; your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die; I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one (for so the original signifies) eat of this bread he shall live for ever.” But we are taught from the forementioned place that it is the angels’ bread of life as well as ours, and therefore it is that bread by which they have eternal life, or which they eat of and live for ever, and is a tree of life to them as well as to us, a tree, the fruit whereof they eat and live for ever as well as we.

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528 [John vi. 32.](#)

*Corol. I.* Here we may take occasion to observe the sweet harmony that there is between God's dispensations, and particularly the analogy and agreement there is between his dealings with the angels and his dealings with mankind; that though one is innocent and the other guilty, the one having eternal life by a covenant of grace, the other by a covenant of works, yet both have eternal life by his Son Jesus Christ God man, and both, though different ways, by the humiliation and sufferings of Christ; the one as the price of life, the other as the greatest and last trial of their stedfast and persevering obedience. Both have eternal life through different ways, by their adherence, and voluntary submission, and self-dedication to Christ crucified, and he is made the Lord and King of both, and head of communication, influence, and enjoyment to both, and a head of confirmation to both; for as the angels have confirmed life in and by Christ, so have the saints: all that are united in this head have in him a security of perseverance. Thus Christ is the tree of life that groweth in the paradise of God to all that belong to that paradise, and to all that ever eat of the fruit of that tree. As Adam, if he had persevered through his trial, would have eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and after that would have had confirmation and been secure of perseverance; so are all that taste of the fruit of this tree, this branch that grows out of the stem of Jesse, this tender plant and root out of a dry ground, this branch of the Lord and fruit of the earth, this bush that God dwells in, this low tree which God exalts. Seeing the saints and angels are formed to be one society dwelling together as one company to all eternity, it was fit that they should be thus united in one common head, and that their greatest interests, and those things that concern their everlasting happiness, should be so linked together, and that they should have such communion, or common concern in the same great events in which God chiefly manifests himself to them, and by which they come to the possession of the eternal reward.

*Corol. II.* Here also we may observe, that God's work from the beginning of the universe to the end, and in all parts of the universe, appears to be but one. It is all one design carried on, one affair managed, in all God's dispensations towards all intelligent beings, *viz.* the glorifying and communicating himself in and through his Son Jesus Christ as God man, and by the work of redemption of fallen man. Those of the angels that fell are destroyed for their opposition to God in this affair, and are overthrown, and condemned, and destroyed by the Redeemer; those of them that stood, are confirmed for their submission and adherence to God in this great affair. So the work of God is one, if we view it in all its parts; what was done in heaven, and what was done on earth, and in hell, in the beginning, and since that through all ages, and what will be done at the end of the world.

*Corol. III.* From this we may see that the angels are interested in Jesus Christ God man, as well as elect men, and that the incarnation of Christ was not only for our sakes, (though chiefly for ours,) but also for the sake of the angels. For God having from eternity, from his infinite goodness, designed to communicate himself to creatures, the way in which he designed to communicate himself to elect beloved creatures, all of them, was to unite himself



to a created nature, and to become one of the creatures, and to gather together in one all elect creatures in that creature, whom he assumed into a personal union with himself, and to manifest to them, and maintain intercourse with them through him. All creatures having this benefit by Christ's incarnation, that God thereby is, as it were, come down to them from his infinite height above them, and is become a fellow-creature, and all elect creatures hereby have opportunity for a more free and intimate converse with God, and full enjoyment of him, than otherwise could be. And though Christ is not the Mediator of the angels in the same sense that he is of men, yet he is *a middle person* between God and them, through whom is all their intercourse with God, and derivations from him.

*Corol. IV.* That the person who is the head of all elect creatures, in whom all are gathered together in one, by whom they all have their eternal fulness and glory, and who is the common fountain of all their good, and the common medium through whom God communicates himself to all, is so much nearer to men than to the angels, confirms it, that the *saints are higher in glory than the angels*.

*Corol. V.* This confirms it that the church, or blessed assembly in *heaven*, is in like *progressive state* with the church on earth; for, at the same time that the church in this world was advanced to a state of new light and glory by the dawning of the gospel-day, the angels in heaven were advanced to a new state of glory and happiness; and not only so, but the souls of the *saints* that died *under the Old Testament* were *advanced much higher in glory*, at *Christ's resurrection and ascension*, for the text in [Eph. iv. 10](#). teaches that at that time of the manifestation of Christ God man in this universe, each of those three were advanced to a state of new blessedness, *viz.* the church on earth, and departed souls of saints whose bodies were in the lower parts of the earth, and also the angels in heaven. He came and dwelt upon earth among us, and we beheld his glory, and received of his fulness. When he rose from the dead he begat the church again to a living hope, as it were, raised the church from the dead with him, and the church here was advanced to so much higher glory, that her former glory was no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth; and then descended into the lower parts of the earth, and filled those that were there advanced the souls of departed saints in glory, in becoming Lord of the dead; and in token of it, and one instance of it then, was his granting a resurrection to many of them, whereby the future glory of the resurrection was in a measure anticipated. Doubtless those saints, that rose with Christ, ascended triumphing with him into heaven, into new glory and blessedness. These things confirm that the assembly in heaven has all along been in a like progressive state with the church on earth, and is in a preparatory state; and that things there, from the beginning of the world hitherto, have been working towards a great end, and glorious issue, and consummation at the end of the world, as it is here.

The church of angels and saints there at first was in a state of infancy to what it is now, as it was with the church on earth, and have been brought forward to greater fulness and



perfection by great events of providence, as it has been with the church here; and things there will arrive at a consummation at the same time, and in the same great event at the end of the world, that they will here. The church in heaven was greatly advanced in happiness at Christ's exaltation, whence commenced the gospel-day to the church in this world; and so again the church in heaven will receive another still much higher advancement in glory at the time of the fall of antichrist, as appears by several passages in the book of Revelation, as abundantly appears, *Rev. xviii. 20., xix. 1-9., xx. 4.* And both that part of the church that is on earth, and that which is in heaven, shall at the same time receive their highest advancement in glory, together with the consummation of Christ's exaltation at the day of judgment. See No. 777, *Corol. 3.*

[942] *Confirmation of the angels.* Before that the angels were confirmed in holiness judicially, so that they were sure of never falling away, they were first greatly prepared for it by having their hearts greatly confirmed in holiness, naturally in some respect so: *i.e.* holiness was greatly confirmed- by the tendency and influence of the means God used with them to that end. They were first greatly confirmed by what they saw of evil, the knowledge they gained of the evil of sin and its punishment in the fall of the angels, the dreadful ruin that sin brought, and also by what they saw of their own weakness, and mutability, and insufficiency for themselves, and also the distinguishing grace of Christ to them in preserving them when others fell; and afterwards by what they saw in that fall of man, and its consequences, and the grace of God to man, and what they saw in God's dispensations of providence, in behalf of his church, and against his enemies from age to age, and by the many trials they had of their obedience through the age of the Old Testament. But their natural confirmation, and so their preparation for a judicial confirmation, had its finishing stroke by what they saw and did in the time of Christ's humiliation, and above all at the time of his last sufferings. What came to pass then, did above all other things confirm their hearts in holiness and ripen their preparation for a judicial confirmation, which then was completed, and crowned their preparation. Their hearts were then confirmed by what they saw then of God's glory, which had its chief manifestation then, and what they then saw of the evil and dreadful nature of sin, which had a much greater manifestation in what Christ did and suffered for sin, and sinners, than in the sin and punishment of fallen angels; and in the honour that they saw one so infinitely great and glorious as Jesus Christ, put upon God's authority and law, and the hatred he manifested of sin, and his willingly abasing himself so infinitely to honour God, and promote the happiness of his little unworthy sinful creatures, and by their own stedfast, universal, and perfect obedience to God, and thorough subjection to Christ under such a trial, and in seeing Christ's exaltation, and the success of such humiliation and obedience as Christ performed, and the infinite benefit of thorough obedience to God, in great humiliation, and self-denial in what they saw in Christ.

This confirmation of the hearts of the elect angels, that prepared them for a judicial confirmation, consisted in the following things:

1. In the warning they had, or what they saw, to make them sensible of the evil nature and dreadful consequences of sin, and so to cause them to fear God.

2. In their humiliation, by what they saw to make them sensible of their own emptiness, and insufficiency for themselves, and dependence on the grace of Christ.

3. In what they saw more of God in the manifestations of his glorious excellency, and goodness, and grace to them, to increase their love to God and Christ.

4. In the example they had set them of obedience by Christ, whose obedience was performed by a person infinitely greater than they, and was performed with such infinite abasement, and an abasement of a like kind with what was required of them, (only infinitely greater,) viz. abasement in ministering to so mean and despicable a creature as man; and in the infinite love to God, and regard to his authority, that was manifested by that obedience.

5. They had their hearts confirmed in obedience by habit and custom, having long persevered in perfect obedience, and having often overcome under trials which they had. And then besides the natural tendency and influence to confirm their hearts in holiness that those things had, which came to pass while they were yet in a state of preparation for their judicial confirmation; that judicial confirmation itself had also a great natural tendency to confirm them, as the bestowment of this infinite reward upon them made manifest God's eternal, electing, distinguishing love, and sovereign and infinite grace to them; and as they hereby receive the sweet and infinitely precious fruit of that grace and love, which tendency for ever must strongly engage their hearts to God in love, and to move them with great devotedness now to make an everlasting dedication of themselves to God and Christ.

[935] *Confirmation of the angels at Christ's ascension Progress of the work of redemption.* The service of the angels of heaven was altered after Christ's ascension from what it had been before, in some analogy to the alteration that was made in the service of the church on earth. The service of the church on earth before Christ's ascension, and that establishment of the evangelical dispensation consequent thereupon, was more legal and mercenary, more from a spirit of bondage, not so free and ingenuous; but afterwards, when faith as the great condition was more fully revealed, and God here more clearly revealed the saints' infallible perseverance, the service of the church is more the service of those that are not under the law, but under grace, from a free spirit, a spirit of adoption, which is a spirit of love. So the angels, till they were confirmed at Christ's ascension, served God more from a spirit of fear, being yet in probation; and their eternal happiness or eternal damnation being yet suspended on their perfect obedience not yet completed, their service was more mercenary; but when Christ ascended, and they were confirmed, thenceforward their service became more disinterested, and merely the service of love; being now no longer in a state of probation, but sure of eternal life by the infallible promise of God.

[947] *Confirmation of the angels.* The service of the angels will not be at an end till the end of the world, when the work of redemption shall be finished; and Christ, whose servants they are, shall have finished his work as Mediator, having fully brought home and glorified all his elect, to whom the angels are ministering spirits, and therefore their most solemn judgment and reward shall be then; but God is pleased to confirm them before the last judgment, and grants them an anticipation of their reward, and deals with them in this respect as he deals with mankind. Man is confirmed when he first believes in Christ, but his work is not done till death, and the reward not bestowed till then; and therefore let the saint be never so fully confirmed and assured before, yet it is proper that judgment should succeed the finishing of his work. The bestowment of reward for a work done is by an act of judgment.

[994] *Confirmation of the angels.* One trial of the obedience of the angels before Christ's exaltation was, that till then they were in a great measure kept in the dark as to God's drift and aim in those great works of God in which they were employed as his ministers from age to age. The grand design and scheme of infinite wisdom in the successive operations of his hands and dispensations of his providence from one age to another, was not opened to them till Christ's exaltation, as appears by [Eph. iii. 9, 10.](#) So the obedience of God's church, which in its minority was tried by prescribing to them a manifold and burdensome ceremonial service, of which they did not know the meaning or design.

[1329] *Confirmation of the angels.* It is an argument that the angels were not confirmed till Christ ascended into heaven, that Jesus Christ God man is risen and ascended, is appointed the head of the new creation, which only is that which cannot be shaken. As to the old creation, it is all that which is liable to pass away. Christ himself, while in the flesh, did in some respects belong to the old creation that passed away, but in his rising again to a glorious immortal life, and so being the first-born from the dead, he is the beginning of the creation of God, the first-born of every creature; the Beginning and Head of the new creation.

## HEAVEN.

*Death of a saint.* When a saint dies, he has no cause at all to grieve because he leaves his friends and relations whom he dearly loves; for he doth not properly leave them, he enjoys them still in Christ, because every thing that they love in them, and love them for, is in Christ in an infinite degree, whether it be nearness of relation, or any perfection and good received, or love in us, or a likeness in dispositions, or whatever is a rational ground of love.

*Union with Christ.* By virtue of the believer's union with Christ, he doth really possess all things. That we know plainly from Scripture: but it may be asked, How he possesses all things; what is he the better for it; how is a true Christian so much richer than other men? To answer this, I will tell you what I mean by possessing all things. I mean that God, three in one, all that he is, and all that he has, and all that he does, all that he has made or done, the whole universe, bodies and spirits, light, heaven, angels, men, and devils, sun, moon, stars, land, and sea, fish and fowls, all the silver and gold, all beings and perfections, as well as mere man, are as much the Christian's as the money in his pocket, the clothes he wears, or the house he dwells in, or the victuals he eats; yea, more properly his, more advantageously, more his than if he commanded all these things mentioned to be just in all respects as he pleased, at any time, by virtue of the union with Christ; because Christ who certainly doth here possess all things, is entirely his, so that he possesses it all, more than a wife the property of the best and dearest of husbands, more than the hand possesses what the head doth. All the universe is his, only he has not the trouble of managing it; but Christ, to whom it is no trouble to manage it, manages it for him a thousand times as much to his advantage as he could himself, if he had the managing of all the atoms in the universe. Every thing is managed by Christ so as to be most to the advantage of the Christian. Every particle of air, or every ray of the sun; so that he in the other world, when he comes to see it, shall sit and enjoy all this vast inheritance with surprising, amazing joy. And how is it possible for a man to possess any thing more than so as shall be most to his advantage? And then besides this, the Christian shall have every thing managed just according to his will; for his will shall so be left in the will of God, that he had rather have it according to God's will than any way in the world. And who would desire to possess all things more than to have all things managed just according to his will? And then besides, he himself shall so use them as to be most to his own advantage in his thoughts, and meditations, &c. Now, how is it possible for any one to possess any thing more than to have it managed as much as possible according to his will, as much as possible for his own advantage, and for himself to use it as much as possible according to his advantage? But it is certain that so far shall the true Christian possess all things: it is not a probable scheme, but absolutely certain; for we know that all things will be managed so as shall be most agreeable to his will: that cannot be denied, nor that it shall be most to his advantage, and that he himself shall use it most to his own advantage. This is the kingdom Christ so often promised: they shall be kings with a witness at this rate: this is the sitting in

Christ's throne, and inheriting all things promised to the victors in the Revelation, and the like in many other places.

ii. *Saints*. Is it not a very improper thing that saints in some respects should be advanced above angels, seeing angels are of more excellent natural parts? I answer, No more improper than it is for the queen in some respects to be advanced above the nobles and barons of far nobler natural powers.

5. *Heaven*. There is no more reason why it should be a damp to the happiness of some in heaven that others are happier, than that their happiness should be damped by a bare possibility of greater happiness, supposing them to be all equal; for if they were all equal and all full of happiness, yet every one would know that greater happiness is possible, absolutely, and possible for them if God had but enlarged their capacity. And why should not they who are actuated by pure reason desire it, as much as if it were actually enjoyed by some beings? for barely that it is enjoyed by other beings cannot possibly cause those that are actuated by pure reason, and whose desires in every respect are agreeable to reason to desire it, any more than if it was only possible to be enjoyed, and were never actually enjoyed by any. But instead of the superiority of some above others in happiness, being a damp on the happiness of those that are inferior, there is undoubted reason why it should be an addition to their happiness, and why it would rather be a detraction from their happiness if it were otherwise; for most certainly there is a pure, ardent, and inconceivably vehement, mutual love between the glorified saints, and this love is in proportion to the perfection and amiableness of the object loved. Therefore, seeing their love to them is proportional to their amiableness, it must necessarily cause delight when they see their happiness proportional to their amiableness, and so to their love to them; it will not damp any to see them loved more than themselves, for they shall have as much love as they desire, and as great manifestations of love as they can bear, and they themselves will love those that are superior in holiness as much as others, and will delight to see others love them as much as themselves. We are very apt to conceive that those that are more holy and more happy than others in heaven will be elated and lifted up above them; whereas their being superior in holiness implies their being superior in humility, or having the greatest humility; for humility is a part of holiness that is capable of degrees in the perfect state of heaven as well as other graces; not that the holiest shall think more meanly of themselves than the least holy, for they shall all be perfectly humble, and perfectly free from pride, and none shall think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, but yet as they see further into the divine perfections than others, so they shall penetrate further into the vast and infinite distance there is between them and God, and their delight of annihilating themselves that God may be all, shall be greater. And besides, those that are highest in holiness, and so necessarily highest in happiness, (for holiness and happiness are all one in heaven,) instead of any thing like despising those that are less holy and happy, will love those that are inferior to them more than they

would do if they had not so much holiness and happiness, more than if they were but equal with them, and more than those do that are equal with them. This is certain; for the foundation of the saints' love to each other will be their love to the image of God which they see in them. Now most certainly the holier a man is, the more he loves *the same degree of the image*; so that the holiest in heaven will love that image of God they see in the least holy more than those do that are less holy; and that which makes it beyond any doubt that this superior happiness will be no damp to them, is this, that their superior happiness consists in their great humility, and in their greater love to them, and to God, and Christ, whom the saints look upon as themselves. These things may be said of this, beside what may be said about every one being completely satisfied and full of happiness, having as much as he is capable of enjoying or desiring; and also what may be said about their entire resignation; for God's will is become so much their own, that the fulfilling of his will, let it be what it may, fills them with inconceivable satisfaction.

[105] *Heaven*. That the glorified spirits shall grow in holiness and happiness in eternity, I argue from this foundation, that their number of ideas shall increase to eternity. How great soever the number of their ideas when they are first glorified, it is but limited; and it is evident the time will come when they shall have lived in glory so long that the parts of duration, each equal to a million million ages, that they have lived, will be more in number than their ideas were at first. Now we cannot suppose that they will ever entirely forget every thing that has passed in heaven, and in the universe, for a whole million million of ages. It is undoubted that they never will have forgot what passed in their life upon earth, the sins they have been saved from, their regeneration, the circumstances which did heighten their mercies, their good works which follow them, their death, &c. They will without doubt retain innumerable multitudes of ideas of what passed in the first seventy years; so also they shall retain to eternity their ideas of what was done in the ages of the world, with relation to the church of God, and God's wondrous providence with respect to the world of men; and can we then think that a whole million million ages of those great and most glorious things that pass in heaven shall ever be erased out of their minds? But if they retain but one idea for one such vast period, their ideas shall be millions of times more in number than when they first entered into heaven, as is evident, because by supposition the number of such ages will be millions of times more in number; therefore, their knowledge will increase to eternity; and if their knowledge, their holiness; for as they increase in the knowledge of God, and of the works of God, the more they will see of his excellency, and the more they see of his excellency, *ceteris paribus*, the more will they love him, and the more they love God, the more delight and happiness will they have in him. See Note on [Is. lxxxix. 1,2](#). It will be objected that at this rate we might prove that the damned increase in perfection. I answer, No; for, though it is true that they shall increase in knowledge, they will increase in odiousness in the same proportion.

[112] *Heaven*. Addition to 2d Corol, of 108. What beauteous and fragrant flowers will these be, reflecting all the sweetness of the Son of God! how will Christ delight to walk in the garden among those beds of spices, to feed in the garden, and to gather lilies!

[152] *Heaven*. The saints in heaven will doubtless eternally exercise themselves in contemplation. They will not want employ this way; not in exercising their thoughts and study upon intricacies and seeming repugnance, to unfold them and discover another further and further that way, as it is here, but by viewing in their minds one thing after another, as they will naturally be led, and sweetly drawn by love and delight, and with such intensesness as the natural bent of their hearts will cause. Their sight shall reach further and further, and new things shall plainly present to their minds, without the mixture of any error. It is *error* always from whence intricacy proceeds, and seeming repugnance, and not from *ignorance*. The object of their thoughts shall be the glory of God, which they shall contemplate in the creation in general, in the wonderful make of it; particularly of the highest heavens, and in the wonders of God's providence. It shall most clearly and delightfully be manifested in the church of saints and angels, which they shall discover more and more by their conversation, assisting one another to discoveries in other things, and most of all mediate ways in the man Christ Jesus. They shall employ themselves in singing God's praise, or expressing their thoughts to God and Christ, and also to one another, and in going from one part of heaven and of the universe to another, to behold the glories of God shining in the various parts of it.

[143] *Heaven*. In the future world the saints' love, one to another, will be such, that it will be a very delightful consideration to them, that Christ Jesus dearly loves the other saints, and it will fill them with joy to see him manifesting his love to them. They again shall see the other saints rejoicing that Christ loves and delights in them.

Singing is amiable, because of the proportion that is perceived in it: singing in divine worship is beautiful and useful, because it expresses and promotes the harmonious exercise of the mind. There will doubtless in the future world be that which, as it will be an expression of an immensely greater and more excellent harmony of the mind, so will be a far more lively expression of this harmony, and shall itself be vastly more harmonious, yea, than our air, or ear, by any modulation, is capable of, which expressions, and the harmony thereof, shall be sensible, and shall in a far more lively manner strike our perception than sound.

[182] *Heaven*. How ravishing are the proportions of the reflexions of rays of light, and the proportion of the vibrations of the air! and without doubt God can contrive matter so that there shall be other sort of proportions that may be quite of a different kind, and may raise another sort of pleasure in the sense, and in a manner to us now inconceivable, that shall be vastly more ravishing and exquisite. And in all probability the abode of the saints after the resurrection will be so contrived by God that there shall be external beauties and harmonies altogether of another kind from what we perceive here, and probably those



beauties will appear chiefly in the bodies of the man Christ Jesus and the saints. Our animal spirits will also be capable of immensely more fine and exquisite proportions in their motions, than now they are, being so gross; but how much more ravishing will the exquisite spiritual proportions be that shall be seen in minds, in their acts between one spiritual act and another, between one disposition and another, and between one mind and another, and between all their minds and Christ Jesus, and particularly between the man Christ Jesus and the Deity, and among the persons of the Trinity, the supreme harmony of all! And it is out of doubt with me that there will be immediate intellectual views of minds, one of another, and of the Supreme Mind, more immediate, clear, and sensible than our views of bodily things with bodily eyes. In this world we behold spiritual beauties only mediate by the intervention of our senses, in perceiving those external actions which are the effects of spiritual proportion. Hereby the ravishingness of the beauty is much obscured, and our sense of it flattened and deadened; but when we behold the beauties of mind more immediately than now we do the colours of the rainbow, how ravishing will it be! All that there wants in order to such an intellectual view, is that a clear and sensible apprehension of what is in mind should be raised in our own mind constantly according to such and such laws; for it is no other way that we perceive with our bodily eyes, or perceive by any of our senses.

Then also our capacities will be exceedingly enlarged, and we shall be able to apprehend, and to take in more extended and compounded proportions. We see that the narrower the capacity the more simple must the beauty be to please: thus, in proportion of sounds, the birds and brute creatures are most delighted with simple music, and in the proportion confined to a few notes; so little children are not able to perceive the sweetness of very complex tunes, where respect is to be had to the proportion of a great many notes together, in order to perceive the sweetness of the tune; then perhaps we shall be able fully and easily to apprehend the beauty, or, where respect is to be had to thousands of different ratios, at once to make up the harmony. Such kind of beauties, when fully perceived, are far the sweetest.

[188] *Heaven*. The best, most beautiful, and most perfect way that we have of expressing a sweet concord of mind to each other is by music. When I would form in my mind ideas of a society in the highest degree happy, I think of them as expressing their love, their joy, and the inward concord, and harmony, and spiritual beauty of their souls, *by sweetly singing to each other*. But if in heaven minds will have an *immediate* view of one another's dispositions without any such intermediate expression, how much sweeter will it be! But to me it is probable that the glorified saints, after they have again received their bodies, will have ways of expressing the concord of their minds by some other emanations than sounds, of which we cannot conceive, that will be vastly more proportionate, harmonious, and delightful than the nature of sounds is capable of; and the music they will make will be in a measure



capable of modulations in an infinitely more nice, exact, and fine proportion than our gross airs, and with organs as much more adapted to such proportions.

[95] *Happiness of heaven.* When the body enjoys the perfections of health and strength, the motions of the animal spirits are not only brisk and free, but also harmonious; there is a regular proportion in the motion from all parts of the body, that begets delight in the soul, and makes the body feel pleasantly all over God has excellently contrived the nerves and parts of the human body. But few men since the fall, especially since the flood, have health to so great a perfection as to have much of this harmonious motion. When it is enjoyed, one whose nature is not very much vitiated and depraved, is very much assisted thereby in every exercise of body or mind; and it fits one for the contemplation of more exalted and spiritual excellencies and harmonies, as music does. But we need not doubt but this harmony will be in its proportion in the bodies of the saints after the resurrection; and that as every part of the bodies of the wicked shall be excruciated with intolerable pain, so every part of the saints' refined bodies shall be as full of pleasure as they can hold; and that this will not take the mind off from, but prompt and help it in, spiritual delight, to which even the delight of their spiritual bodies shall be but a shadow.

[ 98] *Happiness.* How soon do earthly lovers come to an end of their discoveries of each other's beauty! how soon do they see all that is to be seen! Are they united as near as possible, and have communion as intimate as possible? How soon do they come to the most endearing expressions of love that it is possible to give, so that no new ways can be invented, given, or received! And how happy is that love in which there is an eternal progress in all those things wherein new beauties are continually discovered, and more and more loveliness, and in which we shall for ever increase in beauty ourselves; where we shall be more capable of finding out and giving, and shall receive more and more endearing expressions of love for ever; our union will become more close, and communion more intimate!

[206] *Heaven.* In heaven it is the direct reverse of what it is on earth, for there by length of time things become more and more youthful, that is, more vigorous, active, tender, and beautiful.

[263] *Heaven.* If the saints after the resurrection shall see by light, and speak and hear by sounds, it is probable that the medium will be infinitely finer, and more adapted to a distant and exact representation, so that a small vibration in sound, though the undulations may proportionally decrease according to the distance from their rise or fountain, yet may be conveyed infinitely farther with exactness before they begin to be confused and lost through the sluggishness of the medium, or through the bulk, the roughness, or tenaciousness of the particles, and the conveyance may likewise be with far greater swiftness. The organs also will be immensely more exquisitely perceptive, so that perhaps a vibration a thousand times less than can now be perceived by the ear, may be distinctly and easily perceived by them; and yet the organs may be far more able to bear a very strong vibration than ours in

this state; and through niceness of the organ they shall be able to distinguish in the greatest multitude of sounds according to their distance and direction, more exactly by the ear than we do visible objects by the eye; and we know not how far they may clearly hear one another's discourses. So the eye may be so much more sensible, and the medium of vision (the rays) so much more exquisite, that for aught we know they may distinctly see the beauty of one another's countenances and smiles, and hold a delightful and most intimate conversation at a thousand miles distance.

The light of the heavenly regions shall be the brightness of glorified bodies, and especially in the countenance, but chiefly that of the man Christ Jesus, and the glory of God, if there shall be any visible appearance representing the presence of the Deity. The light of the face of Christ will, for the above-mentioned cause, be an infinitely more excellent and delightful sort of refulgence than the light of this world. The brightness of the *saints* shall far excel that; but the splendour of *the Son of righteousness* shall be immensely more sweet and glorious, except that the light of the bodies of the saints shall be some way or other a communication of the light of Christ, and then the difference will be rather in *degree* than in *kind* of brightness, as the light which is reflected from a lily is the same light, but less bright than that of the sun. This world is pleasant to us because the light is sweet, and the sensation is pleasant to the mind; how delightful a place then is heaven with its light, so much more fine, more harmonious, more bright, but yet easy and pleasant to behold! Vide Note on [Rev. xxi. 11](#). Vide Nos. 721, 95, 182.

[264] *Spirits separate*. Though we do not certainly know that separate spirits can properly be said to be in any place; seeing that a spirit cannot be said to be in place at all, only with respect to the immediate mutual operation there is between that and body; now we know not whether there be any such mutual operation with regard to separate spirits, whether or no there be any immediate excitation of any corporeal ideas, or any other way than as they see them in minds that are united to bodies, or remember them as formerly excited in themselves; I say, though we do not certainly know this, yet it does not seem probable that their manner of existence and receiving ideas shall be so exceedingly different from what it is here, and from the church on earth, with whom they are of the same family, and so exceedingly alien from what it will be after the resurrection, so exceedingly different from the existence of the man Christ Jesus, their head, so exceedingly alien from Enoch and Elijah, some of their number, and who are now of the same glorified society. Doubtless they are not more so than the angels who never were united to bodies; but it seems to me very improbable that there should be no corporeal world with respect to the angels who have so much to do with the church on earth, and who shall be conversant with the saints after the resurrection, and with whom they shall be conversant: I therefore cannot think that as soon as a spirit leaves a body, the corporeal world is annihilated with regard to it, but that corporeal ideas are excited in them by some law. Why is Christ's body made glorious now in heaven,

if there are none in heaven to behold his glory, or if separate spirits do not perceive the beauty of bodies?

[272] *Happiness of heaven.* It is not only for want of sufficient accurateness, strength, and comprehension of mind, that from the motion of any one particular atom we cannot tell whether that ever has been that now is, in the whole extent of the creation, as to quantity of matter, figure, bulk, motion, distance, and every thing that ever shall be.

[371] *Resurrection.* The addition of happiness and glory made to the saints at the resurrection, it seems to me evident by the current of the Bible when it tells of those things, will be exceeding great. It is the marriage of the Lamb and the church; the state of things then is the state of perfection; all the state of the church before, both in earth and in heaven, is a growing state. Indeed, the spirits of just men made perfect will be perfectly free from sin and sorrow: will have inexpressible, inconceivable happiness and perfect contentment. But yet part of their happiness will consist in hope of what is to come. They will have as much happiness as they will desire in their existing state, because they will choose to have the addition at that time, and in that order, which God has designed; it will be every way most pleasing, and satisfying, and contenting to them that it should be so. Their having of perfect happiness does not exclude all increase, nor does it exclude all hope, for we do not know but they will increase in happiness for ever. The souls of the saints may now have as much happiness as they, while separate, desire; and such happiness as so answers their nature in its present state, as to exclude all sort of uneasiness and disquietude; and yet part of that happiness, part of that sweet rest and contenting joy, consists in the sight of what is future. They do not desire that that addition should be now, they know that it will be most beautiful, most for God's glory, most for their own happiness, and most for the glory of the church, and every way most desirable, that it should be in God's order.

But the more properly perfect and consummate state of God's people of the church will be after the resurrection; and the whole is now only growing and preparing for that state: all things that are now done in the world, are but preparations for it.

The accession of happiness will consist partly in these things:

1. Then the saints will be in their natural state of union with bodies, glorious bodies, bodies perfectly fitted for the uses of a holy glorified soul.

2. Then the body of Christ will be perfect, the church will be complete; all the parts of it in being; no part of it under sin or affliction: all the parts of it in a perfect state: all the parts of it together no longer mixed with ungodly men: then the church will be as a bride adorned for her husband, therefore the church will exceedingly rejoice.

3. Then the Mediator will have fully accomplished his work; will have destroyed, and will triumph over all his enemies. Then Christ will fully have obtained his reward; then shall he have perfected the full design that was upon his heart from all eternity, and then Jesus Christ will rejoice, and his members must needs rejoice with him.

4. Then God will have obtained the end of all his great works that he had been doing from the beginning; then all the deep designs of God will be unfolded in their events; then the wisdom of his marvellous contrivances in his hidden, intricate, and inexplicable works will appear, the ends being obtained; then God's glory will more abundantly appear in his works, his works being perfect; this will cause a great accession of happiness to the saints who behold it; then God will fully have glorified himself, and glorified his Son, and his elect; then he will see that all is very good, and will rejoice in his own works, which will be the joy of all heaven. God will rest and be refreshed; and thenceforward will the inhabitants keep an eternal sabbath, such an one as all foregoing sabbaths were but shadows of.

5. Then God will make more abundant manifestations of his glory, and of the glory of his Son, and will pour forth more plentifully of his Spirit, and will make answerable additions to the glory of the saints, such as will be becoming the commencement of the ultimate and most perfect state of things, and as will become such a joyful occasion as the finishing of all things and the marriage of the Lamb. Then also the glory of the angels will receive proportional additions; for the evil angels are then to have the consummation of their reward. So that the good angels will have the consummation of their reward. This will be the day of Christ's triumph, and the day will last for ever. This will be the wedding-day between Christ and the church, and this wedding-day will last for ever; the feast, and pomp, and entertainments, and holy mirth, and joys of the wedding will be continued to all eternity.

[372] *Heaven*. It seems to be quite a wrong notion of the happiness of heaven that it is in that manner unchangeable, that it admits not of new joys upon new occasions. The Scriptures tell us that there is joy in heaven, and among the angels of God, upon the conversion of one sinner; and why not among the saints? And if there be new joy upon such an occasion, how great joy have they upon the conversion of nations, and the spiritual prosperity of the whole church on earth! It seems to me evident that the church in heaven have received new joys from time to time upon new occasions, ever since the first saint went to heaven; their joy is continually increased as they see the purposes of God's grace unfolded in his wondrous providences towards his church. Their happiness is increased as their number increases; as it will be greatly for the happiness of the body of Christ to be completed as it will be at the resurrection, so it is increasing as the body grows towards perfection. The coming of Christ Jesus, I believe, made an exceedingly great addition to the happiness of the saints of the Old Testament, who were in heaven; and especially was the day of his ascension a joyful day among them. Then Abraham, and David, and holy men that lived under the Old Testament, "received the promise," which was matter of such joyful expectation to them when on earth. When Christ arose, many bodies of saints of the Old Testament that slept, arose and went to heaven with Christ; for it is unreasonable to suppose they only arose for a few days to die again. The saints must needs have new discoveries of God's glory upon this occasion, as the angels had, [Eph. iii. 10.](#) [Luke ii. 14.](#) [1 Peter i. 12.](#) It is evident by those

scriptures that the angels saw much more of the glory of God by these things; and if they did, undoubtedly the saints also. It was a great addition to the glory of heaven to have Jesus Christ God man made their head: they had then far more near admittance unto God, and more familiar communication with him, and many other ways did this increase their happiness, and their happiness has been exceedingly greater ever since. Thus the Old Testament prophecies of the glories and blessedness that should attend the coming of the Messiah, I believe, not only aimed at the glory that should be brought to the church *on earth*, by it, but to that part of the church that was *in heaven*. Thus, the church of Israel, those same saints to whom those promises were given, do *receive them* in heaven.

I believe, also, that it greatly contributes to the happiness of the saints in heaven to see the success of the gospel after Christ's ascension, and its conquering the Roman empire, and that they greatly rejoice at the Reformation from popery; and will exceedingly rejoice at the fall of antichrist and the conversion of the world to Christianity. Those things seem clear to me by many passages in the Revelation, and that their joy is increasing, and will be increasing, as God gradually in his providence unveils his glory, till the last day.

[413] *Heaven Separate spirits*. One reason why the apostle so much insisted upon the resurrection of the dead, rather than the blessedness of a separate state, as an encouragement to Christians, was because they in those days looked upon Christ's coming, and so the resurrection, as just at hand.

[421] *Heaven*. It seems to me probable that that part of the church that is in heaven have been from the beginning of the world progressive in their light, and in their happiness, as the church on earth has, and that much of their happiness has consisted in seeing the progressive wonderful doings of God, with respect to his church here in this world. Thus Moses with great joy saw the promises of God fulfilled, in bringing the children of Israel into Canaan, with far greater satisfaction than he would have seen it on earth; because he could much better see the glorious ends God proposed by it, and his wonderful wisdom in that work. So those saints, who die now, before the accomplishment of the far more glorious things to the church that God has foretold which are not yet fulfilled, and for which they have prayed and waited, will see the fulfilment of them with greater satisfaction than if they lived upon the earth till they were accomplished. The church in heaven and the church on earth are more *one* people, *one* city, and *one* family, than is generally imagined.

[430] *Heaven*. As there will be various members of different degrees in the body of Christ in heaven, so it seems to me probable that there will be members of various kinds and different offices, as it is in the church on earth. [1 Cor. x](#). That is, there will be some especially distinguished for one grace, others for another; some of one manner of the exercise of grace, others of another; some fitted for this work, others for that: every one will have their distinguishing gift, one after this manner, and another after that, the perfection of the saints in glory nothing hindering; for that perfection will not be of such a kind that one saint



may not be more eminent than another in grace, or that they shall not be capable of increasing, and so attaining to higher degrees, nor that one grace in the same saint shall not have a more remarkable and eminent exercise than others; and it is most probable, if it be so, that they shall excel most in the same grace, and the same kind of works, by which they were most distinguished on earth: God rewarding their graces and works by giving of them grace more abundantly of the same kind; as Christ hath promised, that “to him that hath shall be given.” This difference will be for the beauty and the profit of the whole: they will profit one another by their distinguishing graces; with respect to those graces they will not be beyond being profited by one another, as well as delighted, they will still be employed, and improving themselves.

[431] *Heaven Degrees of glory.* The exaltation of some in glory above others, will be so far from diminishing any thing of the perfect happiness and joy of the rest that are inferior, that they will be the happier for it. Such will be the union of all of them, that they will be partakers of each other’s glory and happiness. *1 Cor. xii. 26.* “If one of the members are honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”

[432] *Heaven,* Though the saints in heaven will see their exceeding folly and vileness in much of their behaviour here in this world, will see a thousand times as much of the evil and folly of sin as they do now; yet they will not experience any proper sorrow or grief for it, for this reason, because they will perfectly see at the same time how that it is turned to the best to the glory of God, or at least will so perfectly know that it is so; and particularly they will have so much the more admiring and joyful sense of God’s grace in pardoning them, that the remembrance of their sins will rather be an indirect occasion of joy. Sorrow and grief for sin is a duty, because we are not capable of having so perfect views of those things. But that a right sense of the odiousness and folly of sin will, under all circumstances, necessarily cause grief, is not so clear. A sense of the great evil of sin is good, absolutely considered; but grief for sin is so only in a certain pre-supposed state and circumstances.

[435] *Heaven.* The church now in heaven is not in its fixed and ultimate, but in a progressive, subordinate, and preparatory state. The state which they are in is in order to another. In the employments in which they are now exercised, they look to that which is still future, to their consummate state, which they have not yet arrived at. Their present happiness is, in many respects, subordinate to a future; and God in his dealings with them has a constant and perpetual respect to the great consummation of all things. So it is both with respect to the saints and angels: all things in heaven and earth, and throughout the universe, are in a state of preparation for the state of consummation; all the wheels are going, none of them stop, and all are moving in a direction to the last and most perfect state. As the church on earth is in a state of preparation for the resurrection state, so is that part of the church which is in heaven. It is God’s manner to keep things always progressive, in a preparatory state, as long as there is another change to a more perfect state yet behind. The saints in this world

are progressive, and all things relating to them are subordinate and preparatory to the more perfect state of heaven; which is a perfect state, in that it is a state of freedom from sinful and uneasy imperfections; but, when the saints are got to heaven, there is yet another great change yet behind, there is yet another state, which is that fixed and ultimate and most perfect state, for which the whole general assembly both in heaven and earth are designed, and therefore they are still progressive. Not but that I believe the saints will be progressive in knowledge and happiness to all eternity. But when I say the church is progressive before the resurrection, I mean that they are progressive with a progression of preparation for another and more perfect state, their state is itinerary, viatory; their state, their employments, their glory and happiness, are subordinate and preparatory to a future more glorious state.

So, the state of the devils and damned spirits is thus, only in order to a future state of more perfect misery. A criminal in a prison, or in a dungeon, suffers misery, but it is only a subordinate misery, being in order to his approaching execution: so they are spirits in prison, they are bound in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. Much of the misery of the devils and damned souls consists in *fear*; the devil is dreadfully afraid of his approaching punishment, as appears by his so crying out when he was afraid that Christ was going to execute it upon him; he beseeches him not to torment him, and says, “Art thou come to torment me before the time?”<sup>529</sup> So much of the happiness of the saints and angels in heaven consists in *hope*. The church in heaven, as to the happiness it now has in Christ, compared with its ultimate happiness, is, as it were, in a betrothed state. The introducing of the glorious state that succeeds the resurrection, is like the marriage of the Lamb. The glorification of the separate soul, is a marriage, compared with its state in this world. The coming of Christ into the world, and introducing of the gospel state of the church, is a marriage with respect to the state of the church under the Old Testament; and the appearing of Christ incarnate in heaven upon his ascension, together with the great access of glory to the church, was like a marriage with respect to the state of the glorified church before; and the glorious times of the church on earth after the destruction of antichrist, will be like the marriage of the Lamb. But these are but lower steps; and, in comparison of the final consummation, are but as betrothings, in order to that everlasting marriage of the church with the Lamb, which shall be in the end of the world.

Much of the happiness of the saints, now, consists in beholding and contemplating the wonderful works of God, that are in order to the consummation, the works of God in his church, both in this world and in heaven.

[477] *Happiness of heaven*, vide Notes on [John iv. 14](#).

[499] *Hades Separate spirits Heaven Hell*. Our first parents enjoyed great happiness: they dwelt in paradise, and there had a confluence of spiritual and outward blessings and

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529 [Matt. viii. 29](#).



delights, before they had so much as performed the condition of eternal happiness, or had had a trial for it. It need not therefore be wondered at, that the separate spirits of saints should be in a very happy state before they are judged at the last judgment, and that the wicked should be very miserable.

[529] *Heaven.* There can be no doubt but that the saints in heaven shall see the flourishing and prosperity of the church on earth; for how can they avoid it, when they shall be *with the King himself*, whose kingdom this church is, and who as King manages all those affairs? Shall the *royal family* be kept in ignorance of the success of the affairs of the kingdom? They shall also be with the angels, those ministers by whom the King manages affairs. In the flourishing of Christ's kingdom here on earth consists much of Christ's mediatorial glory, and of the reward that the Father promised him for his performing -what he did on earth in the work of redemption; the happiness of the saints in heaven consists much in that, that they are with Christ, and are partakers with him in that glory and reward. The saints are not only *with* the King that reigns over this kingdom, but they *reign* with him in the same kingdom, they sit with him in his throne; and therefore it is said that they shall *reign on earth*; that is, when the time of the flourishing and prosperity of Christ's kingdom comes on earth, when he shall reign here in such a glorious manner in his kingdom of grace, they shall reign with him; so they are said to reign with him a thousand years. Therefore doubtless they are not ignorant of the flourishing of the church here on earth.

Can it be supposed that the saints in heaven had not notice of Christ's incarnation, and did not know what he did here upon earth; and that they had no notice when he was crucified and buried, and rose again; and if not, why should they be ignorant of what succeeded, or of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost; and how the kingdom, of which Christ had thus laid the foundation, flourished? Why should their knowledge of the affairs of Christ's kingdom on earth cease, as soon as Christ was ascended 1

The saints in heaven are under infinitely greater advantages to take the pleasure of beholding how Christ's kingdom flourishes than if they were here upon earth; for they can better see and understand the marvellous steps that divine wisdom takes in all that is done, and the glorious ends he accomplishes, and what opposition Satan makes, and how he is baffled and overthrown. They can see the wise connexion of one event with another, and the beautiful order of all things that come to pass in the church in different ages, that to us appear like confusion. They will behold the glory of the divine attributes in his works of providence infinitely more clearly than we can.

The greatest objection that I think of against this, is, the prayer of Simeon; who had it revealed to him, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah; and when he saw him, said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation: <sup>530</sup>" as though he should have missed of the pleasure and satisfaction of




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530 [Luke ii. 29, 30.](#)

seeing this salvation, if he had died before. But shall we conclude from hence that if Simeon had died before, he would not have known of Christ's birth? He surely at least would have seen this salvation then, when Christ ascended into heaven. But the case was this: Simeon was now more willing to die, more willing to venture his soul into another world, and could die in much stronger hope, because his faith in God's salvation was abundantly strengthened by this sight. He had the greater assurance, that when he did depart, he should depart in peace; for his eyes had actually seen the salvation which God had provided for souls, and was therefore more fully persuaded that his soul should be safe and happy in a future state: or if otherwise, it was because the state of separate souls in that particular was not known to him.

Indeed it is desirable to live to see the flourishing of God's church upon this account; that those saints who live to see it will probably be partakers in that spiritual prosperity; their souls will receive a portion of the Spirit that is then plentifully poured out, and so will be increased in grace and holiness; their own souls will prosper, and will be partakers of the prosperity of the church; and besides, they will have a more glorious opportunity to do good, in having a hand in promoting that public prosperity.

An objection may be raised from [Eccl. ix. 6](#). The dead "have no more a portion for ever in any thing done under the sun;" but see an answer in my notes on the verse.

[546] *Separate state Hell torments Heaven.* It may possibly seem strange that the torments of the wicked should be so great, while they are only in prison, in order to their judgment and punishment. But there is no difference in God's dealing with sinners in this respect, from the treatment of malefactors by human judges and rulers, but what naturally arises from the difference of the nature and qualifications of the judges, and the difference of the ends of judgment. Men commit supposed malefactors to prison, in order to a determination whether they are guilty or no, the matter not being yet sufficiently determined; but God, who imprisons wicked men, certainly and infallibly understands whether they are guilty or not: they are not imprisoned, that it may be determined whether they are guilty, but because it is determined and known that they are. The end of human judgment, is to find out whether a man be guilty or no; but the end of divine judgment is only to declare their guilt, and God's righteousness in their punishment. The guilt of wicked men is infallibly determined when they die: it is fit therefore that they should be bound in chains of darkness and misery; it is fit that God's enemies, and rebels against him, and the objects of his eternal wrath, should be imprisoned in dark and dismal recesses while they are reserved for execution; it is fit that the prison of the objects of divine wrath should be a doleful horrid abode. So it is fit that those who are his elect, whom he hath chosen to make the objects of his love, should be reserved in a paradise in order to that consummation. It is fit that the church, which is the bride, the Lamb's wife, should be reserved in a blissful abode previous to the time of marriage. It is fit that in the mean time it should have blessed communion and conversation

with God. The glorification of the souls of the saints at their death, is a marriage in comparison of their conversion, and their state of grace; but it is a state of betrothment, compared with the glory that shall be after the resurrection. So the state of the damned separate spirits, though it be inexpressibly doleful, is yet but as a confinement in chains, and a dark dungeon in order to execution, in comparison of their misery after the day of judgment. See Note on [Matt. xviii. 34.](#)

[555] *Heaven Separate state Angels-* The saints are spectators of God's providences relating to his church here below. (Vide [Hebrews vi. 15.](#) Notes.) One end of the creation of the angels, and giving them such great understanding, was, that they might be fit witnesses and spectators of God's works here below, and might behold all parts of the divine scheme, and see how it was accomplished in the divine works and revelations from age to age. Mortal men see but a very little, they have but a very imperfect view of God's providence in the world while they live, and they do not live long enough to see more than a very small part of the scheme. God saw fit that there should be creatures of very great discerning, and comprehensive understanding, that should be spectators of the whole series of the works of God; and therefore they were created in the beginning of the creation, that they might behold the whole series from the beginning to the consummation of all things. And therefore we read that they sang together, and shouted for joy when they beheld God forming this lower world. [Job xxxviii. 7.](#) So we are taught that they are spectators of the work of redemption, and the progress of it. [1 Tim. iii. 16.](#) [Eph. iii. 10.](#) And as God has made them to be spectators of the great works of the divine wisdom and power, so that their minds may be the more engaged and entertained, God allows them to have a subordinate hand in them, and he improves them as his messengers and servants in bringing them to pass.

Hence I argue, that undoubtedly the souls of departed saints are also spectators of the same things; for they go to be in heaven with the angels. The angels carry them to paradise; and we cannot suppose that they leave them there, and that the only opportunity they have to converse with angels from their death till the end of the world, is while they are on their way from earth to Abraham's bosom. The saints even on earth have from time to time been admitted to converse with angels; and shall they not do so much more familiarly, when they go to be with Christ in paradise? The spirits of just men made perfect, are reckoned as of the same society with the angels, and as dwelling with them in mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, which the apostle elsewhere calls "*Jerusalem which is above,*"<sup>531</sup> by which he doubtless means heaven. Why should not the saints go to be with the angels when they go from their bodies, seeing they are of the same family? The angels are their brethren: why should they be kept separate from the angels, who are their brethren

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531 [Gal. iv. 26.](#)

in the same family? as the angel in the Revelation tells John he is of his brethren, [Rev. xxii. 9.](#) And if any one would understand that, not of a *proper angel*, but of *the departed soul of one of the saints*, then will it make much more to our present purpose. If one of *them* was sent to reveal to John the providences of God relating to the church on earth, then certainly departed saints are acquainted with them. But that the departed saints do dwell in heaven with the angels, is most evident, because we learn by [Eph. iii. 15.](#) that the whole family is in heaven and in earth. Departed saints are doubtless of the family; the angels they also are of the family; saints and angels are all gathered together in one in Christ, [Eph. i. 10.](#) [Colos. i. 10, 20.](#) But none can doubt but that heaven is the dwelling-place of the angels.

It is no privilege to be continued in this world, to have opportunity to see here the success of the gospel and glorious things accomplished in the church. If this had been any privilege, the man Christ Jesus should have been allowed it: he saw very little success, while he was here, of all that he did and suffered; the success was chiefly after he went to heaven, and there he can see it better than if he were here; and this is part of his promised glory, that he there sees the success of his redemption, and his own kingdom carried on and flourishing in this world, [Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.](#) And it is the will of Christ, that departed saints should be with him where he is, that they may behold this glory of Christ, which the Father gives him, and be partakers with him in it. [John xvii. 24.](#)

[565] *Heaven Separate spirits.* The happiness which the departed souls of the saints being with Christ have before the resurrection, is proleptical, or by way of anticipation. This is not the proper time of their reward: the proper time of the reward and glory of saints is after the end of the world, when an end shall be put to the world's state of probation; then succeeds the state of retribution. When all the present dispensations of the covenant of grace shall be ended, and Christ shall have brought all enemies under his feet, and shall have fully accomplished the ends and designs of his mediatorial kingdom, and his own glory shall be fully obtained, and he shall have fully finished God's scheme in the series of revolutions in divine providence; then will be the time of Christ's joy and triumph, and then will be the proper time of judgment and retribution, and then will be the proper time of the reward and glory of Christ's followers. The state that spirits of just men are in now is not the proper state of their reward; it is only a state wherein they are reserved against the time of their reward; it is the time wherein the pure chosen espoused virgin is reserved in the King's house against the day of marriage, and the joy and blessedness that they now enjoy with Christ in their conversation with him, though it appear to us unspeakably great, is only by way of prelibation of what is future, and therefore vastly short of it. Such is God's overflowing love to them, that, while they are only reserved for their designed glory, they shall be reserved in blessed abodes, as a king would entertain her whom he reserves for marriage, and whom he loves with a strong and ardent love, in no mean manner, but in a way suitable to his love to her and his design concerning her. The state of the blessed souls in heaven is not merely



a state of repose, but of a glorious degree of anticipation of their reward; as is evident by [Heb. vi. 12](#). See my Notes on it. Thus it is God's way, from his overflowing goodness to his people, to grant a prelibation of blessings before the proper season. So the church of the Old Testament had an anticipation of gospel benefits before Christ came, and the gospel days commenced. So the saints now, are allowed in a measure to anticipate the blessedness that is to succeed the fall of antichrist. [Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11](#). "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, saying. How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given to every one of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren also, which should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." Those *white robes* were the glory and reward which God gave them beforehand, the earnest of what was to be after antichrist's fall. So the saints here in this world have that light, holiness, and joy, that is an anticipation and earnest of what they are to have in heaven; and what they have now in heaven is but an earnest of what they are to have afterwards at the consummation of all things, and when all things come to be settled in their fixed and eternal state. Therefore the apostle so often speaks of the reward and glory of the saints at Christ's second coming, and encourages Christians with that, without any mention of the glory which they shall receive before.

[571] *Heaven Wisdom and the gloriousness of the work of redemption*. When the saints get to heaven, they shall not merely see Christ and have to do with him, as subjects and servants with a glorious and gracious Lord and Sovereign, but Christ will most freely and intimately converse with them as friends and brethren. This we may learn from the manner of Christ's conversing with his disciples here on earth; though he was the supreme Lord of the disciples, and did not refuse, yea, required, their supreme respect and adoration; yet he did not treat them as earthly sovereigns are wont to do their subjects; he did not keep them at an awful distance, but all along conversed with them with the most friendly familiarity as with brethren, as a father amongst a company of children. So he did with the twelve, and so he did with Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus; he told his disciples that he did not call them servants, but he called them friends. So neither will he call his disciples servants, but friends, in heaven. Though Christ be in a state of exaltation at the right hand of God, and appears in an immense height of glory, yet this will not hinder his conversing with his saints in a most familiar and intimate manner; he will not treat his disciples with greater distance for his being in a state of exaltation, but he will rather take them into a state of exaltation with him. This will be the improvement Christ will make of his own glory, to make his beloved friends partakers with him, to glorify them in his glory, as Christ says to his Father, [John xvii. 22, 23](#). "And the glory which thou hast given me, have I given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them," &c. For we are to consider, that though Christ be greatly

exalted, yet he is exalted not as a private person for himself only, but he is exalted as his people's head, and he is exalted in their name, and upon their account, and as one of them, as their representative, as the first-fruits: he is not exalted that he may be more above them, and be at a greater distance from them, but that they may be exalted with him. The exaltation and honour of the head is not to make a greater distance between the head and the members, but the members and head have the same relation and union as they had before, and are honoured with the head.

When believers get to heaven, Christ will conform them to himself, he will give them his glory; they shall in their measure be made like to him; their bodies after the resurrection shall be conformed to his glorious body.

Christ, when he was going to heaven, comforted his disciples with that, that after a while he would come and take them to himself, that they might be with him again. And we are not to suppose, when the disciples got to heaven, though they found their Lord in a state of infinite exaltation, yet that they found him any more retiring or keeping at a greater distance from them than he used to do. No, he embraced them as friends, he welcomed them home to their common Father's house, he welcomed them to their common glory, who had been his friends here in this world, that had been together here, had lived here together, partook of sorrows and troubles, now welcomed them to their rest to partake of glory with him, he took them and led them into his chambers, and showed them all his glory; as Christ prayed, [John xvii. 24](#). "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." And there ensued without doubt a most pleasant and free conversation between Christ and his disciples when they met together in their common rest and glory.

Christ did not behave with greater distance towards his disciples, after they had seen his transfiguration, than before; no, nor after his resurrection; nor will he in his highest exaltation in heaven.

Christ took on him man's nature for this end, that he might be under advantage for a more familiar conversation than the infinite distance of the divine nature would allow of; and such a communion and familiar conversation is suitable to the relation that Christ stands in to believers, as their representative, their brother, and the husband of the church. The church being so often called the spouse of Christ, intimates the greatest nearness, intimacy, and communion with God. Christ will conform his people to himself; he will give them his glory, the glory of his person; their souls shall be made like his soul, their bodies like to his glorious body; they shall partake with him in his riches, as co-heirs in his pleasures; he will bring them into his banqueting house, and they shall drink new wine with him; they shall partake with him in his dominion; they shall sit with him in his throne, and shall rule over the nations; they shall partake with him in the honour of judging the world at the last day. When Christ shall descend from heaven in the glory of his Father, in such awful and



dreadful majesty, with all his holy angels, and all nations shall be gathered before the saints, at the same time shall they be as familiar with Christ as his disciples were when he was upon earth: they shall sit with him to judge with him. As Christ died as the head of believers, and in their name, and was exalted in their name, so shall he judge the world as their head and representative. It was God's design in this way to confound and triumph over Satan, *viz.* by making man, whom he so despised, and envied, and thought to have had as a slave to lord it over, and thought to have glutted his own pride, and malice, and envy with his blood, and in his everlasting misery; I say, by making *man* his judge. It was God's design that the elect of mankind should be Satan's judge, and therefore the head of them, the elder brother of them, is appointed to this work in the room of the rest, and the rest are to be with him in it. God gave Christ "authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of *man*," [John v. 27](#). partly upon this account we have mentioned.

The conversation of Christ's disciples in heaven shall in many respects be vastly more intimate than it was when Christ was upon earth; vide Notes on [John xx. 17](#). for in heaven the union shall be perfected. The union is but begun in this world, and there is a great deal remains in this world to separate and disunite them; but then all those obstacles of a close union and most intimate communion shall be removed. When the church is received to her consummate glory, that is her marriage with Christ, and therefore doubtless the conversation and enjoyment will be more intimate. This is not a time for that full acquaintance, and those manifestations of love, which Christ designs towards his people.

When saints shall see Christ's divine glory and exaltation in heaven, this will indeed possess their hearts with the greater admiration and adoring respect; yet this will not keep them at a distance, but will only serve the more to heighten their surprise and pleasure, when they find Christ condescending to treat them in such a familiar manner.

The saints, being united to Christ, shall have a more glorious union with, and enjoyment of, the Father, than otherwise could be; for hereby their relation becomes much nearer, they are the children of God in a higher manner than otherwise they could be; for, being members of God's own Son, they are partakers of his relation to the Father, or of his Sonship; being members of the Son, they are partakers of the Father's love to the Son and his complacency in him. [John xvii. 23](#). "I in them, and thou in me: thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me;" and [John xvii. 26](#). "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them;" and [John xvi. 27](#). "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." So they are, in this measure, partakers of the Son's enjoyment of his Father; they have this joy fulfilled in themselves, and by this means they come to a more familiar and intimate conversing with God the Father than otherwise ever would have been; for there is, doubtless, an infinite intimacy between the Father and the Son, and the saints being in him shall partake with him in it, and of the blessedness of it.

Such is the contrivance of our redemption; thereby we are brought to an immensely more glorious and exalted kind of union with God and enjoyment of him, both the Father and the Son, than otherwise could have been. For, Christ being united to the human nature, we have advantage for a far more intimate union and conversation with him than we could possibly have had if he had remained only in the divine nature. So, we being united to a divine person, can in him have more intimate union and conversation with God the Father, who is only in the divine nature, than otherwise possibly could be. Christ, who is a divine person, by taking on him our nature, descended from the infinite distance between God and us, and is brought nigh to us, to give us advantage to converse with him. So, on the other hand, we, by being in Christ, a divine person, ascend nearer to God the Father, and have advantage to converse with him. This was the design of Christ, to bring it to pass that he, and his Father, and his people, might be brought to a most intimate union and communion, [John xvii. 21, 22, 23](#). “That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me; and the glory which thou hast given me have I given them, that they may be made perfect in one.” Christ has brought it to pass, that those that the Father has given him should be brought into the household of God, that he, and his Father, and they should be as it were one society, one family, that his people should be in a sense admitted into the society of the Three Persons in the Godhead. In that family or household, God is the Father; Jesus Christ is his only-begotten and eternal Son; the saints, they also are children in the family, they have all communion in the same Spirit, the Holy Ghost.

*Corol. I.* Seeing that God hath designed men for such exceeding exaltation, it was but agreeable to his wisdom to bestow in such a way as should abase man and exalt his own free grace, and wherein man’s entire, and absolute, and universal dependence on God should be most evident and conspicuous.

*Corol. II.* It is easy to observe the wisdom of God, that seeing he designed man for such a height of glory, that it should be so ordered that he should be brought to it from the lowest depths of wretchedness and misery.

*Corol. III.* Hence we may learn something how vastly greater glory and happiness the elect are brought to by Christ than that which was lost by the fall, or even than that which man would have attained to if he had not fallen; for then man would never have had such an advantage for an intimate union and converse with the Father or Son, Christ remaining at an infinite distance from man in the divine nature, and man remaining at an infinite distance from the Father, without being brought nigh by an union to a divine person.

*Corol. IV.* Hence we may see how God hath confounded Satan in actually fulfilling that which was a lie in him, wherewith he deluded poor man and procured his fall, *viz.* that they should be as gods. When Satan said so, he did not think that this would really be the fruit of it, he aimed at that which was infinitely contrary, his lowest depression, debasement, and



ruin. But God has greatly frustrated him in fulfilling of it, in making the issue of eating that fruit to be the advancement of the elect to such an union with the persons of the Trinity and communion with them in divine honour and blessedness, and particularly he united one of them, the head and representative of the rest, in a perfect union with the Godhead, and so to the honour, dominion, and work of God in ruling the world, and judging it, and particularly in judging the devils, in which all the rest of the elect, according to their measure, partake with him.

[576.] *Heaven's happiness.* If nothing be too much to be given to man, and to be done for man in the means of procuring his happiness, nothing will be too much to be given to him as the end, no degree of happiness is too great for him to enjoy.

When I think how great this happiness is, sometimes it is ready to seem almost incredible. But the death and sufferings of Christ make every thing credible that belongs to this blessedness; for if God would so contrive to show his love in the manner and means of procuring our happiness, nothing can be incredible in the degree of happiness itself; if all that God doth about it be of a piece, he will also set infinite wisdom on work to make their happiness and glory great in the degree of it. If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Nothing could have been such a confirmation of their blessedness as this.

[585.] *Heaven's happiness.* It has sometimes looked strange to me, that men should be ever brought to such exceeding happiness as that of heaven seems to be, because we find that here Providence will not suffer any great degree of happiness; when men have something in which they hope to find very great joy, there will be something to spoil it. Providence seems watchfully to take care they should have no exceeding joy and satisfaction in this world. But indeed this, instead of being one argument against the greatness of heaven's happiness, seems to argue for it; for we cannot suppose that the reason why Providence will not suffer men to enjoy great happiness here is, that he is averse to the creature's happiness, but because this is not a time for it. To every thing there is an appointed season and time, and this agreeable to God's method of dispensation, that a thing should be sought in vain out of its appointed time. God reserves happiness to be bestowed hereafter, that is the appointed time for it, and that is the reason he does not give it now. No man, let him be never so strong or wise, shall alter this divine establishment by anticipating happiness before his appointed time. It is so in all things: sometimes there is an appointed time for man's prosperity upon earth, and then nothing can hinder his prosperity; and then when that time is past, then comes an appointed time for his adversity, and then all things conspire for his ruin, and all his strength and skill shall not help him. History verifies this with respect to many kings, generals, and great men: one while they conquer all, and nothing can stand before them; all things conspire for their advancement, and all that oppose it are confounded; and after a while it is right the reverse. So has it been with respect to the kingdoms and



monarchies of the world; one while is their time to flourish, and then God will give all into their hands, and will destroy those that oppose their flourishing, and then after that comes the time of their decay and ruin, and then every thing runs backward, and all helpers are vain. [Jer. xxvii.](#)

[639] *Heaven.* Whether the saints, when they go to heaven, have any special comfort in their meeting with those that were their godly friends on earth: I think that it is evident that they will, by [1 Thess. iv. 13,14.](#) and the following verses, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” Here,

1. It seems to me that what the apostle mentions here as matter of comfort to mourners, is, not only that their departed friends, though dead, shall be happy; they are not so miserable in being dead as persons are ready to imagine, because they shall rise again; but that they shall meet them and see them again, seems to be intimated in the manner of expression, “God shall bring them to them.” Christians mourn when their near friends are dead, because they are departed and gone; they are parted from them; but when they rise God shall bring them to them again; and this is further confirmed by the following verses, especially the [17th and 18th.](#) “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord: wherefore comfort one another with these words:” where the apostle may well be understood that they should comfort one another, when mourners, with the consideration that they should be hereafter again with their departed friends, and in a glorious and happy state.

2. I think it is evident hereby that there will be something else that will be comfortable in meeting them in a future state than in seeing other saints. The apostle doubtless mentions it as what may be a comfortable consideration to them, that they shall again see and converse with the same persons; implying that they will have a different comfort in seeing them from what they would in seeing other saints; otherwise, why did the apostle mention it for their comfort, that they should see *them* again, rather than any other saints that they had seen or heard of? The apostle’s speaking thus to the Thessalonians, might give them just ground to expect that that peculiarly dear affection which they cherished for their departed friends, which was crossed by their departure, would be again gratified by meeting them again; for this crossing of that affection was the ground of their mourning. If the Thessalonians knew that to see their friends again in another world would be no gratification to their affection which they had to them as their friends, and did no way think or conceive of it as such, then to think of it would be no more comfort to them, or remedy to their mourning, than to think that they should see any other saint that lived and died in another country, or a past age; and that because it would be no remedy to the ground and foundation of their mourning, *viz.* the crossing of their affections to them as their friends; and if it would be no

remedy to their mourning to think of it, it never would have been mentioned to them by the apostle as a ground of comfort, or a reason why they need not mourn. That was what they mourned for, *viz.* that they should not have their affections towards them gratified by seeing of them, conversing with them, &c. That was what the heathen, here spoken of, that have no hope, mourned excessively for, that they should never more have that affection gratified. The apostle here would inform them that they have not this ground to mourn which the heathen had, because they should have their affection gratified again.

Hence it follows, that the special affection which the saints have in this world to other saints, who are their friends, will in some respect remain in another world. I do not see why we should not suppose that saints that have dwelt together in this world, and have done and received kindness to each other's souls, have been assistant to each other's true happiness, should not love one another with a love of gratitude for it in another world, and that the joy in meeting those and seeing their happiness is part of that joy that is spoken of, [2 Cor. i. 14](#). "As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus;" and [1 Thess. ii. 19, 20](#). "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." Or why those that have loved one another with a virtuous love, and from such a love have shown kindness one to another, should not love one another the better for it in another world? God and Christ will reward them and favour them the more for such love, and all the fruits of it, to all eternity; and I do not see why they should not love one another the more for it. Neither do I see how it argues infirmity for a saint in glory to have a special respect to another, because God made use of him as an instrument to bring him into being, and so is the remote occasion of his eternal blessedness; or because he himself was the occasion of bringing the other into being; or that the same agreeableness of temper, which is the foundation of special friendship here, may be so also in another world, or even that a former acquaintance with persons, and their virtues, may occasion a particular respect in another world. They may go to heaven with a desire to see them upon that account; the idea that they have of them by their acquaintance here, may be what they carry to heaven with them; and the idea we have of the proper object of our love may be an occasion of the exercises of love, especially towards that object, and more than towards another of which we have not the idea.

This should move us to lay religion and virtue on the foundation of all our friendship, and to strive that the love we have to our friends be a virtuous love, duly subordinated to divine love; for, so far as it is so, it will last for ever. Death does not put an end to such friendship, nor can it put an end to such friends' enjoyment of each other.

[666] *Separate state*. Texts made use of by Dr. Watts in his essay to prove a separate state: [Psal. lxxiii. 24, 26](#). [Eccles. xii. 7](#). [Isa. lvii. 2](#). [Luke ix. 30, 31](#). [Acts vii. 59](#). [2 Cor. v. 1, 2](#)

Cor. xii. 2, 3..It shows that St. Paul thought that a soul might exist, think, know, and act, in paradise, in a state of separation. (Vide my Notes on the text.) Philip i. 21. 1 Thess. iv. 14. 1 Peter iii. 18-20. Spirits in prison: Jude vii. Rev. vi. 9. Heb. xi. 14. The Jews generally supposed separate spirits; and Christ did not correct them. Matt. xiv. 26. Luke xxiv. 36, &c. Acts xxiii. 8, 9. More evident proof: Matt. x. 28. Luke xvi. 22, &c. Luke xx. 37, 38. Luke xxiii. 42, 43. 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. Philip. i. 23, 24. Heb. xii. 23. 2 Peter i. 13,14. To which may be added, Acts i. 25. See my Note on Heb. xii. 1. Blank Bible, p. 766.

[678] *Beatifical vision.* Whether there be any visible appearance or glory, that is the symbol of the divine presence, in which God manifests himself in heaven, beside the glorified body of Christ: see of the Beatifical Vision, in my sermon from these words, Rom. ii. 10. “But glory, honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good.”

[679] *Goodness of God Love of God Happiness of heaven.* God stands in no need of creatures, and is not profited by them; neither can his happiness be said to be added to by the creature. But yet God has a real and proper delight in the excellency and happiness of his creatures: he hath a real delight in the excellency and loveliness of the creature, in his own image in the creature, as that is a manifestation, or expression, or shining forth of his own loveliness. God has a real delight in his own loveliness, and he also has a real delight in the shining forth, or glorifying of it. As it is a fit and condecient thing that God’s glory should shine forth, so God delights in its shining forth. So that God has a real delight in the spiritual loveliness of the saints; which delight is not a delight distinct from what he has in himself, but is to be resolved into the delight he has in himself; for he delights in his image in the creature, as he delights in his own being glorified; or as he delights in it, that his own glory shines forth, and so he hath real proper delight in the happiness of his creatures, which also is not distinct from the delight that he has in himself, for it is to be resolved into the delight that he has in his own goodness; for as he delights in his own goodness, so he delights in the exercise of his goodness, and therefore he delights to make the creature happy, and delights to see him made happy, as he delights in exercising goodness, or communicating happiness. This is no proper addition to the happiness of God, because it is that which he eternally and unalterably had. God hath no new delight when he beholds his own glory shining forth in his image in the creature, and when he beholds the creature made happy from the exercises of his goodness; because those and all things are from eternity equally present with God. This delight in God cannot properly be said to be received from the creature, because it consists only in a delight in giving to the creature; neither will it hence follow that God is dependent on the creature for any of his joy, because it is his own act only that this delight is dependent on, and the creature is absolutely dependent on God for that excellency and happiness that God delights in. God cannot be said to be the more happy for the creature, because he is infinitely happy in himself, and he is not dependent on the creature for any thing, nor does he receive any addition from the creature. But yet in one

sense it can be truly said that God has the more delight for the loveliness and happiness of the creature, *viz.* as God would be less happy if he were less good, or if it were possible for him to be hindered in exercising his own goodness, or to be hindered from glorifying himself. God has no addition to his happiness, when he exercises any act of holiness towards his creatures; and yet God has a real delight in the exercises of his own holiness, and would be less happy if he were less holy, or were capable of being hindered from any act of holiness.

*Corol. I.* Hence when the saints get to heaven they will have this to rejoice them, and add to their blessedness, that God hath a real delight and joy in them, in their holiness and happiness.

*Corol. II.* Hence God's love to the saints is real and proper love; so that those have been to blame, who have represented, much to the prejudice of religion, the love of God to creatures as if it were merely a purpose in God of acting as the creature does that has love.

*Corol. III.* Hence we learn how all God's love may be resolved into his love to himself, and delight in himself. His love to the creature is only his inclination to glorify himself, and communicate himself; and his delight in himself glorified, and in himself communicated. There is his delight in the *act*, and in the *fruit*: the act is the exercise of his own perfection; and the fruit is himself expressed and communicated.

[701] *Happiness of heaven increasing.* It is certain that the inhabitants of heaven do increase in their knowledge, "the angels know more than they did before Christ's incarnation, for they are said to know *by the church, i. e.* by the dealings of God with the church, *the manifold wisdom of God*: and to desire to look into the account the gospel gives of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Ridgley's Body of Divinity, p. 61/62. vol. 1.

[710.] *Heaven Separate state Resurrection Dispensations.* How the happiness of the resurrection state will exceed the present happiness in heaven. It looks to me probable, that the glory of the state of the church after the resurrection will as much exceed the present glory of the spirits of just men made perfect, as the glory of the gospel dispensation exceeds the Mosaic dispensation; or as much as the glory of the state of the church in its first or purest state of it, or rather in its state in the *Millennium*, (wherein alone the glory of the gospel dispensation will be fully manifested,) exceeds the state of the church under the law, and as much as the state, the company, of glorified souls exceed this. Of old, under the Mosaic dispensation, the church saw things very darkly; they saw as it were by a reflex light, as we see the light of the sun by that of the moon; they saw gospel things in dark types and shadows, and in dark sayings, that were, as it were, riddles, or enigmas. The glory of that dispensation was no glory in comparison of the glory of the evangelical dispensation it so much excels, but under the gospel dispensation those dark shadows are ceased, and instead of enigmas or dark sayings, the apostle uses great plainness of speech. [2 Cor. iii. 12](#). The night, in which we saw by a reflex light only, is ceased, and Christ is actually come, we enjoy

day-light. John the Baptist was the day-star to usher in the day; and when he was born, the day-spring from on high visited us, as Zachariah his father sang. [Luke i. 78, 79](#). And when Christ himself came, the sun rose; especially when he rose from the dead, and shed forth his light and heat on the day of Pentecost; and now we see the sun by his own direct light, we see him immediately, the veil is taken away, and we all see with open face. [2 Cor. iii. 18](#). But still, even under the gospel dispensation, we see by a reflex light, we see only the image in a looking-glass in comparison of what we shall in the future state. [1 Cor. xiii. 12](#). We understand not by plain speeches and declarations, but as in an enigma, or dark saying, as it is said in the same place; for the things of heaven cannot be expressed as they be in our language. The apostle, when he went there, said of them, that it was not lawful or possible to utter them. But when the souls of the saints are separated from their bodies, they shall no longer see heavenly things as in an enigma, or dark saying, for they shall go themselves to heaven to dwell there, and shall immediately see and hear those things that it is not possible or lawful to utter plainly, or know immediately in this world. They shall then no longer see Christ by reflexion as in a looking-glass, because they shall be where Christ himself shall be immediately present; for they that are departed are with Christ, they that are absent from the body are present with the Lord; when that which is perfect is come, then we shall no more see by a looking-glass or enigma, but shall see face to face, as the apostle shows, [1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12](#). "But when that which is perfect is come," is said with respect to the separate souls of the saints, as is evident by [Heb. xii. 23](#). for they are there called the spirits of just men *made perfect*; and therefore when the soul of the saint leaves the body and goes to heaven, it will be like coming out of the dim light of the night into day-light. The present state is a dark benighted state; but when the soul enters into heaven, it is like the rising of the sun, for they shall then see the Sun of righteousness, by his own direct light, because they shall be with him; they will be spirits made perfect in that respect, that is, it will be perfect day with them. [Prov. iv. 18](#). We cannot in the present state see clearly, because we have a veil before us, even the veil of the flesh. The church is Christ mystical: the church in the Old-Testament state was represented by Christ in his fleshly state, such as he was in before his death; for Christ was the head of that church in that state, and was subject to the same ordinances with them, was under the same dispensation with his church till his death.

His flesh was as it were a veil that hindered our access to heavenly things, or seeing them immediately. When Christ died, this veil was rent from the top to the bottom, and the holy of holies, with the ark of the testament, were opened to view; and especially will this be fulfilled in the glorious period of this evangelical dispensation, when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, [Rev. xi. 15, 19](#). But still the church of Christ has a veil before it, to hinder it from seeing immediately things in the holy of holies; and this veil is their flesh, which is mystically the flesh of Christ. Christ in his members is



still in his fleshly state, but when the saints die this veil is rent from the top to the bottom, and a glorious prospect will be opened through this veil.

The day is a time of glory in comparison of the night, because of the sun that is then seen, which is the glory of the visible universe, and by his light fills the world with glory. So the gospel state of the church is spoken of as a state of glory, in comparison of its Old-Testament state. [1 Peter i. 11.](#) “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” [2 Cor. iii. 10.](#) “For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth;” and this state was prophesied of, of old, as a state of glory, but the state of the holy separate souls is a state of glory in comparison of the present state. [Ps. lxxiii. 24, 26.](#) “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory my flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” So it is said of Moses, and Elijah, who were in the state that the saints are now in heaven, that at Christ’s transfiguration they appeared in glory. [Luke ix. 30, 31.](#)

But yet the glorified souls of saints in their present state in heaven, though they cannot be said properly to see as in an enigma, is but darkly, in comparison of what they will see after the resurrection. Therefore, though we are said now to see with open face, in comparison of what they did under the Old Testament; and though separate souls in heaven see face to face, in comparison of what we do now; yet the sight that the saints shall have at the resurrection, is spoken of as it were the first sight wherein they should see him as he is. [1 John iii. 2.](#) “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” The glory of Christ is what will as it were then first appear to all the church, to all that shall then lift up their heads out of their graves to behold it, as well as to those that will then be alive. It is called the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, with respect to both those companies of which the church consists. The apostle speaks of it as what would be a glorious appearing to them, to the Christians that were then living, [Tit. ii. 13.](#); which implies something that will be seen anew, as though he had been till then unseen. That appearing of Christ will be like the appearing of the sun when it rises to all, both those that shall then be found alive, and those that will then rise: it will be to them both as the morning succeeding the dim light of the night. [Ps. xlix. 14.](#) “The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.” Though, in the state the saints are now in heaven, there is no proper darkness, because there is no evil, yet the light they have is dim, like the light of the night, in comparison of the glorious light that shall appear in that morning. The happiness that separate souls have now in heaven, is like the quiet rest that a person has in bed before a wedding day, or some other joyful and glorious day, in comparison of the light and joy after the resurrection. [Isa. lvii. 1, 2.](#) “The righteous perisheth, and

no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace. They shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." [1 Thess. iv. 14, 15](#). "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep." The morning of the natural day when the sun rises, and persons awake out of sleep, and the face of the whole world is revived, seems to be a type of the resurrection, when the saints shall awake out of sweet repose to glory.

The saints now in heaven see God or the divine nature by a reflex light, comparatively with the manner in which they will see it after the resurrection, seeing now through the glass of the glorified human nature of Christ, and in that glass of his works especially relating to redemption, as was observed No. 702.

Of old under the Old Testament, the church of Christ was as a child, [Gal. iv. 1.](#); so still under the gospel dispensation the church on earth is as a child, in comparison of what the church of glorified souls in heaven is, where what is perfect is come. [1 Cor. xiii. 10, 11](#). "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." But yet the church remains a child, and does not come to the stature of a man until the resurrection. [Eph. iv. 10-13](#). "He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But this will not be till that time comes, when the work of those offices ceases, which will not be till the end of the world, and there be no further use of them. [Matt. xxviii. 20](#). It will not be till the time comes when he that is ascended shall descend again. It will not be till the church has all its members; and all its members are delivered from all remaining corruption; and all are brought to their consummate glory.

Of old the church was in a preparatory state, as a woman preparing for her marriage. The coming of Christ, his destroying the Jewish state and church, and setting up the gospel dispensation, is compared to the coming of the bridegroom, and his marriage with the church; the gospel day, to the wedding day; and the provision of God's house under the gospel, to the wedding feast; and gospel ministers, to servants sent out to invite persons to the wedding; [Matt. xxii.](#) at the beginning; and [Isa. lxi. 10](#). And especially is the most glorious time of the Christian church on earth, when the glories of the gospel dispensation shall be most fully manifested, called the marriage of the Lamb. [Rev. xix. 7](#). "Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made



herself ready,” &c. But yet the translation of the soul from the earthly to the heavenly state at death, is represented as its marriage to Christ, and therefore, Christ’s coming by death, is called the coming of the bridegroom, in the beginning of [Matt. xxv](#). One thing that Christ has there respect to, is his coming by death: this is the application Christ makes of it; in the [13th verse.](#), Christ speaks of the coming of the bridegroom as what would be sudden and unexpected, and as it were at midnight, to them that then were his hearers; and what they therefore should continually watch and wait for, that they might not be found slumbering and sleeping as the foolish virgins were. [Matt. xxv. 13](#). “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” But this manner of speaking is not applicable to those that were then living with respect to Christ’s last coming at the end of the world, but with regard to his coming by death. But yet the glorification of the church after the last judgment is represented as the proper marriage of the Lamb. [Rev. xxi. 2](#). “I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;” and [Rev. xxi. 9](#). “Come hither, I will show thee the bride the Lamb’s wife.” See [Luke xiv. 14, 15, 16,](#) &c. compared with [Matt. xxii.](#) at the beginning. See No. 774, *Corol. 5*.

[721] *Happiness of heaven after the resurrection Their external blessedness and delight.* As the saints after the resurrection will have an external part, or an outward man, distinct from their souls, so it necessarily follows that they shall have external perception, or sense; and, doubtless, then all their sense and all the perception that they have will be delighted and filled with happiness every perceptive faculty shall be an inlet of delight. Particularly then, doubtless, they will have the seeing, which is the noblest of all the external senses, and then, without doubt, the most noble sense will receive most pleasure and delight. This sense will be immensely more perfect than now it is, and the external light of the heavenly world will be a perfectly different kind of light from the light of the sun, or any light in this world, exciting sensations or ideas in the beholders perfectly different, of which we can no more conceive than we can conceive of a colour we never saw, or than a blind man can conceive of light and colours; a sort of light immensely more pleasant and glorious; in comparison of which the sun is a shade, and his light but darkness; and this world, full of the light of the sun, is a world under the darkness of night, but that a world of light affording inexpressible pleasure and delight to the beholders, immensely exceeding all sensitive delights in this world. That the light of heaven, which will be the light of the brightness of Christ’s glorious body, shall be a perfectly different sort of light from that of this world, seems evident from [Rev. xxi. 11.](#) and that it will be so, and will also be ravishingly sweet to the eye, is evident from the circumstances of Christ’s transfiguration; (see Note on [2 Peter i. 11. to the end.](#);) and also from the circumstances of Moses’s vision of God in the mount. (See Note on [Exod. xxxiii. 18, to the end.](#); No. 266.)



But yet this pleasure from external perception will, in a sense, have God for its object, it will be in a sight of Christ's external glory, and it will be so ordered in its degree and circumstances as to be wholly and absolutely subservient to a spiritual sight of that divine spiritual glory, of which this will be a semblance, an external representation, and subservient to the superior spiritual delights of the saints; as the body will in all respects be a spiritual body, and subservient to the happiness of the spirit, and there will be no tendency to, or danger of, inordinacy, or predominance. This visible glory will be subservient to a sense of spiritual glory, as the music of God's praises is to the holy sense and pleasure of the mind; and more immediately so, because this that will be seen by the bodily eye will be God's glory, but that music will not be so immediately God's harmony.

[741] *Happiness of heaven.* There is scarce any thing that can be conceived of or expressed, about the degree of the happiness of the saints in heaven, the degree of intimacy, of union, and communion with Christ, and fulness of enjoyment of God, for which the consideration of the nature and circumstances of our redemption by Christ do not allow us and encourage us to hope. This redemption leaves nothing to hinder our highest exaltation, and the utmost intimacy, and fulness of enjoyment of God. Our being such guilty creatures would be no hinderance, because the blood of Christ has perfectly removed that, and by his obedience he hath procured the contrary for us in the highest perfection and glory. The meanness of our nature need be no hinderance, for Christ is in our nature. There is an infinite distance between the human nature and the divine; the divine nature has that infinite majesty and greatness, whereby it is impossible that we should immediately approach to that, and converse with that, with that intimacy with which we might do to one who is in our own nature. Job wished for a near approach to God; but his complaint was that his mean nature did not allow of so near an approach to God as he desired: God's majesty was too great for him. [Job ix. 32.](#), &c. But now we have not this to keep us from the utmost nearness of access and intimacy of communion with Christ; for, to remove this obstacle wholly out of the way, Christ has come down, and taken upon him our nature; he is as Elihu tells Job *he* was according to his wish. He is a man as we are; he also was formed out of the clay. This the church anciently wished for, before it came to pass, to that end that she might have greater opportunity of near access and intimacy of communion. [Cant. viii. 1.](#) "O that thou wert my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother, when I should find thee without I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despised." Christ descending so low in uniting himself to our nature, tends to invite and encourage us to ascend to the most intimate converse with him, and encourages us that we shall be accepted and not despised therein; for we have this to consider of, that let us be never so bold in this kind of ascending, for Christ to allow us and accept us in it will not be a greater humbling himself than to take upon him our nature. Christ was made flesh and dwelt among us in a nature infinitely below his original nature, for this end, that we might have, as it were, the full possession and enjoyment of him. Again,

it shows how much God designed to communicate himself to men, that he so communicated himself to the first and chief of elect men, the elder brother, and the head and representative of the rest, even so that this man should be the same person with one of the persons of the Trinity. It seems by this to have been God's design to admit man as it were to the inmost fellowship with the Deity. There was, as it were, an eternal society in the Godhead in the Trinity of persons; and it seems to be God's design to admit the church into the divine family; so that which Satan made use of as a temptation to our first parents, "Ye shall be *as gods*,<sup>532</sup>" shall be fulfilled contrary to his design. The saints' enjoyment of Christ shall be like the Son's intimate enjoyment of the Father, [John xvii. 21, 22, 23, 24](#). "That they may be all one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me have I given them, that they may be one even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, even as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." [John. xvii. 26](#). "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." The Son's intimate enjoyment of the Father is expressed by this, that he is *in the bosom of the Father*; so we read that one of Christ's disciples leaned *on his bosom*, [John xiii. 23](#). These things imply not only that the saints shall have such an intimate enjoyment of the Son, but that they, through the Son, shall have a most intimate enjoyment of the Father; which may be argued from this, that the way which God hath contrived to bring them to their happiness, is to unite them to the Son as members, which doubtless is that they may partake with the head, to whom they are so united, in his good. And so [1 John i. 3](#). "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

We have all reason to conclude that no degree of intimacy will be too much for the manhood of Christ, seeing that the divine Logos has been pleased to assume him into his very person; and therefore we may conclude that no degree of intimacy will be too great for others to be admitted to, of whom Christ is the head or chief, according to their capacity; for this is in some sort an example of God's love to manhood, that he hath so advanced manhood. He hath done this to the head of manhood, to show forth what honour and happiness God designs for manhood; for the end of God's assuming this particular manhood was the honour and happiness of the rest. Surely, therefore, we may well argue the greatness of the happiness of the rest from it. The assumption of the particular manhood of Christ was but as a means of the honour and advancement of the rest, and we may well argue the end from the means, and the excellency of the one from the excellency of the other.

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532 [Gen. iii. 5](#).

Christ took on him our nature, that he might become our brother, and our companion. The saints are called Christ's *brethren*, Heb. ii. and his followers. Heb. i. 9. Psal. xiv. 8. "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The Hebrew word properly signifies a companion: Greek or Hebrew comes from a root that properly signifies *to consecrate*, or to *be joined with*. This teaches both the saints' intimate converse with, and enjoyment of, Christ, and their fellowship with him, or being joined with him, in partaking with him in his glory and happiness.

But nothing so much confirms these things as the death and sufferings of Christ. "He that hath not withheld his own Son, but hath freely delivered him up for us all in death, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"<sup>533</sup> If the consideration of the greatness of Christ's condescension, in taking on him our nature, invites us to ascend high in our intimacy with him, and encourages us that he will condescend to allow us and accept us in it; much more does his so condescending and humbling himself as he did in his last sufferings. No degree of the enjoyment of God that we can suppose, can require grace and condescension that exceeds what was requisite in order to God's giving Christ to die, or will be a greater expression of love. Christ will not descend lower, nor shall we ascend higher, in having Christ for us, and giving himself to us in such a high degree of enjoyment, than to give himself to us to be our sacrifice, and to be for us in such a degree of suffering. It is certainly as much for God to give his Son to bear his wrath towards us, as it is to admit us to partake of his love towards him.

The latter in no respect seems no more too much to do for a creature, and for a mean worthless creature, than the former. Surely the majesty of God that did not hinder the one will not hinder the other, especially considering that one is the end of the other. We may more easily conceive that God would go far in bestowing happiness on an inferior nature, than that he would go far in bringing sufferings on an infinitely superior divine person; for the former is in itself agreeable to his nature, to the attribute of his goodness; but bringing suffering and evil on an innocent and glorious person, is in itself, in some respect, against his nature. If, therefore, God hath done the latter in such a degree for those that are inferior, how shall he not freely do the former? It will not be in any respect a greater gift for Christ thus to give himself in enjoyment, than it was for him to give himself in suffering.

The sufferings of Christ for believers, also argue the greatness of intimacy with Christ, and fulness of enjoyment of him, that believers shall have, as it shows the fulness of *propriety* they shall have in him, or right that they have to him. *Propriety* in any person is just ground of boldness of access and freedom in enjoyment.

The beloved disciple John would not have made so free with Jesus Christ as to lean on his bosom, had not he looked upon him as *his own*. Christ did in effect give himself to the

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533 Rom. viii. 32.

elect, to be theirs from eternity in the same covenant with the Father, in which the Father gave them to him to be his; and therefore Christ ever looked on himself to be theirs, and they his; and Christ looked on himself to be so much theirs, that he as it were spent himself for them. When he was on the earth, he had, in the eternal covenant of redemption, given his life to them, and so looked upon it as theirs, and laid it down for them when their good required it; he looked on his blood as theirs, and so spilt it for them when it was needed for their happiness; he looked on his flesh as theirs, and so gave it for their life. [John vi. 51](#). “The bread I will give is my flesh.” His heart was theirs; he had given it to them in the eternal covenant, and therefore he yielded it up to be broken for them, and to spill out his heart’s blood for them, being pierced by the wrath of God for their sins. He looked on his soul to be theirs, and therefore he poured out his soul unto death, and made his soul an offering for their sins. Thus he from eternity gave himself to them, and looked on them as having so great a propriety in him as amounted to his thus spending and being spent for them. And as he gave himself to them from eternity, so he is theirs to eternity; the right they have to him is an everlasting right; he is theirs, and will be for ever theirs. Now what greater ground can there be for believers to come boldly to Christ, and use the utmost liberty in access to him, and enjoyment of him? Will it argue Christ to be theirs in a higher degree, for them to be admitted to the most perfectly intimate, free, and full enjoyment of Christ, than for him so to be as it were perfectly spent for them, and utterly consumed in such extreme sufferings, and in the furnace of God’s wrath.

Again: If his enemies were admitted to be so free with Christ in persecuting and afflicting; if Christ, as it were, yielded himself wholly into their hands to be mocked and spit upon, and that they might be as bold as they would in deriding and trampling on him, and might execute their utmost malice and cruelty to make way for his friends’ enjoyment of him; doubtless his friends, for whom this was done, will be allowed to be as free with him in enjoying of him: he will yield himself as freely up to his friends to enjoy him, as he did to be abused by his enemies, seeing the former was the end of the latter. Christ will surely give himself as much to his saints as he has given himself for them.

He whose arms were expanded to suffer, to be nailed to the cross, will doubtless be opened as wide to embrace those for whom he suffered. He whose side, whose vitals, whose heart was opened to the spear of his enemies, to give access to their malice and cruelty, and to let out his blood, will doubtless be opened to admit the love of his saints. They may freely come even *ad intima Christi*, whence the blood hath issued for them, the blood hath made way for them.

God and Christ, who have begrudged nothing as too great to be done, too good to be given, as the means of the saints’ enjoyment of happiness, will not begrudge any thing in the enjoyment itself.

The awful majesty of God now will not be in the way to hinder perfect freedom and intimacy in the enjoyment of God, any more than if God were our equal; because that majesty has already been fully displayed, vindicated, and glorified in Christ's blood: all that the honour, of God's awful majesty requires, is abundantly answered already, by so great sufferings of so great a person. A sense of those wonderful sufferings of Christ for their sins will be ever fixed in their minds, and a sense of their dependence on those sufferings as the means of their obtaining that happiness. Sufficient care is taken in the method of salvation, that all, that have the benefit of Christ's salvation, and the comforts and joys of it, should have them sensibly on that foundation, that with their joys and comforts they should have a sense of their dependence on those sufferings and their validity, and that comforts should arise on the foundation of such a sense; and as God began to bestow comforts in this way here, so he will go on in heaven, for the joy and glory of heaven shall be enjoyed as in Christ, as the members of the Lamb slain, and the divine love and glory shall be manifested through him; and the sense they will have of this, together with a continued sight of the punishment of affronting this majesty in those who were of the same nature and circumstances with themselves, will be sufficient to keep up a due sense of the infinite awful majesty of God, without their being kept at a distance; even though all possible nearness and liberty should be allowed. All the ends of divine majesty are already answered fully and perfectly, so as to prepare the way for the most perfect union and communion without the least injury to the honour of that majesty.

Though it might seem that an admission to such a kind of fellowship with God perhaps could not be, without God's own suffering; yet when Jesus Christ, a divine person, united to our nature, has been slain, way is made for it, seeing that he has been dead: the veil is rent from the top to the bottom by the death of Christ; nothing of awful distance towards the believer can now be of any use, the way is all open to the boldest and nearest access, and he that was dead and alive again is ours fully and freely to enjoy.

Again: We may further argue from the misery of the damned, as God will have no manner of regard to the welfare of the damned, will have no pity, no merciful care, lest they should be too miserable; they will be perfectly lost and thrown away by God as to any manner of care for their good, or defence from any degree of misery; there will be no merciful restraint to God's wrath; so on the contrary with respect to the saints, there will be no happiness too much for them; God will not begrudge any thing as too good for them; there will be no restraint to his love, no restraint to their enjoyment of himself; nothing will be too full, too inward and intimate for them to be admitted to, but Christ will say to his saints, as in [Cant. v. 1.](#), "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundance, O beloved."

*Corol. I. Humiliation.* Hence we may see a reason why *humiliation* should be required, in order to a title to those benefits; and why such abundant love has been exercised in all God's dispensations with fallen man to make provision for man's humiliation and self-dif-

fidence, and self-emptiness; why it is so ordered and contrived that it should not be by our own righteousness, but altogether by the righteousness of another, *viz.* that there might be the more effectual provision to keep the creature humble, and in the place of a creature in such exceeding exaltation, and that the honour of God's majesty and exaltation above the creature might in all be maintained; and how needful it is to believe those truths, and how far those doctrine are *fundamental* or important that tend to this; and how much they militate against the design and drift of God in the contrivance for our redemption, that maintain contrary doctrine.

*Corol.* II. Hence we may learn that a believer has more to be free and bold in his access to Christ than to any other person in heaven or earth. The papists *worship angels and saints* as intercessors between Christ and them; because they say it is too much boldness to go to Christ, without some one to intercede for them; but we have far more to imbolden and encourage us to go freely and immediately to Christ, than we can have to any of the angels. The angels are none of them so near to us as Christ is; we have not that propriety in them: yea, we have a great deal more to encourage and invite us to freedom of access to, and communion with, Christ, than with a fellow-worm. There is not the thousandth part of that to draw us to freedom and nearness towards them, as there is towards Christ. Yea, though Christ is so much above us, yet he is nearer to us than the saints themselves, for our nearness to them is by him; our relation to them is through him.

[743] *New heavens and new earth Consummation of all things Heaven.* The place of God's eternal residence, and the place of the everlasting residence and reign of Christ, and his church, will be heaven; and not this lower world, purified and refined. Heaven is every where in Scripture represented as the throne of God, and that part of the universe that is God's fixed abode, and dwelling-place, and that is everlastingly appropriated to that use. Other places are mentioned in Scripture as being places of God's residence for a time, as mount Sinai, and the land of Canaan, the temple, the holy of holies; but yet God is represented as having dwelt in heaven before he dwelt in those places. [Gen. xix. 24.](#) [Exod. iii. 8.](#) [Job xxii. 12-14.](#) [Gen. xxviii. 12.](#) And when God is spoken of as dwelling in those places, he is represented as coming down out of heaven. So he is represented as coming on mount Sinai. [Gen. xix. 11, 18, 20.](#) [Exod. xx. 22.](#) [Deut. iv. 36.](#) [Nehem. ix. 13.](#) So he is represented as coming to the temple. [2 Chron. vii. 3.](#) So when the cloud of glory first came on the tabernacle, [Exod. ult. 34.](#) it doubtless was the same cloud that till then abode on mount Sinai; but God had first descended from heaven on mount Sinai, and while God did dwell in the tabernacle and temple, he was represented as still dwelling in heaven, as being still his original, proper, and everlasting dwelling-place, and dwelling in the temple and tabernacle in a far inferior manner. [1 Kings viii. 30.](#) "When they shall pray towards this place, then hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place." So [Kings viii. 30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49.](#) [Ps. xi. 4.](#) "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven." [Deut. xxxiii. 26.](#) "There is none like the God of Je-

shurun, who rideth on the heavens in thine help, and in his excellency on the sky.” [Ps. xx. 6.](#) “Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed: he will hear him from his holy heaven.” [Deut. xxvi. 15.](#) [Isa. lxiii. 15.](#) [Lam. iii. 50.](#) [1 Chron. xxi. 26.](#) [2 Chron. vi. 21, 23, 27, 30,;vii. 14.](#) [Neh. ix. 27, 28.](#) [Ps. xiv. 2,;liii. 2.](#) and [Ps. xxiii. 13, 14.](#) “The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men from the place of his habitation, he looketh on all the inhabitants of the earth.” [Ps. lvii. 3,; lxxvi. 8,; lxxx. 14.cii. 19.](#) “For he hath looked from the height of his sanctuary, from heaven did the Lord behold the earth.” [Eccles. v. 2.](#) “God is in heaven, and thou on the earth.” [2 Kings ii. 1.](#) “would take up Elijah into heaven,” and so we have an account how he was taken up, [2 Kings ii. 11.](#) [2 Chron. xxx. 27.](#) [Ps. lxxviii. 4, 33.](#) [Ps. cxxiii. 1.](#) “Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.” [Ps. cxv. 2, 3.](#) “Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he pleased.” [Lam. iii. 41.](#) [2 Chron. xx. 19.](#) [Job xxxi. 2.](#) [Ps. cxiii. 5.](#) [Isa. xxxiii. 5.](#) [Jer. xxv. 30.](#) [Isa. lvii. 15.](#)

The manner in which God dwells in heaven is so much superior to that wherein he dwells on earth, that heaven is said to be God’s throne, and the earth his footstool; [Isa. lxvi. 1.](#) “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?”

The holy places on earth, where God is represented as dwelling, are called his footstool. [Lam. ii. 1.](#) “And remembered his footstool in the day of his anger;” [1 Chron. xxviii. 2.](#) “As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building;” [Ps. cxxxii. 7.](#) “We shall go into his tabernacle, we will worship at his footstool. “God’s sanctuary is called the place of his feet. [Isa. lx. 13.](#) “To beautify the place of my sanctuary, and to make the place of my feet glorious.” The inferior manner in which God dwelt in the Jewish sanctuary, was expressed by this, that God placed his name there. Earthly holy places, which were called God’s house, or the place of his habitation, were so in such a manner, and a manner so inferior to that in which heaven is God’s house, that they are represented as only outworks or gates of heaven. [Gen. xxviii. 17.](#) “This is none other but the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.” Yea, though God is represented as dwelling in those earthly holy places, yet he was so far from dwelling in them as he does in heaven, that when he appeared in them from time to time, he is represented as then coming from heaven to them, as though heaven were his fixed abode, and not mount Sinai; and the tabernacle and the temple, places into which he would occasionally turn aside and appear. Thus God is said to have descended in a cloud, and appeared to Moses when he passed by him and proclaimed his name, though he had before that from time to time appeared there as in the mount of God, and though Moses had at that time been long conversing with God in the mount. [Exod. xxxiv. 5.](#) And so God descended from time to time on the tabernacle. [Numb. xi. 25; xii. 5.](#) Heaven is always represented as the proper and fixed abode of God, and other dwelling-places but as occasional



abodes. When the wise man speaks of worshipping God in his house, he at the same time would have those that worship him there be sensible that he is in heaven, and not on the earth: [Eccles. v. 1, 2](#). “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God. Let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon the earth.”

So God, when he withdrew from the land of Israel, is spoken of as returning to heaven; which is called his place, as though the land of Israel were not his place, [Hosea v. 15](#). “I will go and return to my place.” And God is spoken of as being in heaven in the time of the captivity, as he is in the prophecy of Daniel, [Dan. iv. 37](#); [Dan. v. 23](#), and in Daniel’s vision, [Dan. iv. 13, 23, 31](#).

And heaven is also in the New Testament every where represented as the place of God’s abode. Christ tells us that it is *God’s throne*, [Matt. v. 34](#). This we are taught in the New Testament to look on as God’s temple, after all that was legal and ceremonial concerning holy times and holy places ceased. [Acts vii. 48, 49](#). “Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool, what house will ye build me saith the Lord, and where is the place of my rest?” This is the true temple and the true holy of holies, as it is represented in the epistle to the Hebrews. Heaven is the place whence Christ descended, and it is the place whither he ascended. It was the place whence the Holy Ghost descended on Christ, and whence the voice came, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and is the place whence the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost: and whatever is from God is said to be from heaven, [Matt. xvi. 1](#). [Mark. viii. 11](#). [Luke xi. 16](#). [Matt. xxi. 25](#). [Luke ix. 54](#); [xxi. 11](#). [John iii. 27](#); [vi. 31](#). [Acts ix. 3](#); [xi. 5, 9](#). [Rom. i. 18](#). [1 Cor. xv. 47](#). [1 Peter i. 12](#). [Heb. xii. 25](#). [Rev. iii. 12](#). and other places. The angels are spoken of as coming from heaven from time to time, in the New Testament; and visions of God are represented by heaven’s being opened; and prayer and divine worship are enjoined under the New Testament to be directed to heaven. We are to pray to our Father which is in heaven, which appellation is very often given to God in the New Testament. So we are to lift up our eyes and hands to heaven in our prayers. And heaven is every where in the New Testament spoken of as the place of God and Christ, and the angels, and the place of blessedness; and all good whatever of a divine nature, is called heavenly; and heaven is always spoken of as the proper country of the saints, the appointed place of all that is holy and happy.

Whenever God comes out of heaven into this world, he is represented as bowing the heavens: intimating that heaven is so much the proper place of God’s abode, that it is something very great and extraordinary for him to manifest himself as he is pleased to do in this world among his people; that heaven, the proper place of his abode, is, as it were, rent, or bowed, and brought down in part to the earth to make way for it, [2 Sam. xxii. 10](#). [Psal. xviii. 9](#); [Psal. cxliv. 5](#). [Isa. lxiv. 1](#). God is called the God of heaven, the Lord of heaven, the King of heaven, [Dan. v. 23](#); [iv. 37](#); [ii. 44](#).



Heaven is so much the proper place of God's abode, that, by a metonymy, heaven is put for God himself, [2 Chron. xxxii. 20](#). "And for this cause, Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed, and cried to heaven;" [Psal. lxxiii. 9](#). "They set their mouth against the heavens;" and when any thing is spoken of in Scripture as being from heaven, the same is to be understood as to be from God; thus the prodigal says, "I have sinned *against heaven*," *i.e.* against God, [Luke xv. 21](#).

Heaven is a part of the universe which God in the first creation, and the disposition of things that was made in the beginning, appropriated to himself, to be that part of the universe that should be his residence, while other parts were destined to other uses. [Ps. cxv. 15, 16](#). "You are blessed of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's, but the earth hath he given to the children of men." God having taken this part of the universe for his dwelling-place in the beginning of the creation, he will retain it as long as the creation lasts.

When man was in a state of innocency, before the world was polluted and brought into the perfect state of confusion, God was in heaven. Heaven was God's dwelling-place, for the angels fell from thence: we read that when they fell God cast them down from heaven. And therefore, when this polluted, confused state of the world is at an end, and elect men shall be perfectly restored from the fall to another state of innocency, and perfect happiness after the resurrection, heaven will also then be the place of God's abode.

This lower world in its beginning came from God in heaven. He dwelt in heaven when he made it, and brought it out of its chaos into its present form; as is evident, because we are told that when God did this, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God, *i.e.* the angels, shouted for joy. Without doubt the habitation of the angels was from the beginning that high and holy place where God dwells, and their habitation was heaven in the time of the creation, because those that fell were cast down from thence. But if the lower world in its beginning was from God in heaven, without doubt in its end it will return thither: as he dwelt in heaven before, and when he made it and brought it out of its chaos into its present form, so he will dwell in heaven when and after it is destroyed and reduced to a chaos again.

Heaven is that throne where God sits in his dominion, not only over some particular parts of [Psal. ciii. 19](#). "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all," *i.e.* over all his works, or all that he hath made; which appears by [Psal. ciii. 22](#). "Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion." Because it is the throne in which God rules over the whole universe, therefore it is the uppermost part of the universe as above all; and it is evident that the heaven where God dwells is far above those lower heavens; it is said to be far above all heavens. And as it is the throne of his universal kingdom, so it is the throne of his everlasting kingdom, as he here reigns by a dominion that is universal with respect to the extent of it. The psalmist in this same place is speaking of things that are

the fruits of God's everlasting dominion, especially his everlasting mercy to his people, (which mercy will be especially manifested after the day of judgment,) as in the words immediately preceding in the two foregoing verses, [Ps. ciii. 17, 18](#). "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him," &c. The word here translated *prepared*, also signifies *established*, having respect to its firmness and durability. It is fit, as God's kingdom is everlasting, so the throne of that kingdom should be everlasting, and never should be changed, for that which moves is ready to vanish away. The everlastingness of God's kingdom is signified by the same word in the original that in the place now mentioned is translated *prepared*. [Ps. xciii. 2](#). "Thy throne is established of old, thou art from everlasting," together with the context.

If God should change the place of his abode and his throne from heaven to some other part of the universe, then that which has hitherto been God's chief throne, and his metropolis, his royal city, must either be destroyed, or put to a so much meaner use, and be deprived of so much of its glory, as would be equivalent to a destruction; which is not a seemly thing for the chief city, palace, and throne of the eternal King, whose royal throne never shall be destroyed. [Psal. xlv. 6](#). "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

This heaven, that is so often spoken of as the place of God's proper and settled abode, is a local heaven, a particular place or part of the universe, and the highest or outermost part of it, because it is said to be the heaven of heavens; it is the place where the body of Christ is ascended, which is said to be far above all heavens, and is called the third heaven.

Is it likely that God should change the place of his eternal abode, and remove, and come and dwell in another part of the universe; or that he should gather men and bring them home to himself, as to their great end and centre, whither all things should tend, and in which all should rest?

It is fit that an immutable being, and he who has an everlasting and unchangeable dominion, should not move the place of his throne.

The apostle John, even when he is giving a description of the state of the church after the resurrection, represents the place of God's abode as being then in heaven, for he says he saw the new Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven.

The dwelling-place of the saints is said to be eternal in the heavens; [2 Cor. v. 1](#). "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

If any say that this *earth* will be *heaven* after the day of judgment, is it not as easy to say that, after the resurrection, *heaven* will be the new *earth*? is there any more force upon words one way than the other?

The natural images and representations of things seem to represent heaven to be the place of light, happiness, and glory; such as the serenity and brightness of the visible heavens, of which I have spoken elsewhere.

It is an argument, that this globe we now dwell upon is not to be refined to be the place of God's everlasting abode, because it is a movable globe, and must continue moving always, if the laws of nature are upheld. It being so small, it cannot remain and subsist distinct among the neighbouring parts of the universe without motion; but it is not seemly that God's eternal glorious abode, and fixed and everlasting throne, should be a movable part of the universe.

As heaven will be everlastingly the place of God's chief, highest, and most glorious abode; so without doubt it will be the place of Christ's everlasting residence, and therefore the place whither he will return after the day of judgment. He who has had the honour and glory of dwelling in this glorious abode of God hitherto, will not have his honour diminished after he has completed all his work as God's officer, by then dwelling in a place far separated from God's dwelling-place. If he returned in triumph to heaven, entering into the royal city after his first victory in his terrible conflict under sufferings, much more shall he return thither after his more perfect and complete victory, when all his enemies shall be put under his feet after the day of judgment. And if Christ, after the day of judgment, returns to heaven to dwell, doubtless all his saints shall go there with him; he will invite them to come with him and inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world.

The place of both Christ and his church, their everlasting residence, will be heaven: when Christ comes forth at the day of judgment with the armies of heaven, the saints and angels attending him, it will be as it were on a white horse going forth to a glorious victory. And as the Roman generals after their victories returned in triumph to Rome, the metropolis of the empire, delivering up their power to them that sent them forth; so will Christ return in triumph to heaven, all his armies following him, and shall there deliver up his delegated authority to the Father. As Christ returned to heaven after his first victory, after the resurrection of his natural body, so he will return thither again after his second victory, after the resurrection of his mystical body.

[745] *New heavens and new earth.* It is manifest that the world of the blessed, that is, the new world, or the new heavens and earth, or the next world that is to succeed this as the habitation of the church, is heaven, is the same world that is now the habitation of the angels. For heaven, or the world of the angels, is called the world that is to come. [Eph. i. 20-22.](#) "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet." Heaven, the habitation of principalities and powers, is that which is here called *the world to come*, as being the world that was to succeed this, as the habitation of the church. It cannot be understood in any other sense, or merely that Christ was to be at the head of things in the new world when it did exist; but it speaks of what is already done and was done at Christ's ascension, a past effect of God's mighty

power, according to the working of the exceeding greatness of his power which he wrought in Christ Jesus when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

[775] *Happiness of separate saints.* The proper time of Christ's reward is not till after the end of the world, for he will not have finished the work of Mediator till then; but yet he has glorious rewards in heaven before. The proper time of the angels' reward is not till the end of the world; and their work of attending on, and ministering to, Christ in his humbled militant state, both in himself and members, or body mystical, is not finished till then; but yet they are confirmed before, and have an exceeding reward before. The proper time of the saints' reward is not in this world, nor is their work, their hard labour, trial, and sufferings, finished till death; but yet they are confirmed as soon as they believe, and have an earnest of their future inheritance, the first-fruits of the Spirit, now. And so, though the proper time of judgment and reward of all elect creatures is not till the end of the world, yet the saints have glorious rewards in heaven immediately after death.

[889] *Heaven the eternal abode of the church.* The house not made with hands is eternal in the heavens; but, if the saints' abode in heaven be temporary as well as their abode on earth, it would not be said so; their house there would be but a *tabernacle* as well as here. By the *house eternal in the heavens*, it is evident there is some respect had to the resurrection body, which proves that the place of the abode of the saints after the resurrection will be in heaven, as well as before.

If the saints were only to stay in heaven till the resurrection, then they would be pilgrims and strangers in heaven, as well as on earth, and the country that the saints of old declared plainly that they sought, though they were in possession of the earthly Canaan, will be but a temporary Canaan, as well as the earth; and in some respects more so, because the earth is to be their eternal abode, (though changed,) and not heaven.

We are directed to lay up treasure in heaven, as in a safe place, where it will be subject to no change or remove. The names of the saints are written or enrolled in heaven, and they have their citizenship in heaven, as being their proper fixed abode where they belong, and where they are to be settled. The inheritance incorruptible, is reserved in heaven for the saints, and they are kept by the power of God to this salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, or at the day of judgment. So that the inheritance in heaven is the saints' proper, incorruptible, and everlasting inheritance; and the saints shall be so far from changing the place of their abode in heaven for an abode on a renewed earth at the day of judgment, that this is the proper time of the church's being translated to this incorruptible inheritance in heaven, and the whole army of Israel's passing Jordan to that inheritance; for that is the last time wherein this salvation shall be revealed.

The Lord from heaven does not come to give his elect the country of the earthly Adam only renewed to the paradisiacal state wherein the earthly Adam enjoyed it; [Col. i. 5](#). "For

the hope which is laid up for you in heaven. ” The proper time of the reward of the saints is after the resurrection, as is evident by [Luke xiv. 14](#). “But thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just; ” and the proper place of that reward is heaven, as is evident by [Matt. v. 12](#). ” Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; ” [Heb. x. 34](#). ” Ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance; ” and the time, when the apostle encourages them that they shall receive this enduring substance in heaven, is when Christ comes to judgment, as is evident by the three following verses.

Christ is entered into the holiest of all, and is set down for ever on the right hand of God in heaven, and therefore will not eternally leave heaven to dwell in this lower world in a renewed state.

Christ ascended into heaven as the forerunner of the church; and therefore the whole church shall enter there, even that part that shall be found alive at the day of judgment. Christ entered into heaven with his risen and glorified body, as an earnest of the same resurrection and ascension to the bodies of the saints; therefore, when the bodies of the saints shall rise, they shall also ascend into heaven. See No. 743.1184.

[917] *Saints in heaven acquainted with what is done on earth.* That the blessed inhabitants of heaven are very much occupied in observing gospel wonders done on earth, and that their blessedness in seeing God consists very much in beholding his glory as displayed in those wonders, is manifest not only by the book of Revelation, but many other passages of Scripture; as [Psal. lxxxix.](#) which treats of these wonders; [Psal. lxxxix. 5](#). “And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints;” and [Psal. xix. 1, 2](#). considering the subject of the psalm, see [Psal. cxlix. 5-9](#). to the end, with Notes on verses 5 and 9. See [Matt. xix. 29](#). [Mark x. 30](#). [Luke xviii. 29](#).

[952] *New heavens and earth -Consummation of all things Progress of the work of redemption.* Heaven shall be changed and exalted to higher glory at the end of the world. The creation consists of two parts, upper and lower. Thus we read of the worlds, in the plural number, that were made in the creation, [Heb. i. 2](#). which the apostle in the next chapter distinguishes into two, viz this world, and the world to come, [Heb. i. 5](#). as also [Eph. i. 21](#). The upper world is said to be the world to come, both because it is future to us in this world, and also because the whole elect church it is to succeed this world when this is destroyed, and also on another account, that we will observe by and by. The one of these worlds God hath made for his own Son, and for his attendants, and ministers, the angels; and the other for man. [Psal. civ. 16](#). “The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s, but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” According to the two different kinds of intelligent creatures that God hath made, angels and men, there are two worlds. The one is corruptible, but the other incorruptible; the one is that which can be shaken, the other that which cannot be shaken, but shall remain to all eternity. But yet both in their own nature are mutable; and that heaven is incorruptible, is by the divine will and grace, and not necessarily from the nature of heaven. If the angelic

nature, the highest and most excellent part of heaven, is corruptible, or liable to be shaken and destroyed, as appears by the event; doubtless the place, what is inanimate in heaven, is in its own nature capable of destruction. Heaven is not unalterable in its own nature, so but that it may be exalted. That part of the universe that is capable of ruin is not so unalterable in its own nature, but that it may be brought to a higher excellency; but the highest heavens in their own nature are capable of ruin in the highest and most excellent part of it, in the head of all that part of the creation, and so of the whole creation, *viz*, Lucifer.

God only is incorruptible in his own nature. The one of these worlds is to fall and be ruined, and is to be the eternal seat of those creatures that fell and are ruined; the other is to stand, and to be exalted and brought to higher excellency, perfection, and glory, and is to be the seat of those creatures that stand, and are brought to higher excellency. As all the intelligent creatures that God hath made the inhabitants of the universe, all the spiritual world, (which is the chief part of the universe, and *instar totius*;) is mutable and is to be changed, either by suffering ruin, or by being exalted to a vastly higher perfection; so is the whole universe itself (the habitation, the inferior and inanimate part of the universe) all of it mutable, and all to be changed, either by suffering ruin, or being gloriously exalted in excellency. This universal change shall be at the end of the world, or immediately after the day of judgment. Then shall be the change on the inhabitants: some shall perish, and others shall be exalted to an immensely higher degree of excellency and glory. And so shall it then be with the two worlds: this lower world, that is to be the place of those that perish, shall be destroyed by fire; the upper world, that is to be the seat of the elect, shall be exalted exceedingly in its nature. And this is the new creation, so far as that respects the external and inanimate universe. This will be the external new heavens, and new earth; as there are two spiritual worlds, the elect and the reprobate, so there are two natural worlds, that are to be the everlasting external seats or places of those spiritual worlds. And as it is to be with those spiritual worlds themselves, that one will be destroyed as in a spiritual furnace of fire, and the other will be exalted to a state of excellency and glory, vastly greater than their original excellency; as even the angels, the original inhabitants of heaven, will be; so there is no reason to think but that it will be likewise with the two external worlds, which they have relation to.

When God created this lower world, he made different orders or ranks of creatures, of which the lower creation is constituted, of which man is the most noble and excellent; and so when God made the upper world, he made different parts, of which the angelical nature is the most noble and exalted, and those parts which constitute the *habitation* are inferior. Surely, therefore, the angels, the highest part of the upper creation, will be changed and exceedingly exalted in the glory in which they shine (as doubtless they will be in some proportion to the great and vast alteration that will be made in the glory of the saints, seeing the

day of judgment is the proper time of the reward of the angels as well as saints). There is no reason to think that the inferior parts will not also be proportionally exalted.

God built heaven chiefly for an habitation for Christ, his dear Son, and the angels themselves are made for him, and are as it were only parts of his house, or habitation; as it is said of the church in [Heb. iii. 6](#). All that is in heaven is a habitation for God's beloved Son; the angels are only the more noble and excellent parts of the structure, the chief ornaments of the building. The inanimate parts of heaven are to the angels a habitation; but the intelligent parts of it are to Christ a habitation. As they are called his *chariots*, the seat on which he rides, so they are his *throne*, the seat on which he reigns. As the throne is the noblest part of the palace, and as God built the whole of the upper world to be a habitation for his dear Son; so when the time comes that God shall reward his Son for his perfect and great obedience, and finishing his great work appointed him to do, when the work he was appointed to in his office is all finished at the end of the world, and the time comes for him to receive his full reward, to be glorified with his complete and highest glory in the head and all his members, and all enter into heaven together at Christ's last and greatest ascension thither; the house shall be garnished and beautified exceedingly, to make it fit for his reception in this his highest glory, as it shall be so with the glorious angels who are his chariot, in which he shall ascend, (they shall ascend in far greater glory than they descended, because they shall have received the glory that is their reward,) and who will be his throne when he is come thither, and the chief and most noble parts of the building. I say, as they will be as it were made new, appearing in new glory, so will it be with all the inferior parts of the habitation. The house shall be garnished to prepare it for the glorious bridegroom, who shall enter into it with his blessed bride in her complete and perfect beauty, when they shall enter into heaven to celebrate the solemnity, and to partake of the glorious entertainments and joys, of an eternal wedding; as when king Ahasuerus made a great feast, wherein he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty; and, to show the beauty of his queen, the palace was exceedingly adorned on that occasion. [Eph. i. 6](#).

There is nothing in the Scripture that in the least intimates the external heaven or paradise to be unchangeable, and not capable of being perfected and exalted to higher glory. There is nothing so but the divine nature itself; and it is too much honour to any created thing to suppose it to be so perfect, that no occasion whatsoever, even the reward of the infinite merits of the infinitely beloved Son of God himself, is occasion great enough for allowing of it, or that shall render it fit and proper, that it be yet further adorned. The only heaven that is unalterable, is the state of God's own infinite and unchangeable glory; the heaven which God dwelt in from all eternity, which is absolutely of infinite height and infinite glory, and which might metaphorically be represented as the heaven that was the eternal abode of the blessed Trinity, and of the happiness and glory they have one in another; which is a heaven that is uncreated, and the heaven from whence God infinitely stoops to behold the



things done in the created paradise; and of which, that which we conceive of as the infinite and unchangeable expanse of space, that is above and beyond the whole universe, and encompasses the whole, is the shadow. This is what is meant, [Isa. lvii. 15.](#) (See Notes in loc.)

It is true the things of the highest heavens are things that cannot be shaken, but shall remain through divine grace. Heaven is God's throne, and his throne is established for ever, and therefore shall be for ever and ever, and the saints shall receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. [Heb. xii. 28.](#) Heaven is a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God; it is a house not made with hands, and so eternal. This is an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. What is reserved in heaven is represented in Scripture as far above the reach of all the changes of time that should injure it, and the doors of the palace are everlasting doors. [Psal. xxiv.](#) But none of these things argue heaven to be in any other respect unchangeable, than only as being above all changes that might destroy it, or mar it, or in any respect fade its glory, or bring it into any danger of those things. Heaven is no otherwise out of the reach of change than the precious jewels and treasures that are there kept are so, as the angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and the man Christ Jesus, the most precious and brightest jewel that God has made, the first-born of every creature, the crown and glory of heaven and men, the sun of that world of light; but yet all these are susceptible of change in this respect, that they will be exalted to vastly higher glory. Christ's glory after the day of judgment will be greater than before, as the devil that has managed the war against him shall then be punished for all the mischief that he has done. So Christ, God's General, the Captain that he hath sent forth in this great war against his enemies, when he shall have fully conquered and put down all authority and power, having come forth out of heaven to that end with all his hosts, and has so gloriously finished all the work that his Father gave him a commission for, shall be exceedingly rewarded and glorified. When he shall return with the victory in every respect perfect, he shall enter the city with great triumph to receive a great reward from the Supreme Authority of the city. If Christ God man, the King of heaven, and its most bright and precious jewel, the first-born of every creature, the head and crown, ornament and glory of heaven, and its bright and only luminary, the Sun of heaven, whose glory and sweetness is the fullness, and glory, and happiness of all that world; who is the Alpha and Omega of all that is there, and the sum of all; I say, if he shall be exalted in glory, why not the place, the external habitation that is the lowest part of that world? The habitation has not the honour of being immutable and immovable in a higher sense than this King and end and glory of heaven himself is. The man Christ Jesus becomes immortal and eternal at his resurrection, but yet that was no impediment in the way of his being, as it were, further glorified, as it were, in infinitely higher degrees, as in his first and second ascension. That the highest heavens pass under such a change at the end of the world, is no argument that it is with that as it is with the visible heavens that wax old as a garment; any more than the change on the body of Christ



at his ascension, or on the bodies of Enoch and Elias, and on the bodies of those that arose with Christ, is an argument of the like waxing old.

If the highest heaven might be as it were bowed and rent, (though it be the throne of God,) that the eternal Son of God might come down on the earth, to be the subject of his humiliation; doubtless it is as capable of being adorned and made higher and higher on occasion of his glorification.

The external heavens, and the human nature of Christ, are the *external house* and *temple* of God in different senses; but the human nature, or body, of Christ, including both the head and the members, including his human nature with his church, is the house and temple of God in the highest sense. This is immensely the most noble temple of God. But if this, which is the palace of God in so much the highest sense, will pass under a glorious change; why should not the external house, which is the temple of God in a much inferior sense, and which indeed is to be but a house for this house, pass under a glorious change? If the inner temple, the highest and most holy part of the temple, shall be so much exalted, why may we not suppose that the external temple, the outer courts, or the outermost curtains of the tabernacle, be changed and made proportionally more beautiful?

Christ mystical, or Christ and his church, and the external heaven, are the city of God, or the new Jerusalem, in different senses; but the former in vastly the highest and noblest manner. But if the city of God, or the new Jerusalem, that which is called so in the highest sense, shall be so exalted and adorned with new glory at the head of the universe; why not that external new Jerusalem, that is as much inferior to the other as the body is to the soul? If the soul shall be glorified and made better, why not the body? if the body, why not the garment? if the inhabitants, why not the house?

The body of Christ is the dwelling-place of his soul; and therefore when God the Father glorified the soul of Christ, he also glorified his body, because he judged it meet that the alteration in the house should be answerable to the alteration in the inhabitant. And so, for the same reason, the bodies of the saints shall be glorified as well as their souls; and there is just the same reason why heaven, the house of Christ, and the house of his saints, or in one word, the house of Christ mystical, should be exalted to higher glory at the same time that Christ mystical himself, the inhabitant, is exalted to higher glory.

The church is Christ's temple: Christ is spoken of as *dwelling* in the saints. This temple of Christ, the new Jerusalem, shall, at the end of the world, when Christ comes to receive his full reward, be exceedingly adorned, to fit it for Christ's *indwelling*; as we see by [Rev. xxi. 2](#). And why shall not the other temple of Christ, that which is so in an inferior sense, be proportionally adorned at the same time? Is it not rational to suppose that the whole tabernacle shall be *proportionally* adorned and beautified; the outer curtains proportionally with the inward curtains of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen?

The infinitely glorious and beloved Son of God's shedding his blood, and enduring those extreme sufferings in obedience to his Father's will, was a thing great enough to obtain this, even that the very heaven of heavens should be made new, with new glory for him; it was great enough to lay the foundation for an universal refreshing, renewing, or new creation, of all elect things, that all things both spiritual and external should be immensely exalted in perfection, beauty, and glory.

It seems impossible that it should be otherwise than that all heaven should put on new glory at the same time that Christ put on new glory; all must be allowed proportion, for Christ is the glory of heaven, the beauty and ornament, the life and soul, of all; and there is no glory there, but only the reflection of his glory, and the emanation of his brightness and life, and the diffusion of his sweetness. Every manner of beauty or excellency there, is immediately dependent on him: there is no shining or lustre, no fineness or purity, no vivacity or pleasantness, in any thing there, but it is in such a manner dependent on him, as appear to be *immediately*, every moment, *from him*, as a kind of diffusion of his glory and sweetness on every thing, and into and through every thing; so that the most inward nature of every thing there receives all excellency, and all purity, and preciousness, and sweetness from him immediately. In heaven, Christ appears and acts most visibly and sensibly as the Creator, and Life, and Soul, and Fountain of all being and perfection, and he of whom and through whom all things are, and by whom all immediately consist. Thus the glory of the latter house will in every respect be greater than the glory of the former house, because Jehovah, the angel of the covenant, shall come into his temple, and fill the house with his glory. Christ's appearing in glory will be that which will glorify the bodies of his saints, as though it was an immediate visible communication of his glory and life to them, as from the head to the members. Nothing but his presence in so great glory effects the thing; and so will it be with respect to every thing else that is external in heaven.

Thus as the face of the earth rejoices at the return of the sun in the spring, and there is a great alteration in it, it puts on new beautiful garments of joy, and gladness, and welcomes the sun; and its renewed beauty is from the sun, from his diffused glory, and sweet vivifying influence, in which all the face of the earth rejoices; so it will be in heaven when Christ returns thither in his highest glory after the day of judgment, all heaven will rejoice, and put on new life, new beauty, and glory, to welcome him thither.

[1122] *Heaven perfected*. The external heaven surrounds Christ, not merely as a house surrounds an inhabitant, or as a palace surrounds a prince; but rather as plants and flowers are before the sun, that have their life and beauty and being from that luminary; or as the sun may be encompassed round with reflections of his brightness, as the cloud of glory in mount Sinai surrounded Christ there.

[1126] *Heaven perfected, after the day of judgment*. Solomon's temple was a great type of heaven; and the prophet Haggai foretells that the glory of the latter temple shall be

greater than that of the former, because that the Messiah, “the desire of all nations,” should come into it; [Hag. ii. 6, 7, 8.](#) “For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and *the desire of all nations shall come*: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of the latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.” I suppose that what was here foretold concerning that typical temple, was fulfilled much more properly and amply concerning heaven itself, when the Messiah entered into it at his first ascension; and will be fulfilled to a much more glorious degree still at his second ascension, at Christ’s entrance into that heavenly temple, with his glorified and complete mystical body, as well as his natural body, after God has in a literal manner shaken the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land, and shaken all nations.

The beautifying and adorning the temple of Jerusalem so exceedingly but a little before Christ came into it, seems to be some shadow of this; and I believe was intended as a type of it; though not parallel in every circumstance, as the beautifying of it not being at the very instant of Christ’s first entering into the temple, and some other circumstances. This seems also to be typified by the immensely more glorious abode that the ark had in Solomon’s time than that which it had in David’s time. The carrying up of the ark into mount Zion in David’s time, was a type of Christ’s first ascension into heaven, as is evident from Scripture; and the carrying of it up into mount Moriah, into Solomon’s glorious temple, is a type of his second more glorious ascension into a more glorious abode at the end of the world. David’s militant reign till all the enemies of Israel were subdued under them, was a type of Christ’s present reign in heaven, over his church till the resurrection, which is a militant reign; for till the end of the world he goes on fighting, and will continue so to do till all enemies are made his footstool. As yet we see not all things put under him, and the last enemy that shall be conquered is death, which shall be at the end of the world. Solomon’s glorious reign in perfect peace and tranquility, with all subdued under him, and settled in subjection to him, is a type of the reign of Christ after the end of the world: all enemies shall be subdued: and the place of the ark in his reign, in this glorious and most magnificent temple, was a type of the abode of Christ in heaven, in its advanced glory, at the consummation of all things. It is the same heaven, only sublimated and exalted to exceeding greater glory; which is typified by the mountain of the temple, being called by the same name after the ark was removed into it, that the place of its former abode was called by, *viz. mount Zion*; so that the ark is represented as never changing its place from mount Zion; and when it was carried into mount Zion, God said of it [Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14.](#) “This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell; for I have desired it.”



There is a place somewhere in the universe, (perhaps in the central parts of the earth,) that is called hell; but hell will be made immensely more terrible after the day of judgment, when instead of that fire in the centre of the earth, all the visible universe shall be turned into a great furnace: and probably heaven will be made as much more glorious, after the day of judgment, as hell will be made more terrible.

Thus the external new Jerusalem, or the glorious and eternal abode of the church of God; (which cannot be excluded from the description in the two last chapters in Revelations, because there is in the description often a distinction made between the *city* and the *saints* that are the *inhabitants*;) I say, thus the external new Jerusalem will come down from God out of heaven; *i.e.* heaven, in this new creation of it, shall come down from the *infinitely high and uncreated heaven*, in which God had dwelt from all eternity, from which God stoops and humbles himself to behold the things that are in heaven.

Thus that will be fulfilled that is proclaimed in [Rev. xxi. 5](#). “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. “The whole creation, external and spiritual, shall be altered, and new formed; and thus the new creation will be parallel with the first creation that Moses gives us an account of, to which it is spoken of as parallel in Scripture; and all *the elect creation*, which is composed of all elect things in heaven and in earth, shall be gotten together in Christ, and all made new, both spiritual and external; all that appertains to the elect, not only elect spirits, but their external habitations: their bodies, that are the microcosm or their particular habitations; and the microcosm, that is, the general habitation. There shall be collected all that is *elect* in heaven or earth, being all perfectly purified by fire, and not mixed with the reprobate part of the world, and all shall be made new, and so is justly called “the new heaven and new earth.” There will be new angels and new men, new bodies and new spirits: things that are originally of the earth made new, and things originally of heaven also made new. Though the place of the church of Christ (for whose sake chiefly all heaven and earth is made) be different from what it was before; she dwells in another place, instead of that heaven and earth that was her habitation before; yet it is called by the same *name*, but only *new*, as the ark when it moved from *Zion* to mount *Moriah* carried the *name* with it, only it was a *New Zion*.

When God has obtained his end of the universe that he created in the beginning, when all things are brought to issue into their end at the consummation of all things, and God in the final event appears to be the OMEGA, as he was the ALPHA; then God will show his mighty power a second time towards the whole: toward the reprobate part of the creation, in terribly destroying it; and towards the elect part, in bringing it to its highest perfection. The elect creatures, who are the eye and mouth of the creation, who are made to behold God’s works, and to give him the glory of them, did not behold the first creation. The angels did not behold the first creation of heaven, that most glorious part of the creation, nor did they see the creation of themselves; and men beheld no part of God’s work in producing

the creation; but the time will come when God will make all things new by a new creation, wherein his power towards the whole will be much more displayed than in the first creation. When God shall effect this creation, men and angels shall see God perform it, they shall see God produce the new heaven and new earth by his mighty power. Men, who saw the creation of nothing in the first creation, shall see the creation of all, and even their own new creation; and angels shall see the creation of heaven and of themselves: all shall see that creation that shall be a work so much more wonderful, and so much greater than the former, that the former shall not be mentioned, nor come into mind.

*Conflagration.* Many suppose the fire of the conflagration will be a purifying fire, by which the heavens and the earth will be refined in order to their standing forth in new perfection and beauty. This is very true, yet not in the manner in which many seem to understand. It will indeed be the fire by which the whole universe shall be purified, *i.e.* by which it shall be purged from its reprobate parts; all the filthiness of the whole universe shall be gathered into it, there to be consumed. The reprobate part of heaven was removed out of it to be cast into this fire; the filthiness that once was there is consumed here, and so is all that is reprobate and filthy in the earth. It is a purifying fire, as it is the fire of God's justice and holiness; but the justice and holiness of God shall perfectly purify heaven and earth, and purge all the elect creation from all manner of defilement or mixture of that which is reprobate; whereby it will be fitted to be exalted to its highest beauty and glory. And not only so, but such a wonderful and terrible display of the holiness and justice of God, will be a great means of further sanctifying all the elect universe, setting them at a vastly greater distance from sin against this holy God, and a means of vastly exalting the purity and sanctity of their minds.

Many have supposed that the place of the residence of the saints after the day of judgment, would be different from what it is before; that the *paradise* in which the departed souls of saints are now, is different from the heaven into which they shall be admitted after the day of judgment; and that *paradise* is only a place of rest in which the saints are reserved till the day of judgment, when they shall be admitted into heaven. Here is a mixture of truth with error. It is true that the habitation of the saints, after the day of judgment, will be new and different, exceeding different, from what it was before, but not in that manner that has been supposed: not that the *place* or *situation* will be different, there is no need of that; but the *habitation* will be new created, and shall appear with quite new and transcendently more excellent glory.

It may be objected against what has been at the day of judgment, will invite his saints to "inherit the kingdom here supposed, that Christ, *prepared for them from the foundation of the world;*" as though it were the *same* heaven, that was made and prepared for them at the first creation, which they were now going to inherit.



*Answer.* It is the same house then built, not taken down, never shaken or removed, but only made more glorious; as they are the same angels of heaven that were made for the saints, from the foundation of the world, though they shall be so much more glorified that they will be as it were new creatures. As it will be with the *angels* of heaven, who are the principal part of the kingdom spoken of, so it will be with the *external habitation*: it was prepared for them at the foundation of the world the foundation of it was laid then, and has been preparing *from* the foundation of the world; from that time that the foundation of the world was laid, it has been preparing ever since, in all that has been done to it, and in it, and about it. And not only the kingdom is prepared from the foundation of the world in creating *heaven*, and in what has been done *there* from that time; but the creation of the *whole universe* was made to prepare a kingdom for them, to lay a foundation for their kingdom and dominion, and *all that has been done in providence*, ever since, has been to prepare a kingdom for them. And these words of Christ are a good argument, that the *work of redemption is the end and sum of all God's works*. It was the end of the creation of the whole universe, and of all God's works of providence in it.

*Quest.* By whom and at what time will this glorious work of God, in making the highest heavens *new*, be accomplished. Will it be done by God the Father in the absence of his Son, while he is here in this lower world taken up in the concerns of the last judgment, to garnish heaven or prepare it for his Son with his blessed bride against their coming? or will it be accomplished by the Son at his return into heaven with his church?

*Answer.* Not by the former, but by the latter; for the following reasons.

1. All *communicated* glory to the creature must be by the Son of God, who is the brightness or shining forth of his Father's glory: and therefore when the eternal world comes to receive its greatest brightness and glory, it will doubtless be by him, and it will be by him as God man; for all that God doth by Christ, or the medium of communication between himself and the creature since Christ became God man, or at least since as God man he has been glorified and enthroned as Lord of the universe; he doth by Christ as God man, in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, and that in all things he should have the pre-eminence. As *he* glorifies the angels and saints who are the inhabitants, so doubtless it will be he who will glorify the habitation.

2. The old creation was by him, the highest heavens were created by him; for without him was not any thing made that was made; it was said concerning him, [Heb. i. 10](#). "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hand," and not only the visible but the invisible heavens were created by him; for he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him

all things consist. So likewise the new creation will be by him, for by him God makes the worlds; not only the visible but the invisible world, not only the present world, but the world to come, that new world, the new heavens and new earth; for God hath given him a name above every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come, [Eph. i. 21](#). By the world to come in that place, the apostle seems to mean the new world that shall follow when the age of this shall be at an end, for the word is Greek or Hebrew; *this age, and that which is to come*; and unto Christ hath God put in subjection the world to come. If God committed to him the creation of the old world, much more would he commit to him the creation of the new, for it is his business to renew all things. The creation of the new heavens and the new earth is by the work of redemption, which is his work; and it is a work that he works out as God man, and therefore as God man he will make the heavens new. All new things are by Christ: the new creature, the new name, the new covenant, the new song, the new Jerusalem, and the new heavens and new earth, are all by Christ, God man.

3. The destroying the lower world, the reprobate part of the creation, is committed to him; and therefore much more will the glorifying of the elect part of it be his work, for this is his most proper business; the other is his business more indirectly, and in subordination to this.

4. The creation is certainly by him, as to the principal parts of it, *viz.* the glorifying the saints and angels. He shall build the inner temple, and doubtless, therefore, he will build the outer temple. The glorifying of that, which is his temple and city in the highest sense, is committed to him; and therefore, doubtless, the glorifying of that which is the temple and city in an inferior sense will be committed to him.

5. If Christ as God man shall be the author of this work, he will doubtless be so *visibly*; for the work is committed to him for his honour. It is an honour that the Father commits to him in reward of what he has done and suffered; it shall therefore be visibly done by Christ, as God man, and therefore will not be effected in his absence here in this lower world; but he shall be present when it is done, and shall visibly put forth his power and communicate his influence and glory in order to it.

6. If this work were wrought while Christ is here in this lower world judging the world, then this new creation would not be seen by men and angels, which is not to be supposed.

7. If this work be wrought in Christ's absence, then that world will not be glorified by the presence of the Sun of righteousness, as the face of the earth is renewed and glorified by the return of the sun in the spring.

The Lamb is the light, and glory, and sun of the new Jerusalem, and therefore the new brightness and life, vigour, bloom, and beauty, and fragrancy, and joy, of this world, will be from him and from his presence.

After the curse is executed on the universe of the ungodly, and all the angels and saints have beheld the dreadful execution; then Christ, with all his elect church, now perfect, shall



ascend to heaven, and Christ shall come and present his church, now perfectly redeemed, to the Father, saying, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me;" and having thus finished all the work that the Father had given him to do, he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. Then shall the Father, with infinite manifestations of endearment and delight, testify his acceptance of Christ, and of his church thus presented to him, his infinite acquiescence in what his Son has done, and his complacency in him, and in his church; and in reward shall now give them the joy of their eternal marriage feast, and he himself will dress his Son in his wedding robes. The human nature of Christ, or Christ as God man, shall be the subject of a new glorification then, when he shall be the subject of those smiles of the Father, and those infinitely sweet manifestations of his acceptance and complacency, when he shall present his redeemed church, and deliver up the kingdom; and from the manifestations of complacency, the Son shall be changed into the same image of complacency and love, and shall put on that divine glory, the glory of the infinitely sweet divine love, grace, gentleness, and joy, and shall shine with this special light far more brightly than ever he did before, shall be clothed with those sweet robes in a far more glorious manner than ever before: then shall that be fulfilled in the highest degree; [Ps. xxi. 6](#). "For thou hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance;" and also the fore-verses. Thus God the Father will give the Son his heart's desire, as it is said in the [2d verse of that psalm](#): his heart's desire was, that he might express his infinite love to his elect church, fully and freely; to this end God the Father will now crown him with a crown of love, and array him in the brightest robes of love and grace, as his wedding garments, as the robe in which he should embrace his redeemed church, now brought home to her everlasting rest, in the house of her spiritual husband. As before he came into this accursed world in the glory of the Father, and God the Father arrayed him with his own glory, chiefly of his majesty, power, justice, omnipotence, and holiness, attributes that are terrible to God's enemies, because his errand into this reprobate part of the universe was to destroy it; so now he is returned and entered into the elect and blessed world, to receive the joy that was set before him with his church. Now he shall more especially have conferred on him the glory of his Father, in his gentle and sweet attributes, shining forth in the infinitely bright robes of his love, and grace, and holiness, his sweet ravishing beauty and delight, that he may bless and glorify that elect world with the beams of this light. The Son being thus glorified with infinite sweetness, by the light of the countenance of the Father, the glory will be communicated from him to his church, and she shall be transformed into his image by beholding him, and by the light of his glory and love, shining and smiling upon her. And at that time will be the transformation of all heaven, and it will become a new heaven; the beams of the Son's new glory of grace and love shall advance that whole world to new glory and sweetness. Thus Christ and his saints shall both receive their consummate felicity and full reward, and shall begin that eternal feast of love, and the eternal joys of that marriage

supper of the Lamb. The saints shall not receive their full happiness till then; though they shall be glorified on earth when they shall be raised and changed at the first sight of their glorious Redeemer coming in the clouds, and shall be further glorified when they shall be made to sit with Christ on his throne of judgment; yet Christ speaks of their greatest happiness as then future, when he says, at the close of the judgment, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," &c. Now they shall inherit it; now they shall be put in possession of it.

Thus, though the new glory of heaven shall be, as it were, from the communicated influence and glory of the Sun of righteousness returning to heaven from the judgment; yet it will not be at once, as soon as the beams of the returning Jesus shine on that world; but Christ, with all his saints and angels, shall first enter into the world, and they shall have opportunity to see its glory in its former state; and then the presentation shall be made to the Father, and his acceptance manifested, and the purchased glory then given by his hands; so that the saints and angels shall have opportunity fully to see this work of the new creation: first fully beholding the world before its renovation, and then seeing the change as it is, with the destruction of the reprobate world. That world, as it were, sinks of itself, flies away, and breaks in pieces, by beholding the manifestation of his awful majesty and wrath. The shining forth of the infinitely pure and powerful holiness, justice, and wrath, does, as it were of itself, set all on fire; yet this destruction will not actually be at Christ's first appearing in terrible majesty in the lower world, but at the greatest manifestation of it when he pronounces the curse on the ungodly.

How immensely will it heighten, in the eyes of the saints, the value of that love and gentleness with which they now shall see Christ clothed, that they just before have seen such great manifestations of his infinite majesty, and the terribleness of his wrath! And how will it heighten their admiration and joy in his love, when Christ himself, that glorious King, shall resign up the kingdom to the Father! Though he shall receive now his reward, and new glory from the Father, it will not be to act henceforward as the Supreme Head of dominion, to whom the government of the world is left, but rather as a head or grand medium of enjoyment of the Father. Christ himself shall be admitted to a higher enjoyment of the Father than ever he was admitted to before; and in Christ the saints shall enjoy the Father. The Son himself, as God man, shall now be subject to the Father. After the saints have seen him in infinite majesty in the judgment wherein his glorious and divine dignity appeared, and now come to see him in his ineffable mildness and love; they shall also see his transcendent humility in his adoration of the Father. And what a sense will this give them of the honour of the Father, to behold Jesus Christ, God man, a person of such dignity as they saw in the judgment, thus humbly adoring the Father! And how will this example influence their adoration of God, and keep up their reverence in that infinite nearness and freedom to which they are admitted; as the sight they have had of the terrible majesty of Christ in the judgment

will keep up their reverence towards him in the midst of their most intimate communion with him, and while they dwell, as it were, in his arms, and on his lips! See concerning the new occasion of glory to the highest heavens at Christ's first ascension, Note on these words, [John xiv. 2](#). "I go to prepare a place for you."

[934] *Happiness of heaven*. God doubtless will entertain his saints according to the state of the King of heaven, when he comes to entertain them at the feast that he has provided with such great contrivance and wonderful amazing exercises of infinite and mysterious wisdom, showing the bottomless depths and infinite riches of his wisdom, and with such great and mighty ado, and innumerable and wonderful exercises of his power; having, in order to provide this feast, created heaven and earth, and done all in all ages, bringing such great revolutions in such an amazing wonderful series, and besides that, having come down himself from his infinite height and become man, and also provided the feast at such infinite expense as that of his own blood. We read of Ahasuerus, a great king, when he made a feast unto all his princes and servants, he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the power of his excellent majesty, and gave drink in vessels of gold, and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king, [Esth. i](#). So doubtless the happiness of the saints in heaven shall be so great, that the very majesty of God shall be exceedingly shown in the greatness, and magnificence, and fulness of their enjoyments and delights.

[1059] That the *happiness* of the *saints* in *heaven* consists much in beholding the displays of God's mercy towards his church on earth, may be strongly argued from those texts that speak of the just and the meek inheriting the earth, and their having in the present time much more given of this world, houses and lands, &c. than they parted with in the suffering state of the church; from Christ's comforting his disciples, when about to leave them, that they should weep and lament, and the world rejoice, yet their sorrow should be turned into joy, as a woman has sorrow in her travail, but much more than joy enough to balance it when she is delivered; from its being promised to the good man, [Ps. cxxviii](#). that he should see the prosperity of Jerusalem, and peace in Israel; from the manner in which the promises of the future prosperity of the church were made of old to the church then in being; and from the manner in which the saints received them as all their salvation, and all their desire, and are said to hope and wait for the fulfilment from time to time.

[1061] *Happiness of heaven* consisting much in beholding God's works towards his church on earth. God says to David, [2 Sam. vii](#). "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever BEFORE THEE. Thy throne shall be established for ever." And a promise is made in the context concerning Solomon, that must be understood in the same sense; [2 Sam vii. 12, 13](#). "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever."

This promise concerning his kingdom and the kingdom of his Son, its being established for ever after he was dead, is what David takes principal notice of, and is most affected with, as implying this greatest benefit, and speaks of other things conferred on him in his lifetime as a small thing, in comparison of it, [2 Sam. vii. 19,20](#). “And this was yet a small thing, in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.” And this he insists upon chiefly in his prayer, and in the following verses; and this, he elsewhere says, is all his salvation, and all his desire, or what he sets his heart upon more than any thing whatsoever. And the promise is renewed to Solomon, [1 Kings ix. 5](#). “I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised unto David thy father; there shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.” And yet this same Solomon was thoroughly aware how little a man is benefited by the thought and hopes of what should be in the world after he is dead, which he shall never see or enjoy any thing of; and speaks of it as a great instance of men’s folly and vanity to set their hearts upon it, and deprive themselves of present good for it. [Eccles. ii. 24](#). “There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labours;” and [Eccles. iii. 12, 13](#). “I know that there is no good in them but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should eat, and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labours; it is the gift of God.” [Eccles. iii. 22](#). “Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?” [Eccles. ix. 4, 5, 6, 7](#). “A living dog is better than a dead lion for the dead have no more a reward neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. Go thy way.”

The saints in heaven will be under advantages to see much more of it than the saints on earth, and to be every way more directly, fully, and perfectly acquainted with all that appertains to it, and that manifests the glory of it; the glory of God’s wisdom and other perfections in it. The blessed fruit and end of it, in the eternal glory and blessedness of the subjects of the work of God at that day, will be daily in their view, in those that come out of dying bodies to heaven. And the church in heaven will be much more concerned in it than one part of the church on earth shall be in the prosperity of another.

The blessedness of the church triumphant in heaven, and their joy and glory, will as much consist in beholding the success of Christ’s redemption on earth, and in as great proportion, as the joy that was set before Christ consists in it, or as the glory and reward of Christ as God man and Mediator consists in it.

[1072] *Happiness of heaven*. The saints in heaven will enjoy God as their portion, and possess all things in the most excellent manner possible; in that they will have all in Christ their head. Christ their head is as it were their organ of enjoyment; but the capacity of enjoyment that this organ hath, is of infinitely greater extent than the capacity of any of Christ’s

members taken separately, or by themselves; as the head of the natural body, by reason of its extensive and noble senses, has such a much greater capacity of enjoyment than the inferior members of the body by themselves. Were not the saints united to Christ, they could never enjoy God the Father in so excellent a manner as now they will in heaven, partaking with Christ in his enjoyment of him. And so they never could possess all the works of God in so excellent and glorious a manner as they do in their head, who has the absolute possession of all, and rules over all, and disposes all things according to his will; for by virtue of their union with Christ, they also shall rule over all. They shall sit with him in his throne, and reign over the same kingdom, as his body, and shall see all things disposed according to their will; for the will of the head will be the will of the whole body. Christ being their head, the gratifying of his will shall be as much for their happiness, as if it were their own will separately that was gratified; for they shall have no other will, as the natural body, head, and members have but one will; and on the other hand, the holy desires of the saints (as they will have no other desires) will be evermore Christ's will. The appetite of the members will ever be the will of the head. If the whole universe were given to a saint separately, he could not fully possess it, his capacity would be too narrow. He would not know how to dispose of it for his own good; as the inferior members of the natural body would not know how to dispose of things that the body has possession of for their good, without the eyes or the head. And if the saints did know, they would not have strength sufficient; but in Christ their head they have perfect knowledge and infinite strength.

[1089] *The saints in heaven acquainted with the state of the church on earth.* The man Christ Jesus is the head of the glorified saints in heaven. He is the head of the glorious assembly, who leads them in all their worship and praise, and is their vital head. They are in some sense the glorified body of Christ; they are with him as it were in all things, being partakers with him in all, all his exaltation and glory, all his reward, all his enjoyment of God the Father, all his reward by obtaining the joy set before him, his reign here on earth, the glory of his reign in his kingdom of grace, the bestowment of the promised reward in what is done to the elect here, his enjoyment of the success of his redemption, his seeing his seed, the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hands, his justifying many by his righteousness, his conquering his enemies, his subduing and triumphing over Satan, and antichrist, and all other enemies. What he sees of God, they in their measure see; what he sees of the church of God on earth, and of the flourishing of religion here, they see according to their capacity; what he sees of the punishment of his enemies in hell, they see in him; and therefore this damnation of the enemies of Christ, and its being in the presence of the inhabitants of heaven, consisting of Christ, and saints, and angels, is expressed thus, [Rev. xiv. 10](#). "They shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the *Lamb*:" saying nothing of the glorified saints, including them in the name of the Lamb. Christ, with his glorified mystical body, being but one mystical person, for he

is the head of the glorified body, as the sight of the eyes that are in the head are for the information of the whole body, and what he enjoys they enjoy; they are with him in his honour and advancement; they are with him in his pleasures; they are with him in his enjoyment of the Father's love; the love wherewith the Father loves him is in them, and he in them; they are with him in the joy of his success on earth; they are with him in his joy at the conversion of one sinner. The good shepherd, when he has found the sheep that was lost, calls together his friends and neighbours, saying, [Luke xv. 5,6](#). "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost," And they are with him in his joy at the conversion of nations, and the world. The day of Christ's espousals is the day of the gladness of his heart, [Cant. iii. 11](#). The day of the marriage of the Lamb is the day of Christ's rejoicing. [Isa. lxii. 5](#). [Zeph. iii. 17](#). So it is the day of the gladness and rejoicing of the hearts of the saints in heaven, [Rev. xix. 1-9](#). When he rides forth in this world, girding his sword on his thigh in his glory and majesty, to battle against antichrist and other enemies, they are represented as riding forth in glory with him, [Rev. xix](#). and in his triumph they triumph. They appear on mount Zion with him with palms in their hands; and as Satan is bruised under *his* feet, so he is bruised under their feet also. The saints, therefore, have no more done with the state of the church and kingdom on earth, because they have left this world, and have ascended into heaven; than Christ himself had, when he left the earth and ascended into heaven, who was so far from having done with the prosperity of his church and kingdom here, as to any immediate concern in those things, by reason of his ascension, that he ascended to that very end, that he might be more concerned, that he might receive the glory and reward of the enlargement and prosperity of his church, and the conquest of his enemies here, that he might reign in this kingdom, and be under the best advantages for it, and might have the fullest enjoyment of the glory of it, as much as a king ascends a throne in order to reign over his people, and receive the honour and glory of his dominion over them. Christ came with clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before him to that very end, that he might receive dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him, [Dan. vii. 13, 14](#). God the Father bade him sit at his right hand, that his enemies might be made his footstool, and rule in the midst of his enemies, and that he might enjoy that glorious reward that is called receiving the dew of his youth, and judging among the heathen, and wounding the heads over many countries, [Psal. cx](#). God the Father set Christ on his holy hill of Zion, to that end that he might have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And when the saints leave this lower world by death, and ascend to heaven, they do but follow their forerunner; they ascend as it were with him, they are made to sit together in heavenly places in him, they are exalted to partake of his exaltation, they have written upon them the name of the city of his God, and his own new name, to sit with him in his throne, as he, when he ascended, sat down with the Father in his throne, to rule with him over the same kingdom, to partake with him

in his reward, his honour, his victory, and triumph over his enemies, his joy that was set before him, *viz.* the joy of the success of his redemption, the joy of seeing his seed, of finding his lost sheep, the satisfaction of seeing of the travail of his soul, &c. They in this world travail with him for the same thing, they are crucified with Christ, they deny themselves to promote and advance his kingdom and glory in the world: they many of them suffer with him, and die with him, in the very same cause, and their sufferings are called a filling up of the sufferings of Christ; and as they suffer with him on earth in this cause, so they shall reign with him, they shall enjoy with him the prosperity of that cause, that interest which they sought by their labours and sufferings, as he did by his labours and sufferings when he was on the earth. They shall be as much with Christ in partaking with him of the glory of his reigning over the world in his kingdom of grace, as they shall partake with him in the glory of his judging the world. Indeed they now are not visibly to the inhabitants of the earth reigning with Christ over his kingdom of grace here; as they will hereafter be seen judging the world with Christ. No more is Christ himself now seen by the inhabitants of the earth visibly reigning here, as he will be seen judging at the day of judgment; but yet this does not hinder, but that he does now as truly reign here, and possess and enjoy the glory of this dominion, as he will truly judge at the end of the world.

The saints in going out of this world and ascending into heaven, do not go out of sight of the affairs that appertain to Christ's kingdom and church here, and things appertaining to that great work of redemption that is carrying on here; but on the contrary, go out of a state of obscurity, and ascend above the mists and clouds into the bright light, and ascend a pinnacle in the very centre of light, where every thing appears in clear view. The saints that are ascended to heaven have advantage to view the state of Christ's kingdom in this world, and the works of the new creation here, as much greater than they had before, as a man that ascends to the top of a high mountain has greater advantage to view the face of the earth than he had while he was below in a deep valley or forest, surrounded on every side with those things that impeded and limited his sight.

On this account, as well as others, both Christ and his saints are beautifully represented as ascending and reigning on a mountain, mount Zion, God's holy mountain, the mountain of the height of Israel, &c. On this mountain, they have their kingdom in view; as David, who dwelled and reigned in mount Zion, had Jerusalem in view; and as the saints in heaven have greater advantage to see those things, so also to enjoy them, to see the glory of them, and receive comfort and joy by them. They are under great advantage to possess them as theirs, being with Christ who does possess, in communion with whom they enjoy and possess their infinite portion, their whole heavenly inheritance and kingdom; as much as the whole body has all the pleasure of music by the ear, and all the pleasure of its food by the mouth and stomach, and all the benefit and refreshment of the air breathed in by the lungs; and thus it is the saints in heaven sing to the lamb, [Rev. v. 9, 10](#). "Thou art worthy, &c. for thou

hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and hast made us kings and priests, *and we shall reign on the earth.*” Thus it is, “The meek shall inherit the earth;” for Christ is the heir of the world, he has purchased the kingdom; the kingdom is promised him by the Father, and at last shall be given him when other kingdoms are destroyed, [Dan. vii. 14.](#) and the saints are heirs; with Christ, and shall inherit with him the same kingdom, and reign in the same kingdom, and so they shall enjoy the victory with him: he binds kings in chains; and all the saints shall have that honour with him, [Psal. cxlix. 5, to the end.](#) And thus it is that, when the time comes that Christ shall break his enemies with a rod of iron, they also shall have power over the nations, and shall rule them with a rod of iron, &c. [Rev. ii. 26, 27, 28.](#) And thus it is the souls of the martyrs of Jesus shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. [Rev. xx.](#) They shall be most nearly interested in this revival or spiritual resurrection of the church that shall be then; that shall be in some sense the resurrection of Christ himself, in the same manner as the setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world, is represented as Christ’s being born. [Rev. xii.](#) They shall possess the joy and happiness of that revival of the church; it will be as much their own, and much more in some respects, than of the saints on earth; see [Rev. xix.](#) the former part of the chapter. Thus Abraham, who is spoken of as the heir of the world, inherits it, possesses his inheritance, and shall enjoy the great promise of old made to him.

As the saints in heaven shall be under much greater advantage in heaven to see and enjoy God than when on earth, so they shall be proportionally under much greater advantage to see and enjoy the works of God, and especially those works of God which appertain to the work of redemption; which is that work by which God chiefly manifests himself to the inhabitants of the heavenly world, and especially the redeemed there. The saints and angels see God by beholding the displays of his perfections, but the perfections of God are displayed and manifested chiefly by their effects. The chief way wherein the wisdom of God is to be seen, is in the wise acts and operations of God, and so of his power, and mercy, and justice, and other perfections. But these are seen, even by the angels themselves, chiefly by what God does in the work of redemption. [Eph. iii. 10.](#) “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”

*Corol.* Hence we learn one reason, why the promises of the future glory of the church in this world are so much insisted on in the word of God, delivered to his church ages before the accomplishment.

*Objection.* In [Eccles. ix. 5, 6.](#) it is said of the dead, that they know not any thing; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

*Ans.* 1. Their having no more a portion, &c. implies no more, than that they shall no more be interested in sublunary things, or in any worldly concern. But not that they are not interested in the spiritual and heavenly affairs of that family of God, that is not of the world,



that are chosen and called out of the world, and redeemed from the earth; and, as is represented by the apostle, do not live in the world, but have their conversation and citizenship in heaven.

2. It is manifest that, by the context, the wise man speaks of temporal death as it is in itself, and not as it is by redemption, an inlet into a more happy state, in those that are redeemed from death, from the power of the grave; for the dead are here said to have no more a reward, and as being in a far worse state than when living. [Eccles. ix. 4.](#) The wise man's design and drift leads him to speak of temporal death, or death as it is in itself, with regard to things temporal and visible, without any respect to a future state of existence; and therefore, all that is implied is, that the dead body knows not any thing; they that are in their graves know not any thing; not but that the immortal soul that never dies knows something, knows as well that the dead body shall rise again, as the living know that they must die. It is in this sense, and no other, that all things come alike to all, and there is one event to the righteous and the wicked, [Eccles. ix. 3.](#) and preceding verses. The event is the same in the death of both, only as temporal death is the same in all. In this sense, as dieth the wise man, so the fool. [Eccles. ii. 16.](#)

Texts of Scripture that show that the saints in heaven see, and are concerned and interested in, the prosperity of the church on earth. [Matt. xix. 27, to the end.](#) [Prov. x. 30.](#) [Psal. xxv. 13.](#)

[1095] *Saints in heaven reign on earth.* It is evident, when Christ promises a kingdom to his true followers, as he does especially in [Luke xxii. 29, 30.](#) that one thing especially intended, is their rejoicing with him in his kingdom of grace on earth; by Christ's words in that place: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and *sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*" By this it also appears, that by that expression, used here and elsewhere, of *sitting on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,* is not intended merely judging the world with Christ at the day of judgment; (as indeed it will be unreasonable on other accounts to suppose this chiefly intended, for the saints' judging the world, at the day of judgment, will not consist in their judging the church of God; for they shall all have the blessed sentence pronounced on them together, and sit down on Christ's right hand together, to be assessors with him in judging others: after this they shall not judge one another ever again;) but their judging the world will consist in their judging angels and wicked men.

[1119] *The saints in heaven acquainted with what is done on earth.* It is an argument of this that God so often calls the heavens to be witness of his dealings with men on earth, [Deut. xxxi. 28.; xxxii. 1.; iv. 26.; xxx. 19.](#) [Psal. i. 4.](#) [Isa. i. 2.](#)

[1121] *Saints and angels in heaven acquainted with what is done on earth.* The psalmist, in [Psal. lxxxix.](#) speaking of the work of redemption, the covenant God had made with his chosen, God's prosecuting the designs of his mercy and covenant faithfulness in his dealings



with his church from age to age, and gradually bringing the designs of his mercy to their consummation, as an architect gradually erects and completes a building, [Psal.lxxxix. 1, 5.](#) says, [Psal. lxxxix. 5.](#) “The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord, thy faithfulness also in the congregation of thy saints,” or holy ones. Now this cannot be merely such a figure of speech as when sometimes the earth, seas, rocks, mountains, and trees, are called upon to praise the Lord. This is rather a prediction of an event that shall come to pass, of the notice the heavens shall take of those particular wonders of God’s mercy and faithfulness, and their celebrating them in their praises, and doing it in the assembly of God’s holy ones. And what assembly can that be but that which we read of, [Heb. xii. 22, 23.](#)? Such a praising of the heavens seems here to be spoken of, as is described in [Rev. v. 8, to the end.; vii. 9-11, 15-17.; xii. 10-12.;xiv. 3.; xviii; 20.; xix. 17.](#)

[1134] *Heaven, the everlasting abode of the church.* That the saints shall enter into heaven after the day of judgment, and not continue with Christ here below, is evident; [John xiv. 2. 3.](#) “In my Father’s house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Doubtless these words, “I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am.” &c. will be most eminently fulfilled at Christ’s second coming at the end of the world, that second coming spoken of, [Heb. ix. 28.](#) And when it is said he will receive them to himself to be where he is, he must be understood, to the place to which I am now to go, to that house of my Father to which I am ascending, in which I am going to prepare a place for you. At my second coming I will receive you to those mansions which I now go to prepare in my Father’s house.

It is also evident that Christ went to the highest heavens, the third heaven, far above all heavens, at his first ascension, as the forerunner of his people; implying that they shall all go there in their turn, or after him; and doubtless in this he was the forerunner of them, with respect to their reception of their proper reward, or their complete happiness, which will not be till the last day; and their forerunner as to a bodily ascension or translation, wherein the saints’ bodies shall be made like to Christ’s glorious body, and shall ascend as that did; but they will not have glorified bodies till then. And he is doubtless the Forerunner of the whole church in going to heaven; which he would not be, if after the day of judgment the saints were to stay here below; for those, who shall then be found alive, in such a case never would ascend into heaven at all. And then it is most reasonable to suppose, that Christ will be the first-fruits in his ascension, in like manner as in his resurrection; but Christ is the first-fruits in his resurrection with regard to what the saints shall be the subjects of at the second coming of Christ: [1 Cor. xv. 23.](#) “Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

[1137] *Happiness of heaven.* When God had finished the work of creation, he is represented as resting, and being refreshed and rejoicing in his works. The apostle compares the

happiness Christ entered into, after he had finished his labours and sufferings in the work of redemption, to this, [Heb. iv. 4,10](#).

Therefore we may well suppose, that very much of Christ's happiness in heaven consists in beholding the glory of God appearing in the work of redemption; and so in rejoicing in his own work, and reaping the sweet fruit of it, the glorious success of it, which was the joy that was set before him. And as the apostle represents the future happiness of the saints by a participation of God's rest and Christ's rest from their works, [Heb. iv. 4-11](#). This seems to argue two things, *viz.*

1. That the way that the saints will be happy in beholding the glory of God, will be very much in beholding the glory of his perfections in his works.

2. That the happiness of the saints in heaven, especially since Christ's ascension, consisting in beholding God's glory, will consist very much in seeing his glory in the work of redemption. The happiness of departed saints under the Old Testament, consisted much in beholding the glory of God in the works of creation; in beholding which, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."<sup>534</sup> But their happiness, since Christ's ascension, consists much more in beholding the glory of God in the work of redemption, since the old creation, in comparison of this, is no more mentioned, nor comes into mind. But they will be glad and rejoice for ever in this work.

The beatific vision of God in heaven consists mostly in beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, either in his work, or in his person as appearing in the glorified human nature.

[1246] *The saints higher in glory than the angels.* It is evident that the four and twenty elders in the Revelation do represent the church or company of glorified saints by their song. [Rev. v. 9, 10](#). "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." But these are represented from time to time as sitting in a state of honour, with white raiment and crowns of gold, and in seats of dignity, in thrones of glory, next to the throne of God and the Lamb, being nextly the most observable and conspicuous sight to God, and Christ, and the four living ones. [Rev. iv. 4](#). "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold." So [Rev. v. 6](#). "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living ones, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain." And the angels are represented as further off from the throne than they, being round about them, as they are round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and

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534 [Job xxxviii. 7](#).

thousands of thousands. So [Rev. vii. 11.](#) “And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders, and fell down before the throne on their faces and worshipped God.” These things make the matter of the superiority of the privilege of the saints in heaven very plain.

[1281] *Hades Saints before the resurrection Saints in heaven have communion in the prosperity of the church on earth.* There are three things very manifest from [Heb. vi. 12.](#) “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

1. That the souls of the saints do go to a state of rewards and glorious happiness before the *resurrection*. That although the resurrection be indeed the proper time of their reward, and their happiness before be small in comparison of what it will be afterwards, yet that they are received to such a degree of happiness before, that they may be said to be *in possession* of the promises of the covenant of grace. Those whom the apostle has reference to, when he speaks of them that now *inherit* the promises, are the Old-Testament saints, and particularly the patriarchs, as appears by the next words, where the apostle instances in Abraham, and the promise made to him, and of his patiently enduring, and then obtaining the promise.

Again: It is manifest the things promised to Abraham which the apostle speaks of, were things which were not fulfilled till after his death; and it is manifest by what the apostle expressly declares in this epistle, that he supposed that Abraham and the other patriarchs did not obtain the promises while in this life, [Rev. xi. 13.](#) Speaking there of these patriarchs in particular, he says, [Rev. xi. 13.](#) “Those all died in faith, not having received the promises.” But here he speaks of them as now *inheriting* the promises. This word, as it is used every where in the New Testament, implies *actual possession* of the inheritance; and so as it is used in the Septuagint. It generally signifies the actual possessing of an inheritance, lot, estate, or portion, and that being now in actual possession of the promised happiness, is what the apostle means in this place, is beyond dispute, by what he says, as further explaining himself in the words immediately following; where he says that Abraham, after he had patiently endured, *obtained the promise*. He not only has the *right* of an heir to the promise, which he had while he lived, but he actually *obtained* it, though he died, not having received the promise. And that we should suppose this to be the meaning of the apostle, is agreeable to what he says, [Rev. x. 36.](#) “For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” And that the apostle, when he speaks here of Abraham’s having *obtained* the promise after patiently enduring, does not mean merely in a figurative sense, *viz.* that the promise of multiplying his natural posterity was fulfilled after his death, though he was dead, and his soul asleep, knowing nothing of the matter, for the word is in the present tense, *inherit* the promises, not only *did obtain* them, but *continues still to possess and enjoy* them, though Abraham’s natural seed had been greatly diminished, and the promised land at that time under the dominion of the heathen, and the greater part of the



people at that time broken off by unbelief, and rejected from being God's people, and their city, and land, and the bulk of the nation on the borders of the most dreadful destruction and desolation that ever befell any people.

2. If we compare this with what the apostle says elsewhere in this epistle, it is manifest that the saints he speaks of inherit the promises *in heaven*, and not in any other place in the bowels of the earth, or elsewhere called *Hades*. For it is evident that the promised inheritance which they looked for and sought after, and the promises of which they by faith were persuaded of and embraced, and the promise of which drew their hearts off from this world, was in heaven; this is manifest by [Rev. xi. 13, 14, 15, 16](#). "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. "And the heavenly inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, or land of rest, which Christ has entered into, is that which the apostle all along in this epistle speaks of as the great subject matter of God's promises which the saints obtain through faith and patience. [Rev. iii. 11, 14;](#) [iv. 1, 3, 9, 10, 11;](#) [viii. 6;](#) [ix. 15;](#) [x. 34;](#) [xii. 1, 2, 16, to the end](#).

3. Another thing, which may be strongly argued from this, is, that the happiness of the *separate souls* of saints in heaven consists very much in beholding the works of God relating to man's redemption wrought here below, and the stages of infinite grace, wisdom, holiness, and power in establishing and building up the *church of God on earth*. For what was that promise which the apostle here has special reference to, and expressly speaks of, that Abraham obtained after he had patiently endured, which promise God confirmed with an oath, and in which we Christians and all the heirs of the promise partake with Abraham, and in the promises of which to be greatly confirmed, we have strong consolation and great hope? The apostle tells us, [verses 13, 14](#). "For, when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself; saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." This promise is chiefly fulfilled in the great increase of the church of God by the Messiah, and particularly in the calling of the Gentiles, pursuant to the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, [Rom. iv. 11, 13, 16, 17](#). [Heb. xi. 12](#).

When the apostle speaks of their inheriting the promises, he seems to have a special respect to the glorious accomplishment of the great promises made to the patriarchs concerning their seed now in those days of the gospel; as is greatly confirmed by [Heb. xi. 39](#). "And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect;

” plainly signifying, that they received not the promise in their lifetime; the promise having respect to that better thing that was to be accomplished in that age, in which the apostle and those he wrote to lived, and that the promise they relied upon was not completed, and their faith and hope in the promise not crowned, till they saw this better thing accomplished. [Rev. xiv. 13.](#) “They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;” follow *with them*, Greek or Hebrew, not to come many thousand years after them, as Mr. Baxter observes. Doddridge on [Rev. xiv. 13.](#)

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## TYPES OF THE MESSIAH, &amp;C.

That the things of the Old Testament are types of things appertaining to the Messiah and his kingdom and salvation, made manifest from the Old Testament itself.

WE find by the Old Testament, that it has ever been God's manner from the beginning of the world, to exhibit and reveal future things by symbolical representations, which were no other than types of the future things revealed. Thus when future things were made known in visions, the things that were seen were not the future things themselves, but some other things that were made use of as shadows, symbols, or types of the things. Thus the bowing of the sheaves of Joseph's brethren, and the sun, moon, and stars doing obeisance to him, and Pharaoh's fat and lean kine, and Nebuchadnezzar's image, and Daniel's four beasts, &c. were figures or types of the future things represented by them. And not only were types and figures made use of to represent future things when they were revealed by visions and dreams, but also when they were revealed by the word of the Lord coming by the mouth of the prophets (as it is expressed). The prophecies that the prophets uttered concerning future things, were generally by similitudes, figures, and symbolical representations. Hence prophecies of old were called *parables*; as Balaam's prophecies, and especially the prophecies of the things of the Messiah's kingdom. The prophecies are given forth in allegories, and the things foretold spoken of, not under the proper names of the things themselves, but under the names of other things that are made use of in the prophecy as symbols or types of the things foretold. And it was the manner in those ancient times, to deliver divine instructions in general in symbols and emblems, and in their speeches and discourses to make use of types, and figures, and enigmatical speeches, into which holy men were led by the Spirit of God. This manner of delivering wisdom was originally divine, as may be argued from that of Solomon, [Prov. i. 6](#). "To understand a proverb, (or parable,) and the interpretation, the words of the wise and their dark sayings;" and from that of the psalmist, [Psal. xlix. 3, 4](#). "My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable. I will open my dark sayings upon the harp." And [Psal. lxxviii. 1, 2](#). "Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old." By a parable is meant an enigmatical symbolical speech. [Ezek. xvii. 2.](#) and [xxiii. 3.](#) Hence speeches of divine wisdom in general came to be called parables, as the speeches of Job and his friends. Hence of old the wise men of all nations, who derived their wisdom chiefly by tradition from the wise men of the church of God, who spoke by inspiration, fell into that method. They received instruction that way, and they imitated it. Hence it became so much the custom in the eastern nations to deal so much in enigmatical speeches and dark figures, and to make so much use of symbols and hieroglyphics, to represent divine things, or things appertaining to their gods and their religion. It seems to have been in imitation of the prophets and other



holy and eminent persons in the church of God, who were inspired, that it became so universally the custom among all ancient nations, for their priests, prophets, and wise men to utter their auguries, and to deliver their knowledge and wisdom in their writings and speeches, in allegories and enigmas, and under symbolical representations. Every thing that the wise said must be in a kind of allegory, and veiled with types: as it was also the manner of the heathen oracles, to utter themselves under the like representations.

We find that it was God's manner throughout the ages of the Old Testament, to typify future things, not only as he signified them by symbolical and typical representations in those visions and prophecies in which they were revealed, but also as he made use of those things that had an actual existence, to typify them, either by events that he brought to pass by his special providence to that end, or by things that he appointed and commanded to be done for that end.

We find future things typified by what God did himself, by things that he brought to pass by his special providence. Thus the future struggling of the two nations of the Israelites and Edomites was typified by Jacob's and Esau's struggling together in the womb. [Gen. xxv. 22, 23](#). "And the children struggled together within her, and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord; and the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger." And the prevalence of Jacob over Esau, and his supplanting him, so as to get away his birthright and blessing, and his posterity's prevailing over the Edomites, was typified by Jacob's hand taking hold on Esau's heel in the birth. [Gen. xxv. 26](#). "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called *Jacob*, or, *supplanter*. [Chap. xxvii. 36](#). "Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold now he hath taken away my blessing." [Hosea xii. 3, 6](#). "He took his brother by the heel in the womb Therefore, turn thou to thy God," &c. And as the Israelites overcoming and supplanting their enemies in their struggling or wrestling with them, was typified by Jacob's taking hold on Esau's heel, so Jacob's and his seed's prevailing with God, in their spiritual wrestling with him, was typified by his wrestling with God and prevailing. [Gen. xxxii. 28](#). "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." [Hos. xii. 4](#). "Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him. He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the Lord God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial. Therefore, turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually." The prevalence of the posterity of Pharez over Zarah, who first put forth his hand, was typified by his unexpectedly breaking forth out of the womb before him. [Gen. xxxix. 29](#). So by Moses's being wonderfully preserved in the midst of great waters, though but a little helpless infant, and being drawn out of the water, seems apparently to be typified



the preservation and deliverance of his people, that lie was made the head and deliverer of, who were preserved in the midst of dangers they; were in in Egypt, which were ready to overwhelm them, when the prince and people sought to their utmost to destroy them, and root them out, and they had no power to withstand them, but were like an helpless infant, and who were at last wonderfully delivered out of their great and overwhelming troubles and dangers, which in scripture language is delivering out of great waters, or drawing out of many waters. [2 Sam. xxii. 17.](#) "He sent from above; he took me. he drew me out of many waters." And [Psal. xviii. 16.](#) It is the same sort of deliverance from cruel and blood-thirsty enemies that the psalmist speaks of, that the Israelites were delivered from. And so he does again, [Ps. cxliv. 7.](#) "Send thine hand from above; rid me and deliver me out of great waters from the hand of strange children." And [Psal. lxix. 2.](#) "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me;" with [verse 14.](#) "Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters." That the king of Israel smote three times upon the ground with his arrows, was ordered in providence to be a type of his beating the Syrians three times. [2 Kings xiii. 18, 19.](#) The potter's working a work upon the wheels, and the vessel's being marred in the hand of the potter, so that he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to him to make it, at the time when Jeremiah went down to the potter's house, was ordered in providence to be a type of God's dealing with the Jews. [Jer. xviii.](#)

The twelve fountains of water and the threescore and ten palm-trees, that were in Elim, [Exod. xv. 27.](#) were manifestly types of the twelve patriarchs, the fathers of the tribes, and of the threescore and ten elders of the congregation. The paternity of a family, tribe, or nation, in the language of the Old Testament, is called a fountain. [Deut. xxxiii. 28.](#) "Israel shall dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine." [Psal. lxviii. 26.](#) "Bless the Lord from the fountain of Israel." [Isa. xlviii. 1.](#) "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah." And the church of God is often represented in Scripture by a palm-tree or palm-trees. [Psal. xcii. 12.](#) [Cant. vii. 7, 8.](#) And therefore fitly were the elders or representatives of the church compared to palm-trees. God's people often are compared to trees. [Isa. lxi. 3.](#) and [lx. 21.](#) and elsewhere.

We find that God was often pleased to bring to pass extraordinary and miraculous appearances and events, to typify future things. Thus God's making Eve of Adam's rib, was to typify the near relation and strict union of husband and wife, and the respect that is due, in persons in that relation, from one to the other; as is manifest from the account given of it, [Gen. ii. 21-24.](#) "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because

she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.” And when God spake to Moses from the burning bush, concerning the great affliction and oppression of the children of Israel in Egypt, and promised to preserve and deliver them, what appeared in the bush, *viz.* its burning with fire, and yet not being consumed, was evidently intended as a type of the same thing that God then spake to Moses about, *viz.* the church of Israel being in the fire of affliction in Egypt, and appearing in the utmost danger of being utterly consumed there, and yet being marvellously preserved and delivered. Such a low and weak state as the people were in in Egypt, and such an inability for self-defence, we find in the Old Testament represented by a bush or low tree, and a root out of a dry ground, as was that bush in Horeb, which signifies a dry place. [Isa. liii. 2.](#) [Ezek. xvii. 22-24.](#) Affliction and danger in the language of the Old Testament, are called *fire*. [Zech. xiii. 9.](#) “I will bring the third part through the *fire*.” [Isa. xlviii. 10.](#) “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” And God’s marvellously preserving his people, when in great affliction and danger, is represented by their being preserved in the fire from being burnt. [Isa. xliii. 2.](#) “When thou passes! through the waters I will be with thee when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” And God’s delivering the people of Israel from affliction, and from the destruction of which they were in danger, through bondage and oppression under the hand of their enemies, is represented by their being delivered out of the fire. [Zech. iii. 2.](#) Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Yea, that very thing of the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, is often represented as their being delivered out of the *fire*. [Psal. lxvi. 12.](#) “We went through fire and through water, but thou broughtest us into a wealthy place.” [Deut. iv. 20.](#) “The Lord hath taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt” So [1 Kings viii. 51.](#) and [Jer. xi. 4.](#)

So Moses’s rod’s swallowing up the magicians’ rods, [Exod. vii. 12.](#) is evidently given of God as a sign and type of the superiority of God’s power above the power of their gods, and that his power should prevail and swallow up theirs. For that rod was a token of God’s power, as a prince’s rod or sceptre was a token of his power. Thus we read of the rod of the Messiah’s strength, [Psalm cx.](#) So the turning of the water of the river of Egypt into blood, first by Moses’s taking and pouring it out on the dry land, and its becoming blood on the dry land, and afterwards by the river itself, and all the other waters of Egypt, being turned to blood, in the first plague on Egypt, was evidently a foreboding sign and type of what God threatened at the same time, *viz.* that if they would not let the people go, God would slay their first-born, and of his afterward destroying Pharaoh and all the prime of Egypt in the Red sea. (See [Exod. iv. 9.](#) and [Chap. vii.](#)) God’s making a great destruction of the lives of a people is, in the language of the Old Testament, a giving them blood to drink. [Isa. xlix. 26.](#) “And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood.” Aaron’s rod budding, blossoming, and bearing fruit, is given as a type of God’s

owning and blessing his ministry, and crowning it with success. His rod was the rod of an almond-tree, [Num. xvii. 8.](#) which God makes use of in [Jer. i. 11, 12.](#) as a token and type of his word, that speedily takes effect, as Moses's rod of an almond-tree speedily brought forth fruit.

God caused the corn in the land of Judah to spring again, after it had been cut off with the sickle, and to bring forth another crop from the roots that seemed to be dead, and so, once and again, to be a sign and type that the remnant that was escaped of the house of Judah should again take root downward, and bear fruit upward, and that his church should revive again, as it were out of its own ashes, and flourish like a plant, after it has been seemingly destroyed and past recovery: as [2 Kings xix. 29, 30.](#) and [Isa. xxxvii. 30, 31.](#)

God wrought the miracle of causing the shadow in the dial of Ahaz to go backward, contrary to the course of nature, to be a sign and type of king Hezekiah's being in a miraculous manner, and contrary to the course of nature, healed of his sickness, that was in itself mortal, and brought back from the grave whither he was descending, and the sun of the day of his life being made to return back again, when according to the course of nature it was just a setting. [2 Kings xx.](#)

The miraculous uniting of the two sticks, that had the names of Judah and Joseph written upon them, so that they became one stick in the prophet's hand, was to typify the future entire union of Judah and Israel.

Also God miraculously caused a gourd to come up in a night, over the head of Jonah, and to perish in a night, to typify the life of man. That gourd was a feeble, tender, dependent, frail vine. It came up suddenly, and was very green and flourishing, and was pleasant and refreshing, and it made a fine show for one day, and then withered and dried up. [Jonah iv. 6.](#) &c.

God reprov'd Jonah for his so little regarding the lives of the inhabitants of Nineveh, by the type of the gourd, which was manifestly intended as a type of the life of man; or of man with respect to his life, being exactly agreeable to the representations frequently made of man, and his present frail life, in other parts of the Old Testament. This gourd was a vine, a feeble, dependent plant, that could not stand alone. This God therefore makes use of to represent man, in [Ezek. xv.](#) This gourd was a very tender, frail plant. It sprang up suddenly, and was very short-lived. Its life was but one day; as the life of man is often compared to a day. It was green and flourishing, and made a fine show one day, and was withered and dried up the next. It came up in a night and perished in a night; appeared flourishing in the morning, and the next evening was smitten, exactly agreeable to the representation made of man's life in [Psalm xc. 6.](#) "In the morning it flourished! and growth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." The worm that smote the gourd, represents the cause of man's death. The gourd was killed by a worm, a little thing; as man is elsewhere said to be crushed before the moth. It was that, the approach of which was not discerned; it came under ground:

as elsewhere man is represented as not knowing the time of his death, as the fishes are taken in an evil net, &c. And as being smitten by an arrow that flies unseen. That this gourd was intended by God as an emblem of man's life, is evident from what God himself says of it, and the application he makes of it. God himself compares the lives of the inhabitants of Nineveh with this gourd, [verse 10, 11](#). Jonah had pity on the gourd, *i. e.* on himself for the loss of it; for it was very pleasing and refreshing to him, while it lasted, and defended him from scorching heat. So life is sweet. The Ninevites by its preservation were held back from the wrath of God, that had been threatened for their sins. How much more therefore should Jonah have had a on the numerous inhabitants of Nineveh, when God threatened them with the loss of life, which was an enjoyment so much more desirable than the gourd was to him! And if he found fault with God, that he did not spare to him the shadow of the gourd; how unreasonable was he in also finding fault with God that he did spare the Ninevites their precious lives?

God miraculously enabled David to kill the lion and the bear, and to deliver the lamb out of their mouth, plainly and evidently to be a type, sign, and encouragement unto him, that he would enable him to destroy the enemies of his people, that were much stronger than they, and deliver his people from them. David did this as a shepherd over the flock of his father; and his acting the part of a shepherd toward them, is expressly spoken of as a resemblance of his acting the part of a king and shepherd towards God's people from time to time. [1 Chron. xi. 2](#). [Psalm lxxviii. 70, 71, 72](#). [Jerem. xxiii. 4, 5, 6](#). [Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24](#). [Chap. xxxvii. 24](#). And God's people in places innumerable are called his flock, and his sheep, and their enemies, in David's Psalms and elsewhere, are compared to the lion and other beasts of prey that devour the sheep: and David himself calls his own deliverance, and the deliverance of God's people, a being saved from the lion's mouth. [Psalm vii. 1, 2](#), and [xvii. 12, 13](#). and [xxii. 20](#) and [xxxv. 17](#). and [lvii. 3, 4](#). And David himself thus understood and improved God's thus miraculously enabling him to conquer these wild beasts, and deliver the lamb, as a representation and sign of what God would enable him to do for his people against their strong enemies; as is evident from what he said to Saul, when he offered to go against Goliath.

The accidental rending of Samuel's mantle, [1 Sam. xv. 27, 28](#). signified the rending of the kingdom from Saul. It was a common thing for God to order and appoint things to be done by men, in order to typify future events; so Samuel poured out water in Mizpeh, [1 Sam. vii. 6](#). to signify their repentance. See Pool's Synopsis. Ahijah's rending Jeroboam's garment in twelve pieces, and giving him ten, was to testify the rending the kingdom of Israel, and giving him ten tribes. [1 Kings xi. 30](#)., &c. So see [1 Kings xx. 35](#)., &c. and [2 Kings xiii. 14-20](#). The prophet's assisting the king of Israel, in shooting an arrow eastward, towards Syria, was appointed of God to signify that he would assist the king of Israel in fighting with the Syrians. [2 Kings xiii. 15](#)., &c. The prophet Isaiah by God's appointment went naked and barefoot, to typify the Egyptians and Ethiopians going naked and barefoot in their captivity. [Isaiah](#)

xx. Jeremiah by God's appointment typified the captivity of the Jews into Babylon, with many of its circumstances, by taking a linen girdle and putting it on his loins, and hiding it in a hole in a rock by the river Euphrates, and returning again to take it from thence. [Jer. xiii.](#) He was commanded to typify the destruction of the people by breaking a potter's vessel. [Chap. xix.](#) By taking a wine cup and offering it to many nations agreeably to God's appointment and direction, he typified God's causing them as it were to drink the cup of his fury. [Chap. xxv.](#) And he was commanded to make bonds and yokes, and put them upon his neck and send them to the neighbouring kings, to typify the yoke of bondage under Nebuchadnezzar that God was about to bring upon them. [Chap. xxvii.](#) Nehemiah shook his lap, [Neh. v. 13.](#) to signify the shaking of every man from his house who should not perform the oath which they had taken. Ezekiel very often typified future events, by things that he did by God's appointment; as by his eating the roll, &c. [Ezek. iii.](#) And by lying on his side, and many other things that he was to do, that we have an account of, [Ezek. iv.](#) And by shaving his head and beard, and burning part of the hair in the fire, &c. [chap. v.](#) and by making a chain, [chap. vii. 23.](#); and by his removing, with the many circumstances that God directed him to, [chap. xii. 1.](#), &c.; and by his eating his bread with trembling, [verse 18.](#); by filling a pot with the choice pieces of flesh on the fire, &c.; and by his not mourning for his wife, [chap. xxiv.](#) The prophet Hosea typified the things he prophesied of, by taking a wife of whoredoms, [Hos. i.](#) and by marrying an adulteress, with the circumstances of it, [chap. iii.](#) The prophet Zechariah was commanded to typify the things he predicted, by making silver and golden crowns on the heads of those that returned from the captivity, [Zech. vi.](#); and by the two staves called Beauty and Bands; and by his casting money to the potter in the house of the Lord; and his taking the instruments of a foolish shepherd. [Chap. xi.](#)

It was so common a thing for the prophets to typify things that were the subjects of their prophecies by divine appointment, that the false prophets imitated them in it, and were wont to feign directions from God to typify the subjects of their false prophecies. See [1 Kings xxii. 11.](#) and [Jer. xxviii. 10.](#) Things in common use among the Israelites were spoken of by the Spirit of God as types. Thus the vine-tree is spoken of as a type of man, especially of God's visible people. [Ezek. xv.](#)

It being so much God's manner from the beginning of the world, to represent divine things by types, hence it probably came to pass, that typical representations were looked upon by the ancient nations, the Egyptians in particular, as sacred things, and therefore called *hieroglyphics*, which signifies *sacred images or representations*. And animals being very much made use of in the ancient types of the church of God, so they were very much used in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, which probably led the way to their worship of all manner of living creatures.

Now since it was, as has been observed, God's manner of old, in the times of the Old Testament, from generation to generation, and even from the beginning of the world to the

end of the Old-Testament history, to represent divine things by outward signs, types, and symbolical representations, and especially thus to typify and prefigure future events, that he revealed by his Spirit, and foretold by the prophets; it is very unlikely, that the Messiah, and things appertaining to his kingdom and salvation, should not be thus abundantly pre-figured and typified under the Old Testament, if the following things be considered.

It is apparent from the Old Testament that these things are the main subject of the prophecies of the Old Testament, the subject about which the spirit of prophecy was chiefly conversant from the beginning of the world. It was the subject of the first proper prophecy that ever was uttered: and it is abundantly evident from the Old Testament, that it is every way the chief of all prophetic events. 'Tis spoken of abundantly as the greatest and most glorious event, beyond all that eye had seen, ear heard, or had entered into the heart of man; at the accomplishment of which not only God's people and all nations should unspeakably rejoice, but the trees of the field, the hills and mountains, the sea and dry land, and all heaven and earth, should rejoice and shout for joy; and in comparison of which the greatest events of the Old Testament, and particularly those two most insisted on, the creation of the world and the redemption out of Egypt, were not worthy to be mentioned or to come into mind, and in comparison of which the greatest and most sacred things of the Mosaic dispensation, even the ark itself, the most sacred of all, was not worthy of notice. And it is also abundantly evident from the Old Testament, that it was the grand event that, above all other future events, was the object of the contemplations, hopes, and raised expectations of God's people, from the beginning of the world.

And furthermore, the introducing of the Messiah and his kingdom and salvation, is plainly spoken of in the Old Testament, as the great event which was the substance, main drift, and end of all the prophecies of the Old Testament, to reveal which chiefly it was, that the spirit of prophecy was given, in that the angel, in [Dan. ix. 24](#), speaks of this event, as that in the accomplishment of which prophecies in general are summed up, and have their ultimate confirmation, in which the vision and prophecy, or all prophetic revelation, has its last result and consummation. [Dan. ix. 24](#). "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city; to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, *and to seal up the vision and prophecy*, and to anoint the most holy." That what has been expressed is the import of the phrase of sealing up the vision and prophecy, is evident from the drift and manner of expression of the whole verse, and also from [Ezek. xxviii. 12](#). "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Mr. Basnage, in his history of the Jews, observes, that the rabbies among the Jews still agree to this day, that all the oracles of the prophets relate to the Messiah. Page 371. [Col. 1](#).

And besides, it is to be considered, that this event was that in which the people of God, from the beginning of the world, were most nearly and greatly concerned: yea, was of infin-

itely the greatest concern to them of all prophetic events; for 'tis evident from the Old Testament, that the Messiah was not only to be the Saviour of God's people, that should be after his coming; but that he was the Saviour of the saints in all ages from the beginning of the world, and that through his coming, and what he should do at his appearing, they all should have the only true atonement for their sins, and restoration from the curse brought upon them by the fall of Adam, the resurrection from the dead, and eternal life.

'Tis much more reasonable to suppose, that many things pertaining to the state and constitution of the nation of Israel, many things which God ordered and appointed among them, should be typical of things appertaining to the Messiah; because it is evident from the Old Testament, that the very being of that people as God's people, and their being distinguished and separated from the rest of the world, was to prepare the way for the introduction of that great blessing into the world of mankind, of the Messiah and his kingdom. It seems to be pretty plainly intimated by God, at the first planting of the tree, or founding that ancient church, and separating that people from the rest of the world, in the call of Abraham, in the three first verses of [Gen. xii.](#) "Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation; and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It here seems to be manifest, that the introducing that great good, which God had in view, to all the families of the earth, was what God had in view, in thus calling and separating Abraham, to make of him a happy nation. It is therefore much the more likely, that many things belonging to them should be typical of the great future things appertaining to this great blessing, which was the great end God designed by them: and especially considering that we find it to be God's manner under the Old Testament, in both persons and things, to signify and represent beforehand, that which God made or separated them for, or the special use or design God had in view with respect to them. It was God's manner beforehand to signify and represent these things, in what appertained to them, or happened concerning them. So he often did in the signification of the names that he gave them, as in the names of Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Judah, Joshua, David, Solomon, &c and in things which they saw or did, or which came to pass concerning them; as Moses's being drawn out of the water, and what God showed him in Horeb, before he went into Egypt from Midian, in the burning bush; and in David, in his slaying the lion and bear and delivering the lamb.

Again we find that many lesser redemptions, deliverances, and victories of God's people, which it is plain even from the Old Testament, were as nothing in comparison with the salvation and victory of the Messiah, were by God's ordering represented by types; as the redemption out of Egypt. This was much typified afterwards in institutions that God appointed in commemoration of it. And the reason given by God for his thus typifying of it, was

that it was so worthy to have signs and representations to fix it in the mind. Thus concerning the representations of their coming out of Egypt, in the passover, by eating it with unleavened bread, with their staff in their hand, &c. this reason is given why they should have such representations and memorials of it. [Exod. xiii. 42](#). It is a night much to be remembered. This redemption out of Egypt was also much typified beforehand. It was typified in the smoking furnace and the burning lamp following it which Abraham saw. [Gen. xv. 17](#). It was typified in Moses's being drawn out of the water, and in the burning bush that survived the flames, and by Moses's rod's swallowing up the magicians' rods. David's victory over the enemies of God's people, and his saving them out of their hands, was typified by his conquering the lion and the bear, and rescuing the lamb. God's giving victory to Israel over the Syrians, and delivering them from them, was typified by the prophet's helping the king of Israel to shoot an arrow towards them. [2 Kings xiii. 15](#). &c. The salvation of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army was typified by the springing of the corn afresh from the roots of the stubble. Hezekiah's being saved from death was typified by bringing back the sun, when it was going down. Since, therefore, God did so much to typify those lesser victories and salvations, is it not exceedingly likely that great victory and redemption of the Messiah, which appears by the Old Testament to be infinitely greater, and that was all along so much more insisted on, in the word of the Lord to the people, should be much more typified?

It is much more reasonably and credibly supposed, that God should through the ages of the Old Testament be very much in typifying things pertaining to the Messiah and his salvation, not only in prophecies, but also in types; because we find in fact, that at the very beginning of God's revealing the Messiah to mankind, prophecies and types went together in the first prophecy of the Messiah, and the first proper prophecy that ever was in the world, God foretold and typified the redemption both together, when God said to the serpent, [Gen. iii. 15](#). "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This is undoubtedly a prediction of the Messiah's victory over Satan, and his suffering from Satan, and of the Messiah's people's victory and deliverance through him. And none can reasonably question but that here is also some respect had to that enmity there is between mankind and serpents, and the manner of serpents wounding mankind and of men's killing them; for God is here speaking concerning a beast of the field that was ranked with the cattle, as appears by the foregoing verse. And this state of things with respect to serpents, was plainly ordered and established in these words. But if we suppose that both these things were intended in the same words, then undoubtedly one is spoken of and ordained as a representation of the other. If God orders and speaks of the bruising of a serpent's head, and thereby signifies the Messiah's conquering the devil, that is the same thing as God's ordering and speaking of the bruising of a serpent's head as a sign, signification, or (which is the same thing) type of his conquering the devil.



And in what is said to the serpent, [ver. 14](#). “Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life;” it is evident that God speaks concerning that serpent that was a beast of the field. And yet it is also evident by the Old Testament, that he has respect to something pertaining to the state of the devil, that should be brought to pass by the Messiah; as by [Isa. lxxv.25](#). “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain;” compared with [Isa. xi. 1-9](#), together with [Isa. xxvii. 1](#), and [Zech. iii. 1, 2](#), &c. Thus the very first thing that was ordered and established in this world after the fall, was a type of the Messiah, and was ordered as such: which argues that typifying of the Messiah is one principal way of God’s foreshowing him. And as types and prophecies of the Messiah began together, so there is reason to think that they have kept pace one with another ever since.

It is more credible, that not only some particular events that came to pass among the Jews, or things appointed to be done among them, should be typical, but that the state or constitution of the nation, and their way of living in many things, was typical, because we have an instance of an appointment of a way of living in a particular family or race, to continue from generation to generation, in the chief and more important things appertaining to the outward state and way of life, requiring that which was very diverse from the manner of living of all others, and that which was very self-denying, in order to typify something spiritual. The instance I mean is that of the posterity of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, who was required by the command of Jonadab, commanding them by the spirit of prophecy to drink no wine, nor build any house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard.

It is a great argument, that the ancient state of the nation of Israel, and both things that appertained to their religious constitution, and God’s providential disposal of them, were typical of the Messiah; that the Jews themselves anciently thus understood the matter. The ancient Jewish rabbies (as Mr. Basnage, in his history of the Jews, observes, p. 368.) judged that all things happened to their fathers as types and figures of the Messiah. See also Bp. Kidder’s *Demn. of the Messiah*, part 2. p. 40. and part 1. p. 73, 74. *Ibid.* p. 111, 112. *Ibid.* 150. and part 2. p. 67, 71, 77, 78, and 106.

As to the historical events of the Old Testament, it is an argument that many of them were types of things appertaining to the Messiah’s kingdom and salvation, that these things are often in the Old Testament expressly spoken of as represented or resembled by those historical events. And those events are sometimes not only mentioned as resemblances, but as signs and pledges, of those great things of the Messiah. In [Isa. xli](#). Abraham’s great victory over the kings and nations of the east, is spoken of as a resemblance of the victory of the Messiah and his people over their enemies. Abraham is here called the righteous man, [ver. 2](#); as the Messiah in the same discourse: in the beginning of the next chapter, the Messiah is called God’s servant, that shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, and bring forth

judgment unto truth, and set judgment in the earth. God is said, [xli. 2.](#) to call Abraham to his foot. [Chap. xlii. 6.](#) it is said of the Messiah, "I have called thee to righteousness." Of Abraham it is said, [chap. xli. 2.](#) "That God gave the nations before him, as the dust to his sword, and as the driven stubble to his bow:" and this is spoken of for the encouragement of God's people, as a resemblance and pledge of what he would do for them in the days of the Messiah, when he would cause their enemies before them to be ashamed and confounded, to be as nothing and to perish; so that they shall seek them, and should not find them, and they that war against them shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought; and they should thresh the mountains and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff: so that the wind should carry them away, and the whirlwind should scatter them. [Verses 11, 12, 15, 16.](#)

The church or spouse of the Messiah is spoken of, in [Cant. vi. 13.](#) as being represented by the company of Mahanaim, that we have an account of [Gen. xxxii.](#) at the beginning, made up of Jacob's family and the heavenly host that joined them.

The redemption out of Egypt is very often in the Old Testament spoken of as a resemblance of the redemption by the Messiah. [Numb. xxiii. 22, 23.](#) "God brought them out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel. According to this time shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" [Mic. vii. 15.](#) "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvellous things." [Isa. lxiv. 1, 3, 4.](#) "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens; that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things that we look not for, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear," &c. [Isa. xi. 11.](#) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt;" together with [verses 15, 16.](#) This redemption out of Egypt, is evidently spoken of as a resemblance of the redemption of the Messiah. In [Psal. lxxviii. 6.](#) "God bringeth out those that were bound with chains." [Verse 13.](#) "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;" in which there is an evident reference to the people's hands being delivered from the pots in Egypt. [Psal. lxxxi. 6.](#) and the context, makes this evident. And the drift and design of the psalm shows this to be a promise of the Messiah's redemption. God's dividing the Red sea and the Jordan, and leading the people through them, are often spoken of as resemblances of what God shall accomplish for his people in the days of the Messiah. [Isa. xi. 11.](#) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people that shall be left from Egypt." [Ver. 15, 16.](#) "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and cause men to go over dry shod. And there shall be an high way for the remnant of his people, which shall be left

from Assyria, like as it was to Israel, in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.” [Isa. xliii. 2, 3](#). “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee for I gave Egypt for thy ransom;” [ver. 16, 17, 18, 19](#). “Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters, which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow. Remember not former things Behold, I will do a new thing.” [Chap. xxvii. 12](#). “And it shall come to pass at that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river under the stream of Egypt,” (or the Lord shall strike off, or smite away, both the channel of the river and the stream of Egypt,) “and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.” [Chap. 1i. 10, 11](#). “Art not thou it which hath dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over? Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion,” &c. [Ver. 15](#). “But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea,” &c. [Chap. lxiii. 11, 12, 13](#). “Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saving, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? That led them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness?” [Psal. lxxviii. 22](#). “I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea.” [Zech. x. 10, 11](#). “I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt and he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up, and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.”

The destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Redsea, is spoken of as a resemblance of the destruction of the enemies of God’s people by the Messiah. [Isa. xliii. 16, 17](#). “Thus saith the Lord, which maketh away in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise.” And particularly Pharaoh’s destruction in the Red sea, is spoken of as a type of the Messiah’s bruising the head of the old serpent or dragon. [Isa. li. 9, 10](#). “Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art not thou it which hath dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion,” &c. Pharaoh is called leviathan and the dragon in [Psalm lxxiv. 13, 14](#), as the devil is in a like destruction in the Messiah’s time, [Isa. xxvii. 1](#). That Pharaoh is intended in those forementioned places by the dragon and leviathan, is very manifest from [Ezek. xxix. 3](#) and [xxxii. 2](#).

The joy and songs of the children of Israel at their redemption put of Egypt, and their great deliverance from the Egyptians at the Red sea, are spoken of as a resemblance of the joy God’s people shall have in the redemption of the Messiah. [Hos. ii. 15](#). “And she shall

sing there as in the days of her youth; and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.” The Spirit of God seems to have reference to the manner of his leading and guarding the people when they went up out of Egypt, in going before them to lead them, and behind to keep the Egyptians from hurting them; and to compare what he would do in the Messiah’s days thereto. [Isa. lii. 12.](#) “For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; the God of Israel will be your reward;” the God of Israel, that God that thus led Israel out of Egypt, when he entered into covenant with them, and became the God of that people. Here see Pool’s Synopsis on [Exod. xii. 14.](#) God’s leading the people through the wilderness, is spoken of as a resemblance of what should be accomplished towards God’s people in the Messiah’s times. [Isa. lxiii. 13.](#) “That led them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness.” [Psalm lxviii. 8.](#) “O God, when thou wentest before thy people; when thou didst march through the wilderness;” compared with the rest of the psalm. [Hos. ii. 14,15.](#) “I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her, and she shall sing as in the days of her youth; as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.” [Ezek. xx. 34-37.](#) “And I will bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out” (plainly alluding to God’s manner of redeeming the people out of Egypt). “And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face; like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant.” Where we may also observe that God’s speaking with the people face to face, and entering into covenant with them, and making them his covenant people when he brought them out of Egypt, is spoken of as a resemblance of God’s revealing himself to his people in the days of the Messiah, and bringing them into a covenant relation to himself by him. God’s appearing with the children of Israel in a pillar of cloud and fire, is spoken of as a resemblance of what God would do for his people in the days of the Messiah. [Isa. iv.](#) “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Sion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flame of fire by night. For upon all the glory shall be a defence.” The quaking of the earth and of mount Sinai, at the time of the giving of the law, is spoken of as a resemblance of what should be in the Messiah’s days. [Ps. lxviii. 8.](#) “The earth shook even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.” So the great effect of God’s presence on the mountains, and especially mount Sinai’s being all enkindled by so great and dreadful a fire, is plainly spoken of as a resemblance of what should be in the days of the Messiah. [Isa. lxiv. 1-4.](#) “Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou earnest down; the mountains flowed down at thy presence. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard,” &c. So the rain that

descended on the people, at the time of the thunder and lightning at mount Sinai, or at the time of the great hailstones that God sent on the Amorites, [Psalm lxviii. 7, 8, 9](#). “O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God. Thou, O Lord, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst refresh thine inheritance when it was weary.” These things do abundantly confirm, that the redemption out of Egypt, and the circumstances and events that attended it, were intended by the great disposer of all things to be types of the redemption of God’s people by the Messiah, and of things appertaining to that redemption.

It is an argument that the manna God gave the children of Israel was a type of something spiritual, because it is called the corn of heaven and angels’ food. [Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25](#). and [Ps. cv. 40](#). It could be angels’ food no otherwise than as representing something spiritual.

Now by the way I would remark, what was before made use of as an argument, that the great redemption by the Messiah was very much typified beforehand, is very greatly strengthened by what has been now observed. I mean that argument that lesser redemptions were by God’s ordering represented by types, and particularly that the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt was much typified beforehand. Now if this was so, that God was much in typifying this redemption beforehand, which itself was a type of the great redemption by the Messiah; how much more may we suppose this great redemption itself, that is the antitype of that, should be abundantly typified! Will God do much to typify that, which was itself but a shadow of the Messiah’s salvation? And shall he not be much more in prefiguring the very substance even that great redemption by the Messiah, in comparison of which the former is often in the Old Testament represented as worthy of no remembrance or notice?

God’s bringing his people into Canaan, to a state of rest and happiness there, is spoken of as a resemblance of what God would do for his people through the Messiah. [Jer. xxxi. 2](#). “Thus saith the Lord, the people that were left of the sword, found grace in the wilderness, even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest:” compared with the rest of the chapter and the foregoing chapter. [Isa. lxiii. 14](#). “As the beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest. So didst thou lead thy people to make thyself a glorious name:” together with the context. [Ps. lxviii. 10](#). “Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.” [Ver. 13](#). “Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove,” &c. together with the context. The manner of God’s giving Israel the possession of Canaan, *viz.* by a glorious conquest of the kings and nations of the land, is spoken of as a resemblance of the manner in which God would bring his people to rest and glory, by the Messiah, after his exaltation, [Ps. lxviii. 11, 12](#). “The Lord gave the word; great was the company of them that published it. Kings of armies did flee apace; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.” [Ver. 14](#). “When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon,” taken with [ver. 21, 22, 23](#). “But God shall wound

the head of his enemies The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan; I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea: that thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same." [Ver. 30](#). "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of bulls," &c. together with the rest of the psalm.

What the people of God should be brought to, in the days of the Messiah, is spoken of as represented by the children of Israel's slaying Achan in Joshua's time. [Hos. ii. 15](#). "And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

What came to pass in the time of Joshua's battle with the five kings of the Amorites, and particularly God's sending down great hailstones upon them, is spoken of as a resemblance of what should be in the days of the Messiah. [Isa. xxviii. 21](#). "For the Lord shall rise up in mount Perazim, and his wrath as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and brine to pass his act, his strange act:" together with [ver. 2](#). "Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, shall cast down to the earth with the hand." And [chap. xxx. 30](#). "And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger with tempest and hailstones." And [xxxii. 19](#). "When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low in a low place" (or shall be utterly abased). And [Ezek. xxxviii. 29](#). "I will rain upon him an overflowing rain, and great hailstones."

What God did for Israel in the victory of Deborah and Barak over the Canaanites, is spoken of as a resemblance of what God would do for his people against their enemies in the days of the Messiah; [Psal. lxxxiii. 9, 10](#). "Do unto them as unto Sisera, as to Jabin at the brook of Kison, which perished at En-dor: they became as dung for the earth." For this psalm is prophetic, and these things have respect to the great things God would do against the future enemies of his church. For it does not appear that there was any such confederacy of the nations mentioned against Israel in David's or Asaph's time; and particularly it does not look probable, that there was any such enmity of the inhabitants of Tyre against Israel, as here spoken of, [ver. 7](#). And it is very probable, that as this psalm is prophetic, so it is prophetic of the Messiah's days; as most of the psalms are. And there is a great agreement between what is here foretold of the destruction of the enemies of the church, and what is foretold of the Messiah's days in many other places. And the last verse, which speaks of God's being made known to all mankind as the only true God, and the God of all the earth, further confirms this.

Gideon's victory over the Midianites, is spoken of as a resemblance of what should be accomplished in the Messiah's days. [Isa. ix. 4](#). "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian." [Psal. lxxxiii. 9](#). "Do unto them as unto the Midianites." [Ver. 11](#). "Make their nobles like Oreb and like



Zeeb; yea, all their princes as Zeba and Zalmunna.” As in the destruction of the Midianites every man’s sword was against his brother; so it is foretold, that it should be with the enemies of God’s people in the Messiah’s times. [Ezek. xxxviii. 14.](#) “Every man’s sword shall be against his brother.” [Hag. ii. 22.](#) “And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, and I will overthrow the chariots of them that ride in them, and the horses and their riders shall come down every one by the sword of his brother.”

God’s wonderful appearance for David at Baal-Perazim, to light for him, against his enemies, is spoken of as a resemblance of what should be in the Messiah’s times. [Isa. xxviii. 21.](#) “For the Lord shall ride up as in mount Perazim.”

In [Zech. ix. 15.](#) “The Lord of hosts shall defend them, and shall devour and subdue with sling-stones.” There seems a reference to David’s subduing Goliath with a sling-stone, as though that were a resemblance of the manner in which the enemies of God’s people should be subdued in the times of the Messiah; and this is an argument that David’s bruising the head of this giant and grand enemy of God’s church, is a type of the Messiah, the Son of David, and who is often called by the name of David in Scripture, bruising the head of Satan.

It is an argument that the historical events of the Old Testament in the whole series of them, from the beginning of God’s great works for Israel in order to their redemption out of Egypt, even to their full possession of the promised land in the days of David, and the building of the temple in the days of Solomon, were typical things, and that under the whole history was hid, in a mystery or parable, a glorious system of divine truth concerning greater things than these, that a plain, summary rehearsal or narration of them is called a parable and dark saying or enigma. [Psal. lxxviii. 2.](#) It is evident that here by a parable is not meant merely a set discourse of things, appertaining to divine wisdom, as the word parable is sometimes used; but properly a mystical, enigmatical speech, signifying spiritual and divine things, and figurative and typical representations; because it is called both a parable and dark sayings.

It is an argument that many of the historical events of the Old Testament are types of the great events appertaining to the Messiah’s coming and kingdom, that the Spirit of God took occasion from the former to speak of the latter. He either takes occasion to speak of and foretell the Messiah, and the great events appertaining to his salvation, upon occasion of the coming to pass of these ancient events, or on his speaking of these events, celebrating or promising them, he takes occasion to speak of these latter and greater events, joining what is declared of the one with what he reveals of the other in the same discourse; which is an argument that one has relation to the other, and is the image of the other. Thus the Spirit of God, when speaking by Balaam, took occasion, when celebrating the wonderful work of God in bringing them out of Egypt, to foretell that great salvation that God should work for his people by the Messiah. [Num. xxiii. 23.](#) So the Spirit of God in Nathan, when

speaking of the glorious reign of Solomon, and his building a house to God's name, and promising these things to David, [2 Sam. vii.](#) takes occasion to foretell and promise the more glorious and everlasting kingdom of the Messiah; as it is evident that David understood the words of Nathan by what he says in [chapter xxiii.](#) and in the book of Psalms; and as it is evident from many things in the prophets, the Spirit of God intended them. From the ark's being carried up into mount Sion, and the great joy and privileges of Israel consequent thereupon, the Spirit took occasion to speak very much of the exaltation of the Messiah, and the glorious privileges of his people consequent thereupon; as in [1 Chron. xvi. 7-36.](#) especially from [verse 22.](#) So in [Psalm lxxviii.](#) which was penned or indited on occasion of the ascension of the ark into mount Sion, as any one may be satisfied by duly considering the matter of the psalm, especially [verses 25-29.](#) and by comparing the first and seventh verses of this psalm with [Num. x. 35.](#) and by comparing many passages in this psalm with many parts of that song of David, on occasion of the carrying up the ark, that is recorded in [1 Chron. xvi.](#) Again, on this occasion the Spirit of God speaks of the things of the Messiah in [Psalm cxxxii.](#) which was penned on that occasion, as is very plain from the matter of the psalm, and by comparing verses [8, 9, 10, 11.](#) with [2 Chron. vi. 41, 42.](#)

From David's great victories over the Syrians and Edomites, the Spirit of God takes occasion to speak much of the victories of the Messiah in [Psalms lx.](#) and [cviii. Psalm lxxii.](#) which is evidently a remarkable prophecy of the Messiah, was written on occasion of the introducing of Solomon to the throne of Israel, as is evident from the title, together with the first verse of the psalm.

So the Spirit of God does abundantly take occasion to foretell and promise the redemption of the Messiah, and the overthrow of his people's enemies by him; from these two events, the destruction of Sennacherib's army, and the deliverance of Jerusalem from him, and likewise the destruction of Babylon, and the redemption of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity.

Not only does God take occasion from these historical events to speak of the great events that appertain to the Messiah's coming and salvation; but with regard to several of them, he manifestly speaks of both under one; the same words have respect to both events. One is spoken of under the other, as though one were contained in the other, or as though one were the other; which can be no other way, than by one being the type or representation of the other, in that sense wherein David said the waters of the well of Bethlehem was the blood of those men that bought it in jeopardy of their lives; as the beasts Daniel saw are said to be kingdoms, and the horns to be kings, and as Ezekiel's hair is said to be Jerusalem. [Ezek. v. 5.](#)

Thus Balaam prophesied of David who smote the four corners of Moab, and of the Messiah, under one. So it is most manifest that the peace and glory of Solomon's reign, and that of the reign of the Messiah, are spoken of under one. [Psalm lxxii.](#) And that the ascending



of the ark into mount Sion, and the ascension of the Messiah, are also spoken of under one in [Psalm lxxviii](#).

Some of the historical events of the Old Testament, if they are not typical, must needs be very impertinently taken notice of in the history; as David's sacrificing when they had gone six paces with the ark; [2 Sam. vi. 13](#). It must be both insignificantly done and impertinently related in the history, unless there be some signification of some important thing in it. So the relation of there being twelve fountains of water and threescore and ten palm-trees.

The remarkable similitude there is between many of the events in the Old Testament, both miraculous and others, and the prophetic descriptions of events relating to the Messiah, is an argument that the former were designed resemblances of the latter. God's causing the light to shine out of darkness, as Moses gives us an account of it in the history of the creation, has a great similitude with what is foretold to come to pass in the Messiah's times. [Isaiah xlii. 16](#). "I will make darkness light before them." [Isaiah ix. 2](#). "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." [Isaiah xxix. 18](#). "The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness." So there is a great resemblance between the account Moses gives us of a river that ran through the midst of Eden to water the trees of paradise, and the descriptions which the prophets give of what should be in the Messiah's times; as [Ezek. xlvii. 7](#). "Now when I had returned, behold at the bank of the river were very many trees, on the one side and on the other." [Ver. 12](#). "And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." [Isaiah xli. 18, 19](#). "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle and the oil-tree. I will set in the desert the fir-tree and the pine and the box-tree together." Compared with [Isaiah li. 3](#). "The Lord will comfort Sion and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." [Ezek. xxxvi. 35](#). "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;" and [Psalm xlvi. 4](#). "There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God;" taken with [Num. xxiv. 5, 6](#). "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth; *as the gardens by the river side; as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters;*" and [Jer. xxxi. 12](#). "And their soul shall be like a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all." So between what we are told of the tree of life in Eden, (which being in the midst of the garden, we have reason to think was by the river,) and the representations made of what should be in the Messiah's times, [Ezek. xlvii. 9, 12](#). "Every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the river shall come, shall live. Every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed.

It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months. The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”

The things that we have an account of in Moses’s history of the deluge, have a great resemblance of many of the Old-Testament representations of things that shall be brought to pass in the time of the Messiah’s kingdom. That destruction of the wicked world by a flood of waters, is very agreeable to the Old-Testament representation of the future destruction that shall come on all God’s enemies, and particularly in the Messiah’s days. The wicked of the old world were destroyed by a dreadful tempest. So it is said concerning the ungodly, [Job xxvii. 20, 21](#). “Terrors take hold on him as waters; a tempest stealeth him away in the night. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth; a storm hurleth him out of his place.” Sorrow and misery is very often represented by overwhelming waters, and God’s wrath by waves and billows. [Ps. xlii. 7](#). and [lxxxviii. 7](#). The waters of the flood did not only overwhelm the wicked, but came into their bowels. God’s wrath on the ungodly is compared to this very thing. [Ps. cix. 18](#). “As he clothed himself with cursing like as with a garment, so let it come into his bowels like water.” In the time of the flood the waters were poured down out of heaven like spouts or cataracts of water. God’s wrath is compared unto this, [Ps. xlii. 7](#). “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts.” The waters of the deluge were what the ungodly of the world could not escape, or hide themselves from them by resorting to caves in the ground, or digging deep in the earth, or flying to the tops of mountains; so likewise is the matter represented with respect to God’s wrath on the ungodly, in [Isaiah xxviii. 17](#). “The waters shall overflow the hiding-place;” and [Amos ix. 1, 2](#). “He that fleeth of them shall not flee away: he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them: though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and lake them out thence:” and so in many other places. Particularly is there a great resemblance between the destruction that was brought on the wicked world by the flood, and what is foretold of the wicked in the Messiah’s times; as in [Isaiah xxiv. 18, 19, 20](#). “And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear, shall fall into a pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit, shall be taken in the snare.” (So that there shall be no escaping, let them flee where they will, as it was in the time of the deluge.) “For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it.” There is not only a resemblance between this representation of the punishment of the wicked world in the Messiah’s days, and the history of the flood, but here seems to be an evident allusion to the flood, and a designed comparison of that destruction of God’s enemies, and what was in the time of the flood, when we are told the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, &c. So the destruction of God’s enemies in the Messiah’s times is represented as being by a flood.

[Dan. ix. 26.](#) “And the end thereof shall be with a flood;” and to a flood occasioned by a mighty rain, [Ezek. xxxviii. 22.](#) “I will rain upon him and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain.” There is also a remarkable agreement between what we are told in Moses’s history of the preservation of those that were in the ark, and what is often declared in Old-Testament prophecies concerning the preservation and salvation of the church by the Messiah. [Isa. xxxii.](#) at the beginning. “A man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest.” [Isa. iv. 6.](#) “And there shall be a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm, and from rain.” [Isa. xxv. 4.](#) “Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in distress, a refuge from the storm when the blast of the terrible ones is as the storm against the wall.” [Psal. xlvi. 1, 2, 3.](#) “God is our refuge and strength, we will not fear though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea” (as they in a sense were in the flood. They were in the midst of the sea; the sea surrounded and overwhelmed them). “Though the waters thereof roar and are troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” [Isa. xliii. 2.](#) “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee:” compare these texts with [Psalm xxxii. 6.](#) “Surely in the flood of great waters, they shall not come nigh thee,” and [Psalm xci. 7.](#) “A thousand shall fell at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.” We may suppose that there was a resorting and flocking of animals from all parts of the world, such as are proper to hot countries, from the south; and such as dwell in colder climates, from the north. And as there are many countries that have their peculiar kinds of animals; so we may suppose there was a resorting from every quarter. A resorting of beasts and a flocking of birds, which is a lively resemblance of what is often foretold of the gathering of God’s people into his church from all quarters in the Messiah’s days, and coming to him for salvation when all the ends of the earth should look to him to be saved. [Isaiah xlv. 22.](#) When God should bring the seed of his church from the east, and gather them from the west, and would say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back. Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. [Isa. xliii. 6, 7.](#) and many other parallel places. And God would gather his people from all countries, agreeably to many prophecies, and it shall be said, Who are those that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? The gathering of all kinds of creatures to the ark, clean and unclean, tame and wild, gentle and rapacious, innocent and venomous; tygers, wolves, bears, lions, leopards, serpents, vipers, dragons; and the door of the ark standing open to them, and their all dwelling there peaceably together under one head, even Noah, who kindly received them and took care of them, fed and saved them, and to whom they tamely submitted, is a lively representation of what is often foretold concerning the Messiah’s days, when it is foretold, that not only the Jews should be saved but unclean Gentile nations, when the gates of God’s church should be open to all sorts of people, ([Isa. lx. 11.](#) with the context,) when proclamation should be made to every one to come freely. [Isa. lv. 1-9.](#) And God would abundantly pardon the wicked and



unrighteous, [ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.](#) and would bring again even the captivity of Sodom and her daughters. [Ezek. xvi. 53.](#) And those nations should be gathered to God's church, to be one holy society with Israel, that were wont to be their most cruel and inveterate enemies; such as the Egyptians; [Psal. lxxxvii. 4.](#) and [lxviii. 31.](#) [Isa. xix. 18.,](#) to the end, and [xlv. 14.](#) The Philistines; [Psal. lx. 8.](#) and [lxxxvii. 4.](#) [Zech. ix. 6, 7.](#) The Chaldeans; [Psal. lxxxvii. 4.](#) and Assyrians; [Isa. xix. 23, 24, 25.;](#) and the most wild and barbarous nations, Tabor and Hermon, that were noted haunts of wild beasts; [Psal. lxxxvii. 12.](#) [Cant. iv. 8.](#) [Psal. xlii. 6.](#) [Hos. v. 1.](#) and the nations of Arabia and Ethiopia, (in many places see fulfilment of prophecies of Messiah, § 160.) countries that abounded with the most rapacious, venomous, and terrible animals. When it is foretold that the beasts of the field should honour God, and the dragons and the owls, [Isa. xliii. 19, 20.](#) and when it is foretold, "that the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the falling together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain," [Isa. xi. 6-9.](#) and [chap. lxv. 25.](#) events under the Messiah's kingdom are intended. The ark was a great while tossed to and fro on the face of the flood, ready to be overwhelmed; but at last rested on a high mountain or rock, and the company in it had enlargement and liberty, and were brought into a new world. So the church in the Messiah's days is long in a state of affliction, tossed with tempest and not comforted. [Isa. liv. 11.](#) But when she is ready to be overwhelmed, God will lead her to the rock that is higher than she, [Psal. lxi. 2.](#) and she shall be brought out of her affliction into a new world, [Isa. lxv. 17, 18.](#) and shall dwell in God's holy mountain, as is often foretold.

Another historical event, between which and the Old Testament representations of spiritual things, and particular things appertaining to the Messiah's kingdom, there is a great resemblance in the destruction of Sodom and the neighboring cities. There is a great resemblance between this and the future punishment of the wicked in general, as represented in the Old Testament. Fire and brimstone were poured out from God out of heaven, and rained down on these cities: so the wrath of God is often in the Old Testament compared to fire, and is represented as poured out from heaven on the ungodly, and particularly to be poured out like fire. [Nahum i. 6.](#) [Isa. xlii. 25.](#) [Jer. xlv. 6.](#) [Lam. ii. 4.](#) and [iv. 11.](#) [Ezek. xxii. 21, 22, 31.](#) So it is threatened in allusion to the manner of Sodom's destruction, [Psal. xi. 6.](#) that upon the wicked God would rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible or burning tempest, (as it is in the margin,) and it is said this should be the portion of their cup. That destruction came on Sodom suddenly and unexpectedly, while the inhabitants were in the midst of their voluptuousness and wickedness, and wholly at ease and quiet, in the morning, when the sun arose pleasantly on the earth, and when the idle and unclean inhabitants were

drowned in sloth, sleep, and pleasures; which is agreeable to what is often represented in the Old Testament of the manner of God's bringing destruction on the wicked. It came on Sodom as a snare. So it is said in that [11th Psal.](#) "Snares, fire, and brimstone, shall God rain," &c. That while the wicked is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and rain it upon him while he is eating, [Job xx. 23.](#) That God hath set them in slippery places, and that they are cast down to destruction in a moment, and are utterly consumed with terrors. [Psal. lxxiii. 18, 19.](#) That their destruction falls suddenly upon them, as the fishes are taken in an evil net, (when sporting securely in the water,) and as birds are caught in the snare (when they are feeding and pleasing themselves with the bait). [Eccl. ix. 12.](#) Particularly this is represented as the manner of destruction's coming on them that harden their necks when often reprov'd, as the inhabitants of Sodom had been by Lot, as appears by [Gen. xix. 9.](#) [Prov. xxix. 1.](#) "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." There is a special resemblance between the destruction of Sodom, and the destruction that is foretold to come on the enemies of God and the Messiah under the Messiah's kingdom, which is often represented as being by fire. [Mal. iii. 1.](#) "Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire:" A refiner's fire is a vehement furnace, that burns up the dross. [chap. iv. 1.](#) "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts; it shall leave them neither root nor branch." [Psal. xxi. 9.](#) "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the day of thine anger. The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them." [Dan. vii. 11.](#) "I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame." Yea, that destruction is represented as effected by raining down fire and brimstone upon them. [Ezek. xxxviii. 22.](#) "And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." [Isa. xxx. 30.](#) "And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." [Ver. 33.](#) "For Tophet is ordained of old; for the king it is prepared. He hath made it deep and large. The pile thereof is fire and much wood. The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." [Chap. xxix. 6.](#) "Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire." The Messiah's enemies are represented as destroyed with everlasting fire; [Isa. xxxiii. 11-14.](#) "The people shall be as the burning of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" [Isa. lxvi. 15, 16.](#) "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render vengeance with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword

will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many:" with [ver. 24](#). "And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." There was something in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to represent this. The fire that destroyed them was, as it were, everlasting fire, inasmuch as the destruction it brought upon them was everlasting and irreparable desolation, so that they never could be built again, and never any creature, either man or beast, could live there any more; which is often particularly remarked in Scripture. [Isa. xiii. 19, 20](#), [Jer. xlix. 18](#), and [chap. l. 39, 40](#). [Isa. i. 9](#). The place, land, or lake where Sodom and its neighbour cities once were, is a place that ever since abounds with that sulphurous inflammable matter, that is called *bitumen* and *asphaltum*, and in our translation of the Bible, *pitch*, which is a further representation of eternal burnings, and is a remarkable resemblance of what is foretold concerning the destruction of God's enemies in the Messiah's times. [Isa. xxxiv. 8-10](#). "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion; and the streams thereof shall be turned into *pitch*, (or *bitumen* or *asphaltum*,) and the dust thereof into brimstone; and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day. The smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." This destruction came on Sodom just as the sun was up, and had enlightened the world by its beams. So it is manifest, from many prophecies, that great destruction of the enemies of the church so often spoken of, is when God comes and appears gloriously for his people, and when the morning of that glorious day of the church's light, peace, and triumph is come on, and the glory of the Lord shall be risen upon the church, and the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings. Then will the day come that will burn as an oven, and the wicked shall be as stubble. Lot's being so wonderfully delivered and saved from the destruction, well represents that great preservation of God's church and people, so often spoken of by the prophets, in that time of God's indignation and day of his wrath and vengeance on his enemies.

The remarkable similitude there is between very many things in the history of Joseph, and the Old-Testament prophecies of the Messiah, argue the former to be a type of the latter. Joseph is said to be the son of Jacob's old age. [Gen. xxxvii. 3](#). So the Messiah is every where represented in the prophecies, as coming and setting up his kingdom in the latter days. He was Jacob's beloved son. [Gen. xxxvii. 3](#). So the prophecies do represent the Messiah as the beloved Son of God. They represent him as the Son of God. (See fulfilment of the prophecies of the Messiah, § 15.) They also represent him as one that should be in a very peculiar and transcendent manner the beloved of God. (See fulfilment of prophecies, &c. § 18.) Joseph was clothed with a beautiful garment. So the prophecies represent the Messiah as clothed with beautiful and glorious garments. [Zech. iii. 4, 5](#). "Take away the filthy garments from him. I will clothe thee with change of raiment so they set a fair mitre on his head, and clothed

him with garments.” [Isa. lxi. 10.](#) “He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” The sheaves of Joseph’s brethren in his vision all bow down to his sheaf. So it is prophesied of the Messiah, that God would make him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. [Psal. lxxxix. 27.](#) Kings are said all of them to be the sons of the Most High; but this king is represented as made the highest by God, and all the rest as being made to bow down unto him. [Psal. lxxii. 11.](#) “Yea, all things shall fall down before him.” [Isa. xlix. 7.](#) “Kings shall see and arise; princes also shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.” See also [ver. 23.](#) and [Psal. xlv.](#) “He hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” And many other places import the same thing. The saints are often in the prophecies called the children of God. And they are represented as the Messiah’s brethren. [Psal. xxii. 22.](#) “I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” But the Messiah is every where represented as their Lord and King, whom they honour, and submit to, and obey. Yea, it is promised that every knee should bow to him. [Isa. xlv. 23.](#) The sun, moon, and stars, are represented as making obeisance to Joseph. So in the prophecies the Messiah is represented as God, whom the Old Testament often speaks of as ruling sun, moon, and stars. And the heavens are represented as declaring the Messiah’s righteousness. ([Psal. xcvi. 6.](#) and [1. 6.](#)) And the heavens, and earth, and sea, and the whole universe, is represented as rejoicing and worshipping and praising the Messiah on occasion of his coming and kingdom. [Psal. xcvi. 11-13.](#) [lxix. 34.](#) [Isa. xlv. 23.](#) and [xlix. 13.](#) And the sun is represented as being ashamed, and the moon confounded, and the stars withdrawing their shining, (as it were veiling their faces as the worshipping angels do,) before the Messiah, at his coming to reign in the world. [Isa. xxiv. 23.](#) [Joel iii. 15.](#) And the stars as falling from heaven; [Isa. xxxiv. 4.](#) Joseph’s father and mother are represented as bowing down to him to the earth. This was never fulfilled properly with respect to Joseph. His father, when he met him in Egypt, did not, that we have any account, thus bow down to him; and his mother was dead long before; both Rachel and Leah were dead before Jacob went down into Egypt. But the Messiah’s ancestors are represented as worshipping him. The Messiah is represented as the Son of David; but David calls him Lord. [Psal. cx. 1.](#) Joseph was hated by his brethren, which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the Messiah. [Psal. lxix. 8.](#) “I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.” Joseph was hated by the sons of the same father, Jacob. So the prophecies do represent the Messiah as a son of Jacob, one of the seed of Israel, but as hated by the generality of his seed, the Jews. Joseph’s brethren sold him for a few pieces of silver; so the prophecies do represent the Jews as selling the Messiah for a few pieces of silver. [Zech. xi. 12, 13.](#) Joseph’s brethren went about to murder him; so the prophecies represent the Messiah as being murdered by the Jews. Joseph was the saviour of his brethren and the church of God. He saved their lives. So the Messiah is

abundantly represented in the prophecies as the saviour of his brethren; the saviour of the saints, the church of God, and of the nation of the Jews; and as one that saves them from death. Joseph was the saviour of the world, not only of the seed of Israel, but the Gentile nations, yea of all nations. For the famine was sore in all lands, even over all the face of the earth, and all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn. [Gen. xli. 56, 57](#). And his name *Zaphnath-paaneah*, in the Egyptian language, signifies the saviour of the world. This is exactly agreeable to the Old-Testament representation of the Messiah. Joseph was first in a state of great humiliation, and afterwards in a state of exaltation. In his state of humiliation he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. His disgrace and sufferings were very great. He suffered all unjustly from the hands of men, being innocent, and wrongfully condemned. He suffered as being guilty of horrid crimes. And had his place and lot among great criminals; and suffered all with admirable meekness; which is exactly agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah. Joseph was a servant to one of the chief rulers of Egypt, Potiphar, the captain of the guard. So the Messiah is called the servant of rulers. [Isa. xlix. 7](#). Joseph was one of the king's prisoners, under the hand of the king's chief officer of justice, the captain of the guard, and, as it were, high sheriff of Egypt. So the Messiah is represented as suffering from the hands of God, who bruised him and put him to grief, and as executing justice upon him for man's sins, making his soul an offering for sin. Joseph's being cast into the dungeon is a fit representation of what the prophecies do represent of the Messiah's extreme affliction and grief, and his being brought to the grave, (often called the pit in the Old Testament,) and remaining some time in the state of death. Joseph was a prophet. He had divine visions himself, and had knowledge in the visions of God, and could interpret the visions of others. This is agreeable to Old-Testament representations of the Messiah. He was a revealer of secrets, as his name *Zaphnath-paaneah* signifies in the Hebrew tongue, and revealed those secrets that none other could reveal, and after the wisdom of all the wise men of Egypt had been tried and proved insufficient. [Gen. xli. 8, 9](#), &c. This is agreeable to what is represented of the Messiah in [Isa. xli](#). two last verses, and [xlii. 1](#). "For I beheld, and there was no man even amongst them, and there was no counsellor, that when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold, they are all vanity. Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." Joseph is spoken of as distinguished from all in that he was one in whom the Spirit of God was. How agreeable is this to the frequent representations in the Old Testament of the Messiah, as one that God puts his Spirit upon! Joseph is spoken of as one to whom none was to be compared for wisdom, and prudence, and counsel through the Spirit of God. [Gen. xli. 38, 39](#). This is agreeable to what is foretold of the Messiah, [Isa. ix. 6](#). "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor." [chap. xi. 2, 3](#). "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and shall make him of quick un-





derstanding in the fear of the Lord.” [Zech. iii. 9.](#) “Upon one stone shall be seven eyes.” [Isa. lii. 13.](#) “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.” See also that forementioned, [Isa. xli.](#) and two last verses, and [xlii. 1.](#) Joseph was exalted for this his great wisdom; which is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah, [Isa. lii. 13.](#) “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high.” So agreeably to this, Joseph’s exaltation was very great. He was exalted by the king of the country, who we may well suppose in this case represents God, seeing it is evident by the Old Testament, that kings in their kingly authority are the images of God. ([Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6.](#)) Pharaoh exalts Joseph over all his house and people. So the prophecies do often represent God as exalting the Messiah over his people and his house, or temple, and over heaven. The king exalted Joseph to be next to himself in his kingdom, to ride in the second chariot which he had. So the prophecies represent the Messiah as the second in God’s Kingdom, next to God the Father, and exalted by him to this dignity. [Psal. cx. 1.](#) “Sit thou on my right hand.” [Psal. lxxxix.](#) “I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” Joseph was exalted over all the nobles and rulers of the land of Egypt, excepting Pharaoh himself. [Psal. cv. 21, 22.](#) Agreeable to this it is often represented in the prophecies, that all kings shall be made to bow and submit to the Messiah. And it is also implied that the angels of heaven, as well as all nations of the earth, should be subjected to him by God. [Dan. vii. 9.](#), &c. “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit. Thousand thousands ministered unto him I saw one in the night visions, and beheld one like unto the Son of man come forth in the clouds of heaven, and come to the Ancient of days; and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all nations and languages should serve him.” [Dan. xii. 1.](#) Michael the great prince together with [chap. x. 13.](#) “Michael, the first of the chief princes,” with the context, that speaks of angels as princes. Pharaoh invested Joseph with his own authority and honour as his representative and vicegerent. For he took off his own ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph’s hand. So the prophecies do represent God as investing the Messiah with his authority and honour, seating him on his own throne, and causing him to bear the glory. [Zech. vi. 12, 13.](#) And there are many other prophecies that imply the same. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph with change of raiment, pure garments, and ensigns of royalty, agreeably to what is foretold of the Messiah. [Zech. iii.](#) and [Isa. lxi. 10.](#) Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in fine linen. [Gen. xli. 42.](#) as the Messiah is represented as clothed in fine linen, [Dan. x. 5.](#): for it may, by well considering the chapter, be gathered, that the person there spoken of is the same with Michael mentioned in [verses 13 and 21.](#) and [chapter xii. 1.](#) Pharaoh, when he exalted Joseph, committed all his treasures and stores into Joseph’s hand, to bestow on others and feed mankind. [Psal. cv. 21.](#) He made him lord of his house and ruler of all his substance. And particularly Joseph received those stores and treasures to bestow on his injurious brethren that had been mortal enemies to him; which is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah’s exaltation. [Psal. lxviii. 18.](#) “Thou hast ascended on high thou hast

received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also.” When Pharaoh exalted Joseph he gave him his wife. So the Messiah’s marriage with his church is represented as following his humiliation and attending his exaltation, in [Isa. liii.](#) and [liv.](#) Joseph marries the daughter of Potipherah, which signifies destroyer of fatness, a word of the same signification with some of the names given in Scripture to the devil. This Potipherah was priest of On, which signifies iniquity, or sorrow. So the prophecies do represent the Messiah as bringing his church into espousals with himself from a state of sin and wickedness. [Jer. iii. 14.](#) “Turn, O backsliding children, unto me, for I am married unto you.” Compare [Hos. ii.](#) throughout; [Psal. xlv. 10.](#) with [Ezek. xvi. 3.](#) &c. “Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. When I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thy blood behold, thy time was the time of love and I entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.” And the prophecies do every where represent the Messiah as bringing his people into a blessed relation and union with himself from a state of sin. Joseph’s wife’s name was *Asenath*, which signifies *an unfortunate thing*. Agreeably to this the Messiah is represented as espousing, after his exaltation, a poor, unhappy, afflicted, disconsolate creature. [Isa. liv. 4.](#) &c. “Fear not, for thou shall not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shall not be put to shame. For thou shall forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more, for thy Maker is thy husband; for the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused.” [Verse 11.](#) “O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted: behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours,” &c. [Hos. ii. 9.](#) &c. “I will return and take away my corn none shall deliver out of my hand I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees I will visit upon her the days of Baalim I will bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her and at that day she shall call me Ishi.” [Verses 19, 20.](#) “And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me,” &c. [Isa. lxii. 44.](#) “Thou shall no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall thy land be any more termed Desolate, but thou shall be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” Joseph’s brethren are in great trouble and perplexity, and are brought to reflect on themselves for their sins, and deeply to humble themselves before him, before Joseph speaks comfortably to them, and makes known his love and favour to them, and receives them to the blessings and glory of his kingdom. This is agreeable to what the prophecies do often represent of the Messiah with respect to sinners. [Hos. ii. 14, 15.](#) “I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her, and I will give her her vineyards from thence and she shall sing there.” See also [Jer. iii. 12, 13, 21, 22.](#) [chap. xxxi. 18-20.](#) Joseph’s brethren, before they were comforted and made happy by him, are brought to cry with the greatest humility, and earnestness, and penitence, for their abuse of Joseph, to him for mercy. Agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah, [Zech. xii. 10.](#) &c. “And I will pour upon the

house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him," &c. [Hos. v. 15](#). "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence and seek my face: in their affliction, they shall seek me early." [Ezek. xxxvi. 37](#). "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." [Jer. xxix. 12-14](#). "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity." When once Joseph's brethren were thoroughly humbled, then his bowels yearned towards them with exceeding great compassion and tenderness of heart, though before he treated them as if he was very angry with them. See, agreeable to this, [Jer. xxxi. 18](#), &c. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still. Therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." Joseph perfectly forgives all their past ill treatment, or blots it out, as though it had never been, and will have it remembered no more. [Gen. xlv. 5-8](#). and [1. 19-21](#). This is agreeable to what is often spoken of in the prophecies, as a great benefit God's people shall have by the Messiah. (See fulfilment of prophecies, § 79. and § 86.) The manner of Joseph's comforting his brethren in the manifestations and fruits of his special and peculiar love, his bringing them near him, making known himself to them as theirs in a near relation, his treating them with such great tenderness, his embracing them, his manifesting so great a concern for their welfare, his putting such honour upon them before the Egyptians, his entertaining them with a sumptuous joyful feast in his house and at his own table, his clothing them with change of raiment, his bringing them into his own land and there giving them a goodly inheritance, plentifully providing for them in Goshen, a land of light; all is remarkably agreeable to descriptions given in the prophecies of the manner of God's comforting, blessing, exalting, and manifesting his great favour to his church, after her long-continued sin and sorrows, in the days of the Messiah's kingdom, in places too many to be enumerated. Joseph's brethren at this time are like them that dream, [Gen. xlv. 3](#), &c. which is agreeable to what is said of the church of God, when delivered and comforted by the Messiah. [Psalm cxxvi. 1](#). "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." There is joy in Pharaoh's court among his servants and nobles on the occasion of Joseph's receiving his brethren. [Gen. xlv. 16](#). Answering to this in [Isaiah xliv. 22, 23](#). "I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it." And [chap. xlix. 13](#). "Sing, O heaven, and be joyful, O earth for the Lord hath comforted his people." And [Psalm cxlviii. 4](#). "Praise him, ye heaven of heavens,

and ye waters that be above the heavens,” with [verses 13, 14](#). “Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven. He also exalteth the horn of his people.”

The remarkable agreement between many things in the history of Moses, and the prophecies of the Messiah, argue the former to be a type of the latter. Moses was God’s elect. [Ps. cvi. 23](#). “Had not Moses his chosen stood before him.” In his being so wonderfully preserved and upheld by God when in great danger, preserved in the midst of many waters, when he was cast into the river. Moses was drawn out of the water when a babe. Compare [Ps. lxi. 2](#) and [Isa. liii. 2](#). He was preserved in his banishment, preserved and delivered from the wrath of the king of Egypt, when he from time to time went to him with messages that so much provoked him; preserved at the Red sea, in the wilderness, and in the midst of that perverse, invidious congregation, and delivered from the strivings of the people. This is agreeable to many things said in the prophecies of the Messiah. Moses was twice delivered out of great waters, when he was designed by his enemies for death; once in his being drawn out of the river, and another time in rising out of the Red sea. This is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah’s sufferings and death, and his rising from them. Misery, and wrath, and sore affliction, are often in Scripture compared to great waters, to waves and billows, and great deeps, and the like; and the Messiah’s sufferings in particular, as [Ps. lxi. 1-3, 14, 15](#). and his deliverance out of those sufferings is represented as his being delivered out of great waters. [Ps. lxi. 14, 15](#). The region of the dominion of death and destruction is represented as being down under the waters. [Job xxv. 5, 6](#). These deliverances of Moses, therefore, are agreeable to the prophecies of Christ’s resurrection. Moses was not only delivered from his troubles and danger, but his deliverances were followed with great exaltation, resembling the exaltation of the Messiah that the prophecies speak of. After he was drawn put of the water, he was exalted in the king’s palace, as his son and heir. After his banishment he converses with God in mount Sinai, a resemblance of heaven, and is made king over God’s church. In about forty days after his resurrection out of the Red sea, he ascends up to God in mount Sinai.

The things that are said of the burning bush, do wonderfully agree with the Old-Testament representations of the Messiah. It was not a high tree, but a bush; as the Messiah is called the low tree; [Ezek. xvii. 24](#). and elsewhere, the twig and the tender plant. This bush was a root out of a dry ground; for it was a bush that grew in mount Horeb, which was so called for the remarkable dryness of the place. The word signifies *dryness*; there was no spring about the mountain, till Moses there fetched water out of the dry rock. It was in a thirsty wilderness, where was wont to be no rain. Therefore the children of Israel in that wilderness were supplied with water only miraculously. [Hos. xiii. 5](#). “I did know thee in the wilderness in the land of great drought.” See [Deut. viii. 15](#). That bush was the growth of the earth, as the human nature of Christ in the Old Testament is represented to be. Yet it had

the divine nature of Christ in it; for this angel of the Lord that is said to appear in the bush, has been proved to be the same with the Messiah from the Old Testament, in my discourse on the prophecies of the Messiah. This angel is said to *dwell* in this bush, [Deut. xxxiii. 16.](#) the more to represent the divine nature of the Messiah dwelling in the human nature. This bush burnt with fire, agreeably to what the prophecies speak of the sufferings of Christ; great calamity and affliction in the Old Testament are often called fire. This was especially a resemblance of the wrath of God, that is often called fire in the Old Testament, and which the prophecies represent the Messiah as enduring. (See fulfilment of prophecies, § 70.) The bush was preserved from being consumed, though it burnt with fire, agreeably to the prophecies of the preservation and upholding of the Messiah. God's not suffering his Holy One to see corruption, &c. The bush emerged alive and fresh out of the fire, agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah's resurrection from the dead, and deliverance from all his sufferings. The angel that dwelt out of that bush, who was the Messiah, comes out of the fire, and appears in the bush, and delivered alive from the flames, to work redemption for his people. See [Exod. iii. 8.](#) So the prophecies represent the Messiah rising from the dead, and exalted out of his state of humiliation, to work salvation for his people.

If we consider the remarkable agreement there is between the account Moses gives of the brazen serpent, [Num. xxi.](#) and the representation the prophet makes of the Messiah, we shall see good reason to think that the former was intended to be a type of the latter. Doubtless God's appointing that way for the healing of those that were bitten with fiery serpents, by making an image of those fiery serpents, and putting it on a pole, had some significancy. It was not wholly an insignificant appointment. There was doubtless some important thing that God aimed at in it. It was not an appointment without any aim or any instruction contained in it, as it seems as though it must be, unless some important spiritual thing was represented and exhibited by it. And whoever considers the remarkable agreement between this appointment and its circumstances, and the things spoken concerning the Messiah, will see reason to conclude, that these are doubtless the things signified and pointed forth by it. That sin, misery, and death that the Messiah is represented as coming to save us from, is represented in the Old Testament as being from a serpent. See [Gen. iii. 1-6.](#) and [xv.](#) and [xx.](#) The Messiah is represented as saving from all hurt by the most poisonous serpents: [Isa. xi. 8, 9.](#) and [lxv. 25.](#) Sin, our spiritual disease, is in the Old Testament compared to the poison of the serpent. [Deut. xxxii. 33.](#) [Psal. lviii. 4.](#) and [cxl. 3.](#) The brazen serpent is called a fiery serpent, [Num. xxi. 8.](#) because it was in the image of the fiery serpents. So the prophets represent the Messiah as set forth as a sinner, appearing in the form of sinners, and of a great sinner. [Isa. liii. 6.](#) "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath made the iniquities of us all to meet in him" (for so it is in the Hebrew). [Ver. 9.](#) "He made his grave with the wicked." [Ver. 12.](#) "He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many." He was treated as the greatest of sinners.

The Messiah being set forth in the form of a great sinner, he was, as it were, exhibited in the form of a very venomous serpent, according to the manner of representing things in the Old Testament, for there great sinners are represented as poisonous serpents. [Psal. lviii. 3, 4](#). “The wicked are estranged from the womb; their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth up her ear.” [Psal. cxi. 3](#). “They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders’ poison is under their lips.” In order to the Israelites being saved from death through the poison of the fiery serpents, the brazen serpent was set up as an ensign to the congregation or army of Israel. For the word translated *pole*, signifies *ensign*, which is the much more proper English of the word. This is in exact agreeableness to the prophecies of the Messiah. [Isa. xi. 10](#). “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an *ensign* to the people.” Here the word translated *ensign*, is the very same with the word translated *pole* in the [21st of Num](#). The brazen serpent was set up as an ensign, that it might be exhibited to public view, and the diseased are called upon to look upon it, or behold it. Thus in the prophecies men are from time to time called upon to behold the Messiah; [Isa. xl. 9](#). “O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength. Lift it up; be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.” We may well suppose, that when the brazen serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, there was proclamation made by heralds to that vast congregation, calling upon them to look on that. [Isa. lxxv. 1](#). “I said, Behold me, behold me, to a nation that was not called by name.” [Chap. lxxii. 10, 11](#). “Lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed to the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.” [Zech. ix. 9-12](#). “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation and he shall speak peace unto the heathen by the blood of the covenant I will send forth thy prisoners turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.” [Isa. lii. 7, 8](#). “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.” The way that the people were saved by the brazen serpent, was by looking to it, beholding it, as seeking and expecting salvation from it: as an ensign saves an army by the soldiers looking on it and keeping it in their view. Agreeably to this, it is said concerning the Messiah, [Isa. xi. 10](#). “There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.” And [Isa. xlv. 22](#). “Look to me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” And faith and trust in the Messiah for salvation is often spoken of in the prophecies as the great condition of salvation through him. The Chaldee paraphrasts looked on the brazen serpent as a type of the Messiah, and gave it the name of the word. (Basnage’s History of the Jews, page 367.)

The great agreement there is between the history of Joshua and the things said of him in Scripture, and the things said of the Messiah in the Old Testament, strongly argues Joshua to be a type of the Messiah. There is a great agreement between the names by which he is called in Scripture and the names and things attributed to the Messiah in the Old Testament. His first name was *Oshea*, [Num. xiii. 8-10](#). which signifies *Saviour*. So the Messiah is called by the same name, *a Saviour*, [Isa. xix. 20](#). "He shall send them a Saviour and a great one." The word is of the same root with *Oshea*. So again the Messiah is called a Saviour, [Isa. xliii. 3, 11](#). [Hosea xiii. 4, 9, 10](#). [Obad. 21](#). and other places. So he is called *Salvation*. [Isa. lxii. 11](#). "Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." And this name is agreeable to what is abundantly spoken of in the prophets, as the great work and office of the Messiah, which is to be a Saviour and Redeemer, and to work out the greatest and most eminent salvation for God's people that ever was or will be; that which is therefore often called *the Salvation*. This name *Oshea* was by Moses changed into *Jehoshua*. [Num. xiii. 16](#). "And Moses called *Oshea*, the son of Nun, *Jehoshua*," *i. e. the Lord the Saviour*, or *Jehovah our Saviour*; which makes his name still more agreeable to the name and nature of the Messiah. And it is difficult to assign any other reason why Moses thus changed his name by the direction of the Spirit of God, but that it might be so. This is agreeable to those names by which the Messiah is called in the prophets, *Immanuel*, God with us, and *Jehovah our Righteousness*. So Joshua is called *the Shepherd*, *the stone of Israel*; [Gen. xlix. 24](#); agreeably to names by which the Messiah is often called in the prophets. Joshua's name being the same with the Messiah's, and agreeable to his office, make it the more probable that it was that he might be a type of the Messiah; because it was frequently God's manner to presignify future things by the signification of names; as is evident in many instances. Joshua was God's elect; he was called to his office and exalted to his high dignity by God's election and special designation, agreeably to what is said of the Messiah in the prophets. He resembled the Messiah in things spoken of him by the prophets in many things wherein Moses did so; particularly in near access to God in mount Sinai and in the tabernacle. [Exod. xxxiii. 11](#). and [xxiv. 13](#). and [xxxii. 17](#). Joshua was a man in whom was the Spirit in an eminent manner. [Num. xxvii. 18](#). "Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit;" agreeably to what is often said of the Messiah in the prophets. It is said of Joshua that he was full of the spirit of wisdom, [Deut. xxxiv. 9](#); agreeably to many prophecies of the Messiah. Joshua was both a king and a prophet. See [Num. xxvii. 18](#). and [Deut. xxxiv. 9](#). and [Joshua the two last chapters](#). Herein he is like the Messiah. Joshua was the captain of the host of Israel, that fought their battles for them, and subdued their enemies, though many and mighty. He was their captain in their war with Amalek, and, as we may suppose, the other enemies of Israel that they encountered in the wilderness; and he conquered the numerous and mighty enemies in Canaan; agreeably to what is represented of the Messiah every where by the prophets. He came up out of the Jordan when it was swelled with a great flood, into Canaan; as the Mes-

siah is spoken of by the prophets as coming up out of great affliction, terrible sufferings and death, into heaven, a land of rest and great delight. Great sufferings are in the Old Testament represented by the swelling of the Jordan. [Jer. xii. 5](#). Joshua brought the children of Israel out of the wilderness and out of Bashan, and out of great waters, into Canaan a land of rest flowing with milk and honey, agreeably to [Psalm lxxviii. 22](#). “The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea:” and [Isa. xi. 10](#). “There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, and his rest shall be glorious.” [Hosea ii. 14, 15](#). “I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her: and I will give her her vineyard from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt:” and agreeably to many prophecies that represent the salvation of the Messiah as a bringing of God’s people into a state of liberty, rest, and joy, in Canaan, out of a state of bondage and great affliction in foreign lands, comparing it to God’s first bringing his people through the wilderness into Canaan, which were observed before; and agreeable to many prophecies which speak of God’s people, as delivered from great misery, and brought into happy circumstances, by the Messiah, and as therein partaking with the Messiah in his deliverance from his sufferings and advancement to a state of rest and glory. Joshua, in going before the children of Israel as the captain of the Lord’s host, and bringing them into the land of Canaan, did that which is spoken of in the books of Moses and Joshua themselves, as the office of that angel of God’s presence, who (as I have shown is evident by the Old Testament) was the same person with the Messiah, [Num. xxxiii. 20](#). “Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.” [Verse 23](#). “For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites and the Hittites,” &c. [chap. xxxiii. 14](#). “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” [Josh. v. 14](#). “Nay, but as the captain of the Lord’s host am I now come.” Joshua was a most glorious conqueror, as the Messiah is every where represented to be in the prophecies. Joshua entered Canaan, conquered his enemies, and brought in his people to their rest and inheritance, by his righteousness or strict obedience to God’s commands. [Josh. i. 2](#), &c. “Go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, into the land which I do give thee every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon, that I have given unto you from the wilderness, and this Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. There shall not a man be able to stand before thee. Unto this people shall thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe and do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shall make thy way prosperous, and thou shall have good





success.” God promised that he would be with Joshua, and would uphold him, and not fail him, till he had complete victory over all his enemies, agreeably to what is said of the Messiah, [Isaiah xlii. 1-4](#). “Behold my servant whom I uphold. The smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles wait for his law.” [Verse 6](#). “I the Lord have called thee in righteousness: I will hold thine hand: I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people.” [Chap. xlix. 2](#). “He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he held me, and made me as a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me.” [Verses 7, 8](#). “Kings shall see and arise; princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful. In a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people.” [Psal. lxxxix. 20.](#), &c. “I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted:” and many other places; and agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah, God made his enemies his footstool. [Josh. i. 3-5](#). “Every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon,” &c. with [chap. x. 24](#). “Put your feet upon the necks of those kings,” &c. Joshua, agreeably to the prophecy of the Messiah, was an intercessor for his people. [Joshua x](#). The high walls of God’s enemies came down before Joshua agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah. [Isa. xxv. 12](#). “And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low and bring to the ground, even to the dust.” [Chap. xxvi. 5](#). “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low, he layeth it low even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.” [Chap. xxx. 25](#). “In the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fell.” Joshua destroyed the giants, [Josh. xi. 21.](#); agreeably to this see [Isa. xlv. 14](#). “The Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to thee. In chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto thee.” [Isa. x. 33](#). “And the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.” This seems to be connected with the prophecy in the beginning of the next chapter, in the next verse but one. God assisted Joshua in battle by destroying his enemies by great hailstones out of heaven. See, agreeable to this, [Isa. xxx. 30.](#) and [xxxii. 19.](#) [Ezek. xxxviii. 22](#). Joshua conquered among kings. Joshua made Israel to trample their haughtiest and strongest enemies under their feet. [Josh. x. 24](#). See, agreeable to this, [Isa. xxvi. 7.](#) [Chap. xlix. 23.](#) [Zech. x. 5.](#) [Psal. lxviii. 23.](#) [Mic. vii. 10.](#) [Psal. xlvi. 3.](#) [Isa. lx. 14.](#) [Psal. lviii. 10.](#) Joshua did as it were make the sun stand still over Israel. Agreeably to those prophecies of the times of the Messiah’s kingdom. [Isa. lx. 20.](#) [Zech. xiv. 6, 7.](#) Joshua houghed the horses, and burnt the chariots of the enemies of God’s people in the fire. [Josh. xi. 6, 9.](#) [Hag. ii. 22](#). “And I will overthrow the chariots and those that ride in them, and the horses and their riders shall come down.” [Psal. xlvi. 9](#). “He maketh wars to cease to the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow and cutteth

the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." Joshua divided unto Israel their inheritance, as one that God had appointed to be judge, what portion belonged to every tribe.

There is also such an agreement between what is said of Israel's victory over the Canaanites under Deborah, and what is said in the prophecies of the church's victory over her enemies in the Messiah's times, as argues the former to be a type of the latter. The Canaanites were exceeding strong, and God's people very feeble and defenceless, having no weapons of war, and were mightily oppressed by their enemies. So are things represented between God's people and their enemies, before their glorious victory and deliverance under the Messiah, in places too many to be enumerated. This victory was obtained by a female. So the war under the Messiah against God's enemies, is spoken of as maintained by the church, and the glorious victory obtained over them by her, who is spoken of almost every where by the prophecies as a woman or female, and is represented sometimes as such in prophecies of her battle and victory over her enemies. [Mic. iv. 13.](#) "Arise, thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people." [Cant. vi. 13.](#) "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." [Cant. i. 9.](#) "I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." [Chap. vi. 4.](#) "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners." [Ver. 10.](#) "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" And Deborah's being a prophetess, well agrees with the church's being endowed with such abundant measures of the Spirit of God at the time of the church's glorious victory over her enemies, and all her members becoming as it were prophets agreeably to the prophecies. The assistance given by Jael, another woman, the wife of Heber the Kenite, a Gentile, who slew Sisera, the captain of the host, and so is said to be blessed among women, well represents the assistance of the Gentile church in the victory over God's enemies in the Messiah's days. Deborah tells Barak "The Lord is gone out before thee;" which is agreeable to [Isa. xlii. 13.](#) "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man. He shall stir up jealousy as a man of war. He shall cry, yea, roar. He shall prevail against his enemies;" and many other places in the prophecies. The work of God in that victory of Israel is spoken of as parallel with those things that are represented in expressions very much like those used in the prophecies to represent what shall come to pass in the time of the church's victory over her enemies under the Messiah; such as going out of Seir, his marching out of the field of Edom, and the earth trembling, and heaven as it were dissolving and dropping, and mountains melting. [Judges v. 45.](#) See [Isa. xxxiv. 4-6.](#) and [xxiv. 18-21.](#) and [lxiii. 1-6.](#) and [lxiv. 1-4.](#) The work of God in this victory is compared to God's great work towards Israel, at their coming out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, just as the glorious victory of the Messiah is in the [Ps. 68th](#) Psalm, almost in the same words, (compare [Judges v. 4, 5.](#) with [Psalm lxviii. 7, 8.](#)) which is a clear evidence that this victory is a great image of that. For those things that agree in a third thing, agree among

themselves. There was a plentiful shower at the time of that victory, that swelled the brook Kishon, as is manifest from [Judg. v. 4.](#) and [ver. 20, 21.](#) So at the time of the great victory of the church over her enemies under the Messiah, there will be an abundant outpouring of the Spirit, which is often represented in the prophets as a plentiful and very great shower of rain. And these spiritual showers are in the [68th Psalm.](#) compared to the very same showers on Israel that this is. So the effects produced in the time of the Messiah's victories are compared to the mountains melting, in [Isa. lxiv. 1-4.](#) as the effect of this victory is, [Judg. v. 5.](#) and both compared to the same effects at mount Sinai. Barak, on this occasion, is called upon to lead captivity captive, [Judg. v. 12.](#) in the very same expressions that are used concerning the Messiah, concerning his triumph over his enemies, [Ps. lxxviii. 18.](#) It is a remnant of Israel that is spoken of as having the benefit of this salvation, [Judg. v. 13.](#) as it is a remnant that is often spoken of as having the benefit of the Messiah's salvation. [Isa. iv. 3.](#) [Chap. vii. 3. x. 21, 22. xi. 11-16.](#) [Jer. xxiii. 3.](#) [Joel ii. 32.](#) [Mic. ii. 12.](#) and [iv. 7.](#) and [v. 3.](#) [vii. 8.](#) and [vii. 18.](#) [Zeph. iii. 13.](#) [Zech. viii. 12.](#) It is said of the remnant of Israel in Deborah's time, [Judg. v. 13.](#) "Then he made him that remaineth to have dominion over the nobles among the people: the Lord made me have dominion over the mighty," agreeably to the honour of the saints in the Messiah's times, spoken of [Psal. cxlix. 6.,](#) &c. "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written. This honour have all the saints." And what is said, [Isa. xlix. 23.](#) of kings licking up the dust of the church's feet. The angels of heaven are represented as fighting in this battle, [Judg. v. 20.](#) as they are in the battle of God's people under the Messiah, [Psal. lxxviii.](#) "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." [Cant. vi. 13.](#) "The company of two armies," compared with [Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.](#) The enemies of Israel in Deborah's battle were swept away with a flood, [Judg. v. 21.](#) See [Dan. ix. 26.](#) [Ezek. xxxviii. 22.](#) [Isa. xxviii. 17.](#) The church, on occasion of Deborah's victory, triumphs thus: <sup>535</sup> "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength." This is agreeable to [Isa. xxvi. 7.](#) [Chap. xlix. 23.](#) [Zech. x. 5.](#) [Ps. lxxviii. 23.](#) [Mic. vii. 10.](#) [Ps. xlvii. 3.](#) and [cx. 1.](#) [Isa. lx. 14.](#) [Ps. lviii. 10.](#)

The great agreement there also is between the story of Gideon's victory over the Midianites, and things spoken in the prophecies concerning the Messiah, is an argument that the former is typical of the latter. Gideon brought Israel out of the wilderness, and from the caves, rocks, and mountains, where they had had their abode. [Judg. vi. 2.](#) This agrees with [Psal. lxxviii. 22.](#) "The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan!" [And lxxxix. 12.](#) "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." [Hos. ii. 14.](#) "I will bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her." [Ezek. xx. 35.,](#) &c. "I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." [Isa.](#)



[xlii. 11.](#) “Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice let the inhabitants of the rock sing; let them shout from the tops of the mountains.” [Cant. ii. 14.](#) “O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock let me see thy face.” And [Jer. xvi. 16.](#) “I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks:” taken with the two foregoing verses, and [ver. 19, 20, and 21.](#), following. [Isa. xlii. 7.](#) “To bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house.” [Ver. 22.](#), &c. “This is a people robbed and spoiled, they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore. Who gave Jacob for a spoil and Israel to the robbers? He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger and the strength of battle. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, fear not, for I have redeemed thee.” Compare this with [Judg. vi. 2-6.](#) “The children of Israel made them dens which are in the mountains, and caves and strong holds. And they destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass and Israel was greatly impoverished.”

God, agreeably to some of these and other prophecies of the times of the Messiah, first pleaded with Israel concerning their sin, and brought them to cry earnestly to him, before he delivered them by Gideon. [Judg. vi. 6-10.](#) God did not send them deliverance till they were brought to extremity. Agreeably to [Deut. xxxii. 36, 37.](#) and many other prophecies.

The enemies of Israel, that sought their destruction, that Gideon overcame, were an innumerable multitude, and many nations associated and combined together; agreeably to many prophecies of the victory and salvation of the Messiah. Gideon was appointed “to the office of a saviour and deliverer of God’s people by the sovereign election and special designation of God; agreeably to many prophecies of the Messiah. He was endued with might, and upheld and strengthened immediately from God, and by the Spirit of God and the spirit or might resting upon him. [Judg. vi. 14-16, 34.](#) Agreeably to many prophecies of the Messiah. Gideon was as it were a root out of a dry ground, of a poor family, and the least in his father’s house; a low tree, without form or comeliness. [Judg. vi. 15.](#) Agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah. Gideon was not only the captain of the host of Israel, but was immediately appointed of God to be a priest to build the altar of God, and to offer sacrifice to God, to make atonement for that iniquity of Israel that had brought that sore judgment upon them, that he came to deliver them from. [Judg. vi. 20-28.](#) And he offered a sacrifice acceptable unto God, and of which God gave special testimony of his acceptance, by consuming his sacrifice by fire immediately enkindled from heaven. [Ver. 21.](#) And his sacrifice procured reconciliation and peace for Israel, [ver. 24.](#) These things are exactly agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah. Gideon destroyed idols, abolished their worship, threw down their altars, and set up the worship of the true God. At this time that Gideon overthrew the idols and their worship, those idols and their worshippers were solemnly challenged to plead and make good their own cause. [Judg. vi. 31-33.](#) Agreeably to [Isa. xli. 1-7.](#) and [21-29.](#) Gideon

drank of the brook in the way, and was so prepared for the battle, and obtained a glorious conquest over the kings and the heads of many countries, and filled the place with the dead bodies, agreeably to [Psal. cx. 5-7](#). “The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath: he shall judge among the heathen: he shall fill the places with the dead bodies: he shall wound the heads over many countries: he shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.” The company with Gideon was a small remnant, that was left after most of the people departed. So is the company represented that shall obtain victory over their enemies in the Messiah’s times. [Isa. x. 20](#), &c. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea; yet a remnant shall return. Therefore thus saith the Lord, O my people, be not afraid of the Assyrian For the Lord shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian.” [Mic. v. 8, 9](#). “And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forests, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.” Gideon’s company, with which he overcame his mighty enemies, were not only small but weak, and without weapons of war. Agreeably to this is [Isa. xli. 14](#), &c. “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men (*or few men*, as it is in the margin) of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff,” &c. And [Mic. iv. 7](#). “I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off, a strong nation;” with [verse 13](#). “Arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people,” &c. [Zeph. iii. 12](#). “I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.” [Ver. 16, 17](#). “In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not, and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack, or faint” (as it is in the margin). “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save.” [Ver. 19](#). “Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth,” &c. The representation of a cake of barley bread tumbling into the host of Midian, and coming unto a tent, and smiting it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along, signifying Gideon’s destroying the host of Midian, [Judg. v. 13](#). is not unlike that in [Daniel ii.](#) of a stone cut out of the mountains without hands smiting the image and breaking it all in pieces, that it all became as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Gideon and his company overcame and destroyed the mighty host of their enemies, without any other weapons than trumpets and lamps. This is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah, which show that the weapons by which he should overcome his enemies, should not be carnal but spiritual, and particularly that it should be by the preaching of the word. [Ps. cx. 2](#). “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion:



rule thou in the midst of thine enemies:" together with [Isa. xi. 4](#). "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." [Isa. xlix. 2](#). "And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword." The word of God is in the Old Testament compared to a lamp and a light. [Prov. vi. 23](#). "For the commandment is a lamp and the law is a light." [Ps. cxix. 105](#). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path;" and particularly it is so represented in the prophecies of the Messiah's times. [Isa. li. 4](#). "A law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people." So preaching the word in the Old Testament is compared to blowing a trumpet. [Isa. lviii. 1](#). "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet: show my people their transgression." [Ezek. xxxiii. 2, 3, &c.](#) "If the people take a man and set him for their watchman; if he blow the trumpet, and warn the people," &c. Particularly it is so represented in the prophecies of the Messiah's times. [Isa. xxvii. 13](#). "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come that were ready to perish," &c. [Ps. lxxxix. 15](#). "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." God destroyed the host of Midian by setting every man's sword against his fellow. Agreeably to this is [Hag. ii. 22](#). "And the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother." [Ezek. xxxviii. 14](#). "Every man's sword shall be against his brother." Gideon led captivity captive, agreeably to [Ps. lxviii](#). He led those kings and princes in chains that before had taken them captives; agreeably to [Ps. cxlix. 7-9](#). "To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people: to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron: to execute upon them the judgment written. This honour have all the saints."

There is a no less remarkable agreement between the things said of Samson in his history, and the things said of the Messiah in the prophecies of him. His name *Samson* signifies *Little Sun*, well agreeing with a type of the Messiah, that *Great Sun* of righteousness, so often compared in the prophecies to the sun. The antitype is far greater than the type, as being its end. Therefore, when the type is called by the name of the antitype, it is fitly with a diminutive termination. Samson and other saviours under the Old Testament, that were types of the great Saviour, were but little saviours. The prophets, priests, kings, captains, and deliverers of the Old Testament, were indeed images of the great light of the church and the world that was to follow. But they were but images: they were little lights, that shone during the night. But when Christ came, the great light arose and introduced the day. Samson's birth was miraculous; it was a great wonder in his case, that a woman should "compass a man," as the prophecies represent it to be in the case of the birth of the Messiah. Samson was raised up to be a saviour to God's people from their enemies, agreeably to prophetic representations of the Messiah. Samson was appointed to this great work by God's special election and designation, and that in an eminent and extraordinary way, agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah. Samson was a *Nazarite* from the womb. The word *Nazarite* signifies *separated*.

This denotes holiness and purity. The Nazarite was, with very great and extraordinary care and strictness indeed, to abstain from the least legal defilement; as appears by [Num. vi. 6.](#) and the reason is given in the [8th verse](#). “All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord:” and with the utmost strictness he was to abstain from wine and strong drink, and every thing that appertained in any respect to the fruit of the vine; wine being the liquor that was especially the object of the carnal appetites of men. And he was to suffer no razor to come upon his head, any way to alter what he was by nature, because that would defile it, as the lifting up a tool to hew the stones of the altar would defile it. The design of those institutions concerning the Nazarite, about his hair and about wine, is declared, [Num. vi. 5.](#) “He shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair grow.” This sanctity of the Nazarite representing a perfect holiness both negative and positive, is spoken of in [Lam. iv. 7.](#) “Her Nazarites were purer than snow: they were whiter than milk: they were more ruddy in body than rubies: their polishing was of sapphire.” Therefore Samson’s being a Nazarite from the womb, remarkably represents that perfect innocence and purity, and transcendent holiness of nature and life in the Messiah, which the prophecies often speak of. The great things that Samson wrought for the deliverance of Israel and the overthrow of their enemies, was not by any natural strength of his, but by the special influence and extraordinary assistance of the Spirit of God, [Judg. xiii. 25.](#) and [xiv. 6, 19.](#) and [xv. 14.](#) [xvi. 20.](#) agreeably to many prophecies I have already observed of the Messiah’s being anointed and filled with God’s Spirit, and being upheld, and helped, and strengthened, and succeeded by God. Samson married a Philistine, and all the women that he loved were of that people that were his great enemies. Agreeably to those prophecies that represent the Messiah as marrying an alien from the commonwealth of Israel: as [Ps. xlv.:](#) and his marrying one that was the daughter of the accursed people of Canaan, [Ezek. xvi. 3, 8,](#) &c. together with the latter end of the chapter, and the many prophecies that speak of Christ’s calling the Gentiles and his saving sinners. Samson was a person of exceeding great strength; herein he is like the Messiah, as he is represented, [Ps. lxxxix. 19.](#) “I have laid help on one that is mighty.” [Ps. xlv. 3.](#) “Gird on thy sword on thy thigh, O most mighty, in thy glory and in thy majesty.” [Isa. lxiii. 1.](#) “Who is this travelling in the greatness of his strength?” When Samson was going to take his wife, a young lion roared against him. So the enemies of the Messiah and his people are compared to a lion roaring upon him, gaping with his mouth ready to devour him. [Ps. xxii. 13.](#) “They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.” [Ver. 21.](#) “Save me from the lion’s mouth.” Samson rent the lion as the lion would have rent the kid; which is agreeable to the prophecies which represent the Messiah destroying his enemies as a strong lion devouring his prey. [Gen. xlix. 9,](#) &c. and the many prophecies that speak of his punishing Leviathan with his great, and sore, and strong sword, his mightily and dreadfully destroying his enemies, treading them down as the mire, treading them in his anger and trampling them in his fury, sprinkling his raiment with their blood, &c. Samson is fed with honey out

of the carcass of the lion, which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the glorious benefits of the Messiah's conquest over his enemies, to himself and his people, his own ascension, glory, and kingdom, and the glory of his people. Samson made a feast on occasion of his marriage, which is agreeable to [Isa. xxv. 6](#). "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow; of wines on the lees well refined." [Isa. lxxv. 13, 14](#). "My servants shall eat my servants shall drink my servants shall rejoice my servants shall sing for joy of heart;" and innumerable prophecies that speak of the great plenty and joy of God's people in the Messiah's times; and this accompanying the Messiah's marriage with his spiritual spouse. See [Isa. lxxii. 4, 5, 7-9](#). and [Hos. ii. 19-22](#). and [Cant. ii. 4](#). and [v. 1](#). When Samson visited his wife with a kid, he was rejected, and her younger sister, that was fairer than she, given to him; [Judg. xv. 2](#). Which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the Messiah's coming to the Jews first, when he was offered up as a lamb or kid, and making the first offer of the glorious benefits of his sacrifice to them, and their rejecting him, and the calling of the Gentiles, and the more glorious and beautiful state of the Gentile church than of the ancient Jewish church. In [Judg. xvi. 1, 2](#). we have an account how Samson loved a harlot, and from his love to her exposed himself to be compassed round by his enemies. So the prophecies represent the Messiah as loving a sinful people, and from love seeking such a people to be his spouse, as that which occasions his suffering from his enemies. [Isa. liiii.](#) taken with the following chapter. Samson, while his enemies are compassing him round, to destroy him, rises from sleep, and from midnight darkness, and takes away the strength and fortification of the city of his enemies, the gate of the city, which his enemies shut and barred fast upon him to confine him, and the two posts, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill. [Judg. xvi. 3](#). So the prophecies represent the Messiah, when compassed round by his enemies, rising from the sleep of death, and emerging out of the thick darkness of his sorrows and sufferings, spoiling his enemies, and ascending into heaven, and leading captivity captive. Samson was betrayed and sold by Delilah, his false spouse or companion. So the prophecies do represent the Messiah as sold by his false and treacherous people. Samson was delivered up into the hands of his enemies, and was mocked and derided, and very cruelly treated by them; agreeably to what is foretold of the Messiah. Samson died partly through the cruelty and murderous malice of his enemies, and partly from his own act: agreeably to what is foretold of the Messiah. [Ibid.](#) § 51, 58, 59, 72. Samson at his death destroyed his enemies, and the destruction he made of his enemies was chiefly at his death; which is agreeable to [Isa. liiii. 10-12](#). and [Psal. lxxviii. 18](#). Samson overthrew the temple of Dagon, which is agreeable to what the prophecies say of the Messiah's overthrowing idols and idol worship in the world. Samson destroyed his enemies suddenly in the midst of their triumph over him, so that their insulting him in the prospect of his destruction, instantly issues in their own destruction; agreeably to [Isa. xxix. 5-8](#).



There is a yet more remarkable, manifest, and manifold agreement between the things said of David in his history, and the things said of the Messiah in the prophecies. His name *David* signifies *beloved*, as the prophecies do represent the Messiah as in a peculiar and transcendent manner the *beloved of God*. David was God's elect in an eminent manner. Saul was the king whom the people chose. [1 Sam. viii. 18.](#) and [xii. 13.](#) But David was the king whom God chose, one whom he found and pitched upon according to his own mind, without any concern of man in the affair, and contrary to what men would have chosen. When Jesse caused all his elder sons to pass before Samuel, God said concerning one and another of them, <sup>536</sup> "The Lord hath not chosen this; neither hath the Lord chosen this," &c. See [1 Chron. xxviii. 4.](#) There David says, "The Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father, to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Israel." See [Psal. lxxviii. 67-70.](#) and [lxxxix. 3.](#) "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant;" agreeably to [Isa. xlii. 1.](#) "Mine elect," &c. [49.](#) "And he shall choose thee." He was a king of God's finding and providing, and he speaks of him as *his* king. [1 Sam. xvi. 1.](#) "I will send thee to Jesse for I have provided me a king among his sons." [2 Sam. xxii. 51.](#) "He is the tower of salvation for his king." Agreeably to [Psal. ii.](#) "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." He is spoken of as a man after God's own heart, and one in whom God delighted. [2 Sam. xxii. 20.](#) "He delivered me because he delighted in me;" agreeably to [Isa. xlii. 1.](#) "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." David was in a very eminent manner God's *anointed*, or *Messiah*, (as the word is,) and is so spoken of, [Psal. xxii. 51.](#) "He showeth mercy to his anointed, unto David;" and [xxiii. 1.](#) "David, the son of Jesse; the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob." [Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20.](#) "I have exalted one chosen out of the people; I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." Samuel anointed him with peculiar solemnity. [1 Sam. xvi. 13.](#) See how this agrees with the prophecies of the Messiah. David's anointing remarkably agrees with what the prophecies say of the anointing of the Messiah, which speak of him as a being anointed with the Spirit of God. So David was anointed with the Spirit of God, at the same time that he was anointed with oil. [1 Sam. xvi. 13.](#) "And Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." David is spoken of as being a poor man, of a low family, and in mean circumstances. [1 Sam. xviii. 23.](#) "I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed." [2 Sam. vii. 18.](#) "Who am I? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" Agreeably to this, it is said of the Messiah in the prophecies, that he was a root out of a dry ground, that he was a low tree. David is spoken of as an eminently holy person, a man after God's own heart. He is spoken of in the history

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of the kings of Judah, as one whose heart was perfect with the Lord his God; [1 Kings xi. 4.](#); one that went fully after the Lord; [1 Kings xi. 6.](#); one that did that that was right in the eyes of the Lord. [1 Kings xv. 11.](#) [2 Kings xviii. 3.](#) [2 Chron. xxviii. 1. and xxix. 2.](#) He is spoken of as pure, upright, and righteous; one that had clean hands; that kept the ways of the Lord, and did not wickedly depart from God; [2 Sam. xxii. 21-27.](#) This agrees with what is said in the prophecies of the Messiah. David was the youngest son of Jesse; as the Messiah in the prophecies is spoken of as coming in the latter days. He has frequently the appellation of God's servant. It would be endless to mention all the places; see them in the Concordance under the word *servant David*. So has the Messiah often this appellation in the prophecies. [Isa. xlii. 1-19.](#) [xlix. 3-6.](#) [lii. 13.](#) [liii. 11.](#) [Zech. iii. 8.](#) David's outward appearance was not such as would have recommended him to the esteem and choice of men, as a person fit for rule and victory, but, on the contrary, such as tended to cause men to despise him as a candidate for such things; [1 Sam. xvi. 7.](#) "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart." [1 Sam. xxii. 42.](#) "And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth." [Ver. 56.](#) "Inquire whose son the stripling is." Eliab, his elder brother, thought him fitter to be with the sheep, than to come to the army. [1 Sam. xvii. 28.](#) Agreeably to [Isa. liii. 2.](#) "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." David appeared unexpectedly. Samuel expected a man of great stature, and appearing outwardly like a man of valour; and therefore when he saw Eliab, David's elder brother, that had such an appearance, he said, surely the Lord's anointed is before him. His appearance was astonishing to Goliath and to Saul. So the prophecies represent the Messiah's appearance as unexpected and astonishing, being so mean. [Isa. xlii. 14.](#) "Many were astonished at thee. His visage was so marred more than any man." But yet David was ruddy and of a fair countenance, and goodly to look to. [1 Sam. xvi. 12.](#) [xvii. 42.](#) agreeable to [Psalm xlv. 2.](#) "Thou art fairer than the children of men." [Cant. v. 10.](#) "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands." He was anointed king after offering sacrifice. [1 Sam. xvi.](#) So the prophecies represent the Messiah's exaltation to his kingdom, after he had by his sufferings offered up a sacrifice to atone for the sins of men. David says of himself, [1 Chron. xxviii. 14.](#) "The Lord God of Israel chose me to be king over Israel for ever." And God says to him, [2 Sam. vii. 16.](#) "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee. Thy throne shall be established for ever." This is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah. David, by occupation, was a shepherd, and afterwards was made a shepherd

to God's Israel. [Ps. lxxviii. 70-72](#). "He chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds, from following the ewes great with young. He brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance." This is agreeable to many prophecies of the Messiah, who is often spoken of in them as the shepherd of God's people, and therein is expressly compared to David. [Isa. xl. 11](#). "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." [Isa. xlix. 9, 10](#). "They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them. For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them; by the springs of water shall he guide them." [Jer. xxiii. 4, 5](#). "And I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them I will raise up unto David a righteous branch," &c. [Ezek. xxxiv. 23](#). "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; even my servant David: he shall feed them, and shall be their shepherd." [Ezek. xxxvii. 24](#). "And David my servant shall be king over them, and they shall have one shepherd." [Cant. i. 7](#). "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon." David was of an humble, meek, and merciful spirit. [1 Sam. xviii. 23](#). [2 Sam. vi. 21, 22](#). [vii. 18](#). [1 Sam. xxiv](#). throughout, and [xxvi](#). throughout; [2 Sam. ii. 5, 21](#). and [iv. 9](#). &c. [vii. 18](#). [2 Sam. xxii. 26](#). and many places in the Psalms show the same spirit, too many to be mentioned. This is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah, [Zech. ix. 9](#). "He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on an ass, and a colt the fool of an ass." [Isa. xlii. 3](#). "A bruised reed shall he not break," &c. [Isa. xl. 11](#). "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." [Isa. liii. 7](#). "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." David was a person that was eminent for wisdom and prudence. [1 Sam. xvi. 18](#). "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse prudent in matters." And [xviii. 5](#). "And David behaved himself wisely." [Ver. 14](#). "And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways." [Ver. 30](#). "David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul." [Ps. lxxviii. 72](#). "He guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." This is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah, [Isa. ix. 6](#). [Chap. xi. 2, 3](#). [xli. two last verses](#), with [xlii. 1](#). [lii. 13](#). [Zech. iii. 9](#). David is said to be "a mighty valiant man." [1 Sam. xvi. 18](#). "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, a mighty valiant man." This is agreeable to [Ps. xlv. 3](#). "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory, and thy majesty." [Isa. lxiii. 1](#). "Who is this travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." And in this very thing the Messiah is compared to David. [Ps. lxxxix. 19, 20](#). "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people; I have found David my servant." David was a sweet musician; was preferred as such to all that were to be found in Israel, to relieve Saul in his melancholy. He is called "the sweet Psalmist of Israel." [2 Sam. xxiii. 1](#). He led the whole church of Israel in their praises. He instituted the order of singers and musicians in the house of God. He delivered to the church the book of songs they were to use in their ordinary public worship.

This is most agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah, which do every where represent, that he should introduce the most pleasant, joyful, glorious state of the church, wherein they should abound in the praises of God, and the world be filled with sweet and joyful songs after sorrow and weeping; wherein songs should be heard from the uttermost ends of the earth, and all nations should sing, and the mountains and trees of the field, and all creatures, sun, moon, and stars, heaven and earth, should break forth into singing, and even the dead should awake and sing, and the lower parts of the earth should shout, and the tongue of the dumb should sing, and the dragons and all deeps; the barren, the prisoners, the desolate, and mourners should sing; and all nations should come and sing in the height of Zion; they should sing aloud, and sing a new song, or in a new manner, with music and praises exalting all that had been before. The particular texts are too many to enumerate. The patriarch from whom Christ descended, for this reason is called *Judah, i. e. Praise*: and the Messiah is represented as leading the church of *God* in their sweet and joyful songs. [Ps. xxii. 22.](#) “I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” [Ver. 25.](#) “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation.” [Ps. lxix. 30-32.](#) “I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. The humble shall see this and be glad.” [Ver. 34.](#) “Let the heaven and the earth praise him, the seas and every thing that moveth therein.” See also [Ps. cxxxviii. 1-5.](#) We read in [Ps. lxxxix. 15.](#) of the joyful sound that shall be at that time; and the day of the Messiah’s kingdom is compared to the spring, the time of the singing of birds. [Cant. ii.](#) David slew a lion and a bear, and delivered a lamb out of their mouths. So the enemies of the Messiah and of his people are in the prophecies compared to a lion, as was observed before. So the prophetic representations made of God’s people that are delivered by the Messiah, well agree with a symbol of a lamb. The prophecies represent them as feeble, poor, and defenceless in themselves, and as meek and harmless. [Ps. xlv. 4.](#) and [xxii. 26.](#) [lxix. 32.](#) [cxlvi. 6.](#) and [cxliv. 4.](#) [Isa. xi. 4.](#) [xxix. 19.](#) and [lxi. 1.](#) David comes to the camp of Israel, to save them from Goliath and the Philistines, just at a time when they were in special and immediate danger; when the host were going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle. So the Messiah in the prophecies is represented as appearing to save his people at the time of their extremity. So God appeared for the redemption of his people out of Egypt. But Balaam prophesying of the redemption of the Messiah, [Numb. xxiii. 23.](#) says, according to this time shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought? This is also agreeable to that prophecy of the deliverance of God’s people in the Messiah’s times; [Deut. xxxii. 36.](#) “The Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left.” So [Ps. xiv.](#) and [liii.](#) and [xxi. 11, 12.](#) and [xlvi.](#) and [lviii. 7.](#) to the end; and [lx.](#) and [cxviii. 10.](#), to the end; and [xxviii. 21,22.](#); and [xxix. 5-8.](#); and [xxx.27-30.](#); [xxxii.4-5.](#) [xl.](#) the latter end, and [xli.](#) throughout, [xlii.](#) at the beginning, [li. 7.](#) to the end, and many other places. David was hated and envied by his brethren, and misused by them, when he came

to them on a kind errand from his father, to bring them provision. Herein he resembled the Messiah as Joseph did. David kills Goliath, who, in his huge stature, great strength, mighty army, and exceeding pride, much resembled the devil, according to the representations of the devil in the prophecies of the Messiah's conquest and destruction of him; who is called Leviathan, (*Isa. xxvii. 1.*) which in the Old Testament is represented as a huge and terrible creature of vast strength and impenetrable armour, disdaining the weapons and strength of his enemies, and the king over all the children of pride; *Job xli.* David went against Goliath without carnal weapons. David prevailed against Goliath with a sling and a stone, which is agreeable to *Zech. ix. 15.* "The Lord of hosts shall defend them, and they shall devour and subdue with sling-stones." David, when going against Goliath, took strength out of the brook in the way, agreeable to that concerning the Messiah, *Ps. cx. 6, 7.* "He shall fill the places with the dead bodies: he shall wound the heads over many countries: he shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head." David cut off the head of the Philistine with his own sword. So it may be clearly gathered from what the prophecies say of the Messiah's sufferings, and that from the cruelty of his enemies, and the consequences of them with respect to his exaltation and victory over his enemies, that the Messiah shall destroy Satan with his own weapons. David carried the head of Goliath to Jerusalem: which is agreeable to what is foretold of the Messiah, *Psal. lxxviii. 18.* "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive;" together with the context. David put Goliath's armour in his tent: which is agreeable to *Psal. lxxvi. 2, 3.* "In Salem is his tabernacle, (or tent,) and his dwelling-place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle." When Saul saw David returning from his victory, he says repeatedly with great admiration concerning him, "Whose son is this youth?" *1 Sam. xvii. 55.* "Inquire whose son

this stripling is;" *ver. 56.* "Whose son art thou?" *ver. 58.* agreeably to *Psal. xxviii. 8.* "Who is this king of glory?" Again, *ver. 10.* and *Isa. lxiii. 1.* "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah? This that is glorious in his apparel," &c. The daughters of Israel went forth to meet king David, and sang praises to him when he returned from the slaughter of the Philistine; agreeably to *Psal. xxiv.* and *lxviii.* and many other places. David obtained his wife by exposing his life in battle with the Philistines, and in destroying them: agreeably to what is prophesied of the Messiah's sufferings and death, his conflict with and victory over his enemies, and his redemption of his church by this means, and the consequent joy of his espousals with the church.

David was a great saviour. He saved Israel from Goliath, and the Philistines, and from all their enemies round about. *2 Sam. iii. 18.* "The Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David will I save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies"; agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah. David was greatly persecuted, and his life sought unjustly; agreeably to prophecies of the Messiah.



David's marriage with Abigail, the wife of a son of Belial, a virtuous woman, and of a beautiful countenance, is agreeable to the innumerable prophecies that represent the church of the Messiah, that the prophecies speak of as his spouse, as brought into that happy state from a state of guilt and bondage to sin. David was resorted to by every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was bitter of soul, and he became their captain; which is agreeable to innumerable prophecies that represent the Messiah as the Captain and Saviour of the poor, afflicted, distressed sinners and prisoners, &c. David's host is compared to the host of God, [1 Chron. xii. 22.](#) which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the divinity of the Messiah, and God's people in his times, and under him becoming as an host of mighty valiant men, that shall thresh the mountains, and tread down their enemies, &c. David, as it were raised from the dead, was wonderfully delivered from death, when from great danger he was brought back from the wilderness, and from banishment, and from caves of the earth that resembled the grave; ([Psal.xxx. 3.](#) "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave;") which is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah's restoration from his low and suffering state and resurrection from death. David was made king over the strong city Hebron, that had been taken from the Anakims, the gigantic enemies of God's people: which is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah's conquering the strong city, bringing low the lofty city, conquering the devil, and taking possession of the mightiest and strongest kingdoms of the world. David's followers that came to him to make him king, were men of understanding, mighty men of valour, and men of a perfect heart: [1 Chron. xii.:](#) which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the followers of the Messiah. David was made king by the act and choice both of God and his people. [1 Chron. xi. 1-3.](#) and [xii. 2 Sam. ii. 4. v. 1.](#) &c. This is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah. [Hos. i. 11.](#) "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head." David was made king with great feasting and rejoicing, [1 Chron. xii. 39, 40.](#) which is agreeable to what the prophecies do abundantly represent of the joy of the introduction of the Messiah's kingdom. David was the first king of Jerusalem, that city so often spoken of in the prophecies as a type of the church of the Messiah. David insulted the idols as lame and blind, and destroyed them. [2 Sam. v. 21.](#) Agreeable to § 132-135, 153. David conquered the strongest hold of the Jebusites and reigned there. See what was said before concerning his reigning in Hebron. He rescued Zion from the strong possession of idols, and the enemies of God's people, and reigned in mount Zion: agreeable to innumerable prophecies of the Messiah. David's kingdom gradually increased from small beginnings till he had subdued all his enemies. It was first in David's time, that God chose him a place to put his name there. Through him God made Jerusalem his holy city, and the place of his special gracious residence: agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah. [Psal. cxxxii. 13.,](#) &c. [Zech. i.17.](#) and [ii. 12.](#) and [Isa. xiv. 1.](#) David provided a settled habitation for God, and God is represented as through his favour to David taking up a settled

abode with them, no more walking in a movable tent and tabernacle that might be taken down, and giving Israel a constant abode, that they might no more be afflicted, and carried into captivity; [2 Sam. vii. 6, 10, 24.](#); according to many prophecies of the Messiah. David provided a place for God's habitation in Zion and in mount Moriah; agreeably to [Zech. vi. 12.](#) "He shall build the temple of the Lord." David brought up the ark to abide in the midst of God's people; after it had departed into the land of the Philistines, and had long remained in the utmost confines of the land, in Kirjath-jearim: which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the benefit which the people of God in the Messiah's days shall receive, in the return of the tokens of God's presence to them, after long absence, and his placing his tabernacle in the midst of them, and his soul's no more abhorring them. David ascended into the hill of the Lord with the ark, at the head of all Israel, rejoicing, and gave gifts to men. [2 Sam. vi.](#) But this is agreeable to what is said of the ascension of the Messiah. [Psal. lxxviii.](#) David ascended with the ark wherein was the law of God; as the Messiah ascended with that human nature that was the cabinet of the law. David after he had ascended returned to bless his household, as the Messiah especially blessed his church after his ascension. But Michal his first wife despised his abasement, and received no part in this blessing, but was as it were repudiated; as the prophecies do represent the Jews, as despising the Messiah for his humiliation, and so, as not receiving the benefits and blessing that he should bestow after his ascension, but as being repudiated. When David came to the crown, God broke forth on his enemies, as the breach of water, and in a dreadful storm of thunder, fire, and hail. [2 Sam. v. 20.](#) [1 Chron. xiv. 9.](#) and [Psalm xviii.](#) which is agreeable to [Isa. xxiv. 18-20.](#) [Dan. ix. 26.](#) [Ezek. xxxviii. 22.](#) [Isa. xxx. 30.](#) [xxxii. 19.](#) Yea, the destruction of the enemies of God's people, in the days of the Messiah, is expressly compared to that very breaking forth of God on the enemies of David; [Isa. xxviii. 21.](#) "For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim." The king of Tyre (that was, above all others in the world, a city noted for merchandise and seafaring) built David a house. [2 Sam. v. 11.](#) [1 Chron. xiv. 1.](#) David was not only a king, but a great prophet, [2 Sam. xxiii. 2.](#) and also was a priest. He officiated as such on occasion of the bringing in of the ark. [2 Sam. vi. 13-18.](#) [1 Chron. xv. 27.](#) Again he officiated as such, [2 Sam. xxvii. 17.](#), to the end, and [1 Chron. xvi. 21.](#), &c. And in some respects he officiated as chief in all sacerdotal matters, ordering all things in the house of God, directing and ordering the priests in things relating to their function, disposing them into courses, &c. So the prophecies do abundantly represent the Messiah as prophet, priest, and king. David is spoken of as the man that was raised up on high; which is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah in [Psalm lxxxix. 19.](#) "I have exalted one chosen out of the people;" and [ver. 27.](#) "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." [Psalm xiv.](#) "Thy throne, O God, is for ever;" and [Psalm cx.](#) "Sit thou on my right hand;" and innumerable other places. He is spoken of as eminently a just ruler, one that fed God's people in the integrity of his heart and executed judgment and justice; [2 Sam. viii. 15.](#) [1 Chron. xviii. 14.](#)

which is agreeable to that which is abundantly spoken of the Messiah, as the just Ruler over men; the King that shall reign in righteousness; he shall sit on the throne of his father David, to order and establish it with judgment and justice; the righteous branch that shall grow up to David, &c. God made David a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth. See also [2 Sam. vii. 9. viii. 13.](#) agreeable to [Isa. liii. 12.](#) “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great.” The fame of David went out into all lands; the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations. [1 Chron. xiv. 17.](#) Agreeable to [Psal. xiv. 17.](#) “I will make my name to be remembered.” [Psal. lxxii. 11.](#) “All nations shall serve him.” [Ver. 17.](#) “His name shall endure for ever;” and innumerable other places. David carried up the ark, clothed with a robe of fine linen; [1 Chron. xv. 27.](#) agreeable to [Isa. lxi. 10.](#) “He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness.” [Zech. iii. 4.](#) “Take away the filthy garments from him; and unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” See also [Dan. x. 5.](#) compared with [13, and 21.](#) and [xii. 1.](#) God was with David whithersoever he went, and cut off all his enemies. [2 Sam. vii. 9.](#) and [viii. 6, 14.](#) [1 Chron. xvii. 8, 10. xviii. 6, 13.](#) [2 Sam. xxii. 1.](#), &c. agreeable to [Psal. ii.](#) and [xlv. cx. lxxxix.](#) and innumerable other places. David subdued all the remainder of the Canaanites, and the ancient inhabitants of the land, and so perfected what Joshua had began in giving the people the land. See what is said of Joshua as a type of the Messiah in this respect. David brought it to pass that the Canaanites and enemies of Israel should no longer dwell with them, as mixed among them in the same land. [Joel iii. 17.](#) “No stranger shall pass through thee any more.” [Zech. xiv. 21.](#) “In that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord.” [Psal. lxix. 35, 36.](#) “For God will save Zion and will build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it, and they that love thy name shall dwell therein.” [Isa. lxxv. 9-11.](#) “And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob and out of Judah, an inheritor of my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.” [Isa. xxxv. 8.](#) “An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it.” [Ezek. xx. 38.](#) “And I will purge out from among you the rebels and them that transgress against me. I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel.” David subdued the Philistines, and the Moabites and Ammonites, and the Edomites, agreeably to [Isa. xi. 14.](#) [Num. xxiv. 17.](#) [Psal. lx. 8.](#) and [cviii. 9.](#) [Isa. xxv. 10.](#) [chap. xxxiv.](#) and [lxiii.](#) [Ezek. xxxv. xxxvi. 5.](#) David’s kingdom reached from the river to the ends of the earth. [2 Sam. viii. 3.](#) [2 Chron. xviii. 3.](#) agreeable to [Psal. lxxii. 8.](#) [Zech. ix. 10.](#) David’s reign was a time of the destruction of giants; he slew all the remnant of the race of giants; [1 Sam. xvii.](#) [2 Sam. xxi. 18.](#), to the end, and [xxiii. 20, 21.](#) [1 Chron. xx. 4.](#), to the end, and [xi. 22, 23.](#) agreeable to [Isa. x. 33.](#) “And the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.” This seems (as I observed before) to be connected with the prophecy in the beginnings of the next chapter, next verse but one.





[Isa. xlv. 14.](#) “The Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to thee: in chains shall they come over.” [Psal. lxxvi. 5.](#) “The stout-hearted are spoiled; they have slept their sleep.” David destroyed the chariots and houghed the horses of the enemies of God’s people. [2 Sam. viii. 4. x. 18. 1 Chron. xviii. 4. and xix. 7.](#) agreeably to [Psal. xlvi. 9.](#) “He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder. He burneth the chariot in the fire.” [Psal. lxxvi. 3.](#) “There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. [Ver. 6.](#) “At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.” See also [Ezek. xxxix. 9, 10, 20.](#) and [Zech. xii. 3, 4.](#) What David says, [Psal. xviii.](#) and [2 Sam. xxii.](#) of the manner in which God appeared for him against his enemies, to destroy them in a terrible tempest with thunder, lightning, earthquake, devouring fire, &c. is agreeable to many things in the prophecies of the Messiah. See what has before been observed, when speaking of the deluge and destruction of Sodom, and the destruction of the Amorites in Joshua’s time. Other kings brought presents unto David and bowed down unto him. [2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Chron. xiv. 1. 2 Sam. viii. 2,10. 1 Chron. xviii. 10. 2 Sam. x. 19. 1 Chron. xxii. 4.](#) agreeable to [Psal. lxxii. 10, 11. xlv. 12. lxxviii. 29. Isa. xlix. 7. and lx. 9.](#)

The honour, dominion, and crown of David’s enemies was given unto him. [2 Sam. xii. 30.](#) and [1 Chron. xx. 2. Ezek. xxi. 26, 27.](#) “Thus saith the Lord, Remove the diadem and take off the crown; this shall not be the same. Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high: perverted, perverted, perverted will I make it, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him.” David’s sons were princes. David’s sons were chief rulers or princes, as it is in the margin; agreeably to [Psal. xlv. 16.](#) “Instead of thy lathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.” David brought the wealth of the heathen into Jerusalem and dedicated it to God, and as it were built the temple with it. [2 Sam. viii. 11,12. 1 Chron. xviii. 11. and xxvi. 26, 27. and chap. xxii. throughout, and xxix.;](#) agreeably to [Mic. iv. 13.](#) “Arise, thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.” [Isa. xxiii. 17,18.](#) “The Lord will visit Tyre and her merchandise and hire shall be holiness unto the Lord. It shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.” See also [Isa. lx. 5, 6, 9, 11, 13. lxi. 6. and Zech. xiv. 14.](#) David was a mediator; he stood between God and the people, both to keep off judgments and the punishment of sin, and also to procure God’s favour towards them. For his sake God granted his gracious presence and favour with Israel. [2 Sam. vii. 10.](#) Thus we read of favour which God showed to Israel, and withholding judgments from time to time for his servant David’s sake. [1 Kings xi. 12, 13, 32, 34. xv. 4. 2 Kings viii. 19. xix. 34. and xx. 6.](#) And he stood between God and the people of Jerusalem, when he saw the sword of justice drawn against it to destroy it. [2 Sam. xxiv. 17.,](#) to the end. So the Messiah is spoken of as in like manner the Mediator; being himself peculiarly God’s elect and beloved, is given for a covenant of the people, [Isa.](#)

xlii. 6. xlix. 8. and the messenger of the covenant, and a prophet like unto Moses, who was a mediator. And the prophecies speak of the forgiveness of sin, and the greatest mercy towards God's people, and an everlasting covenant, and the pure mercies of David, as being through the Messiah.

David as mediator saved the people of Jerusalem from destruction, by offering himself to suffer and die by the sword of the destroying angel, and by building an altar and offering sacrifice; 2 Sam. xxiv. 17., to the end, agreeably to the prophecies of the Messiah.

David not only made a tabernacle for God in mount Zion, and so provided a habitation for the Lord, but he in effect built the temple. He bought the ground on which it was built, built an altar upon it, and made provision for the building of the temple. It was in his heart to build a house to God's name, and he directed and ordered precisely how it should be built, and ordered all its services, 1 Chron. xxii. and xxiii. xxiv. xxv. xxvi.: agreeably to Zech. vi. 12, 13. Herein David was as the Messiah, a prophet like unto Moses, who built the tabernacle and the altar according to the pattern God gave him, (as he gave David the pattern of the tabernacle,) and gave the ordinances of the house, and ordered all things appertaining to the worship of the tabernacle. God by David gave to Israel new ordinances, a new law of worship, appointed many things that were not in the law of Moses, and some things that superseded the ordinances of Moses. This is agreeable to the things said of the Messiah. David made all manner of preparation for the building of the temple, and that in vast abundance; he laid up an immense treasure; 1 Chron. xxii. 14. xxviii. 14., &c. xxix. 2., &c. agreeably to Isa. xxv. 6. "And in this mountain shall the Lord make unto all people a feast of fat things," &c. Isa. lv. 1-9. "Ho, every one that thirsteth," &c. Hag. ii. 7. "I will fill this house with glory." Jer. xxxiii. 6. "I will reveal unto them the abundance of truth and peace." Isa. lxiv. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," &c. Isa. lxvi. 12. "I will extend peace to her as a river." Psal. lxxii. 3. "The mountains shall bring peace." Ver. 7. "There shall be abundance of peace." Amos ix. 13. "The mountains shall drop sweet wine." Joel iii. 18. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Chittim." And Isa. lx. throughout; besides the things which the prophecies say of the perfect satisfaction of God's justice, by the sacrifice of the Messiah, and the abundance of his righteousness and excellency. David made such great provision for the building of the temple, in his trouble by war, and by exposing his own life, which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of Christ's procuring the immense blessings of his church, by his extreme sufferings and precious blood. David was the head of God's people, the prince of the congregation of Israel, not only in their civil affairs, but in ecclesiastical affairs also, and their leader in all things appertaining to religion and the worship of God. Herein he was as the Messiah is represented in the prophecies, which speak of him as a prophet like unto Moses, and as the head of God's

people, as their great king, prophet, and priest; and indeed almost all that the prophecies say of the Messiah, implies that he shall be the great head of God's people in their religious concerns. David regulated the whole body of the people, and brought them into the most exact and beautiful order; [1 Chron. xxvii.](#) which is agreeable to what is represented of the church in the Messiah's days, as "beautiful for situation." [Psal. xlviii. 2.](#) "The perfection of beauty." [Psal. 1. 2.](#) <sup>537</sup> "An eternal excellency, the joy of many generations." And what is represented in Ezekiel of the exact measures and order of all parts of the temple, the city, and the whole land. David built the altar in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, on Gentile ground; which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the church of the Messiah being erected in Gentile lands, and being made up of those that had been sinners.

The things that are said of Solomon fall little, if any thing, short of those that are said of David, in their remarkable agreement with things said of the Messiah in the prophecies. His name *Solomon*, signifies peace or peaceable, and was given him by God himself, from respect to the signification, because he should enjoy *peace*, and be a means of peace to God's people. [1 Chron. xxii. 9.](#) "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about. For his name shall be Solomon; and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days." This is agreeable to [Isa. ix. 6, 7.](#) "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called *The Prince of Peace*: of the increase of his *peace* there shall be no end." [Psal. cx.](#) "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec," who as the apostle observes, was king of *Salem*, that is, king of *peace*. [Psal. lxxii. 3.](#) "The mountains shall bring peace unto the people." [Ver. 7.](#) "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." [Psal. xxxv. 10.](#) "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." [Isa. lii. 7.](#) "How beautiful are the feet of him that publisheth peace." [Jer. xxxiii. 6.](#) "I will reveal unto them the abundance of truth and peace:" and many other places. When Solomon was born it is said the Lord loved him. [1 Sam. xii. 24.](#) And the prophet Nathan for this reason called him by the name *Jedidiah*; *i. e. the beloved of the Lord*. He is also spoken of as the beloved son of his father. [Prov. iv. 3.](#) "For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother." Solomon was the son of a woman that had been the wife of a Hittite, a Gentile by nation; fitly denoting the honour that the prophecies represent, that the Gentiles should have by their relation to the Messiah. God made mention of Solomon's name as one that was to be the great prince of Israel and means of their happiness from his mother's womb; agreeably to [Isa. xlix. 1.](#) "The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name." God promised to establish the throne of Solomon for ever, in terms considerably like those used by the prophets concerning the kingdom of the Messiah. [2 Sam. vii. 12.](#) "I will set up thy seed after thee

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which shall proceed out of thine own bowels: and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." Also [1 Chron. xxii. 10](#). [Isa. ix. 6, 7](#). "Of the increase of his government there shall be no end upon the throne of David and his kingdom to establish it from henceforth even for ever." [Psal. cx.](#) "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec." [Dan. vii. 14](#). "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Solomon is spoken of as God's son. [1 Chron. vii. 14](#). "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." [1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10](#). "His name shall be Solomon he shall be my son, and I will be his father." [chap. xxviii. 6](#). "And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts. For I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father." Solomon was in an eminent manner *God's elect*. [1 Chron. xxviii. 5,6](#). "And of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons) he hath chosen Solomon my son, to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. And he said, Solomon thy son have I chosen to be my son." [chap. xxxix. 1](#). "David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen." Though David had many sons, and many born before Solomon, yet Solomon was made his first-born, higher than all the rest, and his father's heir and his brethren's prince; agreeably to [Psal. lxxxvii. 27](#). "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." [Psal. xlv. 7](#). "Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The word which Nathan, the minister of the Lord, spake to Bathsheba, David's wife, and Solomon's mother, and the counsel he gave her, was the occasion of the introduction of the blissful and glorious reign of Solomon, [1 Kings i. 11-13](#). So the prophecies represent the preaching of God's ministers as the means of introducing the glorious kingdom of the Messiah. [Isa. lxii. 6, 7](#). "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." [Chap. lii. 7, 8](#). "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings! Thy watchmen shall lift the voice; with the voice together shall they sing. For they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." This earnest incessant preaching of ministers shall be in the first place to the visible church of God, that is represented in the Old Testament both as the wife and mother of Christ. She is represented as his mother, [Mic. iv. 10](#). "Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail;" with the next chapter, [ver. 2, 3](#). "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." [Isa. ix. 6](#). "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." [Cant. iii. 11](#). "Behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him." Solomon's father had solemnly promised, and covenanted, and sworn to Bathsheba long beforehand, that Solomon should reign and sit on his throne. So the sending of the Messiah and introducing the blessings of his reign, was the grand promise, covenant, and oath of God to his church of old, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in David's and the prophets' times. [Ps.](#)

lxxxix. 3, 4. 35, 36. 2 Sam. xxii. 3-5. Jer. xxxiii. 17, to the end., and many other places. The glorious reign of Solomon is introduced on the earnest petitions and pleadings of Bathsheba with his father. 1 Kings i. 15-21. So the prophecies often represent that the glorious peace and prosperity of the Messiah's reign shall be given in answer to the earnest and importunate prayers of the church. Ezek. xxxvi. 37. "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Jer. xxix. 11-14. Cant. ii. 14. Zech. xii. 10. Bathsheba pleads the king's promise and covenant. So the church is often represented as waiting for the fulfilment of God's promises with respect to the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom. Gen. xlix. 18. Isa. viii. 17. and xxx. 18. xl. 31. and xlix. 23. Zeph. iii. 8. Isa. xxv. 9. xxvi. 8. and lxiv. 4. Solomon came to the crown after the people had set up a false heir, one that pretended to be the heir of David's crown, and for a while seemed as though he would carry all before him. This is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah, which represent that his kingdom shall be set upon the ruins of that of others, who should exalt themselves and assume the dominion. Ezek. xvii. 24. "I the Lord have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree," &c. Ch. xxi. 26. "Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, take off the crown; this shall not be the same. Exalt him that is low; abase him that is high," Ps. ii. "The kings of the earth set themselves; the rulers take counsel together, saying, Let us break their bands, &c. Yet have I set my king on my holy hill of Zion." Ps. cxviii. 22. "The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner." And particularly this is agreeable to what the prophet Daniel says of the reign of antichrist, that shall precede the glorious day of the Messiah's reign, who shall set up himself in the room of the Most High, as law-giver in his room, shall think to change times and laws, whose reign shall continue till the Messiah comes to overthrow it, by setting up his glorious kingdom. When David understands the opposition that was made to Solomon's reign by him that had usurped the kingdom, and by the rulers and great men that were with him, he solemnly declares his firm and immutable purpose and decree of exalting Solomon that day to his throne which was in mount Zion. 1 Kings i. 29, 30. agreeable to Ps. ii. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed; saying, Let us break their bands. Yet have I set my king on my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Solomon was made king by a most solemn oath of his father, that he declares he will not repent of, but fulfil. 1 Kings xxix. 30. "And the king sware, and said, As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day." Agreeable to Ps. cx. 4. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec." When the time came for Solomon to be proclaimed king, all the opposition and interest of his competitors, though very great, and of great men, (and though they seemed to have made their part strong, and to have got

the day,) all vanished away as it were of itself, and came to nothing at once, like a dream when one awakes; agreeably to [Ps. ii.](#) “The Lord shall laugh at them. Yet have I set my king on my holy hill of Zion.” [Isa. xxix. 7, 8.](#) “And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall be even as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; and he awaketh, and his soul is empty,” &c. [Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2.](#) “Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him, as smoke is driven away, as wax melteth before the fire.” [Isa. lxiv. 1.](#) “Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.” [Dan. ii. 34, 35.](#) “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away.” The followers of Adonijah were dispersed without any battle, only by what they heard and saw of what David had done in exalting Solomon, and the manner in which he was introduced and instated in the kingdom; which is agreeable to [Ps. xlviii. 4-6.](#) “For lo, the kings were assembled; they passed by together; they saw it, and so they marvelled. They were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain as of a woman in travail.” After David had declared the decree, that Solomon should be king in Zion, it was dangerous for the princes and rulers not to submit themselves to Solomon, and behave with suitable respect to him, lest he should be angry, and they should perish. [Ps. ii.](#) Solomon, in his way to the throne, is made as it were to drink of the brook. He first descended from the height of mount Zion down into a low valley without the city, to the water-course of Gihon. There he had a baptism to be baptized with. And then he ascended into the state and majesty of a king. Agreeable to [Psalm cx.](#) “He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head:” and the many prophecies that speak of his humiliation, and sufferings, and glorious exaltation consequent thereon. Solomon, after he had descended into the valley to the waters of Gihon, ascended up into the height of Zion in a manner resembling the ascension of the Messiah, very much after the same manner that the ascension of the ark resembled it. For he went up with the sound of the trumpet, all the people following him with songs, and instruments of music, and hosannas, rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth rent again. [1 Kings i. 39, 40.](#) Agreeable to [Psalm lxxviii.](#) and [xlvii. 5.](#) and [xxiv.](#) That the peaceful, happy, and glorious reign of Solomon should be introduced with such extraordinary joy, shouting, songs, and instruments of music in Zion, is agreeable to what is often foretold concerning the introduction of the glorious day of the Messiah’s reign. [Zech. ix. 9.](#) “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem behold, thy King cometh unto thee.” To the like purpose, [chap. ii. 10.](#) [Isaiah xl. 9.](#) and [lii. 7-9.](#) [Psalm xcvi. 10.,](#) &c. “Say among the heathen, the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved. He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad. Let the sea roar and

the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord:" and [Psal. xcvii. 1, 8, 12. xcvi. 4.](#) to the end, and [c. 1, 2. Isaiah xlv. 23. xlix. 13. Isaiah lv. 12.](#) and many other places. The great prosperity of Israel through the reign of Solomon was introduced with the sound of the trumpet. [1 Kings i. 34, 39. 1 Chron. xxix. 21, 22.](#) Agreeable to [Isaiah xxvii. 13.](#) "The great trumpet shall be blown," &c. Solomon was the *Messiah* or *anointed* in an eminent manner. He was anointed by the special direction both of David and of Nathan the prophet. [1 Kings i. 11, 34, 39.](#) He was anointed with God's holy anointing oil out of the tabernacle, [verse 39.](#) not only was Solomon anointed of God, but he was anointed also by the people. They made him king over them by their own act, [1 Chron. xxix. 22.](#) agreeable to [Hos. i. 11.](#) "Then shall the children of Judah, and the children of Israel, be gathered together, and appoint over them one head; and they shall come up out of the land. For great shall be the day of Jezreel." David made Solomon to ride on his own mule, and he sat on his father's throne, while David was yet living, and was king. His father solemnly invested him with his kingly authority; and himself gives him his charge. [1 Kings i. 30, 33, 35, 47, 48. ii. 12. 1 Chron. xxviii. xxix.](#) This is agreeable to the account that is given of God the Father's investing the Messiah with his dominion in [Dan. vii.](#) See also [Zech. vi. 12,13.](#) and [Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2.](#) with [xliv. 2.](#) Solomon is spoken of as not only sitting on the throne of his father David; but also as sitting on God's throne, and reigning in some respect in God's stead, as his vicegerent. [1 Chron. xxviii. 5.](#) "The Lord hath chosen Solomon my son, to sit upon *the throne of the kingdom of the Lord* over Israel." [chap. xxxix. 23.](#) "Then Solomon sat upon the throne of the Lord as king in stead of David his father." [2 Chron. ix. 8.](#) "Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to seat thee on his throne, to be king for the Lord thy God." So the prophecies do represent the Messiah, as sitting on the throne of David his father. [Isa. ix. 7.](#) "On the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it," &c. [Jer. xxxiii 17, 21.](#) And also as sitting on the throne of God. [Zech. vi. 13.](#) "He shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne." Also [Dan. vii. 13, 14.](#) and [Psal. ii.](#) "I have set *my king upon my holy hill* of Zion." [Psal. cx.](#) "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." [Psal. xlv. 6.](#) "Thy throne, O God, is for ever." The beginning of Solomon's reign was a remarkable time of vengeance on the wicked, and such as had been opposers or false friends of David and Solomon. Many such were then cut off. [1 Kings ii.](#) So that it was as it were the righteous only that delighted themselves in that abundance of peace, and partook of the glory, prosperity, and triumph of God's people, that was enjoyed in this reign, which is agreeable to [Isa. lxi. 2.](#) "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God:" [lxv. 12.](#) &c. "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter my servants shall eat; but ye shall be hungry," &c. [Chap. lxvi. 14-16.](#) "And the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indig-

nation towards his enemies. For behold, the Lord will come with fire and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and the slain of the Lord shall be many." [Isa. xxxiii. 14.](#) &c. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrite. He that walketh righteously shall dwell on high thine eye shall see the king in his beauty." [Mal. iv. 1-3.](#) "All the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble. But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. And ye shall tread down the wicked." [Ezek. xx. 38.](#) "And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me." [Psal. xxxvii. 9-11.](#) "For evil-doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." And many other places. Solomon did not immediately cut off these rebels and transgressors; but gave them opportunity to enjoy the blessings of his reign with others, if they would turn from their evil way, and submit to him, and approve themselves worthy men and faithful subjects. But when they went on still in their transgressions he cut them off. Agreeable to what is foretold should be at the introduction of the glory of the Messiah's reign, in [Psal. lxviii. 18.](#) &c. "Thou hast ascended on high thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loaded us with his benefits. But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses." Solomon was a man of great and unparalleled wisdom. This is agreeable to [Isa. ix. 6.](#) "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor." [xi. 2, 3.](#) "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." [Zech. iii. 9.](#) "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes." See also [Isa. xli.](#) two last verses, with [xlii. 1.](#) God was with Solomon and greatly established his throne. [1 Kings ii. 12.](#) [2 Chron. i. 1.](#) agreeable to [Isa. ix. 7, 9.](#) "Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this." [Psal. lxxxix. 2, 3.](#) "Mercy shall he build up for ever: thy faithfulness will thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen." [20, 21.](#) "With my holy oil have I anointed him, with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him." [36, 37.](#) "His throne shall endure as the sun before me: it shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." [Psal. ii.](#) throughout. [Psal. xlv.](#) "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." [Psal. cx.](#) "Sit thou at my right hand, the Lord hath sworn," &c. [Isa. xlii. 1, 4.](#) "Behold my servant whom I uphold he shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law." And [xlix. 8.](#) "I have helped thee, and I will preserve thee, to establish the earth." The Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any before him in Israel. [1 Chron. xxix. 25.](#) [2 Chron.](#)





i. 1.; agreeable to [Psal. xlv. 2.](#), &c. "Thou art fairer than the children of men gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty." [Ver. 6.](#) "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. [Isa. ix. 6.](#) "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, a stranger; agreeably to [Psal. xlv. 10.](#) "Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people," &c. "She was the daughter of a king;" agreeably to [Psal. xlv. 13.](#) "The King's daughter," &c. a Gentile, agreeably to [Hos. ii. 16.](#) "Thou shalt call me Ishi," (*i. e.* my husband.) [Ver. 19, 20.](#) "And I will betroth thee unto me." [Ver. 23.](#) "And I will have mercy upon her that hath not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God;" with innumerable other prophecies of the calling of the Gentiles. She was an Egyptian, and Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Agreeably to [Psal. lxxxvii. 4.](#) "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me." [Psal. lxxviii. 31.](#) "Princes shall come out of Egypt." [Isa. xix. 18, to the end.](#) "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan and there shall be an altar unto the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and the Lord shall be known unto Egypt: and the Egyptians shall know the Lord and the Egyptians shall serve the Assyrians the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed shall be Egypt my people." Pharaoh's daughter being an Egyptian, was of a swarthy complexion; agreeably to [Cant. i. 5.](#) "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." We read of no person that ever offered such great sacrifices as Solomon did. [1 Kings iii. 4.](#), and [viii. 5, 63, 64.](#) [1 Kings ix. 25.](#) This is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the Messiah, as the great priest of God, who by the sacrifices he should offer, should perfectly satisfy divine justice, and truly procure the favour of God for his people; his sacrifices being herein of greater value than thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil, and all the beasts of the field. Solomon built the temple; agreeably to [Zech. vi. 12, 13.](#) He made the dwelling-place of God, that before was only a movable tent, to become a stable building, built on a rock or everlasting mountain; agreeably to [Isa. xxxiii. 20.](#) "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed; neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." [chap. xxviii. 16, 17.](#) "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." [Ezek. xxxvii. 26.](#) "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore," taken together with the prophetic description of that sanctuary in the fortieth and following chapters. Solomon's temple and his other buildings in Jerusalem were exceeding stately and magnificent, so that he vastly increased the beauty and glory of the city. [Isa. 1. 13.](#) "The glory of

Lebanon shall come unto thee. The fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary: and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” [Ver. 15.](#) “I will make thee an eternal excellency.” [chap. liv. 11,12.](#) “Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires; and I will make thy windows of agates and the gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.” The temple that Solomon built was exceeding magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all lands. [1 Chron. xxii. 5.](#); agreeably to [Isa. ii. 2.](#) “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it.” See also [Mic. iv. 1, 2.](#) [Isa. lx.](#) at the beginning. “Arise, shine; for thy light is come the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Solomon enlarged the place of sacrificing, so that sacrifices were not only offered on the altar, but all the middle part of the court was made use of for that end, by reason of the multitude of worshippers and the abundance of sacrifices. [1 Kings viii. 64.](#) [2 Chron. vii. 7.](#) which is agreeable to [Jer. iii. 16, 17.](#) “And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord,” &c. at that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall be gathered unto the name of the Lord unto Jerusalem.” [Mal. i. 10, 11.](#) “From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering:” and many other places. Solomon was a great intercessor for Israel, and by his intercession he obtained that God should forgive their sins, and hear their prayers, and pity them under their calamities, and deliver them from their enemies, and fulfil his promises, and supply all their necessities, that they might find mercy and find grace to help in a time of need, and that God might dwell with Israel, and take up his abode among them, as their king, saviour, and father. ([2 Kings viii. 2 Chron. vi.](#)) By his intercession and prayer he brought fire down from heaven, to consume their sacrifices; and obtained that God should come down in a cloud of glory to fill his temple. [2 Chron. vii. 1-3.](#) [1 Kings viii. 54.](#) His intercession was as it were continual, as though he ever lived to make intercession for his people, that they might obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. See those remarkable words, [1 Kings viii. 59.](#) Solomon was not only an intercessor for Israel, but for the stranger that was not of Israel, but came out of a far country for God’s name sake, when he should hear of his great name and great salvation. [1 Kings viii. 41-43.](#) [2 Chron. vi. 32, 33.](#) which is agreeable to what the prophecies do abundantly represent of the joint interest of the Gentiles in the utmost ends of the earth, with Israel in the Messiah, through hearing his great name, and the report of his salvation. Solomon prayed for all the people of the earth that they might know the true God. [1 Kings viii. 60.](#) So the prophecies do abundantly show, that the Messiah should actually obtain this benefit for all nations of the world. Solomon did the part of a priest in blessing



the congregation. [1 Kings viii. 14.](#) [2 Chron. vi. 3.](#) with [Numb. vi. 23.](#) which is agreeable to the prophecies which do represent the Messiah as a priest, and also to [Gen. xxii. 18.](#) "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." To the like purpose, [chap. xii. 3.](#) [xviii. 18.](#) and [xxvi. 4.](#) and [Psal. lxxii. 17.](#) "And men shall be blessed in him." Solomon made a covenant with the king of Tyre, and the servants of the king of Tyre were associated with the servants of Solomon in the building of the temple: which is agreeable to the prophecies of the Messiah's being a light to the Gentiles and covenant of the people; and the Gentiles being associated with the Jews and becoming one people with them; and their coming and building in the temple of the Lord. [Zech. vi. 15.](#) [Isa. lx. 10.](#) "And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee." And particularly the prophecies that represent that the nation in the islands and ends of the earth and maritime places, the chief nations for arts, wealth, merchandise, and seafaring, should be brought into the kingdom of the Messiah, bringing their silver and gold to the name of the Lord, &c. And that the Tyrians in particular should be the people of the Messiah. Solomon brought the glory of Lebanon, or the best and fairest of its growth, to build the temple of God; agreeably to [Isa. lx. 13.](#) Solomon in an eminent manner executed judgment and justice. [1 Kings iii. 11, 28.](#) and [x. 9, 18.](#) His throne of judgment was of ivory, a white, pure, and precious substance, used in the Old Testament as a symbol of purity and righteousness. This is agreeable to innumerable prophecies of the Messiah. It was in Solomon's time that God first gave his people Israel fully to enjoy that rest in Canaan, that he had promised them in the time of Moses; and Solomon's rest was glorious. [1 Kings v. 4.](#) "But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side." And [chap. viii. 56.](#) "Blessed be the Lord God, that hath given rest unto his people Israel; according to all that he promised, there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant." This is agreeable to [Isa. xi. 10.](#) "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." [Jer. xxx. 10.](#) "So I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return and be in rest and quiet, and none shall make him afraid." [Isa. xxxii. 20.](#) "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down." And [xxxii. 17, 18.](#) "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. [1 Kings iv. 25.](#); agreeable to [Mic. iv. 4.](#) "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid." [Zech. iii. 10.](#) "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, ye shall call every man his neighbour under his vine, and under his fig-tree." In Solomon's reign there were neither adversary nor evil occurrent. So according to the prophecies in the Messiah's times there shall be no adversary.

[Isa. xxv. 5.](#) “Thou shall bring down the noise of strangers as the heat in a dry place, even the heat with the shadow of a cloud; the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.” [Isa. liv. 14.](#) “In righteousness shall thou be established. Thou shall be far from oppression, for thou shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee.” And [xlix. 19.](#) “They that swallowed thee up shall be far away.” [Isa. lx. 13.](#) “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.” And [xi. 13.](#) “The adversaries of Judah shall be cut off.” So [Ezek. xxxvi. 12,13.](#) and many other places. So by the prophecies of the Messiah’s times, there should not be evil occurrent. [Isa. xxv. 8.](#) “He will wipe away tears from off all faces.” And [xxxv. 10.](#) “Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” [Isa. xxxv. 24.](#) “And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” [Isa. lxxv. 19.](#) “And the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.” [Ver. 21.](#) “And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.” [Zech. viii. 12.](#) “The seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit; and the ground shall give her increase; and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things;” and many other places. In Solomon’s time Israel were possessed of great riches, silver, and gold, and other precious things in vast abundance. [1 Kings x. 21-23, 27.](#) agreeable to [Isa. lx. 5.](#) “The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee. The forces (or wealth) of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” [Ver. 6.](#) “The multitude of camels shall cover thee. The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah they shall bring gold.” [Ver. 9.](#) “The ships of Tarshish shall bring their silver and their gold.” [Ver. 11.](#) “Thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces (or wealth) of the Gentiles.” [Ver. 17.](#) “For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron.” [lxi. 6.](#) “Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.” [lxxvi. 11, 12.](#) “That ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream; then shall ye suck,” &c. and many other places. Solomon’s reign was a time of great feasting and rejoicing in Israel. [1 Kings iv. 20-22, 23. viii. 65.](#) and [x. 5.](#) agreeable to [Isa. xxv. 6.](#) “And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.” [Isa. lxxv. 13, 14.](#) “Behold, my servants shall eat my servants shall drink my servants shall rejoice my servants shall sing for joy of heart.” [Ver. 18.](#) “Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy.” [Jer. xxxi. 12.](#) “Therefore shall ye come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd, and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all.” [Zech. viii. 19.](#) “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah joy, and gladness, and cheerful feasts.” [Chap. ix. 15.](#) “They shall drink and make a noise as through

wine, and they shall be filled like bowls and as the corners of the altar.” Also [Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 10. xlv. 23. xlix. 13.](#) and [lxi. 3.](#) and [li. 11.](#) and very many other places.

There was a vast increase of God’s people Israel in Solomon’s days, so that they were as the sand of the sea, and were so many that they could not be numbered or counted for multitude. [1 Kings iii. 8. iv. 20.](#) The servants of Solomon and those that stood continually before him, were pronounced happy, eminently and remarkably so. [1 Kings x. 8.](#) “Happy are these thy men; happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.” Agreeable to [Psal. lxxii. 17.](#) “And man shall be blessed in him.” [Isa. xxxiii. 17.](#) “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty.” [Isa. ii. 5.](#) “O house of Jacob, come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord.” In Solomon’s reign the remnant of the heathen were made bondmen, but the Israelites were for noble employments. [1 Kings ix. 21, 22.](#) Agreeable to [Isa. lxi. 5, 6.](#) “And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God. Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Solomon made cedars to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the vale for abundance.” Agreeable to [Isa. iv. 13.](#) “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” [Chap. xli. 19.](#) “I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle and the oil-tree. I will set up in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together.” [Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.](#) “The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.” In Solomon’s days, the house of the Lord was in a remarkable manner filled with glory. [1 Kings viii. 10, 11. 2 Chron. v. 13, 14.](#) and [vii. 1, 2;](#) agreeable to [Hag. ii. 7.](#) In Solomon’s days, a great and extraordinary feast of tabernacles was kept. [1 Kings viii. 65. 2 Chron. v. 3.](#) and [vii. 8-10.](#) It was by far the greatest feast of tabernacles that ever was kept in Israel. This is agreeable to [Zech. xiv. 16-19.](#) The blessings of Solomon’s reign were the fruit of God’s everlasting love to Israel. [1 Kings x. 9.](#) “Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he the king to do judgment and justice.” [Jer. xxxi. 3.](#) “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” Solomon reigned from the river Euphrates to the ends of the earth, even the uttermost part of the land next to the great sea, as it was called. [1 Kings iv. 21.](#) agreeable to [Psal. lxxii. 8.](#) and [Zech. ix. 10.](#) Solomon had many chariots. [1 Kings iv. 26.](#) and [x. 26.](#) This is agreeable to [Psal. lxxviii. 18.](#) and [Dan. vii. 10.](#) The exceeding greatness of Solomon’s court, the vast number of his servants, ministers, and attendants, which may be learned from [1 Kings iv. 1, 19, 22, 23. Chap. ix. 22. 2 Chron. viii. 9, 10.](#) is agreeable to [Psal. lxxviii. 18.](#) and [Dan. x. 13, 21.](#) and [xii. 1.](#) compared with [Dan. vii. 10.](#) Other kings and nations brought presents unto Solomon. [1 Kings iv. 21. ix. 14.](#) and [x. 25. Psal. lxxviii. 29.](#) “Because of thy temple at Jerusalem, kings shall bring presents



unto thee.” [Psal. lxxii. 10.](#) and [xlv. 12.](#) The queen of Sheba came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and to be instructed by him, and brought great presents, and particularly gold and spices. [1 Kings x. 2, 10.](#) This is agreeable to [Isa. lx. 6.](#) “All they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord.” [Psal. lxxii. 9, 10.](#) “The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.” [Ver. 15.](#) “To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba.”

The queen of Sheba came bringing her presents on a multitude of camels. [1 Kings x. 2.](#) “And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices and very much gold;” agreeable to [Isa. lx. 6.](#) “The multitude of camels shall cover thee: the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense.” Solomon extended his royal bounty to the queen of Sheba, and gave her all her desire. Agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the blessings and favour of the Messiah to be extended to the Gentiles, and his granting the requests of those that look to him from the ends of the earth. Israel, in Solomon’s time, was enriched and adorned with the gold of Ophir, especially they of Solomon’s courts, and of his own family: agreeably to [Psal. xlv. 9.](#) “On thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.” All the kings and merchants of Arabia brought presents of gold and spices unto Solomon. [1 Kings x. 14, 15.](#) This is agreeable to [Isa. xlv. 14.](#) “The merchandise of Ethiopia shall come over to thee.” [Zeph. iii. 10.](#) “From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants.” [Psal. lxxviii. 31.](#) “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.” [Psal. lxxii. 9, 10.](#) “They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.” [Isa. lx. 6.](#) “The multitude of camels shall cover thee. The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense.” [Isa. xlii. 11.](#) “Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit. Let the inhabitants of the rock sing.” [Chap. lx. 7.](#) “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee: the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee.” The ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, and precious stones, and other precious things to Solomon; [1 Kings viii. 26.](#), to the end, [ix. 10, 11.](#); and Solomon improved what they brought to adorn the temple, [ver. 12.](#) agreeable to [Psal. lxxii. 10.](#) “The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents.” [Isa. lx. 5.](#) “The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.” [Isa. lx. 9.](#) “Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first. Their silver and their gold with them to the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel; because he hath glorified thee.” There came of all people from all kings of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and brought presents of gold, silver, spices, &c. [1 Kings iv. 34.](#) “And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth which had heard of his wisdom.” [2 Chron. ix. 23, 24.](#) “And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart; and they brought every man his present, vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness and spices, horses arid mules, a rate year

by year.” Thus all kings did as it were bow down unto Solomon. Solomon was a king of kings. [2 Chron. ix. 26](#). “And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.”

The labour of Egypt was brought over to Israel in Solomon’s days. [1 Kings x. 28](#). “And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt and linen yarn. The king’s merchants received the linen yarn at a price;” which is agreeable to [Isa. xlv. 14](#). “The labour of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia shall come over unto thee.” From that, [1 Kings x. 28](#), it is manifest that fine linen was very much used for clothing in Solomon’s days, at least by Solomon’s court, which is a fit emblem of spiritual purity and righteousness, and was manifestly used as such by priests and princes, and was abundantly used as such in the service of the sanctuary. This is agreeable to what is often spoken in the prophets of the extraordinary holiness and purity of the church in the Messiah’s days, and to [Isa. lii. 1](#). “Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.” Solomon spake many proverbs, or parables, or dark sayings, [1 Kings iv. 32](#). “And he spake three thousand proverbs.” This is agreeable to what the prophets represent concerning the Messiah, as an eminent teacher; and what may be learned from them of the wonderful and mysterious things he should teach in his doctrine. Solomon was, as Joseph, a revealer of secrets. [1 Kings x](#). “The queen of Sheba came to prove Solomon with hard questions: and Solomon told her all her questions; there was not any thing hid from the king which he told her not.” This is agreeable to what the prophecies say of the Messiah’s being a great teacher, and of the vast increase of light and knowledge that shall be by him. Solomon made a great number of songs. [1 Kings iv. 32](#). “His songs were a thousand and five.” This is agreeable to innumerable prophecies which represent the Messiah’s times as times of extraordinary singing and melody, wherein God’s people and all the world should employ themselves in joyful songs of praise; yea, wherein all creatures, the mountains, rocks, trees, the sea, the heavens and the earth, should break forth into singing. Solomon had a vast multitude of wives and concubines, fitly representing the vast number of saints in the Messiah’s times, who are members of the church that is so often spoken of as the Messiah’s wife.

I shall mention but one thing more under this head of things that we have an account of in the history of the Old Testament, remarkably agreeing with things said in prophecies relating to the Messiah’s kingdom and redemption; and that is, the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. It is manifest that the great redemption of Messiah is abundantly represented by a redemption of Israel from captivity and bondage under the hand of their enemies in strange and far distant lands, from the north country, and their return to their own land, and rebuilding Jerusalem and the cities of Israel, and repairing the old wastes; in places too many to be enumerated. This redemption of the Jews was accompanied with a great destruction of those mighty and proud enemies, that had carried them captive, that



were stronger than they, God pleading their cause and revenging their quarrel on the greatest empire in the world, as it were causing them to tread down the loftiest city, the highest walls and towers in the world, destroying their enemies with a great slaughter, and dreadful havock of their enemies; agreeable to [Hag. ii. 22.](#) “And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen.” [Isa. xxvi. 5, 6.](#) “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low even to the ground: he bringeth it even to the dust: the foot treadeth it down, even the feet of the poor and the steps of the needy.” [Chap. xxv. 12.](#) “And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low and bring to the ground, even to the dust.” [chap. xxxii. 19.](#) “When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, and the city shall be low in a low place,” or shall be utterly abased. [Chap. xxx. 25.](#) “And there shall be upon every high mountain and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of water, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.” See also [Isa. xxxiv. 1-8.](#) and [Joel iii. 9-17.](#) [Isa. ii. 10.,](#) to the end, and many other places. This redemption of the Jews was attended with the final and everlasting destruction of Babylon, that great enemy of the Jewish church, that had oppressed her and carried her captive. This is agreeable to prophecies of the Messiah’s redemption. [Isa. xxxix. 10.,](#) to the end, and [xli. 11,12.](#) and [xliii. 17.](#) [Dan. ii. 35.](#) [Obad. 10, 17, 18.,](#) and many other places. The temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt by the countenance and authority of Gentile kings. [Ezra i. 2.,](#) &c. [Chap. vi. 6-15.](#) and [vii. 11.,](#) &c. [Neh. ii. 7-9.;](#) agreeable to [Isa. xlix. 23.](#) “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” It seems to be intimated that the queen of Persia, as well as the king, favoured the Jews, and promoted the restoring of their state, in [Neh. ii. 6.](#) The temple and city were rebuilt very much at the charge of Gentile kings and people, who offered silver and gold. [Ezra i. 4-8.](#) and [vi. 8.](#) and [vii. 15-23.](#) [Neh. ii. 7-9.](#) This is agreeable to many places mentioned in the preceding section concerning Solomon’s reign. At the time of this restoration of the Jews, strangers or Gentiles, and their princes, assisted with sacrifices for the house of God. [Ezra i. 4, 6.](#) [vi. 9.](#) and [vii. 17.](#) This is agreeable to [Psal. xxii. 29.](#) “All they that be fat upon the earth shall eat and worship.” [Isa. xlix. 7.](#) “Kings shall see and arise; princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.” [Isa. lx. 6, 7.](#) “The multitude of camels shall cover thee; the dromedaries of Midian, &c. They shall bring gold, incense. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto thee. The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee. They shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.” Gold, and silver, and sacrifices, and incense were brought to the new temple at Jerusalem, especially from the nations on this side the river Euphrates. [Ezra i. 4, 6.](#) [Chap. vi. 6-10.](#) [Chap. vii. 16-18, 21-23.](#) [Neh. ii. 7-9.](#) Which include Tyre and Ethiopia, Midian and Ephah, Kedar, Nebaioth, and the countries of Arabia, which are spoken of in prophecies that have been already mentioned in this and the foregoing section, as bringing presents, offering gifts, gold, incense, and sacrifices. The Jews at their return out of Babylon, were



redeemed without money. [Isa. xlv. 13.](#) "He shall build my city and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward." Agreeable to [Isa. lii. 3.](#) "Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money." The temple was built by Joshua, that signifies Jehovah the Saviour; agreeable to what is often represented of the Messiah in the prophecies. See what has been said above, concerning Joshua the son of Nun.

We often read of praying, fasting, confessing of sin, their own sins, and the sins of their fathers, and weeping and mourning for sin, that attended this restoration of the Jews. [Dan. ix. 1-19.](#) [Ezra viii. 21-23.](#) [Chap. ix.](#) throughout, [x. 1-17.](#) [Neh. i. 4.](#) &c. [iv. 4, 5.](#) [ix.](#) throughout. God gave the Jews remarkable and wonderful protection in their journey as they were returning from Babylon towards Jerusalem, and also in the midst of the great dangers and manifold oppositions they passed through, in rebuilding the temple and city. [Ezra viii. 21-23, 31.](#) [v. vi. vii.](#) [Neh. iv. vi.](#) This is agreeable to [Jer. xxxi. 8, 9.](#) "Behold, I will bring from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble. For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born." [Isa. xliii. 2.](#) "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." There was kept an extraordinary feast of tabernacles on occasion, of this restoration of the Jews, the only one that had been kept according to the law of Moses since the time of Joshua, the son of Nun. [Neh. viii. 14.](#) This is agreeable to [Zech. xiv. 16-19.](#) After this return from the captivity, the Jews had extraordinary means of instruction in the law of God, much greater than they had before. [Ezra vii. 25.](#) [Neh. viii.](#) After this, synagogues were set up all over the land, in each of which was kept a copy of the law of the prophets, which were read and explained every sabbath day. And there seems to be a great alteration as to the frequency of the solemn public worship of God. Idolatry was utterly abolished among the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity. This is agreeable to [Isa. ii. 18.](#) "The idols shall he utterly abolish." [Zech. xiii. 2.](#) "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land; and they shall no more be remembered." [Hos. ii. 17.](#) "For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name." [Ezek. xxxvi. 25.](#) "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." [Chap. xxxv. 23.](#) "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things." See further, fulfilment of prophecies, § 153.

The agreement between what we are told of Daniel, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and what is said in the prophecy of the Messiah and his people, is such as naturally leads us to suppose the former a designed type of the latter. Compare [Dan. iii.](#) and [vi.](#) with [Isa. xlvi. 10.](#) and [xliii. 2.](#) [Psal. xxii. 20, 21.](#) [xxxv. 17.](#) [Cant. iv. 8.](#)

It is remarkable that it should be so ordered, that so many of the chief women that we read of in the history of the Old Testament, and mothers of so many of the most eminent persons, should for so long a time be barren, and that their conception afterwards of those eminent persons they were the mothers of, should be through God's special mercy and extraordinary providence; as in Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Manoah's wife, and Hannah. It is reasonable to suppose, that God had something special in view in thus remarkably ordering it in so many instances. Considering this, and also considering the agreement of such an event with several prophetic representations made of the church of God in the Messiah's times, there appears a great deal of reason to suppose the one of these to be designed as a type of the other. [Ps. lxxviii. 6.](#) "God setteth the solitary in families." [Ps. cxliii. 9.](#) "He maketh the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children." [Isa. liv. 1.](#) "Sing, O barren, and thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud; thou that didst not travail with child. For more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord."

With respect to some of the principal persons spoken of in the Old Testament, there is this evidence, that they were types of the Messiah, *viz.* that the Messiah in the prophecies is called by their names. Thus the Messiah is called by the name of Israel. [Isa. xlix. 3.](#) "And he said unto me, Thou art my servant, O *Israel*, in whom I will be glorified." And he is often called in the prophecies by the name of *David*. [Hos. iii. 5.](#) "Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord and *David* their king." [Jer. xxx. 9.](#) "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and *David* their king, whom I will raise up unto them." [Ezek. xxxvi. 24.](#) "And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant *David* a prince among them." [chap. xxxvii. 24, 25.](#) "And *David* my servant shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes and do them; and they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children for ever, and my servant *David* shall be their prince for ever." [Ps. lxxxix. 20.](#) "I have found *David* my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." [Ver. 27.](#) "I will make him my first-born," &c. The Messiah is called by the name of Solomon. [Cant. iii. 7, 11. viii. 11, 12.](#) So the Messiah's great forerunner is called by the name of *Elijah*, [Mal. iv.](#); which argues that *Elijah* was a type of him. The Messiah is called by the name of *Zerubbabel*. [Hag. ii. 23.](#) "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O *Zerubbabel*, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and I will make thee a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts."

And as the Messiah is called by the proper names of some of the more eminent persons of the Old Testament, so some of them are called by names that it is evident by the prophecies do much more eminently and properly belong to the Messiah. So Joshua is called the shepherd, the stone of Israel; [Gen. xxix. 44.](#) which according to the prophecies, are appellations most properly belonging to the Messiah. So the name *Israel*, though it was the proper name



of *Jacob* rather than of the Messiah, yet its signification, *the prince of God*, most properly and eminently belongs to the Messiah, according to the prophecies. So it is with the name of *Abram*, high father, and *Abraham*, the father of a multitude. *David*, beloved, and *Solomon*, peace or peaceable. God also calls Solomon *his son*, an appellation which most properly belongs to the Messiah.

There is such a commutation of names between not only persons, but also things, that we have an account of in the histories and prophecies of the Old Testament. Thus the people of the Messiah, though it is plain by the prophecies that they should chiefly be of the Gentiles, yet are very generally called by the name of *Jacob* and *Israel*. So the church of the Messiah, though it is plain by the prophecies that they shall dwell all over the world, yet are often called by the name of *Jerusalem* and *Zion*. So we read in the prophecies of the Messiah's times of all nations going up from year to year to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of tabernacles, and of their being gathered together to the mountain of the house of the Lord, which is utterly impossible. Therefore, we must understand only things that were typified by Jerusalem and the mountain of the house of the Lord, God's holy mountain, holy hill, mountain of the height of Israel, &c. and by the feast of tabernacles, and Israel's going up from year to year to keep that feast. So something appertaining to the Messiah's kingdom is called by the name of the altar of the Lord at Jerusalem, and it is represented as though all nations should bring sacrifices and offer them there on that altar. Yet this is utterly inconsistent with what the prophecies themselves do plainly teach of the state and worship of the church of God at that time. So something appertaining to the Messiah's kingdom is called by the names of the temple, and the tabernacle, and of God's throne in the temple, [Zech. vi. 13](#). But it is plain by the prophecies that there should indeed be no material temple or tabernacle in the kingdom of the Messiah. So we read also, [Ezek. xlv. xlvi.](#) of the passover, that grand memorial of the bringing the children of Israel up out of Egypt. But it is evident that there will be no such memorial of that event upheld in the church in the Messiah's times, by [Jer. xvi. 14, 15.](#) and [chap. xxiii. 7, 8.](#) Certain officers in the church of the Messiah are called *priests* and *Levites*, [Isa. lxi. 6.](#) and [Jer. xxiii. 18.](#) and yet it is plain by the prophecies that the ceremonial law should be abolished in the Messiah's times. A work of grace that is wrought on the hearts of men, is often in the Old Testament called by the name of circumcision; and it is evident by the prophecies that this should in a very eminent and distinguishing manner be wrought in the Messiah's times. Something that the Messiah was to be the subject of, is called in the [40th Psalm.](#) by the name of *boring the ear*; as was appointed in the law concerning the servant that chose his master's service. Something in the prophecies of the Messiah is called by the name of *oil* and *anointing*, that, it is evident, is not any such outward oil or anointing as was appointed in the ceremonial law. [Ps. xlv. 7.](#) [Zech. iv. 12-14.](#) [Isa. lxi. 1.](#) [Ps. ii. 2, 6.](#) and [xx. 6.](#) [lxxxix. 20.](#) with [cxxxiii.](#) So we find something of a spiritual nature called in the prophecies by the name of the golden candlestick that was in the tabernacle and temple, [Zech. iv.](#)

Something is called by the name of that cloud of glory that was above the mercy-seat, [Zech. vi. 13](#). Something is called by the name of God's dwelling between the cherubims, [Ps. xcix. 1](#); and something in the Messiah's kingdom is called by the name of the precious stones that adorn the temple. Compare [Isa. liv. 11,12](#). with [1 Chron. xxix. 2](#). and [2 Chron. iii. 8](#). The name of the *incense* and the names of the sweet spices that were used in the incense and anointing oil in the sanctuary, are made use of to signify spiritual things appertaining to the Messiah and his kingdom, in the book of the Canticles. and [Ps. xlv. 8](#); and something spiritual in that prophecy, [Ps. xlv.](#) is called needle-work, the name of the work of the hangings and garments of the sanctuary. [Exod. xxvi. 36. xxvii. 16. xxxvi. 37. xxxviii. 18. xxviii. 39. and xxxix. 29](#). The garments of the church of the Messiah are spoken of under the same representation as the curtains of the tabernacle and beautiful garments of the high priest. See also [Cant. i. 5](#). Something in the Messiah's kingdom is called by the names of the outward ornaments of the temple, [Isa. lx. 13](#).

As the people of the Messiah are in the prophecies called by the name of God's people Israel, though they should be chiefly of the Gentiles, so likewise we find the enemies of the Messiah's people called by the names of the enemies of Israel; such as *Edom, Moab, the children of Amman, the Philistines, &c.* And the places of the abode of those enemies of the Messiah's people are called by the names of the countries and cities of God's enemies; as *Egypt, Babylon, Bozrah, &c.* And yet it is evident that those prophecies cannot have respect to these nations literally, as hereafter to be such grievous and troublesome neighbours to the Messiah's people, as those nations were to Israel. For the Messiah's people are to be dispersed all over the world, and not to dwell in the neighbourhood of those countries only.

Here it may be observed that the manna is called by the name of something spiritual. [Ps. lxxviii. 25](#). He had given them the corn of heaven; man did eat angels' food, which is an argument that it was a type of something spiritual.

It was before observed, that the things of the Messiah are in the prophecies expressly compared to many of the things of the Old Testament: and I would now observe, that many of them, where they are thus compared, are compared in such a manner as to be at the same time called by the same names. Thus the bondage that the Messiah should redeem his people from is called a lying among the pots; [Psal. lxxviii. 13](#). And this redemption of the Messiah is expressly called a redeeming them from Egypt. [Isa. xi. 11. Zech. x. 10](#). And something that God would do for them, is called his destroying the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and making men go over dry shod; [ver. 15](#). and dividing the sea and the river. [Zech. x. 10, 11](#). "I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves of the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up." In [Psal. lxxviii. 22](#). the redemption of the Messiah is called a bringing God's people again from the depths of the sea. So something that should be in the days of the Messiah, is called by the name of a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, [Isa. iv](#). Something appertaining to

the kingdom of the Messiah is called by the name of the valley of Achor, the place where Achan was slain. [Hos. ii. 15](#). So things appertaining to the destruction of the Messiah's enemies are often called by the names of things made use of in the destruction of the old world, of Sodom and Gomorrah, of the Egyptians, Canaanites, &c. as a flood of waters, rain, hail, stones, fire and brimstone, a burning tempest, &c. as has been observed before. The redemption of the Messiah is called by the names by which the redemption out of Babylon was called. [Jer. xvi. 15](#). "But the Lord liveth which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of the north." So again [xxiii. 8](#). That by the *north country*, or land of the north, was an appellative name by which Chaldea was called, is very manifest. See [Jer. iv. 6. vi. 22.](#) and [i. 14.](#) and very many other places. (See the Concordance.) Things that shall be brought to pass in the Messiah's days, are called by the name of what literally came to pass in the wilderness after the redemption of Egypt; in that in the prophecies, we often read of waters in the wilderness, and streams in the desert and in dry places, and the Messiah's drinking of the brook in the way; and living waters running through the desert in the east country, which is the desert of Arabia; [Ezek. xlvii. 8.](#) waters in dry places, to give drink to God's people, when ready to fail with thirst. [Isa. xxxv. 7. xli. 17, 18. xxxii. 2. xliii. 19, 20.](#) and [lv. 1.](#)

Sin or corruption, which it is evident by the prophecies the Messiah comes to heal, is called by the same general names that belonged to the leprosy, as wounds, and bruises, and nullifying sores, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. Something that should be in the Messiah's times is spoken of under the name of a trumpet, an instrument much in use by God's appointment, in the observances of the ceremonial law; [Isa. xxvii. 13.](#) and something seems to be spoken of under the name of that sound that was made with the trumpets on their joyful festivals, especially on the year of jubilee; [Psal. lxxxix. 15.](#) Something that should be fulfilled in the Messiah's times, is called by the name of that which the serpent is doomed to, [Gen. iii. 14.](#) "Dust shalt thou eat." [Isa. lxxv. 25.](#) "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." Something that should be done by the Messiah is spoken of under the name of the application that was made of water in the legal purifications. [Isa. liii. 15.](#) "So shall he sprinkle many nations." [Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.](#) "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." [Zech. xiii. 1.](#) "In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." Compare these with [Num. viii. 7.](#) and [xix. 13,18-21.](#)

The congregation in the wilderness were in the form of an army, and an army with banners. So the church of the Messiah is often represented as an army. They are represented as being called forth to war, and engaged in battle, gloriously conquering and triumphing, in places innumerable, and are spoken of as being God's goodly horse in the battle, and as a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots, and being made as the sword of a mighty man, and being gathered to an ensign, ([Isa. xi. 10, 12.](#)) and standard; [Isa. xlix. 22. lix. 19.](#) and [lxii. 10.](#) And having a banner given them, [Psal. lx. 4.](#) And setting up their banners in God's name, [Psal. xx. 5.](#) And being terrible as an army with banners, [Cant. vi. 4, 10.](#)

Something in the kingdom of the Messiah is spoken of in the prophecies under the name of pomegranates, which were represented in the work of the tabernacle and temple. [Cant. iv. 3, 13. vi. 7, 11. vii. 12. viii. 2.](#) Figures that were made in the tabernacle and temple were called cherubim, the same name by which angels are called in the Old Testament: which is an evidence that they were made as types or representations of angels. The church and people of the Messiah are in the prophecies of the Messiah compared to and called a palm-tree, or palm-trees; [Cant. vii. 7, 8. Psal. xcii. 12.](#) which is an argument that they were typified by the figures of palm-trees in the tabernacle and temple. Something that should be in the Messiah's time is represented by what appertained to the manner of God's appearance in the holy of holies. [Psal. xcvii.](#) "Clouds and darkness are round about him." Compare [2 Sam. xxii. 12.](#)

Some of the persons that we have an account of in the history of the Old Testament, are expressly spoken of as resembling the Messiah. So *Moses*, "A prophet will the Lord thy God raise up unto thee, like unto me." [Deut. xviii. 15, 18.](#) So *Melchizedek*, [Psal. cx.](#) "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." And the account we have, [Isa. vii.](#) concerning *Shear-ja-shub*, the son of Isaiah the prophet, is equivalent to expressly declaring him to be a type of the Messiah. And *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* are evidently spoken of as types of the Messiah. [Haggai ii. 23.](#) "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, and make thee as a signet." [Zech. iv. 7.](#) "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings; crying, Grace, grace unto it." [Ver. 10.](#) "For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven. They are the eyes of the Lord," &c. [Zech. iii.](#) "And he showed me Joshua the high priest and unto him he said I will clothe thee with a change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee, (for they are men wondered at,) for behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch." [Zech. vi. 11, 12.](#) "Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them on the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech the high priest, and speak unto him, Behold, the man whose name is the Branch."

It is an evidence, that some of the more eminent persons that we have an account of in the history of the Old Testament, are types of the Messiah, that some of them and the Messiah are plainly spoken of under one. It is plain concerning David in the [89th Psalm](#), where the name of David is mentioned once and again, and yet the psalm evidently looks beyond David to the Messiah. It is also plain concerning Solomon in the [72d Psalm](#), which the title declares to have respect to Solomon, and yet the matter of the psalm most evidently shows that it has respect to the Messiah; many things in it being true of the Messiah, and peculiar to him, and not true of Solomon.

And here, by the way, I would observe, that to the many evidences that have already been taken notice of, that David and Solomon are types of the Messiah, this may be added, that the Jews themselves looked on them as types of the Messiah. (See Basnage's History of the Jews, page 367.)

Many things occasionally appointed of God, if they signify nothing spiritual, must be wholly insignificant actions, and so wholly impertinent. Such as the setting up a brazen serpent for man to look upon, in order to a being healed. God's appointing the princes of the congregation to dig a well with their staves, to supply the congregations with water, and a public record's being made of it by divine inspiration, and its being celebrated in a song of the people that is also recorded by divine inspiration. [Num. xxi. 17, 18](#). Moses's holding up his hand by divine direction, that Joshua and Israel might prevail over Amalek: Elijah's stretching himself three times upon the widow of Zarephath's son, in order to raise him to life. [1 Kings xvii. 21](#). Elisha's ordering his staff to be laid on the face of the Shunamite's dead child, and afterwards his lying upon the child, and putting his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and stretching himself on the child, in order to raise it to life. And so many other like actions that God appointed, might be mentioned.

But to say something more particularly concerning the ceremonial law. There is abundant evidence even in the Old Testament, that the things that belong to that law are typical of the things of the Messiah.

If the things of the ceremonial law are not typical of moral and spiritual things, they are wholly insignificant, and so wholly impertinent and vain. For God does abundantly declare, even in the Old Testament, that he has no delight in them on their own account, and that they are in his esteem worthless and vain in themselves, and therefore it will follow that they must be worthless and vain to all intents and purposes, unless they are otherwise by the relation they bear to something that God delights in on its own account, *i. e.* unless they are some way significant of things moral and spiritual. If the things of the ceremonial law were pleasing to God, and were not pleasing on their own account, or by reason of any thing that God saw in them; then it must be on account of something else that they represent, and because they some way stand in stead of them. For instance, when God went out through the land of Egypt to smite the first-born, and saw the blood of the paschal lamb on the door-posts of a house, it is represented as being something pleasing to God, for the sake of which he would spare the inhabitants of that house. But the Old Testament reveals, that blood was not at all pleasing on its own account. For that declares that God hath no delight in the blood of beasts; and therefore the way in which it was something pleasing to God, must be its being something which represented or stood in stead of something that was truly in itself pleasing. So the sweet savour that was made in offering incense is spoken of as something sweet and pleasant to God; and a white clean garment as something pure, and so pleasing



to God. But we know that these things were not pleasant or acceptable on their own account, and therefore it must be only as related to something else that was so. But in what way is a sweet smell related to any thing really sweet to God, except as it is a type, or has some signification of it? And which way has the purity of a garment any relation to spiritual purity, but as it has a representation of it?

This leads me to observe, that there is an apparent and designed resemblance between those things that were instituted, that were in themselves worthless, and those moral and spiritual things that in themselves were valuable in the sight of God. Thus it is apparent, that outward cleanliness and purity resemble and shadow forth that which is in the sight of God real purity; and outward sweetness resembles real sweetness to God. So the light of the lamps in the sanctuary had a resemblance of spiritual light; and the preciousness of gold and pearls, that were used in the sanctuary and priests' garments, had a resemblance of some real preciousness in the sight of God; and the beauty and ornaments of the sanctuary and its vessels and holy garments, &c. had a resemblance of real beauty, and of those things that were ornaments in the sight of God. So that seeming atonement for sin, that was in the legal sacrifices, had a resemblance of that only true atonement the prophecies speak of. The seeming vicariousness there was in the sufferings of beasts for sinners, had a resemblance of a true vicariousness and substitution. And it is also manifest, that God chose those things, or had respect to them in his choice and appointment of them, because they did resemble or shadow forth those correspondent spiritual things, that have a real value and excellency in themselves in his sight. The very nature of the thing makes it manifest. Thus it is manifest that God chose pure garments rather than filthy ones, because outward purity did more resemble real purity. He chose a sweet smell to be offered as a pleasant savour unto him, because sweet smell has more resemblance of what is really sweet to him. It is manifest that he chose the suffering of beasts as an atonement for sin, rather than the feeding and pampering of them, because this has more of a resemblance of a true atonement, which the prophecies speak of as being by the sufferings of a surety. It is evident that God chose the blood or life of the creature to be offered, to make atonement for the soul, rather than the hair, because it has a greater resemblance of the life of a surety, which is a true atonement for the soul, as the prophecies of the Old Testament do represent. But if it be evident, that God in the institution of the things of the ceremonial law, had respect to the resemblance that was in them of spiritual things and things of the Messiah, and appointed those rather than things of a diverse nature, for the sake of that resemblance, this is the same thing as to say, that the former are appointed as *types* of the latter.

All the people of Israel, if they exercised consideration, must suppose and understand that these things pertaining to the ceremonial law were appointed and used as representations and symbols of something spiritual, and not for the sake of any innate goodness in them, or any value God had for them. As for instance, that God appointed white garments rather



than yellow, green, or black, not for any excellency of the colour, but as a more proper representation of righteousness and spiritual purity; and the making a sweet odour with spices, not that God smelt that odour and so was pacified towards men as though he were recompensed by the great pleasure they thereby gave him; but to represent something spiritual that was highly acceptable to him: and so that God appointed them to offer the flesh of beasts and bread, as the food or bread of God as these things are called, and the drink-offering of wine, not that God eat and drank those things, and was pleased with the taste of them, and received refreshment and benefit, as a hungry and thirsty man does by meat and drink; but that these things were mystical and symbolical representations of things of a higher and more divine nature. They must know, that laying hands on the head of the sacrifice, and what was called laying sins on the scape goat, was no real laying sins on those beasts. And besides, God did expressly and abundantly teach his people under the Old Testament the contrary of these things. They must naturally therefore suppose, that they were used as things significant of something of a nature higher than themselves. They must naturally suppose, that the eating the passover with the staff in the hand, and with bitter herbs, and putting the blood of the sacrifices upon the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot, were mystical, and symbolical, and significant of something in itself of value and importance.

With respect to the legal sacrifices, the evidence that they were types of the Messiah is very strong; which will appear if we consider the following things.

It is evident there is some real and proper atonement for sin, which is in God's account requisite, and which he insists upon in order to the pardon of sin, and which he accepts as a true atonement, and is willing to forgive sin on account of it. Otherwise, God never would designedly have taken a course by such an abundance of institutions, to bring up his people of the nation of Israel in the notion of the need of some atonement for sin, and some vicariousness and substitution of suffering for the sinner, in order to satisfy divine justice, and not only to bring up the Jews in this nation, but his church and people from the beginning of the world, insomuch that all nations received this notion from the first progenitors and founders of the nations and families of the earth.

It is also very manifest that the legal sacrifices of beasts and birds were no real atonement. This appears not only from the nature of the thing, but it is what God abundantly taught his people under the Old Testament, of whom he required these sacrifices. *Psal. xl. 6. 1. 5.*, to the end, *li. 16. Isa. i. 11.*, &c. *lxvi. 2, 3. Hos. vi. 6. Jer. vii. 21-23.*, and especially *Mic. vi. 6-8.*

It is apparent by the prophecies of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to offer a true and real atonement for the sins of men. That the Messiah should offer up himself a sacrifice for sin, is very clearly implied in many places there mentioned. But this doctrine is not only implied, but it is declared, that the Messiah should atone for sin, or expiate it by

sacrifice. [Isa. liii. 10.](#) “When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin.” [Dan. ix. 24.](#) “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city” *to make reconciliation* for iniquity, or to expiate iniquity by sacrifice, or *to make atonement* for iniquity; for the word in the original is the very same that is used from time to time in the law about sacrifices for making atonement. In what follows, it is declared how this atonement was to be made, *viz.* by anointing the most holy and the coming of the Messiah, and by his being cut off, but not for himself, and making the sacrifice and oblation to cease in the last half of the seventieth week. And it is evident that the atonement for sin here spoken of is a proper atonement, that makes real satisfaction for sin, and truly pays and finishes the debt, by the other expressions that are added, [Dan ix. 24.](#) “To finish the transgression, and make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness;” and making the sacrifice and oblation to cease, *i. e.* by making sin to cease, making an end of sin and finishing the transgression, that there shall be no further occasion for sacrifice and oblation. And making atonement for sin is here prophesied of as that which was to be, but never yet was: it was a new thing, as the prophecy must be understood. But it could be a new thing in no other sense but that, *viz.* that a true and proper atonement for sin should be offered. For atonement in other senses beside this had been abundantly offered from the beginning of the world. What is translated, to finish the transgression, might have been rendered, to consume transgression. But that expiation for sin that consumes transgression and makes an end of sins, and brings into a state of perpetual righteousness, so as to make all further sacrifices, or attempts, and means, and representations of atonement to cease, and should abolish them as now needless, that is undoubtedly a proper atonement for sin.

Again, it is not only manifest by the Old Testament that the sacrifice of the Messiah is a true real atonement, but that it is the only true and real atonement for sin. For the Old Testament speaks of no other sorts of sacrifices of expiation for sin but those two, *viz.* the ancient legal sacrifices of beasts, and the sacrifice of the Messiah. What the prophecies sometimes say of sacrifices that should be offered by God’s people, after the Messiah’s ascension, must be understood figuratively; because it is expressly foretold, that the Messiah by his sacrifice should cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. And besides, as I observed before, the Messiah’s making expiation for sin, is prophesied of as a new thing; and as it is foretold as a new thing, or the first thing of that nature, so it is also prophesied of as the last thing of that nature, as is implied in those expressions of his making an end of sin, finishing the transgression, and making the sacrifice and oblation to cease. And these two things put together, imply that this is the only truly expiatory sacrifice. See also [Zech. iii. 8, 9.](#) And then, that this is the only sacrifice by which the sins of God’s people are atoned, and that never any one is forgiven and accepted on account of any other atonement, is implied in [Isa. liii. 6.](#) “*All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*”



Another thing that is very manifest, is, that the legal sacrifices had a manifold resemblance and representation of that great, true, and proper sacrifice that the prophecies foretold that the Messiah should offer. Thus those beasts that were offered were without blemish, as the prophecies represent the Messiah to be, [Isa. liii.](#) and other places. These sacrifices were not of unclean but clean beasts, therein representing that spiritual purity that the prophecies speak of in the Messiah. A very great part of those sacrifices were of lambs, as the paschal lamb, [Exod. xxix. 39.](#) and very many other of their sacrifices, which had a resemblance of what the prophecies represent of the feebleness, innocence, meekness, and gentleness of the Messiah. Most of the sacrifices were males, as the Messiah is represented as of the male sex. They were offered by a priest in white robes, representing the purity and holiness of the Messiah; who, when spoken of, [Dan. ix.](#) as the great priest that should offer that atonement that should make an end of sin, is called the "Most Holy." "Seventy weeks are determined to make reconciliation for iniquity and to anoint the Most Holy." The priests were anointed: herein there was a resemblance between them and the great Messiah, or anointed. The sacrifices suffered as the Messiah, the great sacrifice, is represented to suffer. The sacrifices suffered death, and a violent death, as the Messiah suffered death the sacrifices were burnt by fire from heaven; as the prophecies represent the Messiah as suffering from the immediate hand of God. In most of the sacrifices, their inward parts were to be burnt on the altar, that are abundantly made use of in the Old Testament to represent the soul; which is agreeable to what the prophecies represent of the Messiah's making *his soul* an offering for sin. The fat of the inwards of the sacrifices was melted, and consumed, and burnt up in the fire; which is agreeable to [Psal. xxii. 14, 15.](#) "I am poured out like water my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels; my strength is dried up like a potsherd;" and [Psal. cii. 4.](#) "My heart is smitten and withered like grass;" and [Isa. liii. 12.](#) "He hath poured out my soul unto death." There was the resemblance of the substitution of the sacrificed beast in suffering for the sinner, as the prophecies represent concerning the Messiah. There was an appearance of laying the iniquities of those for whom the sacrifices were offered, on the animal sacrificed, especially on some of the sacrifices on the head of which the hands of those for whom they were offered were laid, that they might lay their sins upon them. This is agreeable to [Isa. liii. 6.](#) "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." The scape-goat is represented as bearing the sins of those for whom he was offered into the wilderness; which is agreeable to [Isa. liii. 4.](#) "Surely he hath borne our griefs, he hath carried our sorrows." The Messiah is expressly spoken of as being like a lamb, in his being slain, and offered as a sacrifice for sin, [Isa. liii.](#) The high priest made intercession for the people with the blood of the sacrifices, agreeably to [Isa. liii. 12.](#)

Beside all that has been already observed, this further is manifest, *viz.* that they are by God called an atonement, and are said to be an atonement, times without number. (See the Concordance under the word Atonement.) Seeing therefore, that the legal sacrifices are

declared expressly and abundantly to be no real atonement, but have evidently a great resemblance of the true atonement, and are plainly representations of it, and are abundantly spoken of by him that instituted them, as being an atonement, and as instituted by him that they might be an atonement; it is very apparent, that they were appointed figures and representations of the true atonement. For there are but these two ways of any thing's being consistently with truth said to be such a thing, by the name of which it is called, *viz.* either its being that thing truly and properly, or figuratively and by representation. Either it must be that thing that it is said to be in reality, or by representation of the reality, or not at all. We have often in the law of Moses this expression used with regard to the sacrifices. The priest shall make an atonement for him. Now one of these two meanings must be put upon the words, either that he shall make a real proper atonement, or that he shall make an atonement figuratively or significantly. It is either a true atonement or a seeming atonement: otherwise it could not be an atonement in any sense, nor would it be so called by God. If there be such a thing as a real atonement for sin, and the legal sacrifices be not a real atonement for sin, yet are appointed and accepted as an atonement, then they are appointed and accepted instead of an atonement, for that is the same thing. So that it is evident, that God appointed the legal sacrifices to stand in stead of, or to represent, the real atonement. If a man be appointed to stand for another that is absent, and be accepted for an absent friend, then he is his representative. When the prophet called the arrow that the king of Israel shot out of his window, the arrow of the Lord's deliverance, nothing else could be meant, but that it was a sign of the arrow of the Lord's deliverance. So when the man that interpreted his fellow's dream, said of the barley cake, "this is the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash;"<sup>538</sup> he could mean nothing else, but that this *signified* the sword of Gideon. So when Joseph said, "The seven lean kine are seven years of famine."<sup>539</sup> And so in innumerable other instances that might be mentioned. It is evident from what has been already observed, that here are certain resemblances and shadows of sacrifices, and substitutions in suffering for sinners, and atonements for sin: and it is manifest that it was out of regard to this resemblance there was in the shadow of the atonement, that the shadow was appointed. God himself has decided it by calling the shadow by the name of the substance, and by declaring that he appointed the shadow, that it might be for the substance, which he has done in declaring that he appointed it, that it might be for an atonement, *i. e.* instead of the real atonement, which is the substance.

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538 [Judges vii. 14](#)

539 [Gen. xl. 26, 27](#)

These shadows of atonement are not merely called by the name of an atonement, but they are spoken of from time to time as being an atonement, and are said to be appointed, that they might be an atonement. Now what other way there is of being an atonement, but either being so really, or being so in figure, and significance, I know not.

The incense appointed in the law had a sweet smell, and was acceptable to the senses, and so had a shadow of that which was acceptable to God and a sweet savour to him. And seeing that it is expressly declared by God in the law, that he appoints this incense for a sweet savour to him, this demonstrates that God in the appointment has respect to that resemblance, that it is appointed to be a standing representation of a true sweet savour to him. Sweet smell is appointed, because it resembles what is truly acceptable to God. When external whiteness and purity, that is a shadow of true purity in the sight of God, is called by the name of true purity; and is declared to be appointed that it might be for purity in the sight of God; this demonstrates that it is appointed to be a standing representation of true purity. So, likewise, when the shadows of sufferings for sinners, and atonements for sin, are called by the name of real sufferings for sinners, and atonements for sin, and are said from time to time to be atonements for sin, and to be appointed that they might be for atonements for sin; it demonstrates clearly, that these shadows of atonement are appointed out of respect to the resemblance they have to the real atonement, and that they might be instead of it, and standing representations of it; or, which is the same thing, that they might be types of it. God appointed the suffering of the creature, rather than the feeding or fattening of it, for the making atonement, because the suffering of the creature has a greater resemblance of that suffering that makes a real atonement for sin. God in thus calling these shadows from time to time by the name of the things resembled, and speaking of them from time to time as being the things resembled, does therein plainly put them in their stead, and does make use of them as representations of them: as if any should on design call one by another's name, that was not his own name, and ordinarily speak of him and treat him as being that other, this would be the same thing as to substitute him for the other, and to make use of him as the other's representative.

It is an argument that the sacrifices were types of the Messiah, that when Manoah offered sacrifice by God's appointment, he that is called the "angel of the Lord," and who was the Lord, ascended in the flame of the sacrifice, [Judg. xiii. 20](#). And so did, as it were, offer up himself in the flame of the sacrifice, intimating that he was the great sacrifice, that was the antitype of those sacrifices of beasts. The beasts that were sacrificed to God, ascended up in the flame before God for a sweet savour. So the matter is represented in the Old Testament. But here we see, that when the sacrifice was ascending in the flame, the angel of the Lord ascends in the same, to show that that was the end of the sacrificing fire, *viz.* to cause him to ascend as a sweet savour unto God.



Again there is clear proof, that the legal sacrifices were types of the great sacrifice of the Messiah in [Dan. ix. 24](#). “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy;” taken together with [ver. 27](#). “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week shall he cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.” What is translated in [ver. 24](#). “And to make an end of *sins*,” might have been translated, “He shall seal up the *sin-offerings*.” The word translated *sins* in the original is *Chattaath*, the very same word that is made use of in the law of Moses, to signify *sin-offerings*. So that the word might as well be translated *sin-offerings* here as there. And it is the more likely, that *sin-offerings* should be meant here, because the word is in the plural number; whereas if what was intended was the same with iniquity in the clause preceding, and transgression in the clause following, thus varying the expression for eloquence sake, it would be more likely this word would have been in the singular number as those are. And besides it is the more likely that the word signifies *sin-offerings*, because it is evident that this text is a prophecy of the sacrifice that the Messiah should offer for sin. In the next words it is said, “He shall make reconciliation for iniquity.”<sup>540</sup> The word rendered *reconciliation* (as has been already observed) signifies *expiation by sacrifice*; it being the same that is so often rendered *atonement* in the law of Moses, when speaking of *sacrifices for sin*. But what argues yet more strongly that this should have been translated, *he shall make an end, or seal up, sin-offerings*, is, that in the 24th verse there seems to be a reference to what had been said before in this verse, when it is said, In the midst of the week, or in the half of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. In the 24th verse it had been said, that the sacrifices or *sin-offerings* should be made an end of or sealed up in seventy weeks; and the [25th, 26th. and 27th.](#) verses are evidently exegetical of that 24th, to explain how the anointed Holy One or Messiah should make atonement for iniquity, and seal up the *sin-offering* and sacrifices in seventy weeks, *viz.* from the commandment to build Jerusalem there should be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks, that is, 69 weeks, and then in the remaining week he should establish the covenant with many, and in the half of the week he should make the sacrifice and oblation to cease, or make an end of the *sin-offerings*, as was said before. Now let us mind the expression; the word translated *make an end*, in the original is *he shall seal up*. “He shall seal up the *sin-offerings*.” It is the very same word that is used in the following clause concerning vision and prophecy. “He shall *seal up* the vision and prophecy.” The same word being thus used twice in like manner, in different clauses of the same sentence, once concerning the vision and prophecy, and the other time concerning the *sin-offering*, there is all reason to understand it in both places in the same sense. But the

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540 [Dan. ix. 24](#).

plain meaning of that clause, to seal up the vision and prophecy, is this; then shall be accomplished the grand event so often exhibited by the prophecies of the prophets, and so often represented and signified by the visions which they saw, and so the vision and prophecy shall be finished and brought to their grand accomplishment; that which they ultimately aimed at. Then shall be fulfilled the sum of what was signified in the vision and prophecy. (Ezek. xxviii. 12. "Thou sealest up the sum full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.") So when in the same sentence it is said, to seal up the sin-offerings, and make atonement for iniquity, we must in a like sense understand it thus, to offer that grand sacrifice or atonement for iniquity, that is so much exhibited and represented by the sin-offerings. So that the sin-offerings shall be made to cease, their design being obtained and finished, that grand event, that great and true atonement for sin, which was aimed at in them, and which they all signified and represented, being now accomplished.

Again it is evident, that the priests of old, in their office of offering sacrifices, were types of the Messiah in offering his sacrifice: otherwise there is no truth in that prophecy that God declares in so solemn a manner, and confirms with an oath, in Jer. xxxiii. 18. "Neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to kindle meat-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." See how solemnly this is confirmed and sworn to, in the following words. Unless this be fulfilled in the true sacrifice or atonement, which the Messiah offers, and in the accomplishment of that prophecy of the Messiah, Psal. cx. "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek;" it is not fulfilled at all; and is neither agreeable to fact nor to other prophecies. Unless this prophecy be fulfilled thus, it is not agreeable to fact. For the priests and Levites have had no man literally to offer sacrifices literally, for a much longer time than ever they had a man to offer sacrifices. And it is not agreeable to other prophecies, particularly that fore-mentioned, Dan. ix. 24, 27. That speaks of the Messiah's causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and sealing them up, which is directly contrary to this prophecy of Jeremiah xxxiii. if this latter be understood literally. For this very prophecy of Jeremiah is evidently a prophecy of the Messiah. See ver. 15. "I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up to David." So that upon this supposition Jeremiah foretells the Messiah's abundantly confirming the priests and Levites in their business of offering sacrifice and oblation, so as to perpetuate it for ever; and Daniel foretells his finishing the business wholly, sealing it up and making it to cease. And it is elsewhere foretold that there should be no temple made with hands, no ark, no sacrifices of beasts, in the Messiah's times.

From what has been now observed of the prophecies foretelling that the Messiah should abolish the legal sacrifices, it is manifest that whenever the prophecies of the Messiah's times do speak of sacrifices then to be offered, they are to be understood mystically, *i. e.* of spiritual things typified by the sacrifices, as Isa. xix. 31. lx. 7. Ezek. xi. 40, 41. Mal. i. 11.

The blood of the legal sacrifices is called the blood of the covenant by Moses, [Exod. xxiv. 8](#). “And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.” But God calls the blood of the Messiah the blood of the covenant that he had made with this people, or the blood of their covenant. [Zech. ix. 11](#). “As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water.” It is evident that the blood of the Messiah is that blood by which, the church will be redeemed, when the Messiah comes, which is the time here spoken of. See [ver. 9](#). foregoing, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh,” &c. Therefore, as both these, *viz.* the blood of the legal sacrifices, and the blood of the Messiah, are called the blood of the church’s covenant, it is manifest that one is represented by the other. The same sacrifices must be intended in that prophecy of the Messiah’s times, [Ps. 1. 5](#). “Gather my saints together, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Thus plain it is that the legal sacrifices were types of the Messiah, the great sacrifice and true atonement for sin, and were appointed as such. And by some things that have been already observed, it is also manifest that their legal purifications were types of that spiritual purity that should be by the Messiah, and the sweet incense a type of that which is spiritual and truly sweet to God. And concerning the incense, I further observe, that spiritual things are expressly compared to it in the Old Testament, [Ps. cxli. 2](#). “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” And the Messiah is expressly compared to a cloud of incense; [Cant. iii. 6](#). White and beautiful garments were appointed the priests by the law of Moses. These garments on the priests are expressly spoken of as representing something in the Messiah, and particularly are there spoken of as representing righteousness. Again, the righteousness of the Messiah is compared to beautiful garments, [Isa. lxi. 10](#). “He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with his ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” [Job xxix. 14](#). “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me.” God is represented as clothed with a garment white as snow. [Dan. vii. 7](#). And the Messiah appears to Daniel clothed in linen. [Dan. x. 5, 6.](#) and [xii. 7](#). Spiritual purity is represented by the colour white. [Isa. i. 18](#). “Though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.” [Dan. xii. 10](#). “Many shall be purified and made white.” The high priest had brodered garments: such are spoken of as representing righteousness. [Ezek. xvi. 9, 10](#). “Then I washed thee with water; I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee; and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work and I girded thee about with fine linen.”

It is manifest that the legal uncleannesses were types of sin, they are said to be an abomination to the Lord. Yea, they are called sin in the law of the sin-offering. [Lev. vi. 6-8.](#) and [xiv. 13, 14, 19, 22, 24, 25, 53. xv. 30](#). Moral impurities seem to be represented by legal impurities, [Hag. ii. 11-14](#). One thing that was a legal pollution, was blood. This is made use of by



the prophets to represent sin. [Ezek. xvi. 6.](#) “When I saw thee polluted in thy blood.” So [9, 22.](#) [Isa. i. 18.](#) “Though your sins be as scarlet and red like crimson.” [Chap. iv. 4.](#) “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.”

One kind of legal uncleanness was through menstruous blood. Moral or spiritual pollution is compared to this. [Isa. lxiv. 6.](#) “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” or menstruous clothes, as it might have been rendered. The leprosy was one kind of legal uncleanness. Sin seems to be compared to this, in [Isa. i. 6.](#) “From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.”

The legal purifications by washing the hands in the laver, and other parts of the body in water, is what a spiritual cleansing from sin is compared to. [Ps. xxvi. 6.](#) “I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar;” alluding to the priests washing their hands at the laver before they compassed God’s altar. [Zech. xiii. 1.](#) “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.” [Ps. li. 2.](#) “Wash me from my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.” [Isa. i. 16.](#) “Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings.” [Jer. iv. 14.](#) “Wash thy heart from wickedness.” [Prov. xxx. 12.](#) “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not cleansed from their filthiness.” [Isa. iv. 4.](#) “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion.” [Ezek. xvi. 4.](#) “Neither wast thou washed in water.” [Ver. 9.](#) “Then washed I thee in water.” [Ezek. xxxvi. 25.](#) “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness.”

That the anointing under the law typified something spiritual, is confirmed by this, that what is spiritual is called anointing. [Ezek. xvi. 9.](#) “I anointed thee with oil.” It is an argument that those officers that were anointed, were types of the Messiah, that his name is *Messiah*, or the *anointed*. The holy anointing oil represented the Spirit of God, because the Holy Spirit is represented by holy anointing oil. [Zech. iv. 2-6, 12.](#) and [Isa. lxi. 1.](#) “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me.” By which last words it may also be confirmed, that the anointing of the officers of the Jewish church represented the spiritual anointing of the Messiah.

Something spiritual that shall be in the Messiah’s times is compared to the wine of the drink-offering. [Zech. ix. 15.](#) “They shall drink and make a noise as through wine. They shall be filled like bowls and as the corners of the altar.”

We have the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, that the golden candlestick with its bowl on the top and its seven lamps, and oil for the lamps, is a representation of the church of the Messiah. [Zech. iv.](#) taken with the preceding chapter.

The sanctuary or temple was a type of heaven, as may be argued from this, that heaven is called in the Old Testament his dwelling-place, his holy habitation, his sanctuary, and his

temple. [1 Kings viii. 30.](#) “Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place.” So [39, 43, 49.](#) [2 Chron. vi. 21, 30, 39.](#); and [2 Chron. xxx. 27.](#); and [Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14.](#) “The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men; from the place of his habitation he looketh on all the inhabitants of the earth.” [Isa. lxiii. 15.](#) “Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory.” [Jer. xxv. 30.](#) “The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation.” [Deut. xxvi. 15.](#) “Look down from thy holy habitation.” [Ps. lxviii. 4, 5.](#) “Sing unto the Lord; sing praises unto his name; extol him that rideth on the heavens by his name Jah. A judge of the widows is God in his “holy habitation.” [Ps. cii. 19.](#) “For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary, from heaven did the Lord behold the earth.” [Ps. xi. 4.](#) “The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord’s throne is in heaven.”

That the great, costly, or precious stories that were the foundation of the temple, spoken of [1 Kings v. 19.](#); and of Solomon’s house, [chap. vii. 10.](#) represented the Messiah, is confirmed by [Isa. xxviii. 16.](#) [Ps. cxviii. 22.](#) [Zech. iii. 9.](#) and [iv. 7.](#)

It is a confirmation that the frame of the tabernacle and temple were typical, from the agreement there is between it, and the visions under which God sometimes manifested himself. The mercy-seat with the cherubims is called the chariot of the cherubims. [1 Chron. xxviii. 18.](#); agreeable to the vision that Ezekiel had of God riding in a chariot drawn by cherubims. Ezekiel’s vision of the chariot of the cherubims was also agreeable with the frame of the chariot, in which the lavers were set, and represented as drawn by lions, oxen, and cherubim; agreeable to the shapes of Ezekiel’s living creatures. See [1 Kings vii. 27-39.](#)

But a very great and clear evidence, that the city of Jerusalem, the holy city and the temple in all its parts and measures, and its various appendages and utensils, with all its officers, services, sacrifices, and ceremonies, and so all things appertaining to the ceremonial law, and indeed many things appertaining to the civil state of the people as divided into twelve tribes, were typical of things appertaining to the Messiah and his church and kingdom, is that these things are evidently made use of as such, in a very particular manner in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel; that we have an account of the nine last chapters of his prophecy. These there mentioned, which are the same which were in Israel under the law of Moses, are mentioned as resemblances, figures, or symbolical representations of spiritual things. So that God has in these chapters determined, that these things are figures, symbols, or types representing the things of the Messiah’s kingdom, because here he plainly makes use of them as such.

It is no argument, that the things that have been treated of were not designed as types of the Messiah, and things pertaining to his kingdom, that God, when he instituted them, did not expressly declare them to be so. For there is no more necessity of supposing that all types signifying future events, when given should be explained, than that all visions and prophecies signifying future events should be explained. The things that were exhibited in visions, were truly a sort of types of future events; as Abraham’s smoking furnace and

burning lamp, which was not explained nor expressly declared to represent any thing future. The twelve fountains and threescore and ten palm-trees at Elim, were evidently types of the twelve tribes, and threescore and ten elders; but yet it is not expressly said so. The like might be observed of Jacob's taking Esau by the heel at his birth, and God's making Eve of Adam's rib, and Moses's rod's swallowing up the magicians' rods, and many other things.

*Corollary.* Seeing it is thus abundantly evident by the Old Testament itself, that the things of the Old Testament were typical of the Messiah, and things appertaining to him, hence a great and most convincing argument may be drawn that Jesus is the Messiah; seeing there is so wonderful a correspondence, and evident, manifold, and great agreement between him and his gospel, and those types of the Old Testament. And as it is so plain by the Old Testament, that the ancient state of things amongst the Jews was all typical of the Messiah, and the Jews themselves acknowledge it: So it is a great argument, that Jesus and his kingdom were the end and antitype of these things, because presently after he comes and sets up his kingdom, God puts a total and final end to that typical state of the Jews, and all things appertaining to it, blots out all those types at once, and wipes them clean away, and poured the utmost contempt upon them, and covered them with the most dreadful darkness, and utterly destroyed, as by one great fatal and final blow, that whole typical world, and has now continued their abolition for so many ages, much longer than he did their existence, and has followed all that reject the antitype, and will cleave to the types, with so awful and continual a curse, and all this agreeably to the prophecies of what God would do, when the Messiah, this great antitype, was come.

That typical representations were looked upon by God as no trifling matters, but things of great importance, as is manifest in that it is spoken of in Scripture as a matter of such importance, that Christ's body should not see corruption before it was raised.

It was common for names to be given by a spirit of prophecy. (See Owen on [Heb. vii. 2.](#) p. 112.)

We have reason to suppose, that very many things in the Old Testament are intended as types, seeing it is manifest in some instances, that so very minute circumstances were so ordered, such as the negative circumstances of the story of Melchizedek, there being no mention made of his father or mother, of his birth or death.

That all things, even to the least circumstance, prescribed by God about the tabernacle, and its services, were types of heavenly things, appears by the apostle's manner of arguing, ([Heb. viii. 5.](#)) from those words of God to Moses, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." And if they were all types, they were all for our instruction; and if they were for our instruction, then we must endeavour to understand them, even those of them that are no where explained in Scripture.

[Heb. ix. 3-5.](#) The apostle there mentioning the ark, mercy-seat, tables of the covenant, the golden censer, pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, concludes thus, "Of which I

cannot now speak particularly," *i. e.* I cannot now explain particularly the design of those things, and tell you particularly what evangelical and heavenly things were represented thereby; which proves evidently, that many things in the tabernacle were typical, and intended to represent to God's people evangelical things, which signification is not explained to us in Scripture.

The Jews of old seemed to look on the redemption from Egypt as a type of the redemption which should be accomplished by the Messiah. (See Pool's Synopsis on [Exod. xii. 14.](#))

It is an evidence that legal uncleanness was a type of sin, that it is in effect called sin. (See Pool's Synopsis on [Lev. xii. 8.](#))

That the temporal things of the Old Testament were types of the spiritual things of the New. (See Pool's Synopsis on [2 Sam. ii. 10.](#))

An objection is raised from the abuse that will be made of this doctrine of types. *Answer.* I do not know that the types of Scripture are more abused by people that are enthusiastic and of teeming imagination, than the visionary representations of the book of Revelation; and yet none make that an objection against all attempts to understand and interpret that book. We have as good warrant from the word of God to suppose the whole ceremonial law to be given in order to a figurative representing and signifying spiritual and evangelical things to mankind, as we have to suppose that prophetic representations are to represent and signify the events designed by them, and therefore have as good reason to endeavour to interpret them.

The principles of human nature render types a fit method of instruction. It tends to enlighten and illustrate, and to convey instruction with impression, conviction, and pleasure, and to help the memory. These things are confirmed by man's natural delight in the imitative arts, in painting, poetry, fables, metaphorical language and dramatic performances. This disposition appears early in children.

This may be observed concerning types in general, that not only the things of the Old Testament are typical; for this is but one part of the typical world. The system of created beings may be divided into two parts, the typical world, and the antitypical world. The inferior and carnal, *i. e.* the more external and transitory part of the universe, that part of it which is inchoative, imperfect, and subservient, is typical of the superior, more spiritual, perfect, and durable part of it, which is the end, and as it were the substance and consummation, of the other. Thus the material and natural world is typical of the moral, spiritual, and intelligent world, or the city of God. And many things in the world of mankind, as to their external and worldly state, are typical of things pertaining to the city and kingdom of God: as many things in the state of the ancient Greeks, and Romans, &c. And those things belonging to the city of God, which belong to its more imperfect, carnal, inchoative, transient, and preparatory state, are typical of those things which belong to its more spiritual, perfect, and durable state; as things belonging to the state of the church under the Old Testament

were typical of things belonging to the church and kingdom of God under the New Testament. The external works of Christ were typical of his spiritual works. The ordinances of the external worship of the Christian church are typical of things belonging to its heavenly state.

The manner of the apostle's expressing himself in [Gal. iv. 21, 22.](#) will clearly prove that Abraham's two sons, and their mothers, and mount Sinai, and mount Sion, were intended to be types of those things he mentions; which is a great confirmation that the history of the Old Testament in general is intended to be typical of spiritual things. The apostle's manner of speaking seems to imply, that it might well be expected of God, that his people should understand such like things as representations of divine things, and receive particular instruction exhibited in them, even before they are particularly explained to them by God by a new revelation.

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**NOTES ON THE BIBLE.**



## THE PENTATEUCH WRITTEN BY MOSES.

That the Pentateuch was written by Moses, is the voice of all antiquity. It has been all along, even to this day, the received opinion of both Jews and Christians, that Moses, being commanded and inspired by God, wrote those books, which are called the Pentateuch, except only some particular passages, which were inserted afterwards by a divine direction, for the better understanding of the history.

We read, [Exodus xxiv. 4, 7, 8.](#) that Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, which before that time had been delivered from mount Sinai, in a book, which is there called *The Book of the Covenant*. Afterwards, when God had added more precepts, he again commands Moses to write them, [Exod. xxxiv. 27.](#) “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words have I made a covenant with thee and with Israel.” Near 40 years afterwards, Moses was commanded to write all the commands which God had given the people, and the revelations which he had made of himself to them, in a book, to be laid up by the side of the ark of the covenant, to be kept for a testimony against Israel. [Deut. xxxi. 24-26.](#) “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” And the original of this book of the law was in being, as we read expressly, till the times of Josiah; [2 Kings xxii.](#) and [2 Chron. xxxiv.](#) and so, doubtless, till the captivity into Babylon. This book of the law, which Moses was thus commanded to lay up beside the ark, did not only comprehend those things, which were contained in some of those preceding chapters of Deuteronomy, wherein some things of the law were repealed; but the whole system of divine law, which God gave to the children of Israel, expressing the whole of the duty which God expected of them. This appears from [Josh. i. 7, 8.](#) “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe and do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded them; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate on them day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein,” &c. And therefore the Levites, whom Jehoshaphat sent to teach the people their duty, did not do it in any other way than out of the book of the law. [2 Chron. xvii. 9.](#) “And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about, throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”

And then it is further evident, that the book of the law which we have an account of Moses's committing to the Levites, to be laid up in the side of the ark, [Deut. xxxi.](#) did not contain merely what had then lately been delivered in some preceding chapters of Deuteronomy; because in this book of the law were contained the precepts concerning burnt-offerings

and sacrifices, and the office and business of the priesthood; which are not contained so much in Deuteronomy as in Leviticus and Numbers, as appears from [2 Chron. xxiii. 18.](#) “Also Jehoiada appointed the officers of the house of the Lord, by the hands of the priests, the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord to offer the burnt-offering of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses.” [2 Chron. xxxv. 12.](#) [Neh. x. 34, 35, 36.](#) [Hag. ii. 11.,](#) &c. [Josh. viii. 31.](#) [Ezra vi. 18.](#) [Neh. viii. 14, 15.](#) [2 Chron. xxx. 5.](#) and [xxxi. 3.](#) And in the book of the law were contained not merely the precepts which God delivered to Moses, but the sanctions and enforcements of those laws, the promises and threatenings; as appears from [Deut. xxix. 20, 21.](#) “The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him; and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven; and the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law. See also [ver. 27.](#) and [Deut. xxviii. 61.](#) “Also every plague, and every sickness, which is not written in the book of this law, will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.” See also [2 Kings xxii. 13, 16, 19.](#) and parallel places in [2 Chron. xxxiv.](#) [Dan. ix.](#) and [Josh. viii. 34, 35.](#) “And afterwards he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word, of all that Moses commanded, that Joshua read not.” See [Psal. cv. 8, 9, 10.](#) And not only the promises and threatenings were contained in the book of the law, but all the revelations which God gave, which tended to enforce it, or which in any way related to it, and even the prophecies that were there contained of what should afterwards happen to the people on their sin or on their repentance. This appears from [Neh. i. 8, 9.](#) “Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations. But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them, though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.”

And besides, we read of Moses being expressly commanded to write histories of the acts of the Lord towards his people, as well as of the revelations which he made to them. So he was commanded to write an account of the people’s war with Amalek, with its attendant circumstances, that posterity might see the reason of this perpetual war which God had declared against Amalek. [Exod. xvii. 14.](#) “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” Now a full account could not be given of this affair without relating much of the preceding history of Israel; for an account must be given in the writing of the reason and occasion of the children of Israel’s coming to the border of



the Amalekites, and what was the cause of the discord and war which subsisted between them and Israel, which would take up no small part of the history of the book of Exodus.

Besides, we are expressly told that Moses wrote the journeys of the children of Israel by God's command. [Num. xxxiii. 2.](#) "And Moses wrote their goings-out according to their journeys, by the commandment of the Lord;" and is it reasonably to be supposed that he would write those for the use of the children of Israel in after-generations, and not write the great and mighty acts of the Lord towards that people in Egypt and at the Red sea, at mount Sinai, and in the wilderness, which were a thousand times more worthy of a record, and of being delivered down to posterity, than a mere journal of the people's progress in the wilderness, without those mighty acts? It is every way incredible that Moses, of whom we so often read expressly that he wrote God's commands, threatenings, promises, and revelations, and the early histories of mankind, that he should not write those great acts of the Lord, and leave a record of them with the congregation of Israel; especially when it is evident in fact that Moses was exceeding careful that they might not forget those great acts of the Lord in future generations. [Deut. iv. 9, 10, 11.](#) "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thine heart all the days of thy life, but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons specially, the day when thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb," &c. Here the very same orders are given for the keeping the acts of the Lord in the memory of posterity, as are given for the keeping up the memory of the precepts, [chap. vi. 7.](#) and [xi. 18, 19.](#) Job speaks of writing words in a book, as a proper mean to keep up the memory of them, and so does God to Isaiah. [Isa. xxx. 8.](#) "Now go write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever." Moses did not trust the precepts of God merely to oral tradition, he was sensible that that way only was not sufficient, though he gave such a charge to the people to teach their children; and the memory of the war with Amalek, when God saw it needful that it should be transmitted to posterity, was not trusted to oral tradition, but Moses was commanded to write it, that other generations might know it; and so the travels of the children of Israel, when they were thought of importance to be remembered, were not trusted to tradition, but a record was written to be transmitted. Very great care was taken that these acts should be remembered, in appointing monuments of them. Thus the passover was instituted as a perpetual monument or memorial of the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and the beginning of the year was appointed as a memorial of it, and the first-born sons were consecrated to God in memory of God's slaying the first-born of Egypt. Certain laws were appointed about strangers and the poor. [Deut. xxiv. 17, 18, 22.](#) and [xvi. 11, 12.](#) and [xv. 15.](#) [xvi. 12.](#) [Lev. xxv. 42, 55.](#) and about bondmen in remembrance of their peregrination and bondage in Egypt. To suppose that such care should be taken lest the laws themselves should be forgotten, which were appointed for the very end of keeping up the memory of the fact, and that those laws should be written down;



and yet that no care should be taken that the facts themselves should be so far remembered as to write them down, when the memory of the fact is supposed to be of so great importance, that the very being and remembrance of those laws is by the supposition subordinate thereto, the memory of the fact being the end both of the existence and of the memory of the laws, is absurd. In [Nehem. xiii. 1, 2, 3.](#) a precept is cited, with a part of the history annexed as the reason of the law, and altogether is said to be read in the book of Moses. The manna was laid up as a monument of their manner of living in the wilderness, and God's miraculous sustaining of the people there. The feast of tabernacles was to keep in remembrance the manner of their sojourning in the wilderness; as in [Lev. xxiii. 43.](#) Aaron's rod that budded, was laid up as a memorial of the great things done by that rod in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, and particularly of the contest with Korah and his company, and the censers of the rebels kept and turned into broad plates for the covering of the altar, as a memorial of what happened in the matter of Korah, and the fire from heaven, was kept without ever going out, as a perpetual monument of its miraculous descent from heaven, and the occasion of it; and the brazen serpent was kept as a memorial of the plague of fiery serpents, and the miraculous healing of those that were bitten. The tabernacle that was built in the wilderness, was a monument of the great manifestations which God made of himself there, and the many things that came to pass relating to the building of the tabernacle. The two tables of stone kept in the ark were a monument of those great things which happened when they were given. The rest of the Jewish sabbath was appointed as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of bondage. The laws concerning the Moabites and Ammonites were appointed as monuments; and the gold taken in the war with the Midianites was laid up for a monument of that war. [Num. xxxi. 54.](#) A great many places were named to keep in remembrance memorable facts in the wilderness; and who can think that all this care was taken to keep those things in memory, and yet no history be written to be annexed to these many monuments to explain them, by him by whose hand these monuments were appointed; and he, at the same time, so great a writer, and so careful to keep up the memory of events by writing, in those instances of the writing of which we have express mention?

Another instance of Moses's great care that these great acts might not be forgotten, is his calling together the congregation to rehearse them over to them a little before his death, as we have an account in Deuteronomy. He also left some precepts wherein the children of Israel were required themselves from time to time to rehearse over something of the general history of their ancestors the patriarchs, of whom we have an account in Genesis; and so the history of the people from that time, as in the law of him that offered the first-fruits, [Deut. xxvi.](#)

And we find that great care was taken to erect monuments of the great acts of God towards the people after Moses's death, as of their passing through Jordan, though less memorable than some of those. And the fact that there were monuments expressly appointed to

keep in memory so many of God's acts in Moses's time, and not of some others more memorable, is an argument that they had a history of them instead of monuments, as particularly of the children of Israel passing through the Red sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts there. No act of God towards that people is more celebrated through the Scriptures than this; and yet we have no account of any monuments of it, or any ordinance expressly said to be appointed in memory of it, though there was a monument of their passing through Jordan, an event much like it, but less remarkable, and far less celebrated in Scripture. No account can be given of this, but that the history and song that Moses wrote and left in the book of the law, were monuments of it. Such was the care that was taken, that some of the acts of God towards the people might be remembered, that in appointing the monuments for their remembrance, it is expressed that it was for that end, that they might have it perpetually in mind as a token on their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes, as particularly in appointing the law of consecrating the first-born, to keep up the remembrance of God's slaying the first-born of Egypt, [Exod. xiii. 15, 16](#). One of the laws or precepts themselves of the book of the law was, that the people should take heed never by any means to forget the great acts of God, which they had seen, and that they should not be forgotten by future generations, [Deut. iv](#). How unreasonable, then, is it to suppose that no history was annexed to those laws, and that at the same time that such a strict injunction of great care to keep up the memory of those things in future generations was given, they should yet be left without the necessary means of it! Again, another precept is, that they should not forget their own acts and behaviour from time to time, [Deut. ix. 7.](#), &c. See also [chap. viii. 14, 15, 16.](#), &c. and [chap. v. 15](#). So they are strictly required to remember their bondage in the land of Egypt, [Deut. xvi. 12.](#) and [chap. xxiv. 18, 22](#). And also, to remember what God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt, all those great signs and wonders, and the manner of their deliverance out of Egypt, [Deut. vii. 18, 19](#). So they are strictly enjoined to remember all their travel, the way that they went, and the circumstances and events of their journey, [Deut. viii. 2-5.](#) and [14.](#), to the end. And they are charged to know God's great acts in Egypt, and from time to time, in [Deut. xi](#). at the beginning. They are commanded to remember what God did to Miriam, [Deut. xxiv. 9](#). Writing of those works of God that are worthy to be remembered and celebrated by praises to God, is spoken of as a proper way of conveying the memory of them to posterity for that end, in [Psalm cii. 18](#). "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." The importance of remembering these works of God related in the Pentateuch, is mentioned not only in the Pentateuch itself, but also in other parts of Scripture, as in [Psalm cv. 5](#). "Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth." By the marvellous works which God has done, and his wonders, is meant those marvellous works that he did to Abraham and his seed, from the calling of Abraham to the bringing in of the people into Canaan, as appears from the following part of the psalm; and it is observable



here that the psalmist connects the wonderful works and the laws or judgments of God's mouth together as in like manner worthy to be remembered. See also [1 Chron. xvi. 12.](#) with the subsequent part of that song. The law, and covenant, and wonderful works, are in like manner connected as not to be forgotten, in [Ps. lxxviii. 10, 11.](#) and in the 111th Psalm, the psalmist intimates that God has taken some special care to keep up the memory of those works; [ver. 4.](#) "He hath caused his wonderful works to be remembered," speaking of these works, as appears from what follows in the psalm. And what other way can we suppose it to be that God hath done this, than the same with that whereby he caused his covenant and commandments spoken of in the following verses, to be remembered, *viz.* by causing them to be recorded? The works and commandments are joined together. [Ver. 7.](#) "The works of his hands are verity and judgment, all his commandments are sure;" and again in the [9th verse.](#) "He hath sent redemption to his people, he hath commanded his covenant for ever;" as they are doubtless connected in the record. Compare [Psalm cxlvii. 19.](#) and [ciii. 7.](#) In the 78th Psalm, the psalmist, after speaking of the great care that Moses took that the history of the great works of God towards Israel in Egypt and the wilderness should be remembered and delivered to future generations, (in [ver. 4, 5, 6, 7.](#)) then proceeds to rehearse the principal things in that history in a great many particulars, so as to give us, in short, the scheme of the whole history, with many minute circumstances, in such a manner as to show plainly that what is there rehearsed is copied out of the history of the Pentateuch.

It is the more likely that the *history* of the Pentateuch should be a part of that which was called *the law of Moses*, because it is observable that the words *law*, *doctrine*, *statute*, *ordinances*, &c. as they were used of old, did not only intend precepts, but also promises, and threatenings, and prophecies, and monuments, and histories, and whatever was revealed, promulgated, and established, to direct men in their duty to God, or to enforce that duty upon them. So the blessings and the curses that were written by Moses are included in that phrase, and the words that Moses commanded. [Joshua viii. 34, 35.](#) So promises are called law, and the word which God commanded in [Ps. cv. 9.](#) and [1 Chron. xvi. 15.](#) So promises and threatenings are called the word which God commanded his servant Moses. [Nehem. i. 8, 9.](#) Threatenings and promises are called statutes and judgments in [Levit. xxvi. 46.](#) Thus we read, [Exod. xv. 25, 26.](#) that at Marah God made for the people a statute and an ordinance, but that which is so called is only a promise. So we read in [Joshua xxiv. 25.](#) that Joshua made a covenant with the people, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem, which was nothing else than only his establishing what had been there said by a record and a monument, as appears from the context. So when God, in the song of Moses, [Deut. xxxii.](#) calls upon heaven and earth to give ear to his doctrine, which he says shall distil as the rain, &c. therein is included both history and prophecy, as appears by what follows, and what, in [Ps. lxxviii. 1.](#) is called a law, is only a history, and the very same with the history in the Pentateuch in epitome, those dark sayings of old, which the psalmist there rehearses, as appears from what

follows in the psalm; which makes it the more easily supposable that the original and more full history, of which this is an epitome, was also amongst them called a law. And it is probable, that when we read of the great things of God's law, [Hos. viii. 12.](#) and the wondrous things of God's law, that thereby is not only intended precepts and sanctions, but the great and wondrous works of God recorded in the law. It is evident that the history is as much of an enforcement of the precepts, (and is so made use of,) as the threatenings, promises, and prophecies; and why then should it not be included in the name of the law as well as they? There is something of history, or a declaration of the great acts or works of God in that, which is by way of eminency called *the Law*, viz. the Decalogue; in that there is a declaration of the two greatest works of which the history of the Pentateuch gives an account, viz. the creation of the world, and the redemption out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: the latter is mentioned in the preface of the Decalogue, and both in the 4th commandment in Deuteronomy. But the fact that history was included in what was called *the law*, is so plain from nothing as from Moses's own records. [Deut. i. 5.](#) "On this side Jordan in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare that law, saying " and then follows in this and the ensuing chapters, that which is called this law, which consists in great part of history, being a rehearsal and recapitulation of the history in the preceding books of the Pentateuch. What follows next in this and the two next chapters is almost wholly history, which undoubtedly there is special reason to understand as intended by those words, "Moses began to declare the law, saying." See also [Deut. iv. 44, 45.](#) and [xxxi. 9, 24, 25, 26.](#) and [v. 1.](#)

Again, *the book of the law*, and *the book of the covenant*, were synonymous expressions; (see among other places, [Psalm cv. 8, 9, 10.](#)) but the word *covenant*, as it was then used, included history, as [Deut. xxix.](#) "These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses;" and what next follows is history, such history as was introductory, or concomitant, or confirmatory to the precepts, and threatenings, and promises that follow, and of this nature is all the history of the Pentateuch. It is abundantly manifest that the manner of inditing and writing laws in the wilderness delivered by Moses, was to intermix history with precepts, counsels, warnings, threatenings, promises, and prophecies.

It may be noted, that it was very early the custom in Israel to keep records of the public transactions of the nation, and they regarded this as a matter of so great importance, as to have men appointed, whose business and office it was to keep these records. So we find it was in the days of Solomon and David, and in the days of the Judges, as early as the days of Deborah. [Judg. v. 14.](#) "Out of Zebulun, they that handle the pen of the writer." It is probable from the context, that these were their rulers, or some of the chief officers in the land that kept records of public affairs. Before this, also, we have express account of Joshua and Moses making records of public transactions. (See [Josh. xxiv. 26.](#) and the forementioned place concerning Moses's writing records.) And it is evident that these transactions which related to the bringing of that nation into a covenant relation with God, and redeeming them out

of Egypt, &c. were always by that nation chiefly celebrated, and looked upon as the greatest and most memorable events of their history. Now, therefore, is it credible, that in a nation, whose custom it was all along, even from the very times of those great transactions, to keep records of all public affairs, that they should be without any written record of these transactions?

There is no other way that would be natural of writing a divine law, or a law given by God in an extraordinary manner, with wonderful and astonishing circumstances, and great manifestations of his presence and power, except that of writing it in this manner, and recording those extraordinary circumstances under which it was given: first introducing it by giving an account that it was given by God, and then declaring when, how, and on what occasion, and in what manner it was given. And this will bring in all the history, from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy. Who can believe that Moses wrote the law which God gave at mount Sinai, without giving an account how it was given there; when the manner of giving was so exceedingly remarkable, and so affected Moses's mind, as appears from many things which Moses wrote in Deuteronomy, which are there expressly called by the name of a *law*, and which we are also expressly told that Moses wrote in the book of the law, and delivered to the priests to be laid up in the sanctuary?

There is such a dependence between many of the precepts and sanctions of the law, and other parts of the Pentateuch, that are expressly called the law, and that we are expressly told were written in the book of the law, and laid up in the sanctuary; I say, there is such a dependence between these and the history, that they cannot be understood without the history. Many of the precepts, as was observed before, (p. 117.) were appointed to that end to keep up the remembrance of historical facts; and that is expressly mentioned in the words of these laws themselves. But such laws obviously cannot be understood without the history. Thus this is mentioned as the reason of the appointment of the feasts of tabernacles, *viz.* that the children of Israel might remember how they dwelt in tabernacles in the wilderness. [Levit. xxiii. 43.](#) Now this required the history of their travels and sojourning there. So the law concerning the Amalekites, Moabites, and Amorites, appointed in commemoration of what passed between the congregation of Israel in the wilderness in their travels there, and those nations, cannot be understood without the history of those facts; and these require the history of the travels of the children of Israel, and of the things that led to those incidents, and that occasioned them. So that great law of the passover that is said in the law to be in remembrance of their redemption out of Egypt, and the many particular rites and ceremonies of that feast, are said expressly in the law to be in remembrance of these, and those circumstances of that redemption. Now it is impossible to understand all these particular precepts about the passover without a history of that affair: and this requires the history of their bondage in Egypt, and the manner how they came into that bondage; and this draws in the history of the patriarchs. The preface of the ten commandments cannot be understood



without the history of the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, and of their circumstances there, in the house of bondage; nor can what is given as one reason of the 4th commandment in Deuteronomy be understood without an account how they were servants in the land of Egypt, and how they were delivered from their servitude. We very often find this mentioned as an enforcement of one precept and another, *viz.* God's deliverance of the people out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and out of the iron furnace. See [Levit. xviii. 3. xix. 34. xxii. 33. xxv. 42, 55. xxiii. 43.](#) and [xxvi. 13, 45.](#) [Numb. xv. 41.](#) [Deut. iv. 20. vi. 12. vii. 8. viii. 14. xiii. 10.](#) and [xx. 1.](#) Which shows how necessary the history is to understand the law. The many precepts about the poor bondman and stranger that are expressly enforced, from the circumstances of the Israelites in Egypt, absolutely require a history of their circumstances there. And there are in the enforcement of the laws, frequent references to the plagues and diseases of Egypt, threatenings of inflicting those plagues, or promises of freedom from them, which cannot be understood without the history of those plagues. The law of no more returning again into Egypt, [Deut. xvii. 16.](#) requires the history of their coming out from thence. The law concerning not admitting the Moabites and Ammonites into the congregation of the Lord, because they so treated them in their journey, could not be understood without the story of their treatment, and that required an account of their journey. The law concerning sins of ignorance, [Numb. xv. 22, 23, 24.](#) depends on the history for its being intelligible: [Numb. xv. 22, 23, 24.](#) "and if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments which the Lord hath spoken unto Moses, even all that the Lord hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the Lord commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations, then it shall be, if ought be committed by ignorance," &c. Here is a reference to God's revealing himself from time to time, in a long series of revelations to Moses, which cannot be understood without the history.

The law was written as a covenant, or as a record of a covenant, between God and the people; and therefore *the tables of the law* and *the tables of the covenant*, *the book of the law* and *the book of the covenant*, are synonymous phrases in Scripture. And the psalmist, [Ps. cv. 1, 10.](#) speaking of the *covenant* that God made with the patriarchs, says, that God confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and unto Israel for an everlasting covenant. It is to be noted that the promise to Abraham is what is there especially called *the law*, and *the word which God commanded*. The threatenings of the law are called the words of the covenant which God made by Moses in [Jer. xi. 8.](#) But if Moses wrote the book of the law as a record of the covenant that was made between God and the congregation of Israel, it was necessary to write the people's consent, or what was done on both sides, for there was a mutual transacting in this covenant. See [Deut. xxvi. 17, 18.](#) "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways," &c. "And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his com-

mandments.” Agreeable hereto is the account we have, [Exod. xix. 8.](#) and [xxiv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.](#) and [Deut. v. 27.](#) and [xxvi. 17.](#)

The discourse that we have in [Deut. xxix.](#) and [xxx.](#) is introduced thus, [Deut. xxix.](#) “These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.” But the following discourse, called *the words of the covenant*, is made up of the following things, *viz.* a history of the transaction, Moses’s rehearsal of past transactions and wonderful dealings of God with them, with reproofs for their insensibility and unaffectedness as introducing what he had further to say. He then proceeds to charge them to serve the true God, and to avoid idolatry, and then to enforce this charge with awful threatenings and predictions of judgments that shall come upon them if they transgress, with the circumstances of these judgments, and promises of forgiveness on repentance; and the whole concluded with various arguments, pressing instances, solemn appeals, obtestations, exhortations, &c. to enforce their duty. If such a miscellany is called *the words of the covenant*, we need not wonder if the whole book, that is called *the book of the law*, should be a similar miscellany.

It was necessary that a record of a covenant between God and the nation of Israel, should contain the story of the transaction. But this, if fully related, would bring in very much of the history of the Pentateuch, which is extensively made up of an account of those things that were done by God, to bring the people into a covenant relation to him, and the way in which they became his covenant people. Hence the psalmist, in [Psalm cv.](#) having mentioned this covenant and law which God established with the people, proceeds in the ensuing part of the Psalm, to rehearse the series of events relating this covenant transaction, from God’s entering into covenant with the patriarchs to the children of Israel’s being brought into Canaan.

It was exceedingly necessary, in particular, when Moses was about to write a record of the covenant which God established with the people, and to give an account of the manner in which he entered into covenant with them, and brought them into a covenant relation to him, to show the beginning of it with the patriarchs, with whom that covenant was first established, and with whom was laid the foundation of all that transaction, and that great dispensation of the Lord of heaven and earth with that people, in separating them from all the rest of the world, to be his peculiar covenant people. The beginning and groundwork of the whole affair was mainly with them, and what was done afterwards by the hand of Moses, was only in pursuance of what had been promised to them, and often established with them, and for which God made way by his acts and revelations towards them. What God said and did towards those patriarchs, is often spoken of in the words of the law (those that are expressly called the law) as the foundation of the whole, and also in other parts of the Old Testament; as most expressly in [Psalm cv. 8, 9, 10.](#); see also [Josh. xxiv. 3.](#), &c.; and many other parallel places.



And there is very often in the law, strictly so called, an express reference to the covenant that God had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as in [Levit. xxvi. 42.](#) [Deut. iv. 31, 37.](#) [Deut. vi. 10, 18.](#) and [vii. 8, 12.](#) and [ix. 5, 27.](#) and [x. 11, 15.](#) and [xix. 8. xxvi. 3, 15.](#) and [xxx. 20.](#) which passages are unintelligible without the history of the patriarchs. And there are many other passages in the law, wherein there is an implicit reference to the same thing; as in those in which God speaks of the land, which the Lord their God had given them, or had promised them, the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Canaanites, &c. referring to the promise made to Abraham, [Gen. xv. 18.](#), to the end; where God promises to Abraham the land of those nations by name.

Again, the forementioned considerations, many of them must, at least, induce us to believe that Moses wrote the history of the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, so far at least as he himself was concerned in that affair, and was made the chief instrument of it, from his being first called and sent of God on that errand. But this as naturally leads us back further still, even to what God said and did to the patriarchs; for the beginning of this history directly points and leads us to those things as the foundation of this great affair, of which God now called Moses to be the great instrument. Thus when God first appeared to Moses, and spake to him in mount Sinai out of the bush, and gave him his commission, it was with these words, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." [Exod. iii. 6.](#) So again, [ver. 13, 14, 15, 16.](#) "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said, moreover, unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, for that which is done to you in Egypt." So again, [chap. iv. 5.](#) "That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee." And [chap. vi. 2, 3, 4.](#) "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord, and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers." It is unreasonable on many forementioned accounts, to believe any other than that Moses should write this history, and it is most credible that he did it on this account, that those first extraordinary appearances of God to him, as is natural to suppose, made most strong impressions on his mind, and if he wrote any history it is likely he wrote this. But from these things it appears that the history



of the patriarchs lays the whole foundation of the history of the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and of God's separating them and bringing them into a covenant relation with himself. So that it cannot be understood without the history of the patriarchs. Would it not therefore have been an essential defect in Moses, in writing that history, to leave the children of Israel without any record of that great foundation?

There is frequent mention in that part of the Pentateuch, (which is expressly styled *the law*,) of several tribes of Israel and their names, and of the patriarchs who were the heads of the tribes. [Deut. iii. 12, 13, 15, 16.](#) and [xxvii. 11, 13.](#) and elsewhere. And Moses was commanded to engrave the names of the twelve patriarchs on the stones of the breastplate of the high-priest. But these things are not intelligible without the history of Jacob's family. In [Deut. x. 22.](#) there is a reference to Jacob's going down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons, which is not intelligible without the history.

The law for him that brings the offering of the first-fruits cannot be understood without the history of Jacob's difficulties and sufferings in Padan-Aram, and the history of his going down into Egypt with its circumstances, and the history of the great increase of his posterity there, and the history of their oppression and hard bondage there, and the history and circumstances of their deliverance from it, and the history of the great and wondrous works of God in Egypt, and the Red sea, and the wilderness, until the people came to Canaan. And if Moses left no record of these things; then, in the law, he enjoined him who offered the first-fruits, (*i. e.* of all the people, every individual householder, from generation to generation,) to make an explicit confession and declaration of those things that he did not understand.

What is said in the law, of the Edomites, as the children of Esau, and what God had given to him for his possession, and the favour God showed Esau, in [Deut. ii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 22.](#) and the law concerning the Edomites, [Deut. xxiii. 7, 8.](#) how they should be treated, because Esau was their brother, cannot be understood without the history of the family of Isaac. And the kind of mention made of Moab and Ammon, as the founders of the nations of the Moabites and Ammonites, and the favour showed them on their father Lot's account, in [Deut. ii.](#) seems to suppose the history of Lot and his family, and cannot be understood without it. And the reference there is in the law to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, [Deut. xxix. 23.](#) cannot be understood without the history of that affair.

These things that have been mentioned, lead us up in the history of the Pentateuch, within less than *eleven* chapters of its beginning; so that according to what has been said, all except this very small part of the Pentateuch must have been delivered by Moses to the children of Israel; and it is unreasonable to suppose that this small part was not delivered by the same hand as part of the same record. The history of Abraham begins with the [26th verse of the 11th chapter of Genesis.](#); and the beginning of that history is there so connected with, and as it were grows upon, the preceding history of Noah and his posterity, that to

suppose any other than that they were originally the same record, having the same author, is most unreasonable. That Moses's history began any where between that and the beginning of Genesis, or that that part of [Genesis from the beginning to the 26th verse of the 11th chapter.](#), is to be divided, as having several writers, are suppositions which, from a bare view of the history itself, any one will be convinced are erroneous. But it will appear still more unreasonable not to ascribe it to Moses, if we consider not only the connexion of the beginning of the history of Abraham with it, but the dependence of many things in the following history upon it; and also in that part of the Pentateuch that is more plainly called the *Law*. There is frequent mention made both in the law and history of the posterity of the sons of Ham, *Mizraim* and *Canaan*, called by the names of these their ancestors, mentioned [chap. x. 6.](#) and of those of the posterity of Mizraim, called *Caphtherim*, mentioned [ver. 14.](#) and in [Deut. ii. 23.](#) and of the posterity of the sons of Canaan, mentioned [ver. 15.](#), &c. called by their names. And in the following history there is mention made of Ham, the son of Noah, [Gen. xiv. 5.](#) Mention is made of Elam and Shinar, [Gen. xiv. 1.](#), &c. of whom we have an account, [chap. x.](#) Frequent mention is made of the land of Cush, (in our translation, *Ethiopia*.) so named from Cush, the son of Ham, of whom we have an account, [Gen. x. 6-8.](#) So there is in the following history frequent mention of the land of Aram, the son of Shem. In Balaam's prophecy, referred to in the law in Deuteronomy, mention is made of Ashur, Chittim, and Eber, [Numb. xxiv. 22, 24.](#) The great event of which Moses most evidently wrote the history, and which takes up all the historical part of the Pentateuch, from [Gen. x. 26.](#) to the end of Deuteronomy, is God's separating the seed of Abraham and Israel from all nations, and bringing them near to himself to be his peculiar people. But to the well understanding of this, it was requisite to be informed of the origin of nations, the peopling of the world, and the Most High dividing to the nations their inheritance: and therefore the [9th, 10th and 11th chapters of Genesis.](#) are but a proper introduction to the history of this great event. In the song of Moses, of which mention is made in the law, and which Moses in the law was required to write, and the people in the law were required to keep, and learn, and often rehearse, there is an express reference to the separating the sons of Adam, and God's dividing the earth among its inhabitants; which is unintelligible without the [10th and 11th chapters of Genesis.](#) In that song, also, is plainly supposed a connexion between this affair, and that great affair of separating the children of Israel from all nations to be his peculiar people, about which most of the history of the Pentateuch is taken up. The words are as follows, and in them the people are expressly called upon to keep in remembrance both these events that are so connected, which obviously supposes a history of both, [Deut. xxxii. 7-9.](#) "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee; when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot



of his inheritance.” And by the way I would observe, that in the following words are also references to other historical facts of the Pentateuch that cannot be understood without the history.

In the fourth commandment, there is such a mention made of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and of God’s resting the seventh day, as is a kind of epitome of the first chapter of Genesis, and the beginning of the second, and is unintelligible without that history; and there is a reference, in [Deut. iv. 32.](#) to God’s creation of man, and there is mention in the prophetic song of Moses of the name of *Adam*, as the grand progenitor of mankind, [Deut. xxxii. 8.](#) And there is mention made of the garden of God, or Paradise, [Gen. xiii. 10.](#) And before I leave this argument from references to historical facts, I would observe, that a very great part of [the thirty-one first chapters of Deuteronomy.](#), (which are most evidently, as I observed before, a part of the law of Moses, laid up in the holy of holies,) are made up of nothing but recapitulations, brief rehearsals, references, and hints of preceding historical facts, and counsels, and enforcements from history, which cannot be understood without the knowledge of that history.

And not only does the law of Moses depend upon the history, and bear such a relation to it, and contain such references to it that it cannot be understood without it, but the manner of writing the law shows plainly that the law and history were written together, they are so connected, interwoven, blended, inwrought, and incorporated in the writing. The history is a part of the law, its preamble from time to time being often made an introduction to laws; and there are continually such transitions from history to law, and from law to history, and such a connexion, and reference, and dependence, that all appears as it were to grow together as the several parts of a tree. These, as they stand, are parts of the continued history, and the history of the facts is only as an introduction and preamble, or reason and enforcement, of the laws, all flowing in a continued series, as the several parts of one uninterrupted stream, all as one body. So that the bare inspection of the writing, as it stands, may be enough to convince any one that all has the same author, and that both were written together. Such is the manner of writing the laws concerning the passover, the chief of all the ceremonial observances, in the [12th chapter of Exodus.](#), and the law concerning the first-born, in the [13th chapter.](#), and the statute and ordinance mentioned in the [15th chapter of Exod. 25, 26.](#) verses. Such also is the manner of writing that law by which is made known to the children of Israel, which particular day is the sabbath, [Exod. xvi. 23.](#) Such is the manner of writing the decalogue itself, which in the highest sense is called the law of Moses, in [Exod. xx.](#) that it is unreasonable to think that it was recorded by Moses without any of the concomitant history, and those words in the law, [Exod. xx. 22, 23.](#) Such are the laws ordering the particular frame of the tabernacle, ark, anointing oil, incense, priest’s garments, with the history of the consequent building, &c. The revelation made to Moses when God proclaimed his name, [Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.](#) which is an important part of the law, together with

ver. 10, 11., &c. and ver. 30, 31. The several laws given on occasion of Nadab and Abihu's being burnt, [Levit. x.](#) and [chap. xvi.](#) particularly [ver. 1, 2.](#) taken with what follows, together with the last words in the chapter. See also [Levit. xxi. 1.](#) and [ver. 24.](#) and [chap. xxii. 1-3, 17, 18.](#) The law concerning blasphemy, with the story of the blasphemy of Shelomith's son, [Levit. xxiv.](#) The law of the Levites' service, with the history of their being numbered and accepted instead of the first-born and consecrated, [Num. iii.](#) and [iv.](#) and [viii.](#) The law of putting the leper out of the camp, [Num. v.](#) at the beginning. The law of polluted persons keeping the passover, with the history that gave occasion for it, [Num. ix. 6.](#) The history of making the trumpets, with the law concerning their use, [Num. x.](#) The law constituting the seventy elders, which is only giving a history of their first appointment, [Num. xi.](#) The law of the presumptuous sinner, with the history of the sabbath-breaker, [Num. xv. 30.,](#) &c. The law for the priests, [Num. xviii.](#) which supposes a foregoing history of the rebellion of Korah, see [ver. 5.](#) and [ver. 27.](#) compared with the [13th verse of the preceding chapter.](#) The law of the inheritance of daughters, with the history of Zelophehad's daughters. The law of the cities of refuge on the east side of Jordan, with the history of the taking of the country.

History and law are every where so grafted one into another, so mutually inwrought, and do, as it were, so grow one out of and into another, and flow one from another in a continued current, that there is all appearance of their originally growing together, and not in the least of their being artificially patched and compacted together afterwards. It seems impossible impartially and carefully to view the manner of their connexion, and to judge otherwise.

Another argument that the same care was taken to preserve the memory of the facts, as to preserve the precepts of the law, *viz.* by making a public record of them, to be preserved with the same care, and so in like manner laid up in the sanctuary, is, that it is declared in the law, that the *whole law* was written, and the record of all the precepts of it transmitted to posterity as a monument of the historical facts, or to that end that the memory of those facts might be kept up in future generations. [Deut. vi. 20, to the end.](#) "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and the Lord showed signs and wonders great and sore upon Pharaoh and upon all his household before our eyes, and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day: and it shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us."

It is a plain and demonstrative evidence, that the Jews had all along some standing public records of the facts that we have an account of in the history of the Pentateuch, that

these facts are so abundantly, and in such a manner, mentioned or referred to all along in other books of the Old Testament. There is scarcely any part of the history from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Deuteronomy, but what is mentioned or referred to in other books of the Old Testament, that were the writings of after-ages, and some of them are mentioned very often, and commonly with the names of persons and places, and many particular and minute circumstances, not only that part of the history which belongs more immediately to the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, and their journey through the wilderness, but the preceding introductory history, and not only that which concerns the Jewish patriarchs, but the first part of the history of Genesis, even from the very beginning. In these writings we have very often mention of God's creating the heavens and the earth; [Isa. lxxv. 17.](#) and [lxxvi. 22.](#) and [xl. 21, 22, 28.](#) and [li. 13.](#) and [xlii. 5.](#) and [xliv. 24.](#) and [xlv. 12.](#) and [xxxvii. 16.](#) and [lxxvi. 1, 2.](#) [Jer. x. 11, 12.](#) and [xxxii. 17.](#) and [li. 15.](#) and [xiv. 22.](#) [2 Kings xix. 15.](#) [Psalm lxxxix. 11, 12.](#) and [cii. 25.](#) [Zech. xii. 1.](#) [Psalm cxv. 15.](#) and [cxi. 2.](#) and [cxiv. 8.](#) and [cxxxiv. 3.](#) The manner of God's creating by speaking the word, [Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9.](#) and [cxlviii. 5.](#)

The world being at first without form and void, and covered with darkness, agreeably to [Genesis i. 2.](#) is referred to [Jer. iv. 23.](#)

God's creating the light is referred to [Psal. lxxiv. 16.](#)

God's creating the light and darkness, [Isa. xlv. 7.](#) agreeable to [Genesis i. 3, 4.](#)

God's creating the firmament, [Psal. xix. 1.](#)

God's creating the waters that are above the heavens, [Psalm cxlviii. 4, 6.](#) agreeable to [Genesis i. 7.](#)

God's gathering together the waters, [Psal. xxxiii. 7.](#) His making the sea and the dry land, [Psal. xcv. 5.](#) stretching out the earth above the waters, [Psal. cxxxvi. 6.](#) appointing the sea its decreed place, [Jer. v. 22.](#) [Prov. viii. 29.](#) [Psal. civ. 9.](#)

God's creating the sun, [Psal. xix. 1, 4.](#) and [lxxiv. 16.](#)

God's creating the sun for a light by day, and the moon and the stars for a light by night, [Jer. xxxi. 35.](#) [Psal. cxlviii. 3, 6.](#)

God's creating great lights. The sun to rule by day, and the moon and stars to rule by night, [Psal. cxxxvi. 7, 8, 9.](#) See also [Psal. civ. 19.](#) with [.ver. 24.](#)

God's creating the sea, and the many creatures that move herein, and the whale in particular, [Psal. civ. 25, 26.](#)

God's creating the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and all that is therein, [Psal. cxlvi. 6.](#); many parts of the creation is mentioned, [Prov. viii. 22-29.](#)

God's creating man and beast, [Jer. xxvii. 5.](#)

God's creating man, [Psal. viii. 5.](#)

Man being made of the dust of the earth, [Eccles. xii. 7.](#)

Man's having dominion given him in his creation over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and beasts of the earth, [Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8.](#)



Man's having the herbs and plants of the earth given him for meat, [Psal. civ. 14, 15.](#) agreeable to [Gen. i. 29.](#) and [iii. 18.](#)

The first marriage, or God's making Adam and Eve one, is referred to, [Mal. ii. 15.](#)

Adam's name is mentioned, [Hos. vi. 7.](#)

The garden of Eden is often mentioned by name, with its pleasures and delights, [Isa. li. 3.](#) [Ezek. xxviii. 13.](#) and [xxxi. 8, 9, 16, 18.](#) and [xxxvi. 35.](#) and [Joel ii. 3.](#)

Adam's violating the covenant is referred to, [Hos. vi. 7.](#)

The curse denounced against Adam, that as he was dust, so unto dust he should return, is referred to, [Eccles. xii. 7.](#)

The curse denounced on the serpent, that he should eat dust all the days of his life, is referred to, [Isa. lxv. 25.](#) [Mic. vii. 17.](#)

Mention is made of the flood of waters that stood above the mountains, and God's rebuking and removing the flood, [Psalm civ. 6, 7.](#)

Noah's name is mentioned, and his righteousness before God, and great acceptance with him, referred to, [Isa. liv. 9.](#) and [Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.](#)

The waters of Noah's flood, and their going over the earth, and God's covenant with Noah, that he would no more destroy the earth with a flood, are mentioned, [Isa. liv. 9.](#)

Many of the names of the descendants of Noah that we have an account of in [Gen. x.](#) are mentioned in other parts of the Old Testament, and some of them very often, and every where in an agreeableness with the account we have of them there; [Psal. lxxviii. 51.](#) and [cv. 23, 27.](#) and [cvi. 22.](#) and [lxxxiii. 8.](#) [Isa. xi. 11.](#) and [xxiii. 1, 2, 12, 13.](#) [Jer. ii. 10.](#) and [xxv. 20-25.](#) and [xlix. 34-39.](#) [Ezek. xxvii. 5-15.](#) and [ver. 20-25.](#) [chap. xxx. 45.](#) and [xxxii. 24, 26.](#) and [xxxviii. 2-5, 6, 13.](#) [Micah v. 6.](#) and in many other places.

The names of others also that we have an account of as heads of nations in the history of the Pentateuch before Moses's birth, beside the patriarchs of the Jewish nation, are frequently mentioned, [Psal. lxxxiii. 6, 7.](#) [Isa. xi. 14, 15.](#) [Isa. lx. 6, 7.](#) [Jer. ii. 10.](#) [Jer. xxv. 20, 25.](#) [Jer. xlix.](#) throughout, and in many other places, all is in agreeableness to the history of the Pentateuch. The Philistines coming forth out of Caphtor, [Amos ix. 7.](#) [Jer. xlvi. 4.](#) compared with [Genesis x. 14.](#) and [Deut. ii. 23.](#)

The name *Babel* is often mentioned. There is particular mention of the ancestors of the Jews dwelling on the other side of the river Euphrates, and particularly *Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor*, [Josh. xxiv.](#)

Abraham being brought from thence of God, from the East, from the other side of the river, his coming at the call of God, and being led by him into the land of Canaan, [Josh. xxiv. 3.](#) [Isa. xli. 2.](#)

His being called with Sarah his wife, [Isa. li. 1, 2.](#)

God's leading Abraham throughout the land of Canaan, [Josh. xxiv. 3.](#) agreeable to [Gen. xii. 6.](#) and [xiii. 17.](#)

God's blessing Abraham is mentioned, [Isa. li. 1, 2.](#)

Abraham is spoken of as a righteous man, and God's servant and friend, [Isa. xli. 2.](#) and [verse 8.](#), [Psal. cv. 42.](#)

God's entering into covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, promising them the land of Canaan, [Psal. cv. 8, 9, 10, 11, 42.](#)

The church of God in the families of those patriarchs, being very small, and their being strangers and sojourners in the land of Canaan, and their going from one nation to another, and from one kingdom to another people, and God's wonderfully restraining men from hurting them, and his reproofing kings for their sakes, and God's calling them prophets, [Psal. cv. 12-15.](#)

God's giving Abraham an easy conquest over great kings and rulers of the principal nations of the world, as in [Gen. xiv. 14.](#), &c. is mentioned in [Isa. xli. 2, 3.](#)

Melchizedek is mentioned by name as being a great priest of the true God, and both a king and a priest, [Psal. cx. 4.](#)

God's fixing the border of the seed of Abraham at the river Euphrates, as the history of the Pentateuch informs us that God did in his promise to Abraham, [Gen. xv. 18.](#) and afterwards from time to time to the Israelites, is referred to [2 Sam. viii. 3.](#)

The great plentifulness of the land of Sodom is spoken of, [Ezek. xvi. 49.](#)

The great wickedness of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, [Ezek. xvi. 46-56.](#) [Isa. i. 10.](#)

Their being guilty of notorious uncleanness, [Ezek. xvi. 50.](#) [1 Kings xiv. 24.](#) and [xv. 12.](#) and [xxii. 46.](#) [2 Kings xxiii. 7.](#)

Their being of a very proud and haughty spirit, [Ezek. xvi. 49, 50.](#) agreeable to [Gen. xv. 9.](#)

Their being very open, and barefaced, and shameless in their wickedness, [Isa. iii. 9.](#)

Their being overthrown with a very great, and terrible, and utter destruction, [Isa. i. 9.](#) and [xiii. 19.](#) [Jer. xlix. 18.](#)

Their being the subjects of sudden destruction, [Lam. iv. 6.](#)

God's overthrowing them with fire, [Amos iv. 11.](#)

Their being overthrown with perpetual and everlasting desolation, without ever being rebuilt, or inhabited any more, [Isa. xlix. 18.](#) and [l. 40.](#) [Ezek. xvi. 53, 55.](#) [Zeph. ii. 9.](#)

Their being overthrown together with neighbouring cities, [Jer. xlix. 18.](#) and [l. 40.](#)

The birth of Isaac, as a special gift of God to Abraham, [Josh. xxiv. 3.](#)

The birth of Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac, by a special gift of God, [Josh. xxiv. 4.](#)

Esau is mentioned under the names of both Esau and Edom, as Jacob's brother, in the book of Obadiah, and often elsewhere.

Jacob's taking hold of Esau's heel when they were born, is mentioned, [Hosea xii. 3.](#)



Jacob's being preferred before his brother by God's election, [Psal. cv. 6.](#) [Isa. xli. 8.](#) [Mal. i. 2. 3.](#)

God's appearing to Jacob at Bethel, [Hosea xii. 4.](#)

Jacob's fleeing into the country of Syria, and there serving for a wife, and particularly his serving there in doing the business of a shepherd or keeping sheep, [Hos. xii. 12.](#)

The two wives of Jacob, Rachel and Leah, are mentioned as those that did build the house of Israel, [Ruth iv. 11.](#)

Jacob by his strength having power with God, and having power over the angel, [Hos. xii. 3, 4.](#)

The names of the twelve sons of Jacob are mentioned in [Ezek. xlviii.](#) and very often elsewhere.

Esau's having mount Seir given to him, [Josh. xxiv. 4.](#) agreeably to [Gen. xxvi. 8.](#)

And the name of Ishmael, and his posterity, and of the sons of Abraham by Keturah, and the sons of Lot, and the sons of Esau, are often mentioned, agreeably to the account we have of them in Genesis.

Joseph's being sold into Egypt, and being a servant there, [Psal. cv. 17.](#)

Joseph's being by Providence sold into Egypt before the house of Israel, to preserve life, [Psal. cv. 16, 17.](#) agreeable to [Gen. xlv. 5.](#) and [1. 20.](#)

Tamar's bearing Pharez to Judah, [Ruth iv. 12.](#)

Joseph's being bound in prison in Egypt, [Psal. cv. 18.](#) as [Gen. xxxix. 2.](#)

Joseph's having divine revelations in prison, and his thereby foretelling future events, and those predictions coming to pass, and that being the occasion of Pharaoh's taking him out of prison and setting him at liberty, [Psal. cv. 19, 20.](#)

And Joseph being upon this exalted over all the land of Egypt, and being made lord of Pharaoh's house, and ruler of his substance, and being next to the king himself in power and dignity, and being Pharaoh's vicegerent, and so having power and authority over all the princes and nobles of Egypt, [Psal. cv. 21, 22.](#)

The famine that was at that time in the land of Canaan, that obliged Israel and his family to seek elsewhere for bread, is mentioned, [Psal. cv. 16.](#)

Jacob's going down into Egypt with his family, [Josh. xxiv. 7.](#) [1 Sam. xii. 8.](#) and [Psal. cv. 24.](#)

Their multiplying exceedingly in Egypt, till they were become more and mightier than the Egyptians, and the Egyptians dealing subtilly with them to diminish them. [Psal. cv. 24, 35.](#) agreeable to [Exod. i. 9, 10.](#)

The Egyptians first loving the Israelites, and then afterwards being turned to hate them, [Psal. cv. 25.](#)

Their being slaves in Egypt, [Mic. vi. 4.](#) [Jer. ii. 20.](#) [Judg. vi. 8.](#)



The cruelty of their bondage, its being as it were an iron furnace, (as it is called [Deut. iv. 20.](#)) is mentioned [1 Kings viii. 51.](#) [Jer. xi. 4.](#) and [Judg. vi. 9.](#)

The particular kind of their service in handling pots, wherein they carried their mortar, and working in furnaces, in which they burnt their brick, is referred to [1 Kings viii. 51.](#) and [Jer. xi. 4.](#) and [Ps. lxxviii. 13.](#) and [lxxxi. 6.](#)

God's taking notice of their cruel bondage and great affliction with compassion, and a fellow-feeling of their calamity, [Isa. lxiii. 9.](#) agreeably to [Exod. ii. 23-25.](#) and [chap. iii. 7, 9, 16.](#)

God's making known himself to them in Egypt, [Ezek. xx. 5.](#) agreeable to [Exod. iii. 1-6.](#) and [ver. 13-16, 29-31.](#) and [chap. vi. 2-6.](#)

God's making himself known to them by the name of the Jehovah your God. [Ezek. xx. 5.](#) agreeable to [Exod. vi. 2, 3, 6, 7.](#) especially verse 7.

God's promising and securing to them in Egypt to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt into a land flowing with milk and honey. [Ezek. xx. 6.](#) agreeable to [Exod. iii 8, 10, 12, 14, 17.](#) and [chap. vi. 2-8.](#) where we have an account of his swearing by his great name JEHOVAH, and I AM THAT I AM.

God's making use of Moses, a great prophet, as the main instrument of bringing the people out of Egypt, &c. [Isa. lxiii. 11, 12.](#) [Hos. xii. 13.](#)

Aaron's being joined with Moses in this affair. [Josh. xxiv. 5.](#) [1 Sam. xii. 6-8.](#) [Psal. lxxvii. 20.](#) and [cv. 26.](#) Miriam's also being joined, [Mic. vi. 4.](#)

God's working very great wonders for his people in the time of Moses and Aaron, [Psal. lxxvii. 11-14.](#)

His working very great wonders in Egypt, [Psal. lxxviii. 12, 43.](#) and [lxxxi. 5.](#) and [cv. 27.](#) and [cxxxv. 9.](#) and [cvi. 9.](#) [Josh. xxiv. 5.](#) Great tokens and wonders upon Pharaoh and all his servants, [Psal. cxxxv. 9.](#)

God's redeeming the people out of Egypt, [Judg. vi. 8, 9.](#) and [xi. 16.](#) [1 Sam. xii. 6-8.](#) [Psal. lxxxi. 10.](#) and [lxxiv. 2.](#) and [lxxvii. 15.](#) and [lxxviii. 42.](#) and [cxiv. 1.](#) and [cxi. 9.](#) [Jer. ii. 6, 20.](#) and [xi. 4.](#) [1 Kings viii. 51.](#) [Jer. xvi. 4.](#) [Ezek. xx. 10.](#) [Hos. xii. 13.](#) [Amos ix. 7.](#) [Micah vi. 4.](#) and many other places.

God's turning the rivers and pools of Egypt into blood, so that the Egyptians could not drink the waters, and also thereby killing their fish, [Psal. lxxviii. 44.](#) and [cv. 29.](#)

The land's bringing forth frogs in abundance, to fill even the chambers of Pharaoh, [Psal. lxxviii. 45.](#) and [cv. 31.](#)

The plague of lice is mentioned [Psal. cv. 31.](#)

The plague of the divers sorts of flies, [Psal. cv. 31.](#) and [lxxxviii. 45.](#)

God's sending hail, and thunder, and lightning, and flaming fire with hail, to the breaking of the trees of the field and destroying their cattle, [Psal. lxxxviii. 47, 48.](#) and [cv. 32.](#) agreeably to [Exod. ix. 22.,](#) &c.

God's sending locusts to eat up all the growth of the field, [Psal. lxxviii. 46.](#) and [cv. 34, 35.](#)

The plague of darkness, [Psal. cv. 28.](#)

God's smiting and destroying all the first-born of Egypt with the pestilence, the first-born, both of men and beasts, [Psal. lxxviii. 50, 51.](#) and [cv. 36.](#) and [cxxxv. 8.](#) and [cxxxvi. 10.](#)

The children of Israel's going out of Egypt upon this last plague, [Psal. lxxviii. 52.](#) and [cxxxvi. 11.](#) [Josh. xxiv. 5.](#)

Their going out with silver and with gold, [Psal. cv. 37.](#)

The Egyptians' being glad to be rid of them, [Psal. cv. 38.](#) agreeably to [Exod. xii. 33.](#)

Their being brought out with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm, [Psal. cxxxvi. 12.](#)

Their being led by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire to give them light by night, [Psal. lxxviii. 14.](#) and [cv. 39.](#) [Isa. iv. 5.](#)

Their being led into the wilderness, [Psal. lxviii. 7.](#) and [lxxviii. 40, 52.](#) and [xcv. 8.](#) and [cvi. 9, 14.](#) and [cxxxvi. 16.](#) [Jer. ii. 2, 6.](#) [Ezek. xx. 10.](#) [Judg ix. 16.](#)

The people going to the Red sea, [Judg. ix. 6.](#)

The Egyptians pursuing after the people with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea, [Josh. xxiv. 6.](#)

The people crying unto the Lord at the Red sea, [Josh. xxiv. 7.](#)

The perverseness of that generation, [Psal. cvi. 6, 7.](#) [xcv. 8.](#) and [lxxviii. 8., &c.](#) [Isa. lxiii. 10.](#) [Ps. lxxxii. 11.](#)

Their provoking God at the Red sea, [Psal. cvi. 7.](#) agreeable to [Exod. xiv. 11, 12.](#)

God's putting darkness between Israel and the Egyptians, [Josh. xxiv. 7.](#)

God's dividing the Red sea, and causing the people to pass through, and causing the waters to stand as an heap; his turning the sea into dry land, so that the people went through on foot dry shod, [Psal. lxxviii. 13.](#) [lxvi. 6.](#) and [lxxiv. 13.](#) [lxxvii. 16, 19, 20.](#) [cxiv. 3, 4.](#) [cxxxvi. 13, 14.](#) [cvi. 8, 9.](#) [Isa. x. 26.](#) [li. 10.](#) [lxiii. 11, 12, 13.](#) [Hab. iii. 8-10, 15.](#) [Psal. lxxvii. 10-20.](#)

God's destroying Pharaoh and his hosts, his chariots and his horses by the Red sea, by bringing the waters upon them to cover them, so that there was not one of them left, [Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14.](#) [lxxvi. 5, 6.](#) [lxxviii. 53.](#) [cxxxvi. 15.](#) [cvi. 10, 11.](#) [Isa. x. 26.](#) [li. 9, 10.](#) and [Josh. xxiv. 7.](#)

God's doing these things at the Red sea by the lifting up of Moses's rod, [Isa. x. 26.](#)

God's conquering and crushing Egypt in a forcible manner, and with mighty power, [Psal. lxxxix. 10.](#) [Isa. li. 9.](#)

God's doing such great things for to preserve a people for the glory of his own name, and to show his mighty power, [Psal. cvi. 8.](#) agreeable to [Exod. viii. 16.](#)

The people's singing praises at the Red sea, [Psal. cvi. 12.](#) [Hos. ii. 15.](#) [Psal. lxvi. 6.](#) [cv. 43.](#) agreeable to [Exod. ix. 16.](#)

This destruction of the Egyptians being reported and famed through the earth, [Isa. xxiii. 5.](#)

The people's murmuring in the wilderness for want of bread, [Psal. lxxviii. 17.](#), &c. and [cvi. 14.](#)

Their soon transgressing, and provoking, after singing praises at the Red sea, by lusting and tempting God, [Psal. cvi. 13, 14, 15.](#)

The people's dwelling in tents in the wilderness, [Psal. cvi. 25.](#)

The people's being encamped in the wilderness, like an army, [Psal. lxxviii. 28.](#) and [cvi. 16.](#)

God's sending the people manna, and feeding them with bread from heaven that was rained down upon them, [Psal. lxxviii. 23, 24, 25.](#) and [cv. 10.](#)

God's revealing his holy sabbath to the people as we have an account in the [16th. of Exod. Ezek. xx. 12. Neh. ix. 14.](#)

God's giving the people waters plentifully to supply the whole congregation out of the rock of Meribah, by striking the rock and causing the waters to gush out, [Psal. lxxviii. 15, 16, 20. lxxxi. 7.](#) and [cv. 4.](#) and [cxiv. 8.](#)

Amalek's coming forth in a hostile manner against Israel in the way when he came up from Egypt, [1 Sam. xv. 2.](#)

What Jethro the priest of Midian said and did, that we have an account of [Exod. xviii.](#) is referred to [1 Sam. xv. 6.](#)

God's entering into covenant with the people at mount Sinai, or Horeb, after they came out of Egypt, and giving the law and statutes, and judgments there, [1 Kings viii. 9. Psal. lxxvi. 8. Ezek. xx. 10, 11. Mal. iv. 4.](#)

God's giving the law by a very terrible and awful voice from heaven, [Psal. lxxvi. 8.](#)

God's appearing there with extraordinary manifestations of his majesty and glory in the heavens and in the earth, with an exceeding shining brightness and beams of glory, attended with the utmost danger of being struck dead in a moment, as by a pestilence, to those that transgressed, [Hab. iii. 3, 4, 5.](#)

The earth trembling, and the mountains quaking exceedingly at that time, [Judg. v. 4, 5. Hab. iii. 6, 7, 10. Psal. cxiv. 4.](#) and [lxviii. 8.](#)

And particularly mount Sinai shaking, [Judg. v. 5. Psal. xlvi. 8.](#)

The people's making a molten calf at mount Sinai, and worshipping that as the representation of the God of Israel, [Psal. cvi. 19, 20. Ezek. xx. 8.](#)

God's saying on that occasion that he would destroy the people, but Moses standing before him as an intercessor for them, to turn away God's anger, on which God spared them, [Psal. cvi. 23.](#)



Moses's putting the two tables of stone into the ark at mount Sinai, when he made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt, [1 Kings viii. 9.](#)

The people lusting for flesh, and tempting God by asking meat for their lust, [Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18, 19.](#)

God's wrath on that occasion, [Psal. xxviii. 21.](#), &c.

God's giving the people quails in answer to their desire, in vast abundance, which were brought by a wind which God caused to blow, and let fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations, [Psal. lxxviii. 26.](#), &c. and [cv. 4. cvi. 15.](#)

The wrath of God's coming upon them while the meat was yet in their mouths, and suddenly slaying them with a great plague, [Psal. lxxviii. 30, 31.](#), and [cvi. 15.](#)

The people not believing, for all God's wondrous works that they had seen, despising the pleasant land, and not believing his promise, that he would bring them into it, and murmuring at the report of the spies, and being for turning back again into Egypt, [Psal. lxxviii. 32.](#), &c. [ver. 41.](#) and [cvi. 24, 25.](#)

God appearing on that occasion as though he would pour out his fury and consume the whole congregation, but yet spared them for his mercies' sake, lest the Egyptians and other heathen nations should hear of it, and should take occasion from thence to reproach the name of God, [Ezek. xx. 13, 14, 17.](#)

God's swearing in wrath on that occasion concerning that froward and perverse generation, that they should not enter into his rest, but that he would destroy them in the wilderness, because they had seen God's miracles, but yet exceedingly provoked him, and often tempted him, [Psal. xcv. 8-11.](#) and [cvi. 26. Ezek. xx. 15, 16.](#)

God's promising Caleb the land whereunto he went, [Judg. i. 20.](#)

Korah and his company envying Moses and Aaron in the camp, and the earth's opening her mouth and swallowing up Dathan and Abiram, and their company, and a fire from the Lord consuming others of them, [Psal. cvi. 16.](#), &c.

What Moses said to the Levites about their inheritance, [Numb. xviii. 20.](#), &c. referred to "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance; the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them."

The people's angering Moses at the water of strife, provoking his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes, [Psal. cvi. 32, 33.](#)

Israel's sending messengers to the king of Edom, saying, "Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land," and the king of Edom's refusing to hearken thereto, [Judg. xi. 17.](#)

The people's compassing or going round the land of Edom, going along through the wilderness, [Judg. xi. 18.](#) agreeable to [Numb. xxi. 4.](#) and [Deut. ii. 1-8.](#)

The people's passing through a great and terrible wilderness, a land of pits, and of great drought, a waste and desolate country, [Jer. ii. 2, 6. Hos. xiii. 5.](#)

The people compassing the land of Moab, and coming by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitching on the other side of Arnon, because Arnon was the border of Moab, [Judg. xi. 18.](#) exactly agreeable to the history of the Pentateuch, [Numb. xxi. 11, 13.](#) and [xxii. 36.](#)

The people not being suffered to pass through the land of Moab, [Judg. xi. 17, 18.](#)

Israel's sending messengers from their camp in the borders of Moab to Sihon, king of the Amorites, saying, "Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land," and Sihon refusing, but upon this, gathering all his people together, and coming to Jahaz to fight against Israel, [Judg. xi. 18, 19, 20.](#)

God's delivering Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and Israel's possessing their land from Arnon, even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan, dwelling in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that belonged to Sihon, exactly agreeable to the history, [Judg. xi. 21-26.](#) [Josh. xxiv. 8.](#) [Psal. cxxv. 10, 11.](#) [cxxxvi. 17-22.](#)

And afterwards smiting Og, the king of Bashan, and possessing his land, [Josh. xxiv. 8.](#) [Psal. cxxxv. 10, 11.](#) and [cxxxvi. 17-22.](#)

But that Balak, the king of Moab, durst not venture, after he had seen this, to go put against Israel, and never engaged them in battle, until Israel went against them, [Judg. xi. 25, 26.](#) agreeable to [Numb. xxii. 2.](#) and the consequent history.

Balak's stirring Balaam, the son of Beor, to curse the people, and God's turning the curse into a blessing, while Israel abode in Shittim, [Josh. xxiv. 9, 10.](#) [Mic. vi. 5.](#)

Israel's sinning by joining themselves to Baal Peor, and eating the sacrifices of their gods, and God's being provoked, and executing wrath on the congregation for this sin, and Phineas's executing judgment on this occasion, that was counted to him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore, [Psal. cvi. 28-31.](#)

The war of Israel with Balak, and their victory, [Josh. xxiv. 9, 10.](#)

The people's long sojourning in the wilderness, [Josh. xxiv. 7.](#) and [Isa. lxiii. 9.](#)

God's speaking from time to time to Moses and Aaron from a pillar of cloud, [Psal. xcix. 6, 7.](#)

Moses's faithfulness in his office, [Psal. xcix. 7.](#) agreeable to [Num. xii. 7.](#) Their great perverseness, hardness of heart of that generation, and their frequent rebellions, and provoking, and vexing God's Spirit, and tempting of him in the wilderness, even for forty years, [Psal. lxxviii.](#) throughout, especially [ver. 40, 41.](#) and [lxxxii. 11, 12.](#) and [xcv. 8-11.](#) [Isa. lxiii. 10.](#) [Ezek. xx. 13.](#)

God's repeated and continual judgments against them, wasting them by a great mortality that pursued and destroyed with great manifestations of divine wrath. [Psal. xc.](#) [Isa. lxiii. 10.](#)

God's often pardoning and sparing the people, so as to forbear to destroy the whole congregation at Moses's intercession, but yet not without giving great manifestations of his

wrath towards their sins, taking vengeance of their inventions, as Moses ground their calf to powder, [Psal. lxxviii. 38.](#), &c. and [xcix.](#)

**THE PEOPLE'S PROMISING TIME AFTER TIME TO  
REPENT WHEN SMITTEN WITH TERRIBLE JUDGMENTS, BUT  
YET TURNING AGAIN QUICKLY TO SIN, NOT BEING  
STEDFAST IN GOD'S COVENANT, PSAL. LXXVIII. 31-37.**

God's showing great favour to the young generation, [Jeremiah xxxi. 2.](#)

God's entering into covenant a second time with that young generation, [Jer. ii. 2, 3.](#)  
[Ezek. xx. 18, 19, 20.](#)

He that can observe the facts of the history of the Pentateuch after this manner mentioned and referred to in the writings of the several ages of the Israelitish nation, and not believe that they had all along a great and standing record of these things, and this very history, can swallow the greatest absurdity. If they had not had this history among them, or one that exactly agrees with it, it would have been morally impossible, but that amongst this vast number of citations and references, with so great a multitude of particularities and circumstances mentioned by so many different writers in different ages, there must have been a great many inconsistencies with the history, and a great many inconsistencies one with another; and it would have puzzled and confounded the skill of any writer who should have attempted to form a history afterwards that should every where without jarring so harmonize with such various manifold citations, and rehearsals, and references so interspersed in, and dispersed through, all those writings of several ages; and unless these writers had such a record to be their common guide, it could not have been otherwise than utterly impossible.

It was impossible that this vast number of events, with so many circumstances, with names of persons and places, and minute incidents, should be so particularly and exactly known, and the knowledge of them so fully, and distinctly, and without confusion or loss, kept up for so many ages, and be so often mentioned in so particular a manner, without error or inconsistency through so many ages, without a written record. How soon does an oral tradition committed to a multitude vary, and put on a thousand shapes, and mix, and jumble, and grow into confusion! Here appears in fact to have been an exact consistent knowledge and memory of things kept up, and that shows that there was in fact a standing record; and the comparing of the records of the Pentateuch with these innumerable citations and references, shows that this was in fact that identical record.

The facts of this history are very often rehearsed just in the same order and manner as they are in the history of the Pentateuch; and in many places there is a rehearsal of the facts of very great parts, and sometimes a kind of abridgment of the bigger part of the history, as [Josh. xxiv.](#) [Psal. lxxviii.](#) and [cv.](#) and [cvi.](#) and [cxxxvi.](#) [Ezek. xx. 5-23.](#) And we sometimes find the facts of former parts of the history of Genesis joined with the story of the children of Israel's redemption out of Egypt, and travels in the wilderness, as introductory to it, and



sometimes even beginning with the story of the creation, in like manner as it is in the Pentateuch, and after the captivity, in [Nehem. ix.](#)

These events are commonly mentioned after such a manner as plainly supposes that a full account of them was already in being, and well known and established, as in those words, *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job stood before me.* It supposes the history of those men extant and well known among the people, and so in these words, *We should have been like Sodom and like unto Gomorrah.* It is supposed that the history of the destruction of those cities was what the people were well acquainted with. So those words, [Psal. lxxviii. 40.](#) “How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert,” plainly supposes a history extant, that gives a particular account of those things. It is after the manner of a reference to a history. So it is very often elsewhere, as [Ruth iv. 11.](#) “The Lord make this woman that is come into thine house like Rachel, and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel” So [Josh. xiii. 33.](#) “But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance, the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, *as he said unto them;*” the words are mentioned plainly after the manner of a citation. So [Judg. i. 20.](#) “And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said.” [Psal. cx.](#) “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” it supposes an extant account of Melchizedek. See also [2 Sam. viii. 3.](#) [Isa. xiii. 19.](#) [Jer. xlix. 18.](#) and [1. 40.](#) [Ezek. xvi. 46-56.](#) [Amos iv. 11.](#) [Zech. ii. 9.](#) [Isa. xli. 1-8.](#) and [li. 1, 2, 9, 10.](#) [Micah vi. 5.](#) and very many other places there are that show the same thing, which it would be tedious to mention.

And sometimes these historical events are mentioned so much in the words of the history of the Pentateuch, as could not be without a written history to be a guide; as particularly Jephthah’s rehearsal, [Judges xi. 15-28.](#)

That the children of Israel had a great standing record among them of those facts that they looked upon sacred and holy, is evident from [Psal. cxi. 4.](#) The psalmist, speaking of these works, says that *God had made his wonderful works to be remembered.* They are those works of which we have an account in the Pentateuch, as is manifest from [ver. 7, 9.](#) The words in the original that are translated, *he hath made to be remembered,* are Greek or Hebrew *he hath made a record.* The word signifies *memorial* or *record.* The word *recorder,* [2 Sam. viii. 16.](#) [1 Kings iv. 3.](#) [2 Kings xviii. 18.](#) [Isa. xxxvi. 3, 22.](#) and other places, is Greek or Hebrew which is a word of the same root; the words *Zeker* and *Mazkir* are just in the same manner akin to one another, as the English words *recorder* and *record.*

So the history of these facts is called *God’s report,* (as it is in the original,) [Hab. iii. 2.](#) “I have heard thy report, and was afraid.” What that report was, appears from what follows: it was the report of those works there mentioned: which works he, in this verse, prays God to revive. But in the [15th and 16th verses.](#) the prophet more plainly tells us what that report was that made him afraid, *viz.* the account of God’s marching through the Red sea, with the other great works of God, mentioned in the foregoing part of the chapter.

And that this great record that the writers of the Old Testament cited so often, was contained in the book of the law, may be argued from the manner in which these facts are sometimes mentioned. The psalmist, in the introduction which he makes to his rehearsal of the story of the Pentateuch in the 78th Psalm, calls that story by the name of law, [ver. 1.](#) and the precepts and history are united in the notice he here takes of them, and mentions the history as what God had commanded the memory of to be carefully kept up as the proper enforcement of the precepts, [ver. 7.](#) with the foregoing verse. And being given of God as an enforcement of the precepts of the law, is as properly looked upon as a part of the law, as the prophecies and other arguments made use of in Deuteronomy, and other parts of the law. So the history is introduced in such a manner in the 105th Psalm, speaking in the introduction of the covenant and law which God established with the people, [ver. 5, 8, 9, 10.](#) that makes it naturally to be supposed that the history he rehearses is taken out of the book of the law. The wonderful works and precepts of the law are spoken of together, as in like manner to be remembered; [ver. 5.](#) “Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.” So these wonderful works are repeatedly mentioned or referred to together, [Psal. cxi.](#) And so again they are in the introduction to the rehearsal we have of this history in the 106th Psalm, as in [ver. 2, 3.](#) So the law and the historical facts are mentioned together, [Psal. ciii. 7.](#) as being both alike of divine revelation. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.” We find the precepts and history cited together, mixed, and blended in the 81st Psalm, as they are in the Pentateuch.

It appears from profane history to have been the manner of the nations of old to keep the ancient histories of their nation, and their genealogies, and the genealogies and acts of their gods, in their temples, where they were committed to the care of their priests as sacred things. This, in all probability, was in imitation of the example of the Israelites in keeping the Mosaic history which Moses committed to the care of the priests, to be laid up in the sanctuary as a sacred thing; and the ancient records of the neighbouring heathens, particularly of the Phoenicians, show the priests of the Jews had such a history in keeping giving an account of the creation of the world, &c. even so long ago as the days of the Judges. This appears from Sanchoniathon’s history, wherein he mentions many of the same facts, and confesses that he had them from a certain priest of the god *Iao*. The ancient heathen writers do make mention of Moses as the writer of the things contained in the former part of the book of Genesis. [See instances, Miscoll. No. 1012 and 1014, at the place marked thus (|) in the margin. See also ff. No. 429, at the same mark, and 432.]

Again: Another argument that will invincibly prove that the history of the Pentateuch, as well as the precepts, was of old, from the beginning, contained in the book of the law, that sacred book which the children of Israel had among them laid up in the sanctuary from the days of Moses, is this, *viz.* that it is certain that the book which the Jews had among

them, when they first returned from the Babylonish captivity, which they called *the book of the law, and the law of Moses*, and made use of as their law, as the same book of the law that their nation had all along as their great and standing record and rule, and as such had kept in the sanctuary of old, was that very Pentateuch which we now have, containing both the history and the precepts. This was the book of the law that Ezra made use of, and that Ezra and the Levites that were with him did so publicly and solemnly read and explain to the people, as we have account, [Neh. viii.](#) and which was laid up in the second temple in the same manner as the book of the law of Moses had been in the first. That this book was the same with the Pentateuch that we now have, is exceeding manifest from the genealogies and historical references in the first book of Chronicles, that was written on occasion of all Israel being reckoned by genealogies after they came out of the captivity. See [1 Chron. ix. 1.](#) None that read those genealogies and historical references will make himself so ridiculous as to question whether these were not taken from the very history that we have in the Pentateuch, and an history that the Jews had among them as the ancient, great, and established records of their nation.

And again: If they had any other book of the law when they first came out of the captivity, it is impossible but that it must be preserved, for they must have a high regard to it as being the same with that sacred book that had been regarded in all former ages as the great and holy rule of their nation, and accordingly kept as most sacred by the priests in the sanctuary of God, in the holy of holies, beside the ark of God. We find the writings of the prophet Jeremiah were preserved, [Dan. ix. 2.](#) how much more would they preserve the law of Moses! But the Jews had no books of the law preserved, they have none other now, and have had no other in all ages since; they had no other in Christ's time, and we have no account of any other in all the accounts we have of the nation, from Christ's time to the captivity; though in these accounts there be very much said about the book of the law, and though there were many controversies about it from time to time, and innumerable copies of it, and many that made it their business to study, to write, and to teach it, though there were synagogues established through Palestine, and through the world wherever the Jews were dispersed. The custom of synagogues in every city began near the first return from the captivity. See Prideaux, part I. p. 534, &c. Yet there is no mention made in any accounts we have of the Jews of any other book of the law that was among them in any of those times, nor of any knowledge or thought that any of them had that there had ever been any other book of the law in any former times. It is evident that the book of the law that the Jews had in Ezra's time, was very publicly known among the people, by the great pains that Ezra and others took thoroughly to acquaint them with it, and therefore it would have been impossible to make so great an alteration in that sacred book to which they were taught to pay such a regard, and which was laid up in the holy of holies in the temple, and in their regard to which the people soon after the captivity became, in some respects, even superstitious. I say it

would have been impossible to have made so great an alteration in it, that whereas formerly it had only a body of precepts, now it was turned into a large history, with precepts here and there mixed and blended, without some notice being taken of it, and some notable disputes, and controversies, and some remaining traces at least of the alteration, and some remaining knowledge of the former purer volume. It would be endless to reckon up the absurdities of such a supposition.

There were many sects among the Jews in Palestine, having many disputes and differences of opinion about the law of Moses; but there was no such dispute or difference as this, whether this was the genuine book of the law. And not only the Jews in Palestine, but all the Jews through the world, which were so vastly dispersed even in Esther's time, yet without controversy or any difference of opinion, all acknowledged this same book as the only book of the law, and this was the book of the law that was read in all the synagogues through the world, and was owned by the Samaritans also; (of which more afterwards;) which would have been impossible, if this was so different from that book of the law that the Jews had, and was so publicly known in Ezra's time. The Sadducees, many of whom were learned men, and boasted of their freedom of thought, and taking liberty to differ from the Jews, and were a kind of infidels, and rejected most other writings that the Jews accounted sacred, yet acknowledged without dispute the book of the Pentateuch, as we now have it, as the genuine book of the law of Moses, and as the record of God. So did the Samaritans, though they hated the Jews, and exceedingly differed from them in other things, and were such enemies to them after the captivity, that they would rather reject a thing for being one of their customs or principles; yet they owned this Pentateuch as the genuine law of Moses, which it is exceeding absurd to suppose they would have done if the book had been new made with all the history foisted in sometime after Ezra; so that undoubtedly this was the book of the law that the Jews owned and made use of, and regarded as the true law of Moses in Ezra's time.

Now, as to the consequence, if the Pentateuch, as we now have it with its history, was the book that the Jews had and used as the book of the law soon after the captivity, then it will follow that it was also the same book that was their book of the law before the captivity; for if such a great alteration was made in the book of the law, it was either done by Ezra, or by some of the Jews, before he came up to Jerusalem. It was not done by Ezra, for the priests in Jerusalem had the book of the law among them before Ezra came, even when they first came out of the captivity, as appears from [Hag. ii. 11, 12, 13](#). "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean." See also [Ezra ii. 62, 63. iii. 2-8. vi. 18](#). Hence, if Ezra had made such an

alteration, the Jews would all have known it, and could not have been imposed upon, and made to believe that this book was the same with the book of the law. Neither the priests, nor the Levites, nor any of the people, make the least opposition to Ezra's copy of the law, but all allow it, receiving it as an undoubted copy of the law of Moses. See [Neh. viii](#). And then it is most apparent that the style of the history of the Pentateuch is very different from Ezra's style in the two books of Chronicles and the book of Ezra, whose style in history is very distinguishable from all the preceding histories of the Old Testament. Besides, it is manifest, that at the time that Ezra went up from Babylon to teach the Jews the law, the book of the law of Moses was not a thing of which the Jews, who were then abroad in the world, were destitute, as of a book which was lost or secreted, of which they were in quest, but of which they had not the possession, but it was a book well known by multitudes, and this fact was a thing at that time notorious and known to the heathen. It is manifest from the copy of Artaxerxes's letter, [Ezra vii. 25](#). "And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, *all such as know the laws of thy God*; and teach ye them that know them not." This made it impossible for Ezra to palm upon the people a book of his own contriving and writing, instead of the book of the law of Moses, the grand and ancient law of their God, which was the grand rule of their nation, and the foundation both of their civil and sacred constitution, and of all their privileges, and of their very being as a nation, separated from other nations.

It is very manifest, that soon after Ezra's coming first to Jerusalem, as it is thought about ten or a dozen years after that event, Nehemiah, the king's cup-bearer in Shushan, in Persia, was well acquainted with the book of the law of Moses, [Neh. i. 7, 8, 9](#); which clearly proves the falsity of the supposition that the nation of the Jews had at that time no other book of the law of Moses but that which was of Ezra's forging and publishing, as nothing would be more absurd than to suppose his new forged book would in so short a time be published, and well known, and received, and established, not only at Jerusalem and Judea, but among the Jews dispersed over the world as far as Shushan, in so short a time.

And it could not be that any of the Jews in Judea should forge this book after the captivity, and impose it on the priests and the people before Ezra came, for this would have made no less jar between Ezra and the rest of the people than the other; for then Ezra would have known that this was not the true book of the law, for he was well acquainted with the law before he came out of the land of the captivity to Jerusalem. He was a noted scribe in the law of Moses in Babylon, [Ezra vii. 6](#). insomuch that he was famed for it among the heathen, and was noted for it by the king of Persia, who over and over gives him that as a name that he was known by, "*Ezra the scribe of the law of the God of heaven*." [Ezra vii. 11, 12, 13](#). And Ezra went up with a design to teach the people in Jerusalem this law of Moses; this was his main errand, as appears from [Ezra vii. 6, 10, 14, 21, 23, 25, 26](#). and the book of the law that



he taught the people he did not receive at Jerusalem of any of the priests, or others there, but carried it up with him in his hand, as appears from [Ezra vii. 14, 25.](#) and [Neh. viii. 1, 2.](#)

This great forgery, or fraudulent substitution of such a book as the Pentateuch for the book of the law of Moses, could not be done and imposed on the Jews at any time soon after the return from the captivity, for from what has been said already, it appears that there was the same book of the law well known by many, and received by all at that time, both by the Jews in Judea, and also by those who still remained in the land of their captivity; which could not possibly arise from any other cause than the tradition of this book from their forefathers who lived before the captivity. It is impossible that such a forgery should so quickly, so easily, and universally, without dispute or difference of parties, obtain through so great a nation, so disunited in the places of their abode. It could not have been so difficult to introduce and give currency to a forgery in any thing, as in the book of the law of Moses, their grand and sacred rule, and constitution and foundation: so much so that never did any people so much, and in so many respects, depend on any body of laws, as the Jewish nation depended on this book. It was for the sake of the laws commanded them and the privileges given them in this book, that they forsook their habitations, and all their possessions in the land of their captivity, and bore the loss and trouble of their journey to Palestine, and the great difficulties of rebuilding their city and temple, and resettling again in the land, and re-establishing their state there. And therefore we may be sure they would be, above all things, careful with regard to that book. In Haggai's and Zechariah's time, before the temple was finished, they had this book among them, as I observed before; but then many were living that had seen the former temple, and must know what kind of book that was that was called the law of Moses, that was amongst the people before the captivity, and was kept in their first temple. The highest ambition of the Jews that returned from the captivity, was to be like their forefathers in their religious privileges; and therefore they were for building a temple as near as they could like the former, and those that had seen the former temple wept bitterly that this new temple was no more like it; and doubtless they would be for having the same book of the law. The people that remembered the former temple must needs know what book that was, that was then called the book of the law, being so much and so severely reprov'd and threatened from time to time, by the prophet Jeremiah, for not conforming themselves to it, [Jer. ii. 8.](#) "The priests said not, Where is the Lord? And they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit." [Jer. xviii. 18.](#) "Come and let us devise devices against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priests." [Jer. xlii. 23. and viii. 8.](#) "How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it, the pen of the scribes is in vain." [Chap. vi. 19. and xvi. 11. xlv. 10. and xxvi. 4. and xxxii. 23.](#) See also [Lam. ii. 9. Ezek. vii. 26. and xxii. 26.](#); and indeed the whole book of Jeremiah seems to suppose the book of the law extant, and visible among the people; the

people therefore, that returned from the captivity, would not easily have received any other book, as the book of the law, to be their sacred rule, and to be laid up in the sanctuary, different from that which their forefathers had, and which had been laid up in the holy of holies in the former temple.

The book of the law of Moses was not lost in the time of the captivity, but was well known among the Jews in Babylon, [Dan. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13.](#); and that this was a fact very publicly and openly known among the heathen, that they had the law of their God among them in the time of the captivity, is a thing manifest from [Dan. vi. 5.](#) and [Ezra vii. 12, 21, 25.](#); yea it was extant among them just before their return, as appears from [Dan. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13.](#) “Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured out upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God.” And several of the prophecies of Daniel suppose the book of the covenant to be extant, [Dan. xi. 22, 28, 30, 32.](#) which shows more plainly how impossible it was for another book so different to be universally imposed on the nation in Babylon and Judea instead of this book, so soon after the captivity. It appears that the Jews in the captivity kept the writings of the prophet Jeremiah among them, from [Dan. ix. 2.](#) How much more would they keep copies of the law of Moses, which they esteemed as the foundation of all!

Again: It is most manifest that the Jews in their first re-settlement in Palestine, had those very records that we now have in the Pentateuch, as the records that had been constantly upheld in their nation, as the ancient, established, and undoubted sacred records of their nation, insomuch that when they on that occasion reckoned the people by their genealogies, they founded their reckoning on these records, and ran up their genealogies to the accounts given of their forefathers, and the first original of their families in them, making this record their standard, and grand rule, by which to judge who were true Israelites and who were not, and who were true priests and who not. So that they refused so much as to admit those that could not prove themselves to be of the seed of the priests, or of the seed of Israel according to the rule of this record, as appears by the genealogies in the first book of Chronicles, and particularly [chap. ix. 1.](#) and [Ezra ii. 59, 62, 63.](#) It was necessary for any one in order to prove himself to be of the genuine seed of the priests, that he should be able to run up his genealogy to Aaron; for his proving that he was of the seed of some other person that lived since did not prove it, unless he also proved that that person was a descendant of Aaron. And so for any one to prove that he was of the seed of Israel, he must be able to run up his genealogy to Israel himself.

So that this very record at that time was of such established reputation among them, that they all with one consent made it the very foundation of their re-establishment; they founded their nation and church in this its restoration wholly on this foundation, and by this rule, which shows that this record was no new thing among them, just then devised, with which before they had never been acquainted. It was a notorious fact, that in Esther’s

time, known to the heathen, that the Jews who remained dispersed all over the Persian empire, from Judea to Ethiopia, agreed in one established law, which was very diverse from those of all other nations; [Esther iii. 8.](#)

Again: The zendavesta, or book that Zoroastes wrote, shows that the history of the Pentateuch was extant either in or before the time of the captivity of the Jews into Babylon, and was of great reputation then, because many things in that book of his are taken out of the history of the Pentateuch. He speaks of Adam and Eve as the first parents of mankind, and gives in a manner the same history of the creation and deluge that Moses doth, and speaks therein of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses, in the same manner as the Scriptures do, and out of a particular veneration for Abraham, he called his book the book of Abraham. (See Prid. part I. p. 318.) These things must have been taken from the Jews either at or before the time of the captivity. (See the preceding pages in Prideaux.)

Again: Another argument, that the Pentateuch with its history was the book that the Israelites anciently had among them as the book of the law of Moses even before the captivity, is, that the Samaritans had this Pentateuch as it is with its history, under this name of the book of the law of Moses. One argument that the Samaritan Pentateuch was written before the captivity, is, that it is written in the ancient *Phoenician* or *Hebrew* character; whereas, the Jewish copy is written in *Chaldee* letters; those letters becoming natural to them in their captivity; and therefore if they had taken their Pentateuch from the Jews after the captivity, they would have doubtless taken it in the same characters in which they had it; but in that it is found among them not in their characters, but in the characters that the Jews used before the captivity, it is a strong argument that they took it from the Jews before the captivity, and not afterwards. Whence should the Samaritans take those old Hebrew characters, if not from the Jews before the captivity? They were characters to which they were not used in their own country, but were much more likely to be used to the Chaldean characters then, from their living in the neighbourhood of Chaldea. And if they took the Pentateuch from the Jews after the captivity, whence should they take those characters, which were neither natural to themselves, nor in use among the Jews at that time?

Again: It is not at all likely that the Samaritans would be so fond of a conformity to the Jews after the captivity, as to adopt their laws and make the Jewish constitution their own, seeing there was always, even from the first return from the captivity, such a peculiar and inveterate enmity between them and the Jews.

And as such an alteration of the book of the law could not be made after the captivity without notice being taken of it, so neither could it at any time before, even in the most degenerate and ignorant times in Israel. Yet there must be so much knowledge of this book, as must render such a cheat impracticable; for the whole nation, in all its constitution, both civil and sacred, and in the title they had to their inheritance, and in all their usages, and innumerable peculiar customs, was so founded on this law, that it must unavoidably lead





at least many in the nation to such a degree of knowledge of it, as to enable them to distinguish between that which is supposed to be so different from it as such a book as the Pentateuch, and only the body of the Mosaic precepts. Though the law was commanded to be laid up in the sanctuary, and kept there, yet it was not kept from the common use of the priests. The priests are called those that handle the law, [Jer. ii. 8](#). See also [Jer. xviii. 18](#). [Ezek. vii. 26](#). [Hag. ii. 11](#). [Mal. ii. 7](#). It was required of the priests that they should be thoroughly acquainted with the law, for they in the law of Moses are appointed to teach it to the people. The great number of ceremonies and minute circumstances with which their business was attended, and also the multitude of observances which they were to teach the people out of the law, made it necessary in the nature of things that they should be thoroughly acquainted with the law, even to the having it as it were by heart. Hence the priests and Levites in all their cities and dwellings through the land, must be supposed to have copies of the law in their hands. This being also the judicial or political law of their nation, the rule of the civil magistrates and judges in all civil and criminal matters, and the rule by which every man held his possessions, and was defended in his civil and common rights; this made it necessary that civil magistrates, and those who sat to judge in their gates, should have copies of the law in their hands. The king was, by an express statute of the law, required to write him out a copy of the law with his own hand, and the law was commanded to be read to the whole congregation of Israel once in seven years. And particularly pious and devout persons were wont to have by them copies of the law, for it is mentioned as the character of the godly man, [Psal. i. and xxxvii. 31](#). "That he meditate on God's law day and night." And all were commanded in the law to be continually meditating on the law, and make it as it were their constant companion day and night, that it might be for a sign on their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes, and that they should make it the continual subject of their conversation one with another, as they sat in the house, and as they walked by the way, &c. It was not to be shut up only in the holy of holies, and in any respect so disposed of as to be out of the reach of any, but to be nigh to every one, in every one's heart and mouth, as appears from [Deut. xxx. 11-14](#). See also [Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8, 9](#). and [chap. xi. 18, 19, 20](#). and [chap. iv. 9](#). It is true the law, in times of great degeneracy, was much more neglected, and less known; and copies of it were more rare than at other times, as in the reign of Manasseh. The original that Moses laid up in the sanctuary had been neglected and lost, being buried up in rubbish, as the temple of God itself was neglected, and the finding of it by the priest was a thing greatly taken notice of, and excited the observation and inquiry of the king and people into the nature of things contained in this book, and the Spirit of God set in on that occasion greatly to impress the king's mind with the things contained in that book, and the finding and reading that very book, as written by Moses's own hand, had a natural tendency greatly to engage the attention of the king, and to affect him in the reading of it. But we are not to suppose, that during that degenerate time, there was no copy of the law extant and in use

among any of the people. If in the most degenerate times in Israel, there were seven thousand devout worshippers of the true God left, though but little known, so undoubtedly in Manasseh's reign there were many of the priests and Levites, and others that were devout worshippers of the true God, enough to keep many copies of the law for their use to direct them in God's service.

As to the passages in the Pentateuch, wherein a later hand than that of Moses is evident, they are very few: as Witsius, in his *Miscel. Sac.* observes. Two of them are only a kind of translation of the names of places, as of the city of Hebron, and the place to which Abraham pursued the kings, where it is said he pursued them unto Dan. The history is exactly the same that Moses must be supposed to write, and the place mentioned the same that Moses mentioned; but the alteration that is made by some later hand is rendering the name of the place by a word whose signification was known to the people; and those two are the only instances that appear manifest to me of all that Le Clerc mentions, excepting only the account of Moses's death and burial. As to the name *Hebron*, so often used in the Pentateuch, it is very probable that there is in it no later hand than that of Moses; for, though it was called *Arbah* at first, yet it seems to have been named *Hebron*, which signifies *fellowship*, from his there entering into an association or covenant-fellowship with Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner. Compare [Gen. xiii. 18.](#) with [chap. xiv. 13.](#) It is likely that Abraham might give a name to this place from his entering into this fellowship with those men here, that he should name the place where he entered into covenant with Abimelech, Beer-sheba, from that covenant, as [Gen. xxi. 31, 32.](#); or possibly this name Hebron, or fellowship, might be given to the place from that wonderful communion and fellowship which Abraham there had with angels, with whom he ate, and drank, and conversed most familiarly under an oak, and where at the same time he familiarly conversed with God about the destruction of Sodom, which is much remarked by Abraham and God himself, [Gen. xviii. ver. 17, 27, 37.](#) Or it might have been named so first from Abraham's fellowship with Mamre, Aner, and Eshcol, and afterwards confirmed from this his communion with God and the angels, as Beer-sheba was first so named from Abraham's covenant with Abimelech, and afterwards confirmed from Isaac's covenant in the same place, [Gen. xxvi. 30-33.](#) It seems that after this, when the posterity of Abraham left the land and sojourned in Egypt, this place went no more by that name Hebron in the land of Canaan, but when the children of Israel returned, and Caleb took possession of the place, he restored the name which Abraham gave it.

See Dupin, at the beginning of the first volume of his *Ecclesiastical History*. See concerning places inserted after Moses's death, §§§ [Num. xxi. 14.](#)

As to the account of Moses's death and burial, it was not *Ezra* that made this addition; for the Samaritan Pentateuch, which was taken from the Jews before Ezra, has this addition, and all other passages that have been supposed to be additions. This addition of Moses's death in all probability was made by *Joshua*, who, it is evident, was a divine writer, and a

writer of divine records, and was Moses's successor, who alone was in the mount with him forty days and forty nights, and who succeeded to Moses's authority, and to most of his divine privileges and intercourse with heaven, on whom Moses laid his hand, and committed the care of the whole congregation, and of the law and tabernacle, into his hands. He succeeded Moses as the head of the congregation, and as their judge, and as the person by whom they were to transact with God, as it was with Moses. He had the care of setting up the tabernacle, and therefore he took care to set it up in Shiloh, and he took the care of the settlement of the church of Israel, and the establishment of the worship of God in Canaan, and he was looked upon as having the care of the book of the law of Moses, even so as to have power to add words to it, as appears from [Josh. xxiv. 26](#).

Places in the New Testament, which suppose Moses to be the penman of the Pentateuch, [John v. 46, 47](#). [Mark xii. 26](#). compared with [Exod. iii. 6](#). [Acts xv. 21](#). [2 Cor. iii. 14, 15](#). [Heb. xii. 21](#).

[342] *Gen. i. 2.* “The earth was without form and void.” The first state of the earth, or this lower world, shows what it was to be afterwards, *viz.* a world of confusion and emptiness, full of evil, vanity of vanities. So in the first state of man in his infancy, is an image of what man always is in himself, a poor, polluted, helpless worm.

[427] “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” The word translated *moved*, in the original is Greek or Hebrew which, as Buxtorf says, the Hebrew note properly signifies *to hover as a bird, or to brood as a bird over her young, or her eggs when sitting on them*; and both Grotius and Buxtorf observe from the writers of the Talmud, properly signifies *the brooding of a dove upon her eggs*. See Buxtorf on the Radix am and Grotius de Veritate, B. 1. sec. 16. Notes; where Grotius also asserts more than once, that the word *merachepeth* signifies *love*. Hence the many fables among the heathen about the world’s being formed by love, and by the breeding of a dove, &c. Macrobius resembles the world to an egg, in the 7th book and 16th chap. of his Saturnalia. And hence the Syrian gods are called by Arnobius the offspring of eggs, by which gods he means the stars. Orpheus had his opinion from the Phœnicians, one of which was this in Athenagoras, that *mud proceeded from water*, after which he mentions a great egg split into two parts, heaven and earth.

In the Argonauticks, ascribed to Orpheus, we have these lines,

In verse he sung the origin of things—How Love, the cause of all things, by his power  
Creating every thing, gave each his place.”

And Aristophanes, in his play called the Birds, in a passage preserved by Lucien, in his Philopatris and Suidas,

“First of all was Chaos and Night, dark Erebus and gloomy Tartarus. There was neither earth, nor air, nor heaven, till dusky night, by the wind’s power on the wide bosom of Erebus, brought forth an egg, of which was hatched the god of love; (when time began;) who with his golden wings fixed to his shoulders flew like a mighty whirlwind, and mixing with black Chaos in Tartarus’ dark shades, produced mankind, and brought them into light. For before love joined all things, the very gods themselves had no existence. But upon this conjunction all things being mixed and blended, æther arose, and sea, and earth, and the blessed abodes of the immortal gods.” Grotius. *Ibid.*

[448] *Gen. i. 2.* “And the earth was without form and void.” *Tohu, Bohu*, which last are words signifying vanity and emptiness. Thus God was pleased in the first state of the creation to show what the creature is in itself; that in itself it is wholly empty and vain, that its fulness or goodness is not in itself, but in him, and in the communications of his Spirit, animating, quickening, adorning, replenishing, and blessing all things. The emptiness and vanity here spoken of, is set in opposition to that goodness spoken of afterwards. Through the incubation of the Spirit of God, (as the word translated *moved*, signifies,) the Spirit of God is here represented as giving form, and life, and perfection to this empty, void, and unformed mass, as a dove that sits infuses life, and brings to form and perfection the unformed mass of the

egg. Thus the fulness of the creature is from God's Spirit. If God withdraws from the creature, it immediately becomes empty and void of all good. The creature as it is in itself is a vessel, and has a capacity, but is empty; but that which fills that emptiness is the Spirit of God.

As the Spirit of God here is represented as hovering or brooding as a dove, so it is probable, when the Spirit of God appeared in a bodily shape, descending on Christ like a dove, it was with a hovering motion on his head, signifying the manner in which not only he personally was filled with the fulness of God, but also every individual member of his mystical body. So that this that we have an account of is one instance wherein the old creation was typical of the new. (See note on [Eph. iii. 19.](#))

[398] [Gen. i. 27, 28, 29, 30.](#) *Covenant with Adam.* [Gen. i. 27, 28, 29, 30.](#) "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them; and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said. Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so."

Here is described the sum of the blessedness that man had in his first estate. Here is first his inherent spiritual good, which lay in his being created in God's image. Here is the happiness that he had in the favour of God; his blessing of him is a testimony of it. Here is the happiness he had in his intercourse with God; for his thus talking with him in this friendly manner is an instance of it. Here is all his external good, which consisted in two things: first, in having society, implied in that expression, Male and female created he them, and in those words, Be fruitful and multiply. Here is the sum of their outward good in the enjoyment of earthly good. Here is the possession of the earth, and the enjoyment of the produce of it, and dominion over the inferior creatures in it. These things were evidently given to Adam as the public head of mankind. God in blessing them, evidently speaks to them as the head of mankind. The blessings he pronounces are given him in the name of the whole race, and therefore the favour manifested in blessing them is implicitly given to him as the head of the race. God's making them in his own image and then blessing them, implies his bestowing those blessings pronounced on the subject blessed, on the condition of its continuing such an excellent subject as he had made it, and as it now stood forth to receive his blessing, or continued in such a happy capacity to enjoy the blessings as it now was. Otherwise the blessing would be in a great measure made void; for in order to men's being happy in the blessing, two things were needful: first, that the enjoyments granted should be good; and secondly, that the subject should be good, or in a good capacity to receive and enjoy them; therefore both these are doubtless implied in the blessing here pronounced on Adam, which

is plainly pronounced on him in the name of the whole race. And therefore, in like manner when Adam is threatened with being deprived of all these in case of his disobedience, Adam must understand it in like manner as a calamity to come on the whole race, and consequently the implicit promise of life, as the confirmation and increase of the blessing, respects also the whole race. Hence the covenant must be made with Adam, not only for himself, but all his posterity.

[450] [Gen. ii. 2.](#) “And on the seventh day God ended all his works.” The word translated *work*, is Greek or Hebrew which comes from Greek or Hebrew, *angel* or *messenger*, and therefore most properly signifies *a work done in the execution of some function to which the workman is appointed, as the angel, messenger, officer, or workman of another*; and so is fitly used concerning the work of creation; which was performed by the Son of God, who is often called *the angel of the Lord*: he being the Father’s great officer, and artificer, through whom he performs all his work, and executes his eternal counsels and purposes.

[451] [Gen. ii. 5.](#) “And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.” This seems to be observed to teach that all the life that is in the creation is immediately from God, and not from the creature itself: that in itself is wholly lifeless and void, and empty of all perfection. The vegetable life that is in this lower world was immediately from God. Of all the innumerable kinds of principles of life that now are manifest, every one was immediately from God. Though the earth, and the rain, and the cultivation and husbandry of men be now made use of, yet these living principles were not first owing to them, for they were before them. So it is as to all principles of spiritual life in the spiritual creation.

[397] [Gen. ii. 9.](#) and [iii. 22, 23, 24.](#) *Concerning the Tree of Life.* This tree seems manifestly to have been designed for a seal of Adam’s confirmation in life, in case he had stood, for two reasons: 1st, because its distinguishing name is the tree of life; and 2d, because by what is said in the latter end of the 3d chapter, there appears to have been a connexion by divine appointment, between eating of that tree and living for ever, or enjoying a continued, certain, and everlasting life. But yet here are these difficulties attending such a supposition. If it was so that this fruit was intended as a seal of Adam’s confirmation in life, and was by divine constitution connected with confirmed life, then it should seem that it was something kept in store, reserved by God to be bestowed as a reward of his obedience and his overcoming all temptations, when his time of probation was ended. There seems to be an allusion to this in [Rev. xxii. 14.](#) “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.” And [chap. ii. 7.](#) “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.” So that it was not to be come at until the time of his trial was ended, for if he had eat of the tree before his probation was ended, confirmed life would doubtless have been as much connected with it as after he fell, and that would have defeated God’s design, which was that

he should not have confirmed life till his obedience was tried; and if so, why was there not need of cherubim and a flaming sword before, to keep Adam from the tree, before he fell, as well as afterwards? Whereas there seems to have been nothing to keep him from this tree. The tree was not forbidden him; for he had leave to eat of every tree, but only the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And as there was no moral hinderance, so there seems to have been no natural force to keep him off: it does not seem to have been out of his reach; for, if so, what occasion was there for placing cherubim and a flaming sword after he fell. The tree does not seem to be hidden from Adam, for, if it was sufficiently secured from him by this means, before he fell, so it was afterwards, and so what need of the cherubim and flaming sword? From the account which Moses gives of the place of this tree, that it was *in the midst of the garden*, it appears probable that it was in the most conspicuous place in the whole garden; as the tree of life is said to grow in the midst of the street of the heavenly paradise. [Rev. xxii. 2.](#) The street of a city is the most public place in it; and that Adam might have it in view to put him in mind of the glorious reward promised to his obedience, to engage him to the greater care and watchfulness, that he might not fail.

The most probable account that is to be given of this matter is this: that the fruit of the tree of life was not yet produced; but that it was revealed to Adam, that after a while the tree should produce fruit, of which whosoever eat should live for ever; that he might eat of it if he persisted in his obedience; and that if he did not persevere in obedience he would expose himself to death before that time, and so cut himself off from ever tasting of it. The tree probably made a most lovely and excellent appearance, and sent forth a sweet fragrance, *and perhaps was gay in the blossom*, promising most excellent fruit.

This tree, as it grew in the midst of the garden, so probably it grew by the river, that ran through the midst of this Paradise. See [Rev. xx. 2.](#) [Ezek. xlvii. 12.](#)

[469] [Gen. ii. 9.](#) and [iii. 22-24.](#) On *the Tree of Life*.

There is not the least probability that every fruit-tree in the garden of Eden was then loaded with ripe fruit all at one time. If so, there would have been no provision made for Adam's subsistence through the year, according to those laws which God had established concerning the tree when he created them; for, according to those laws, the same fruit was not to be perpetually hanging; but when the fruit was ripe, the fruit was to be shed, otherwise the seed would not be shed upon the earth in order to a new production, according to [Gen. i. 11, 12.](#) "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth, and it was so." It is much more probable that it was with the trees of paradise as is represented of the trees that grew on the banks of Ezekiel's river of living waters. It is represented as though there were all sorts of fruit-trees, and some yielding their fruit one month, and others another; so that there were ripe fruits newly produced every month of the year, and so a perpetual summer, and also a perpetual spring: some trees were hung with ripe fruit, and others in

the blossom, in each month in the year. St. John's vision, [Rev. xxii.](#) may be so understood that each single tree bore twelve manner of fruits on different branches; and yet perhaps there is no necessity of so understanding it; and so one sort bore ripe fruit in one month, and another in another; so that the same tree was always in blossom in some part, while some other part was loaded with ripe fruit. But in Ezekiel's vision the variety of fruits seems to be on different trees, because it is said there shall grow *all* trees for meat.

*Corol.* This is a confirmation of the supposition, that the angels were not confirmed till Christ had ended his humiliation, and until he ascended into glory. For Christ is the tree of life in the heavenly paradise, in the native country of the angels; just as the tree of which we have been speaking was the tree of life on earth, the native country of men; and the Scriptures give us to understand that this person, who is the tree of life in this heavenly paradise, is "angels' food." Hence we may infer, that the fruit of this tree was the food by which the angels have their eternal life, or their confirmed life. But as man, who was made under a like covenant of works with the angels, would not have been confirmed, if he had persevered in his obedience, till the tree had brought forth its fruit, and till the fruit of the tree was ripe; so it is not probable that the angels were confirmed, until Christ, the Tree of life in the heavenly paradise, had brought forth his fruit. But what is the fruit that grows on this heavenly tree, the second Person of the Trinity, but the fruit of the Virgin Mary's womb, and that fruit of the earth spoken of [Isa. iv. 2.](#) and [ix. 6.](#) "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely, for them that are escaped of Israel." "For unto us a son is born, and unto us a child is given," &c. (how often are the children that are born in a family compared in Scripture to the fruit that grows on a tree!) when this holy child had gone through all his labours and sufferings, and had fulfilled all righteousness, and was perfected, as 'tis expressed in [Luke xiii. 32.](#) [Heb. ii. 10.](#) and [v. 9.](#): then he was seen of angels, and received up into glory, then the fruit was gathered: Christ, as full ripe fruit, was gathered into the garner of God, into heaven, the country of angels, and so became angels' food: then the angels fed upon the full ripe fruit of the tree of life, and received of the Father the reward of everlasting life. Christ did not become the author of eternal salvation to man, till he was thus made perfect, neither did he become the author of confirmed eternal life to the angels, till he was made perfect. Thus the fruit of this tree of life did not become the food of life to either men or angels till it was ripe.

This tree of life did as it were blossom in the sight of the angels, when man was first created in an innocent, holy, pleasant, and happy state, and was that creature from whence this future fruit of the tree of life was to spring, the blossom out of which the fruit was to come. It was a fair and pleasant blossom, though weak and feeble, and proved a fading thing like a flower. When man fell, then the blossom faded and fell off; man came forth like a flower, and was cut down, but the blossom fell in order to the succeeding fruit. The fall of





man made way for the incarnation of Christ, it gave occasion to the production and ripening of that fruit, and to its blessed consequences.

Thus, though Christ God man be not the Saviour of the angels, as he is of men, yet he is the tree of life to the angels, and the bread of life as truly as to men.

[77] [Gen. ii. 17.](#) “In the day that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die.” This expression denotes not only the certainty of death, but the extremity of it. Thou shalt die, in the superlative and to the utmost degree; and so it properly extends to the second death, the death of the soul; for damnation is nothing but extreme death, and I am ready to think that God, by mentioning dying twice over, had respect to two deaths, the first and the second, and that it is to those words the apostle John refers in [Revelation xx. 14.](#) when he says, “This is the second death.” It is much such a reference as he made in the 2d verse of that chapter. There he explains to us who the serpent was that beguiled Eve, *viz.* the dragon, that old serpent, who is the devil and Satan: so here he explains what the second of those deaths, that was threatened to Adam, was. See notes on [Rev. xx. 14.](#)

[325] [Gen. ii. 17.](#) “Dying thou shalt die.” If we sometimes find such kind of doubled expressions, and also this very expression, dying thou shalt die, as in Solomon’s threatening to Shimei, when no more is intended than only the certainty of the event, yet this is no argument that this does not signify more than the certainty, even the extremity as well as certainty of it. Because such a repetition or doubling of a word, according to the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, is as much as our speaking a word once with a very extraordinary emphasis. But such a great emphasis, as we often use, signifies variously; it sometimes signifies certainty, at other times extremity, and sometimes both.

[320] [Gen. ii. 17.](#) “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” This, in addition to notes in blank Bible, And besides Adam died that day, for he was ruined and undone that day, his nature was ruined the nature of his soul which ruin is called death in Scripture, [Eph. ii. 1, 5.](#) [Colos. ii. 13.](#) [Matt. viii. 22.](#) [John v. 25.](#) The nature of his body was ruined that day, and became mortal, began to die, his whole man became subject to condemnation, to death; he was guilty of death, and yet that all was not executed; that day was a token of his deliverance; and his not dying that day a natural death, is no more difficult to reconcile with truth, than his never suffering at all that death that was principally intended, *viz.* eternal damnation; and probably there were beasts slain the same day by God’s appointment in their stead, of which God made them coats of skins, for it is probable God’s thus clothing them was not long delayed after that they saw that they were naked.

[110] [Gen. ii. 21.](#) “Adam received Eve as he awaked out of a deep sleep;” so Christ receives his church as he rises from the dead. Dr. Goodwin speaks of this deep sleep of Adam as a type of Christ’s death, 1st vol. of his Works, part iii. p. 58.

[251] [Gen. iii.](#) at the beginning. “*Now the serpent was more subtle,*” &c. “What is an argument *ex posteriori* of the devil’s having assumed the form of a serpent in his temptation

of our first parents, is the pride he has ever since taken of being worshipped under that form, to insult, as it were, and trample upon fallen man. To this purpose we may observe that the serpent has all along been the common symbol and representation of the heathen deities, *Jul. Firmic. de errore Prof an. Relig.* p. 15. That the Babylonians worshipped a dragon, we may learn from the Apocrypha, and that they had images of serpents in the temple of Belus, Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. cap. 4. informs us. Grotius out of several ancient authors, has made it appear that in the old Greek mysteries they used to carry about a serpent, and cry, Greek or Hebrew, the devil, thereby expressing his triumph in the unhappy deception of our first mother. The story of Ophis among the heathen was taken from the devil's assuming the body of a serpent in his tempting of Eve. *Orig. contra Celsus*, lib vi. And to name no more what Philip Melancthon tells us of some priests in Asia, is very wonderful, *viz.* that they carry about a serpent in a brazen vessel, which they attend with a great deal of music, and many choruses in verse, while the serpent every now and then lifts up himself, opens his mouth, and thrusts out the head of a beautiful virgin, (as having swallowed her,) 'to show the devil's triumph in this miscarriage among those poor deluded idolaters.' Nicol's *Conference with a Theist*, vol. i.

[452] *Gen. iii. 14.* "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." This doubtless has respect not only to the beast that the devil made use of as his instrument, but to the devil, that old serpent, to whom God is speaking, chiefly as is evident by the words immediately following. The words, *On thy belly shalt thou go*, as they respect the devil, refer to the low and mean exercises and employments that the devil shall pursue; and signify that he should be debased to the lowest and most sordid measures to compass his ends, so that nothing should be too mean and vile for him to do to reach his aims. The words, *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*, have respect to the mean gratifications that Satan should henceforth have for his greatest good, instead of the high and glorious enjoyments of which heretofore he was the subject in heaven; and that even in those gratifications he should find himself sorely disappointed, and so his gratifications should from time to time in all that he obtained as long as he lived, turn to his grief and vexation, agreeably to the use of a parallel phrase, *Prov. xx. 17.* "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel." When a man has eagerly taken into his mouth that which he accounted a sweet morsel, but finds it full of dirt, it moves him immediately to spit it out, and so to endeavour to clear his mouth of what he had taken as eagerly as he took it in. So Satan is from time to time made sick of his own morsels, and to spit them out again, and vomit up what he had swallowed down, as the whale vomited up Jonah, and as the devil vomited up Christ, when he saw that he had swallowed down that which, when within him, gave him a mortal wound at his vitals.

[456] *Gen. iii. 14, 15.* "And the Lord said unto the serpent," &c. In this first prophecy ever uttered on earth, we have a very plain instance of what is common in divine prophecies

through the Scripture, *viz.* that one thing is more immediately respected in the words, and another that is the antitype principally intended, and so of some of the words being applicable only to the former, and others only to the latter, and of God's beginning to speak in language accommodated to the former, but then as it were presently forgetting the type, and being taken up wholly about the antitype. Here in the 14th verse, the words that are used are properly applicable only to that serpent that was one of the beasts of the field; so here it is said, Thou art cursed above all cattle; which shows that this prophecy has some respect to that beast that is a type of Satan. But, in the things spoken in the next verse, the beast called a serpent seems to be almost wholly forgotten, and the speech to be only about the devil; for the enmity that is there spoken of, is between the Seed of the man, and that Seed a particular person; for the words in the original are, "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" it is Greek or Hebrew (*He*) in the Hebrew, and Greek or Hebrew in the Septuagint; as is observed in Shuckford, vol. i. p. 286.

[322] [Gen. iii. 20](#). "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." What Adam in this has respect to, doubtless is that which God had signified in the [15th verse](#), *viz.* that Eve was to be the mother of that Seed that was to bruise the head of the serpent, the grand enemy of mankind that had brought death on them, and had the power of death, and so was to be the author of life to all that should live, *i. e.* all that should escape that death. So Eve was the mother of all living, as all that have spiritual and eternal life are Christ's, and so the woman's seed, because Christ was of the woman. Adam, when he had eaten the forbidden fruit, and his conscience smote him, had a terrible remembrance of the awful threatening; "Dying, thou shalt die;" and therefore took great notice of those words which God spake concerning the seed of Eve bruising the serpent's head; which seem to afford some relief from his terror, and therefore he thought it worthy to give Eve her name from it, as the most remarkable thing that he had observed concerning Eve, and the thing that he thought more worthy to be remembered, and could think of with greater delight and pleasure, than any thing else concerning her, and therefore he thought it above all things worthy that her name should be a continual memorial of it.

That the thing of which Adam took special notice in giving his wife this name, was not her being the universal mother of mankind, or the *universality* of her maternity, but the *quality* of those that she was to be the mother of, *viz.* *living* ones, is evident from the name itself, which expresses the latter, and not the former; the word Greek or Hebrew *Chavah*, which we render *Eve*, expresses *Life*, the quality of those that she was to be the mother of, and not the universality of her maternity. And it is not likely this would have been if there was nothing in this quality of her posterity that did at all distinguish her from any other mother; which would have been if all that was intended by her being the mother of those that were living, was that she was to be the mother of such as were to live in the world; for so all other mothers might be called *Chavah* as well as she, or by some name that expressed



that quality of life. A name is given for distinction; and therefore doubtless Adam gave her a name that expressed something that was distinguishing; but if what was meant was only that she was the mother of all mankind, then the thing that was distinguishing of her, was merely the *universality* of her maternity, and not at all the *quality* of her posterity. Why, then, was not the universality, the distinguishing thing, expressed in the name, rather than the quality, which was not at all distinguishing?

Again: It is not likely that Adam would give her a name from that which did not at all distinguish her from him. If persons have not names that shall distinguish them from all others, yet doubtless they ought to have names to distinguish them from those with whom they always live, and from whom there is most occasion to distinguish them. But if it was not the quality of her posterity, but only the universality of her progeniture of mankind, to which he had respect, that was what was common to her with himself.

If it had been only her being the mother of all mankind to which Adam had respect, it would have been more likely that he would have given her this name on her first creation, and on her being brought to him; which was after that benediction, “Be fruitful and multiply;” but we find that this name was not given on that occasion, but then Adam gave her another name, [Gen. ii. 23](#). He called her *Ishah*, from her being taken out of man; but the name of *Chavah*, as the mother of all living, is given on another occasion, *viz.* just after God had promised that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, and immediately after God had pronounced the threatening of death on Adam, as in the verse immediately foregoing, “till thou return to the ground, for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return:” while Adam is under the terror of this sentence of death, he comforts himself with the promise of life couched in what God had said to the serpent. Adam gave Eve a new name on this occasion, from that new thing that appeared concerning her after the fall: as she had her first name from the manner of her creation, so she had her new name given her from Christ’s redemption, and Adam gave her her name from that which comforted him, with respect to the curse that God had pronounced on him and the earth; as Lamech named Noah, [Gen. v. 29](#). “And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”

It was a common thing for the progenitors of Christ to have names given them from something that had respect to him or his redemption, or some of his benefits: so were Seth, and Noah, and Abraham, and Sarah, and Israel, and Judah, and others named.

And besides, we have no parallel place in the Bible to justify our understanding this expression, *all living*, of all mankind that shall hereafter live upon the earth, or including them with those that are now living.

[399] [Gen. iii. 20](#). There are also these further arguments to confirm that Adam does not give his wife the name of *Eve*, which signifies *Life*, because she was the mother of all

mankind, but because she was the mother of Christ, and of his living seed, who are the seed of the woman of whom God had just spoken. 1st. This name is exceedingly proper and suitable to signify the latter, because, “in Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive; by man came death, so by man also came the resurrection of the dead;” “the second Adam is made a quickening Spirit;” “in him was *life*, and he is *the life*.” All mankind by the first Adam are in a state of death, dead in trespasses and sins, but Christ is the bread of life, of which he that eats should live for ever; and he is thus the fountain of life to the children of men, by bruising the head of the serpent, or destroying him that has the power of death, even the devil; which God had just before promised should be by the Seed of *Isha*, the name that Adam gave his wife at first.

2. It is not likely that Adam would give this name, *viz. Living One*, as a distinguishing name for mankind, to distinguish them from other creatures; for the same name is, from time to time in the preceding chapters, given to other creatures, as [chap. i. 21, 24, 28.](#) and [chap. ii. 19.](#) where the word is radically the same; and so afterwards the name is often given to other animals, [chap. vi. 19.](#) [vii. 4, 23.](#) [viii. 1.](#) and in many other passages of Scripture. And especially it is unlikely that he would give this as a distinguishing name to mankind immediately upon man’s fall, whereby he was ruined, and had brought that threatening on himself, “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;” and immediately after he had been told by God that he was dead, (*i. e.* in effect so,) “dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” Adam could not mean by the phrase *all living*, what indeed we sometimes use that expression to signify, *viz. mankind*; but yet we do not intend by it, *all that have had, and now have, the human nature*, as though life was a distinguishing property of that nature, but we merely mean by it *those that are now alive*, to distinguish them from those that are dead, or are not yet born. And it is exceeding unlikely that Adam would now first find out this name to distinguish mankind, even those that yet had no life or being, as though life was a distinguishing property and dignity of human nature, on the occasion of so great, awful, and affecting an event, as the first entrance of any such thing as death into the world, to waste, and destroy, and make fearful havock of all mankind, all Eve’s posterity, and that originally by her means. If Adam had meant by *all living*, all mankind that then had a being in this world, the name was very improper for her; for he that was living of mankind was the only person of all mankind that she was not the mother of: he was rather the father of her. But in the other sense it is true, Eve was the mother of all living universally, *of every living one*, as it is in the original. There is not one that has spiritual and eternal life of all mankind, who in this sense is excepted, not Adam, nor Christ, no, nor herself, for in this sense, as she was the mother of *Christ*, *she was her own mother*.

3. It is remarkable that Adam had before given his wife another name, *viz. Isha*, when she was first created and brought to him; but now, that on the occasion of the fall, and what

God had said upon it, he changes her name, and gives her a new name, *viz. Life*, because she was to be the mother of every one that has life; which would be exceeding strange and unaccountable if all that he meant was, that she was to be the mother of mankind. If that was all that he intended, it would have been much more likely to be given to her at first, when God gave them that blessing, *viz. "Be fruitful and multiply,"* by virtue of which she became the mother of mankind; and when mankind was hitherto in a state of life, and death had not yet entered into the world. But that Adam should not give her this name then, but call her *Isha*, and then, after that, change her name, and call her name *Life*, immediately upon their losing their life and glory, and coming under a sentence of death, with all their posterity, and the awful, melancholy shadow and darkness which death has brought on the whole world, occasioned by Eve's folly, is altogether unaccountable, if he had only meant, that she was the mother of mankind.

4. That Adam should change her name, and call her name *Life*, after he had given her another name, doubtless was from something new that appeared, that was very remarkable, concerning Eve; and doubtless we have an account of what that remarkable thing was. The scriptural history is not so imperfect as to give us an account of such an event as a person's name being changed, without mentioning the occasion of that change. We have several times elsewhere an account of the change of persons' names in Scripture, but always have an account of the reason why; but we have no account of any thing new concerning Eve, that could give Adam occasion thus to change her name, and call her *Life*, but only what God said concerning her and her seed after her fall. We have an account of this change of her name immediately upon it, and therefore must understand that as the occasion of it. This was an exceeding proper occasion for such a name, and it is natural to suppose that Adam's mind might now be so affected by the curse of death just pronounced by God, and the promise of life by Eve, as to induce him to change her name from *Isha* to *Life*.

It is most probable, that Adam would give Eve her name from that which was her greatest honour, since it is evident that he had respect to her honour in giving her this name. The name itself, *Life*, is honourable; and that which he mentions concerning her being the *mother of every living one*, is doubtless something he had respect to as honourable to her. Since he changed her name from regard to her honour, it is most likely he would signify in it that which was her peculiar honour; but that was the most honourable of any thing, that had ever happened, or that ever would happen concerning her that God said that she should be the mother of that seed, that should bruise the serpent's head. This was the greatest honour that God had conferred on her; and we find persons' names changed elsewhere to signify something that is their peculiar honour, as the new names of Abraham, Sarah, and Israel.

6. All new names, of which we have an account in Scripture as given prophetically, are given with respect to some great privilege persons have by some special relation to Christ,



or interest in him, and his redemption. So Abraham's and Sarah's new names were given them of God, on occasion of the promise made to them, that in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; and Jacob's new name of *Israel* is given because as a prince he had prevailed with Christ in wrestling with him, and had obtained the confirmation of Abraham and Isaac's blessing to him and his seed, when he and his posterity were in danger of being cut off by Esau.

[466] [Gen. iii. 20](#). "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she is the mother of all living." To suppose the living here to mean those that are restored to spiritual life, and shall be saved from death, and have everlasting life, is agreeable to the denomination the apostle gives true Christians, [2 Cor. iv. 11](#). "Greek or Hebrew, *the living*, or *the livers*; and again [chap. v. 15](#).

[82] [Gen. iv. 1](#). "And Adam knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." In Eve's expressing herself thus, it is probable she had an eye to what God said, that her seed should bruise the serpent's head: and now seeing she had a son, her faith and hope was strengthened that the promise should be fulfilled.

[453] [Gen. iv. 3, 4](#). *Cain's and Abel's sacrifice*. Abel when he comes before God is sensible of his own unworthiness and sinfulness, like the publican, and so is sensible of his need of an atonement, and therefore comes with bloody sacrifices, hereby testifying his faith in the promised great sacrifice. Cain comes with his own righteousness, like the Pharisee, who put God in mind that he paid tithes of all that he possessed. He comes without any propitiation, with the fruit of his ground, and produce of his own labours, as though he could add something to the Most High, by gifts of his own substance; and therefore he was interested in no atonement, for he was not sensible of his need of any, nor did he trust in any; and so being a sinner, and not having perfectly kept God's commandments, sin lay at his door unremoved, and so his offering could not be accepted, for guilt remained to hinder. This reason God intimates, why his offering was not accepted, in what way he says to him, [verse 7th](#), "If thou doest well if thou keepest my commandments, thou and thine offerings shall be accepted; but seeing thou doest not well, as thine own conscience witnesses that in many things thou hast offended, the guilt of sin remains to hinder thy being accepted without an atonement, thy righteousness cannot be accepted, whatever offering thou mayest bring to me." See Bp. Sherlock's Use and Intent of Prophecy, p. 74, 75. and Owen on [Heb. xi. 4](#). p. 18.

[344] [Gen. iv. 7](#). "If thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted; and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Cain was not accepted in his offering, because he did not well because, 1. He was a wicked man, led an ill life under the reigning power of the world and the flesh, and therefore his sacrifice was an abomination to the Lord, [Prov. xv. 8](#). a vain oblation, [Isa. i. 13](#). God had no respect to Cain himself, and therefore no respect to his offering, as the manner of the expression ([ver. 5.](#)) intimates. But Abel was a righteous man: he is

called righteous Abel, [Matt. xxiii. 35](#). His heart was upright, and his life was pious; he was one of those whom God's countenance beholds, [Psal. xi. 7](#). and whose prayer is therefore his delight, [Prov. xv. 8](#). God had respect to him as a holy man, and therefore to his offering as a holy offering. The tree must be good, else the fruit cannot be pleasing to the heart-searching God.

2. There was a difference in the offerings they brought. It is expressly said, [Heb. xi. 4](#). Abel's was a more excellent sacrifice than Cain's: either, 1. In the *nature* of it. Cain's was only a sacrifice of acknowledgment offered to the Creator; the meat-offerings of the first of the ground were no more, and for ought I know might have been offered in innocency. But Abel brought a sacrifice of atonement, the blood whereof was shed in order to remission, thereby owning himself a sinner, deprecating God's wrath, and imploring his favour in a Mediator: or, 2. In the *qualities* of the offering. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, any thing that came next to hand, what he had not occasion for himself, or was not more charitable. But Abel was curious in the choice of his offering, not the lame, or the lean, or the refuse, but the firstling of the flock, the best he had, and the fat thereof, the best of those best. 3. The great difference was this, that Abel offered in faith, and Cain did not "Abel was a penitent, like the publican that went away justified; Cain was unhumbled, and his confidence was in himself, like the Pharisee who glorified himself, but he was not so much justified before God." Henry on verses 3, 4, 5.

["If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."] Not at *Cain's* door, but at *God's* door. His wicked doings lay, as it were, at the door of God's temple, to prevent his admittance and acceptance with God: they stood as a partition-wall between God and him. Wicked men's sins are a cloud which their prayers cannot pass through, and which hinders their offerings from being brought into the holy place: they are a thick veil before the door of the holiest of all, to hinder their access to God. [1 John iii. 21, 22](#). "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

[51] [Gen. iv. 14](#). It seems to me no way improbable that Cain's house was intended, and by him understood, not only of him personally, but of his posterity. Such he might learn from his father Adam, seeing the covenant that was made with him was made not only for himself, but for his posterity. If Cain understood it only of himself personally, it seems somewhat strange that he should express himself after such a manner. The inhabited earth was not broad enough for such expressions. The expression, from thy face, may be in the same sense as David was shut out from the face of God when he dwelt in Ziklag, from his altar where his people sacrificed and worshipped him, and where he especially manifested himself. Doubtless there were then such things as well as afterwards.

[323] [Gen. v. 29](#). "And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath



cursed.” Noah comforted God’s people concerning their labour and fatigue, that was the fruit of God’s curse on the ground.

1. And chiefly as the Redeemer was to be of him, who should deliver his people from all their labours and sorrows, and should procure them everlasting life in the heavenly Canaan, a better paradise than that which was lost, where the ground is not cursed, and shall spontaneously yield her rich fruit every month, where there remains a rest to the people of God, who shall rest from their labours, and their works shall follow them.

2. He first invented wine, which is to comfort him that is faint and weary with fatigue, and the toil of his hands, and which makes glad man’s heart, a remarkable type of the blood of Christ, and his spiritual benefits.

3. To him was given leave to eat flesh, as a relief from the fruit of the curse on the ground, which rendered the fruits of it less pleasant and wholesome. God gave Noah leave to feed on the flesh of other animals, to comfort him under his toil of his hands in tilling the ground. And this is another type of our feeding on Christ, and having spiritual life and refreshment in him: for, in feeding on the flesh of animals, our food and the nourishment of our lives is obtained at the expense of their lives and shedding their blood, as we come to feed on Christ by his laying down his life. And these things in Noah that should be matter of comfort under God’s curse, are the rather taken notice of in him, because in his time the curse on the ground was to be more fully executed than ever it had been before the good constitution of the earth was to be overthrown by a flood, and its wholesomeness and fertility greatly diminished, and so the toil of his hands would be greatly increased, were it not for this relief given that has been mentioned.

4. Before Noah, God’s people did not know how far this curse would proceed; they probably foresaw that God intended to execute the curse on the ground in a much further degree than ever yet he had done. God had not comforted his people by any limits set in any promise made to them, but to Noah God made a gracious promise, setting limits to the curse, promising in some respects a certain measure of success to the labour of their hands, promising that seed-time, and harvest, &c. should not cease.

[5] *Gen. vi. 4.* The monstrous births that arose from the conjunction of the sons of God with the daughters of men, typify unto us what an odious monster results from the conjoining of holy things with wicked, as of a holy profession with a wicked life in hypocrites, and what powerful enemies against religion such are, whether they are particular persons or churches, as the church of Rome, that monstrous beast, in whom are joined the profession of the name of Christ and many of his doctrine with the most odious devilism, who has horns as a lamb, but speaks as a dragon: and their bulk and huge stature denotes their pride, as none are so proud as hypocrites. Vid. 257.

[257] *Gen. vi. 4.* And their great bulk, and strength, and renown, besides the pride of such persons and churches as join the religion, doctrine, and worship, and profession of his

church, with the deluding glories and bewitching pleasures of this world, and of the heathenish and other human and carnal churches and societies of it, here typified by the beauty of the daughters of men. I say, besides the pride of such churches, these things seem to denote the earthly pomp and splendour, and worldly renown and glory, and great temporal power, that such churches affect, and are commonly in providence suffered to arrive to, as the church of Rome and others.

[428] *Gen. vi. 4.* “And there were giants in the earth in those days,” &c. Pausanias, in his *Laconics*, mentions the bones of men of a more than ordinary bigness, which were shown in the temple of Esculapius, at the city of Asepus: and in the first of his *Eliacks*, he speaks of a bone taken out of the sea, which aforetime was kept at Piso, and thought to have been one of Pelops. Philostratus, in the beginning of his *Heroicks*, informs us that many bodies of giants were discovered in Pallene, by showers of rain and earthquakes. Pliny, *b. vii. ch. 16.* says, “That upon the bursting of a mountain in Crete, there was found a body standing upright, which was reported by some to have been the body of Orion, by others, the body of Aetion. Orestes’s body, when it was commanded by the oracle to be dug up, is reported to have been seven cubits long. And almost a thousand years ago, the poet Homer continually complained, “that men’s bodies were less than of old.” And Solinus, *chap. i.* inquires, “Were not all that were born in that age less than their parents?” And the story of Orestes’s funeral testifies the bigness of the ancients; whose bones when they were dug up in the 58th Olympiad at Yegea, by the advice of the oracle, are related to have been seven cubits in length. Other writings, which give a credible relation of ancient matters, affirm this, that in the war of Crete, when the rivers had been so high as to overflow and break down their banks, after the flood was abated, upon the clearing of the earth, there was found a human body of *three and thirty feet long*: which L. Flaccus, the legate, and Metellus himself, being very desirous of seeing, were much surprised to have the satisfaction of seeing what they did not believe when they heard.” Grotius *de Verit. b. i. sect. 16. Notes.*

Josephus, *b. v. chap. 2.* of his ancient history: “There remains to this day some of the race of the giants, who by reason of the bulk and figure of their bodies, so different from other men, are wonderful to see or hear of. Their bones are now shown far exceeding the belief of the vulgar.” Gabinius, in his history of Mauritania, said that Antæus’s bones were found by Sertorius, which, joined together, were sixty cubits long. Phlegon Trallianus, in his 9th chap. of *Wonders*, mentions the digging up the head of Ida, which was three times as big as that of an ordinary woman. And he adds also that there were many bodies found in Dalmatia, whose arms exceeded sixteen cubits. And the same man relates out of Theopompus, that there were found in the Cimmerian Bosphorus a company of human bones twenty-four cubits in length. Le Clerc’s *Notes on Grotius de Veritat. b. i. sect. 16.*

We almost every where in the Greek and Latin historians meet with the savage life of the giants mentioned by Moses. In the Greek, as Homer, *Iliad 9th*, and Hesiod, in his *Works*

and Days. To this may be referred the Wars of the Gods mentioned by Plato in his Second Republic, and those distinct and separate governments taken notice of by the same Plato, in his third book of Laws. And as to the Latin historians, see the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the fourth book of Lucan, and Seneca's third book of *Natural Questions*, Quest. 30. where he says concerning the Deluge, "that the beasts also perished, into whose nature men were degenerated." Grotius de Verit. b. i. sect. 16.

[199] [Gen. vi. 14](#). "Make thee an ark of gopher wood." The word in the Hebrew language seems to imply that the wood was of a bituminous or pitchy nature, and consequently more capable of resisting wet or moisture, and St. Chrysostom particularly calls it Greek or Hebrew, *square wood not liable to rot*. The learned Fuller rightly concludes it to be the cypress, from the affinity of the word for cypress in Greek, which is Greek or Hebrew; from whence, if the termination is taken away, *Cuphar*, or *Gopher*, consists of such letters as are often changed into each other; neither is there any wood less subject to rottenness and worms than this is, as all writers do allow. Pliny saith that the cypress-wood is not sensible of rottenness or age, that it will never split nor cleave asunder except by force, and that no worm will touch it, because it hath a peculiar bitter taste; and therefore Plato advised that all records that are to be preserved for the benefit of future generations, should be written upon tables of cypress. Martial says that it will last for a hundred ages and never decay. Thucydides saith that the chests were made of cypress in which the Athenians carried away the bones of those who died in war for their country, and the Scholiast gives this reason for it, because it would never decay; and the Pythagoreans abstained from making coffins of cypress, because they certainly concluded that the sceptre of Jupiter was made of this tree, and no reason can be assigned for such a fiction among the poets, but because it was the fittest resemblance of that eternal power and authority which they attribute to him. Theophrastus, speaking of those trees which are least subject to decay, adds this as a conclusion, that the cypress-tree seems to be the most durable of all, and that the folding-doors of the temple of Ephesus being made thereof, had lasted without damage for four generations. In this Pliny is more particular, and saith that those doors were made of cypress, and they had lasted till his time, which he saith was near four hundred years, and still looked as if they were new. And Vitruvius speaks both of the cypress and of the pine-tree, that they kept for a long time without the least defect, because the sap, which is in every part of the wood, hath a peculiar bitter taste, as is so very offensive that no worm or other consuming animal will touch it. He also tells us that such works as are made of such wood will last for ever. And therefore he advises that the beams of all churches should especially be made of cypress-wood, because such as were made of fir were soon consumed by the worm and rottenness; and as it was such a lasting wood, so it was also very fit for the building of ships. Peter Martyr, as cited by the learned Fuller, saith that the inhabitants of Crete had their cypress-trees so common, that they made the beams of their houses, their rafters, their rooms, and floors, and also their



ships, of this wood. Plutarch saith that the ship-carpenter in the first place useth the pine from Isthmos, and the cypress from Crete; and Vegetius adds, that the galleys are built chiefly of the cypress, and of the pine-trees, or of the larch and fir; and in the epistle of Theodoricus to Abundantius, the prefect, in which he gives him a commission to build a thousand barks for fetching provisions, or bread-corn; he commands him to inquire throughout all Italy, for proper artists, for wood for such work; and wherever he should find the cypress or pine-trees near the shore, that he should buy them at a reasonable price. Neither was it thus only in Crete and Italy, but Diodorus proves that in Phœnicia there was timber sufficient to build ships, because Libanus, near Tripoli, and Biblus, and Sidon were full of cedar-trees, and larch-trees, and cypress-trees, which were very admirable for show and greatness; and Plato, among the trees that were fit for ship-carpenters to use, places the cypress next to the pine and the larch-trees. And even in latter years, we are told that the Saracens did hasten from Alexandria to Phœnicia to cut down the cypress-wood, and fit it for the use of the ships. And as the cypress-tree was very fit for this use, so it grew in great plenty in Assyria and Babylonia, and therefore Arrian and Strabo speak particularly of it, and that the numerous fleet which Alexander the Great built in those parts, was made of the cypress which he cut down, and which grew in Babylonia. For there was, as they say, a great plenty of these trees in Assyria, and that they had no other wood in the country which was fit for such a purpose.

Bedford's Scripture Chronology, p. 111, 112. notes that the reason why they needed a sort of wood not subject to decay or rottenness, was chiefly because the ark was so long in building. Had it not been a kind of wood of extraordinary durability, it would have decayed and spoiled in much less than 120 years, being exposed to the weather.

[259] The country where Noah built the ark, was probably in Babylonia, or the region thereabout, which abounds with cypress or gopher-trees. The Gordyeen mountains in Armenia seem to be at a proportional distance, and since they are allowed to be the highest in the world, there is no reason for receding from the commonly received opinion, viz. that those were the hills whereon the ark stopped. Here it is that the generality of geographers place the ark. Here it is that almost all travellers have found the report of it. And lastly, here it is that the inhabitants of the country show some relics of it, and call places after its name to this very day. Complete Body of Divin. p. 324.

“In Armenia est altior mons quam sit in toto orbe terrarum, qui *Arath* vulgariter nuncupatur; et in cacumine montis illius arca Noe post diluvium primo sedit; et licet propter abundantiam nivium, quæ semper in illo monte reperiuntur, nemo valet illum ascendere; semper tamen apparet in ejus cacumine quoddam nigrum, quod ab hominibus dicitur esse Arca.” Hist. Orient. c. 9.

The mount Gordion, called by the Turks *Ardagh*, is the highest in the world; the Jews, the Armenians, and the Mussulmans, affirm that the ark of Noah stopped at this mountain

after the deluge. *La Boulaye's Voyages*. They tell us likewise that the city Nahsivan, which is about three leagues from the mountain Ararat, is the oldest in the world; that Noah dwelt therein when he came out of the ark; that the word *Nahsivan* is derived from *Nah*, which signifies *a ship*, and *sivan*, which signifies *to stop* or *stay*; and that this name was given to it because the ark stopped at this same mountain. Tavernier's Travels, tom. iv.

[297] [Gen. vii. 1-7](#). The company in *Noah's Ark* was upon many accounts a type of the church of Christ. The ark did literally contain in it the church of God, for all flesh had corrupted their way before God, and true religion and piety seemed to be confined to Noah and his family. The ark was made for the salvation of the church, and for the saving the church from the destruction which the world was to undergo, and to which it was doomed, and of which all the rest of mankind were to be the subjects in an overflowing deluge of God's wrath. So Christ, God-man, mediator, was made for the salvation of his church, to save it from that destruction and woe that is denounced against this wicked world, and that deluge of wrath that will overwhelm all others. The way in which persons were saved by the ark, was by taking warning from Noah the preacher of righteousness to fly from the wrath to come, and hearkening to the call, and flying for refuge to the ark, and getting into the ark. So the way by which we are saved by Christ, is by flying from the deluge of God's wrath, and taking refuge in Christ, and being in him.

The ark was a refuge from storm, and from wind, the rain that poured down out of heaven in a very dreadful manner, it did not hurt those that were in the ark; so Christ is a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest. [Isa. xxxii. 1](#). He is a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from wind. [Isa. iv. 6](#). "He is to his church a refuge from the storm, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." [Isa. xxv. 4](#). "He that is built in Christ, when the wind blows, the rain descends, and the floods come and beat upon his house, it will not fall."

The company in the ark was safe in the greatest catastrophe, when the world was as it were dissolved. So they that have Christ for their refuge and strength, need not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, (as they in fact were in the flood, they were in the midst of the sea, the sea surrounded them and overwhelmed them,) though the waters thereof roar and are troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, [Psal. xlvi. 1, 2, 3](#). Though the waters were so exceeding great and overwhelming, yet those that were in the ark did not sink in them. Though the waters overtopped the highest mountains, yet they could not overwhelm them; though the ark when it stood on the ground was a low thing, in comparison of other things that the waters overwhelmed, yet the waters could not get above them, but let the waters rise never so high, yet the ark kept above them, which evidently represents the safety of the church in Christ in the greatest danger, so that "when thou passest through the waters, I

will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” [Isa. xliii. 2](#). Concerning those that belong to the church of Christ, it is promised in [Psal. xxxii. 6](#). “For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.” And though the church often appears as a low thing, as though the mighty waters that come against it could immediately overflow it, yet the church is kept above water, let them come in ever so fiercely, and rise never so high. If it was not the Lord that is on their side, oftentimes her enemies would swallow her up quick. This also represents to us how Christ was kept from sinking under his sufferings. It was impossible that Christ should fail in the great work that he undertook; and though his sufferings were so great, though the deluge that came upon him was so very great, the billows of wrath so mighty, enough to overwhelm a whole world, and to overwhelm the highest mountains, to overtop the stoutest and mightiest, yet Christ did not sink and fail, but was kept above water; he kept above all, and in the issue triumphed overall; as his church also in him shall obtain the victory over all her enemies, and shall appear finally above them, let them rise never so high, and deal never so proudly, as the ark kept still above the water, when the waters were mounted up even to heaven. The ship wherein Christ was could not sink. [Matt. viii. 24, 25, 26](#). “And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but he was asleep, and his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith! Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.”

They that went into the ark were saved, when thousands and millions of others were destroyed; so they that dwell in the secret place of the Most High, that make Christ their refuge, and the Most High their habitation, thousands shall fall at their side, and ten thousands at their right hand; only with their eyes shall they behold and see the reward of the wicked, but no evil shall befall them, nor any plague come nigh their dwelling, [Psal. xci](#).

There was but one ark that any could resort to for refuge in the whole world. So there is no other name, but the name of Christ, given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. There was no other refuge but the ark. If they went up to the tops of their houses, or to the tops of the highest mountains, it was in vain, the waters overtopped them; so if men trust in their carnal confidences, in their own strength, their own works, and mount high in a towering conceit of their own righteousness, it is in vain. In vain is salvation looked for from the hills, and the multitude of the mountains, for there is no safety but in the Lord. Other refuges did they then probably look for, more likely to save them than the ark, for they could scarce conceive of such a way of safety by the floating of such a building on the waters, the art of making ships having not been discovered before that time. So men’s own righteousness looks more likely to men to save them, than Christ. They are ready to say of the Lord’s anointed, How shall this man save us?



There were but a few saved, when all the rest of the world was destroyed; so the church of Christ is but a little flock.

The door of the ark was open to receive all sorts of creatures, tigers, wolves, bears, lions, leopards, serpents, vipers, dragons, such as men would not by any means admit into the doors of their houses, but if they came they would soon have beat them out again. So Christ stands ready to receive all, even the vilest and worst: he came to save the chief of sinners. There were all kinds of creatures in the ark; so in the Christian church are gathered together persons of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, persons of all degrees, all kinds of tempers and manners. In the ark the wolf dwelt with the lamb, the leopard lay down with the kid, all were peaceable together in the ark, even those that were the greatest enemies, and were wont to devour one another before, as it is prophesied that it should be in the Christian church, [Isa. xi. 6.](#), &c. [lxv. 25.](#)

All in the ark was subject to Noah, as the church is subject to Christ; all was saved by his righteousness, [Gen. vii. 1.](#) "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark: for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." As the church is saved by Christ's righteousness, there is no rest any where for God's people but and in Christ, as the dove that Noah sent forth found no rest for the sole of her foot but in the ark; when she wandered from the ark, she found no rest till she returned again. The dove therein was a type of a true saint, as the raven was a type of a false professor, who separates from Christ, and returns to him no more.

The ark was taken up from the earth, and after being long tossed to and fro in the waters, when it was not steered by the wisdom of Noah, but was only under the care of Providence, is rested on the top of an exceeding high mountain, as it were in heaven, and was brought into a new world; so the church of Christ in this world is tossed to and fro like a bark on the water, passes through great tribulation, and appears to be overwhelmed. [Isa. liv. 11.](#) "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires." At last, through God's care of it and mercy to it, it rests in heaven. The ark, in the midst of the flood, rested on a mountain strong and high; so the church, when ready to be overwhelmed, rests on a rock higher than she.

[354] [Gen. vii. 8, 9.](#), and [14, 15, 16.](#) *Concerning the resorting of all kinds of birds, and beasts, and creeping things to the ark before the flood.* The particular animals that were gathered together to the ark and saved there, when all the rest of their kind were destroyed, were those that God had pitched on, and in his sovereign pleasure chosen, out of the many thousands and millions that were of their kind, and yet they were of every kind, as it were of every nation of birds and beasts. So that here was a lively image of that gathering together of the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, that there was before the destruction of Jerusalem, and before the terrible judgments of God that came on the

earth at and before Constantine's time, and that will be before the great destruction of God's enemies that will be about the time of the destruction of antichrist, when the harvest of the earth shall be gathered in before the vintage, and the gathering together there will be to Christ before the great, and general, and last destruction of the wicked by the general conflagration, when the world shall be destroyed by a deluge of fire. There are elect of every nation that shall be gathered in before the final destruction of the wicked world, as is often said in Scripture, especially in the book of Revelation. The doves and other birds then flocked to the windows of the ark, representing that flocking of souls to Christ which shall be as doves to their windows. They flocked together, the eagle, the vulture, and other rapacious birds, together with doves and other such birds, without preying upon them; representing times of great ingathering of souls to Christ, wherein the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid, &c.

[346] [Gen. viii. 7, 8.](#), &c. *Concerning the raven and the dove, that Noah sent forth.* The dove is an emblem of a gracious soul, which, finding no rest for its foot, no solid peace or satisfaction in this world, this deluged, defiling world, returns to Christ as to its ark, as to its Noah. The carnal heart, like the raven, takes up with the world, and feeds on the carrion it finds there. But return thou to thy rest, O my soul, to thy *Noah*, so the word is, [Psal. cxvi. 7.](#) "O that I had wings like a dove to flee to him," [Psal. lv. 6.](#) The olive-branch, which was an emblem of peace, was brought, not by a raven, a bird of prey, nor by a gay and proud peacock, but by a mild, patient, humble dove. It is a dove-like disposition that brings in to the soul earnest of rest and joy.

[166] [Gen. viii. 21.](#) "And the Lord smelt a sweet savour, and the Lord said in his heart, I will not," &c. It was not for the acceptableness of that sacrifice that made God promise that he would no more curse the ground, but the acceptableness of the sacrifice of Christ represented by it.

[347] [Gen. ix. 5.](#), &c. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require it whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." We have an account of murders before the flood, but nothing that looks as though murder was wont then to be revenged with death by men, in an established course of public justice. Lamech, when he had been guilty of murder, seems not to have been executed for it by men. And by the story of Cain, it should seem that God took the punishment of murder then into his own hands. In all probability, a little before the flood, when we read that the earth was filled with violence, the earth was filled with murders, and that those giants who then became such mighty men, and men of renown, were guilty of many murders, and that it was in the earth as it was in corrupt times in Israel, and the land was filled with oppression and violence, in other respects their hands were full of blood, [Isa. i. 15.](#) [Jer. ii. 34.](#) "And the land was full of blood," [Ezek. ix. 9.](#) By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they broke out, and blood toucheth blood: the like in many other places. And there being no human laws for



putting murderers to death, therefore God did in a remarkable manner take that work into his own hands in the destruction of those murderers by the waters of the deluge; but now establishes it as a rule henceforward to be observed, that murder shall be revenged in a course of public justice.

Another reason why God now does expressly establish and particularly insist on this rule is, that God had now first given them leave to shed the blood of beasts for food, which had not been granted till now, which liberty they would have been in danger of abusing, to make shedding of blood appear a less terrible thing to them, and so taking encouragement the more lightly to shed men's blood, had not God set up this fence.

[238] [Gen. ix. 12, 13, 14, 15.](#) *Concerning the rainbow that God gave for a token of the covenant to Noah.* The author of *Revelation Examined with Candour*, supposes that the rainbow was never seen before Noah saw it, on occasion of his revealing his covenant to him, and says, "The tradition of antiquity concerning the rainbow, seems strongly to confirm this opinion; for *Iris*, which is the name of the rainbow with the Greeks, is said to be the daughter of *Thaumas*, *i. e.* Wonder, and the messenger of Jupiter, to carry his great oath to the other gods when they had offended. Now this seems to be a fable plainly founded upon the solemn covenant now mentioned, which God made with men after the deluge: the covenant of God on this occasion plainly implies the oath of God, as you may learn from [Isa. liv. 9.](#) where God declaring his resolution of mercy to the Gentiles, useth these words, '*For this is as the waters of Noah unto me, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*'"

[348] [Gen. ix. 12., &c.](#) *Concerning the rainbow, the token of the covenant.* This is on many accounts a token of God's covenant of grace, and his special promise of no more overthrowing the earth with a flood in particular.

It was a most fit token of the covenant of grace of which this particular covenant was a part, and also an image, as appears by [Isa. liv. 8, 9, 10.](#) Tokens of things that appertain to the covenant of God do as fitly confirm this promise, as they did the promise mentioned in the [7th chap. of Isaiah, ver. 14.](#) It is light which is the symbol of God's favour and blessed communications to those that are the objects of his favour, and a symbol of hope, comfort and joy, excellency and glory. It is a very pleasant light, excellently representing that grace and love that is manifested in the covenant of grace, and that sweet comfort and peace, and that excellent grace and glory, that is the fruit of that love.

It is light manifested in all the variety of its beautiful colours, which represent, as has been elsewhere shown, the beauty and sweetness of the divine Spirit of love, and those amiable sweet graces and happy influences that are from that Spirit.

It is a pleasant sweet light in a cloud, which is the symbol of the divine presence, and especially of God manifest in the flesh, or in the human nature of Christ, and therefore fitly represents the pleasant grace and sweet love of God as appearing in Christ God man. The

light of the sun is more beautiful and pleasant to our weak eyes appearing thus in a cloud where the dazzling brightness of it is removed, and its pleasantness retained and illustrated, than when we behold it in the sun directly. So the divine perfections, as appearing in Christ God man, are brought down to our manner of conception, and are represented to the greatest advantage to such weak creatures as we are, and appear not glaring and terrifying, but easy, sweet, and inviting. The light of the rainbow in a cloud, teaches the like mystery with the light of fire in a pillar of cloud in the wilderness, even the union of the divine nature, or God dwelling in flesh.

It is a pleasant light in the bosom of a dissolving cloud, that is wearied with watering, and is spending itself for the sake of men, and in order to shed down its fatness, its nourishing, benign, refreshing influences on the earth, and so fitly represents the beauty, and love, and excellent fulness of Christ, as it is manifested in his dying for men. The drops of rain fitly represent Christ's blood, and also his word, and the blessed communications of his Spirit, which come by his death, and are compared to the rain in the Scripture.

As the cloud fitly represents the human nature of Christ's person, so also it doth Christ mystical, or the human nature of the church. In the rainbow the light of the sun is imparted to, and sweetly reflected from, a cloud, that is but a vapour that continues for a little while, and then vanishes away in an empty, unsubstantial, vanishing thing, driven to and fro with the wind, that is far from having any light or beauty of its own, being in its own nature dark.

The multitude of drops from which the light of the sun is so beautifully reflected, signify the same with the multitude of the drops of dew that reflect the light of the sun in the morning, spoken of, *Ps. cx. 3.* (See notes in the place.) They are all God's jewels, and, as they are all in heaven, each one, by its reflection, is a little star, and so do more fitly represent the saints than the drops of dew. These drops are all from heaven, as the saints are born from above; they are all from the dissolving cloud: so the saints are the children of Christ, they receive their new nature from him, and by his death they are from the womb of the cloud, the church: Jerusalem which is above, is the mother of us all: the saints are born of the church that is in travail with them, enduring great labours, and suffering, and carnal persecutions; so those jewels of God are out of the dissolving cloud. These drops receive and reflect the light of the sun just breaking forth, and shining out of the cloud that had been till now darkened and hid, and covered with thick clouds; so the saints receive grace and comfort from Christ's rising from his state of humiliation, suffering, and death, wherein his glory was veiled, and he that is the brightness of God's glory was as it were extinguished, as was signified in the time of it, by that eclipse of the sun. The light which in the sun, its fountain, is one and unvaried, as it is reflected from the cloud appears with great variety; so the glory of God, that is simple, is reflected from the saints in various graces. The whole rainbow, composed of innumerable shining beautiful drops, all united in one, ranged in such excellent order, some parts higher and others lower, the different colours one above another in such

exact order, beautifully represents the church of saints of different degrees, gifts, and offices, each with its proper place, and each with its peculiar beauty: each drop may be beautiful in itself, but the whole, as united together, much more beautiful. [Numb. xxiv. 5, 6.](#) “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! as the valleys are they spread forth, as the gardens by the river’s side; as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as the cedar-trees beside the waters.” [Ps. xlviii. 2.](#) “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion.” [Ps. 1. 2.](#) “Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.” [Ps. cxxii. 3.](#) “Jerusalem is builded as a city compact together.” Part of this bow is on earth, and part in heaven, so it is with the church. The bow gradually rises higher and higher from the earth towards heaven, so the saints from their first conversion are travelling in the way towards heaven, and gradually climb the hill, till they arrive at the top. So this bow in this respect is a like token of the covenant with Jacob’s ladder, which represented the way to heaven by the covenant of grace, in which the saints go from step to step, and from strength to strength, till they arrive at the heavenly Zion; so in this bow the ascent is gradual towards the top in the way to heaven; the beginning of the ascent is sharpest and most difficult; the higher you ascend the easier the ascent becomes. On earth this bow is divided, the parts of it that are here below are at a distance from one another, but in heaven it is united, and perfectly joined together. So different parts of the church on earth may be divided, separated as to distance of place, have no acquaintance one part with another, and separated in manner of worship and many opinions, and separate in affection, but will be perfectly united in heaven. The parts of the rainbow, the higher you ascend, the nearer and nearer do they come together; so the more eminent saints are in knowledge and holiness, the nearer they are to a union in opinion and affection; but perfect union is not to be expected but in heaven.

This beautiful, pleasant light, appears after the heavens have been covered with blackness, and have poured out rain on the earth, seeming to threaten its destruction by a deluge; so it is a fit symbol of his mercy after his anger, the turning away of his anger, his mercy appearing in the forgiveness of sins. So the glorious gospel follows the law, and Christ’s glory follows his sufferings, and comfort in the hearts of the saints follows sorrows of conscience; yea, this light is light in darkness, it is a beautiful light reflected from the dark cloud, showing God’s love in his anger, his love appearing in his frowns. God’s love never so greatly appeared as in the sufferings of Christ, the greatest manifestation of his anger against sinners, and his love when the shower is over in past threatenings, and convictions, and terrors of conscience, which the saints have been the subjects of.

The rainbow, if completed, would be a perfect circle, the most perfect figure in every part united, fitly representing the most excellent order and perfect union that there shall be in the church of Christ. The rainbow is sometimes in Scripture represented as a circle, [Rev. x. 1.](#) “And a rainbow was upon his head.” The reason why the circle is not now complete,



is because a part of it is as it were under the earth; but if we by standing on a high mountain, or otherwise, see it all raised above the earth, we should see it a complete circle. So the church of Christ is now incomplete, while a part of the elect church is buried under the earth, and a part has never yet received being, but after the general resurrection, when that part of the church that is now under the earth shall be raised above it, then the church of Christ would be in its complete state. If we could view the resurrection church from a high mountain, as the apostle John viewed it, and saw it in the colours of the rainbow, reflected from these precious stones, we should see the circle completed without any part wanting, all disposed in the most perfect union and beautiful order. The order of the drops of the rainbow, supposing them to represent saints, and the sun to represent Christ, is the most apt, commodious, and beautiful, both with respect to the sun and each other. They are in the most apt order with respect to the sun, all opposite to him, and so placed in a fit posture to view the sun, and to receive and reflect his rays, all at an equal distance from the sun, and all in a sense round about him to testify their respect to him, and yet none behind him, but all before his face, and all in the most apt order to behold and reflect light on, and converse together, and assist and rejoice one another. On the whole, here is an image of the most pleasant and perfect harmony, of a great and blessed society, dependent on, blessed in, and showing respect to, the fountain of all light and love.

The sun is as it were in the centre of this beautiful circle of little jewels or stars, as the sun is in the centre of the orbits of the planets, and as the ark, and the mercy-seat, and the seven lamps, were in the midst of the tabernacle of blue, and purple, and scarlet, those colours of the rainbow, and as Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and as the throne of the Lamb is in the midst of the saints of heaven, who are round about that throne, and also a rainbow round about the throne, [Rev. iv. 3, 4.](#) and as the Lamb, who is the light of the new Jerusalem, has that city adorned with the colours of the rainbow round about him.

Each drop contains in itself a beautiful image of the sun reflected after its manner according to that part of the sun's glory which is most conspicuous in it: one contains a red image of the sun, another a yellow one, another a green one, and another a blue one, &c.: so each saint reflects the image of Christ, though each one has his particular gift, and there be some particular grace or spiritual beauty that is most conspicuous in him. The whole bow, when completed into the form of a circle, or all that multitude of shining jewels or stars together united into that excellent form and order, do together constitute one complete image of the sun. Though the image differs from the sun itself in the following things: 1. That whereas the disk of the sun is full within its own circumference, the image is empty, it is a circle not filled, but left empty to be filled with the sun; so Christ has all fulness in himself, but the church is in itself an empty vessel, and Christ is her fulness. 2. Whereas the light is single in the sun, in the bow it is diversified, reflected in a great variety, the distinct

glories of the sun as it were divided, and separately reflected, each beauty by itself, as it is in Christ and his church. 3. Though there be so many that each one reflects a little image of the sun, and the whole bow or circle be of so great extent, and be so beautiful, yet the sun infinitely exceeds the whole in light, the whole reflects but a little of the brightness of the fountain.

A drop of rain fitly represents man. It is a very small thing, of little value and significancy; a drop of the bucket, and light dust of the balance, are mentioned together as small and worthy of no consideration. It is very weak, very mutable, and unstable, exceeding liable to perish, soon falls and is dissipated, and cannot be made up again. The continuance of a drop of rain is but short, it is a thing of a very posting nature, its course is swift, and in a moment it sinks into the earth, and is no more, which fitly represents the frailty and mortality of man, whose days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, who is but a momentary thing, and hastens with a swift course to the grave. Man's dying and sinking into the grave is compared to this very thing, of water's being spilt on the ground, sinking into the earth, and so being irrecoverably gone, [2 Sam. xiv. 14.](#)

The drops of rain reflecting the light of the sun in the rainbow fitly represent the saints, for in them fire and water are mixed together, which fitly represents the contrary principles that are in the saints' flesh and spirit. In those drops are a brighter spark of heavenly fire in the midst of water, and yet it is not quenched, it is kept alive by the influence of the sun, as the heavenly seed and divine spark is kept alive in the saints in the midst of corruption and temptation, that seem often as if they would overwhelm and extinguish it. So God suffers not the smoking flax to be quenched. The drop in itself is wholly water, as the nature of man in itself is wholly corrupt; in the saints, that is, in their flesh, dwells no good thing; they have no light or brightness in them, but only what is immediately from heaven, from the Sun of righteousness. In the drops of the rainbow is represented both the saints descending to the grave by the flesh, and also their ascending to heaven by the spirit of holiness, for the water descends swiftly to be buried in the earth, but by the fire, a beautiful light, in them is represented an ascent as it were up a hill from the earth to heaven.

These drops fitly represent the saints on another account, as Mary's alabaster box of precious ointment represented the heart of a saint; this drop, though itself is weak and frail, yet is clear and pure as alabaster, and contains as it were a spark or show of beautiful heavenly light in it, which represents the same divine grace that Mary's precious ointment did.

[419] [Gen. x. and xi.](#) *The dispersion and first settlement of the nations.* By the descendants of Jophat were the isles of the Gentiles divided, [Gen. x. 5.](#) By the *Isles*, the Hebrews denoted not only such countries as were on all sides encompassed by sea, but also such countries as were so divided by the sea from them as that they could not be well come unto, or at least used not to be gone unto, but by sea; in brief, they called *islands* all *beyond sea-countries*, and all people islanders, which were wont to come by the sea to them and to the Egyptians,

among whom the Jews lived a long time, and so called things by the same names, at least in Moses's time, when the people were lately come out of Egypt. Now such are not only the island of Cyprus, Crete, and other islands of the Mediterranean, but also the country of the Lesser Asia, and the countries of Europe; and indeed those countries, so many of them as were then inhabited and known to the Jews, were not only beyond the sea, but peninsulas mostly encompassed by the sea, as the Lesser Asia, Greece, Italy, and Spain. And that not only Europe, but the countries of the Lesser Asia were called *isles*, seems manifest by [Isa. x 10, 11](#). "The Lord shall recover the remnant of his people from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." Lesser Asia is either here included under the term, *islands of the sea*, or wholly left out; but it is not likely the countries of Asia would be mentioned, so many of them to the south-east and north of Judea, far and near, and the countries of Europe beyond the Lesser Asia, and all countries of the Lesser Asia wholly passed over.

The sons of Japhet were seven, Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim, [Gen. x. 2, 4](#).

To begin with Gomer and his sons, to whom we may assign the greatest part of the northern tract of the Lesser Asia for their first plantations. Josephus tells us expressly that the Galatians who lived in this tract were called Gomerites, and Herodotus tells us that a people called Cimmerii dwelt in those parts; and Pliny speaks of a town in Troas, a part of Phrygia, called Cimmeris. All the northern part of Lesser Asia was anciently called Phrygia by the Greeks, which is a word that in the Greek language signifies torrid or burnt country, as Gomer in Hebrew is from the Radix Gamar, which signifies to consume; and its derivation Gumra, or Gumro, signifies a coal, and it is certain there was a part of this country which was specially called by the Greeks Greek or Hebrew Burnt Phrygia.

Ashkenaz, who of the three sons of Gomer is first named by Moses, was seated in the western part of the nation of Gomer, *i. e.* in the north-west part of the Lesser Asia; as it is hardly to be questioned, there being so plain footsteps of his name to be found in those parts; for in Bythinia there is a bay formerly called the Ascanian bay, together with a river and lake of the same name, and in the lesser Phrygia, or Troas, there was both a city and province anciently known by the name of Ascania, and there was isles lying on the coast called the Ascanian isles; nor is it any way unlikely but that in honour of this Ashkenaz, the king and great men of those parts took the name of Ascanias, of which name, besides Ascanius, the son of Eneas, we find a king mentioned in the second book of Homer's Iliads, which came to the aid of Priamus at the siege of Troy, and from hence probably came that name the Greeks gave to the sea, the Euxine sea. From the family of Ashkenaz, upon the coasts along which lies the entrance into this sea, with some variation of the sound, which length of time might naturally introduce. And the prophet Jeremiah foretelling the taking



of Babylon by Cyrus, has this expression, [chap. li. ver. 27](#). “Call together against her the kingdom of Ararat, and Miseni, and Ashkenaz;” where, by the kingdom of Ashkenaz, may very well be understood the inhabitants of those parts we are speaking of, for Xenophon, as Bochart has well observed, tells us that Cyrus having taken Sardes, sent Hystaspes with an army into Phrygia, that lies on the Hellespont, and that Hystaspes having made himself master of the country, brought along with him from thence a great many of the horse and other soldiers of the Phrygians, whom Cyrus took along with the rest of his army to Babylon.

Riphath, the second son of Gomer, is probably supposed to have seated his family in the parts adjoining eastward to the plantation of his brother Ashkenaz. This opinion is confirmed by the testimony of Josephus, who expressly says that the Paphlagonians, a people inhabiting some portion of this tract, were originally called *Riphateans*, from Riphath. There are also some remainders of his name to be found here among the writings of the ancient Greeks and Latins. For in Apollonius’s *Argonauticks*, there is mention made of the river called *Rhebæus*, which rising in this tract, empties itself into the Euxine sea. The same is called by Dionysius Periegetes and others, *Rhebas*. Stephanus does not only acquaint us with the river, but tells us also of a region of the same name, and whose inhabitants were called *Rhebœi*; and Pliny places here a people called *Riphœi*, and another called *Arimphœi*.

The third and last son of Gomer named by Moses, is *Togarmah*, whose family was seated in the remaining, and consequently in the most easterly, part of the nation of Gomer, and this situation of the family of *Togarmah* is agreeable both to sacred and common writers; for as to sacred Scripture, Ezekiel thus speaks, [chap. xxxviii. ver. 6](#). “Gomer, and all his bands, the house of *Togarmah*, of the north quarters, and all his bands;” and again [chap. xxvii. ver. 14](#). “They of the house of *Togarmah* traded in thy fairs, (*i. e.* the fairs of Tyre,) with horses, and horsemen, and mules.” Now the situation that we assign to *Togarmah* makes it in a manner lie true north from Judea and Cappadocia, by which name a considerable part of the lot of *Togarmah* was in process of time known to the Greeks, was very well stocked with an excellent breed of horses and mules, and that the inhabitants were esteemed good horsemen, as is well attested by several ancient heathen writers, as Solinus, of Cappadocia, Dionysius Periegetes, Claudian, and Strabo; and there are to be found footsteps of the very name of *Togomah* in some of those names, whereby some of the inhabitants of this tract were known to old writers. Thus Strabo tells us that the *Trochmi* dwelt in the confines of Pontus and Cappadocia. And several towns lying on the east of the river Halys, and so in Cappadocia, are assigned to them by Ptolemy. They are by Cicero called *Trogmi*, and *Trachmeni* by Stephanus; and in the council of Chalcedon they are called *Trocmales* or *Trogmales*; there being frequent mention made in that council of *Cyriæus*, bishop of the *Trogmales*.

We next proceed to say something of the colonies which, coming from the nation of Gomer, in process of time spread themselves in several parts of Europe. Herodotus tells us

that a people called *Cimmerii* formerly dwelt in that tract of Lesser Asia, which we assign to Gomer. So he tells us withal that these people put out a colony to Palus Mæotis, on the north of the Euxine sea, and so gave the name of Bosphorus *Cimmerius* to the strait betwixt the Euxine sea and the Mæotick lake, now commonly called the strait of Caffa.

This colony of the *Cimmerii* increasing in process of time, and so spreading themselves still by new colonies further westward, came along the Danube, and settled themselves in the country which from them has been called Germany. For as to the testimony of the ancients, Diodorus Siculus (as Mr. Mede observes) affirms that the Germans had their original from the Cimmerians, and the Jews to this day (as the same learned person remarks) call them Ashkenazim of Ashkenaz. Indeed they themselves retain plain marks enough of their descent both in the name *Cimbri* and also in their common name *Germans*, or as they call themselves, *Germen*, which is but a small variation from *Gemren*, or *Gomren*, and this last is easily contracted from *Gomerin*, that is, Gomereans; for the termination *en* is a plural termination of the German language, and from the singular number, Gomer, is formed *Gemren* by the same analogy that from *brother* is formed *brethren*. The other name *Cimbri*, is easily framed from *Cimmerii*, and by that name the inhabitants of the northwest peninsula of old Germany, now called Jutland, were known not only to the ancient, but latter writers, and from this name of the inhabitants, the said peninsula is called *Cimbrica Chersonesus*, and that frequently by modern authors.

Out of Germany, the descendants of Gomer spread themselves into Gaul, or France. To prove this, Mr. Camden quotes the testimony of Josephus, when he says that those called by the Greeks *Golataæ* were originally called *Gomerites*, which words may be understood either of the Asiatic *Golataæ*, commonly called by us Galatians, or the European *Galataæ*, commonly called by us Gauls. If it be taken in the former sense, then it is a testimony for the first seating of Gomer in the tract of the Lesser Asia we have assigned him, and on this account it is before taken notice by us. Mr. Camden also produces the testimony of other writers to prove the Gauls to be from Gomer, as of Appian, who, in his *Illyricks*, says expressly that the Celts, or Gauls, were otherwise called *Cimbri*. Those barbarians whom Marius defeated, Cicero plainly terms Gauls, and all historians agree that these were the *Cimbri*. And the coat-armour of Beleus, their king, digged up at Aix, in Provence, where Marius routed them, does evince the same, for the words *Beleos Cimbro*s were engraven upon it in a strange character. Again: Lucan calls that ruffian that was hired to kill Marius, a *Cimbrian*, whereas Livy and others affirm him to have been a *Gaul*; and by Plutarch the *Cimbri* are called *Gallo-Scythians*.

Hence we conclude that the ancient inhabitants of Britain were descended from Gomer, for it is not to be questioned but that the isle was first peopled from those countries of the European continent which lie next to it, and consequently from Germany or Gaul. The name by which the offspring of those ancient Britons, the Welch, call themselves to this





very day, is *Kumro*, or *Cimro*, and *Kumri*, and in like manner they call a Welch woman *Kumraes*, and their language, *Humeraeg*; and since the *Saxons* and *Angles* were Germans, who, as was before observed, were descendants of Gomer, and were near neighbours to the people that were more especially called *Cimbri*, hence it follows that our ancestors, who succeeded the old Britons, were also descended from Gomer.

But now to proceed to the other sons of Japhet, as the nation of Gomer first seated itself in the northern tract of the Lesser Asia, so the nation of *Javan* seated itself in the southern tract of the same. And this appears not only from the name of a country in this tract called Ionia, but also from the situation of the four families of Javan's sons within this tract, which are mentioned in this order by Moses, Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim, [Gen. x. 4.](#)

*Tarshish* seated himself on the eastern part of this tract, as is probable, on several considerations. For *Tarsus* is a chief town of Cilicia, and Josephus expressly affirms that Cilicia, and the country round it, was originally known by the name of *Tarshish*. It is scarcely to be doubted, but this was the *Tarshish* to which the prophet Jonas thought to flee from the presence of the Lord, as also that this principally was the *Tarshish* mentioned so often by the prophets, on account of its trading with Tyre.

To the west of Tarshish, adjoining the portion appertaining to *Kittim*, or *Cittim*, which word having a plural termination, does, in all probability, imply the descendants of *Keth*, or the *Ketians*. Ptolemy tells us of a country here called *Cetis*, and Homer in *Odys. 4.* mentions a people called *Cetii*, who were thought to take their name from a river, *Cetius*, in the same quarter. But it is remarkable that this is agreeable to the name mentioned by Homer. Josephus will have the isle of Cyprus to have been the seat of the *Cittim*, because therein was a town called *Citium*, of good note, but it is not to be questioned, but the continent was peopled before the island, and consequently that the *Cittim* first seated themselves on the continent, from which they might, probably enough, send in process of time some colony over into the neighbouring island of Cyprus.

The two remaining families of Javan, *viz. Elishah* and *Dodanim*, seated themselves on the western coast of the southern tract of the Lesser Asia. Here upwards, or northwards, were anciently situated the *Æoles*, who as they carry some marks of their pedigree in their name, so are expressly affirmed by Josephus to have been descended from Elishah, and from him to have taken their name. And since the country, peculiarly called in after-ages, *Ionia*, joined to the south, of what was in said ages peculiarly called *Æolia*, it is probable that the said *Ionia*, (so peculiarly called perhaps, from *Javan's* living therewith his son Elishah,) was possessed originally by the sons of Elishah, or else partly by them and partly by the *Dodanim* of whom next.

On the same western coast, south of the family of Elishah, may the family of *Dodanim* be supposed to have first planted itself, for there we find in ancient writers a country called *Doris*, which may not improbably be derived from *Dodanim*, especially if this be plural, as

the termination seems to import, and so the singular was *Dodan*; which being softened into *Doran*, the Greeks might easily frame from thence *Dorus*, whom they assert to be the father of the Dorians. Certain it is from the Greek writers themselves, that the Dorés or Dorians were a considerable body of the Greeks, insomuch that *Dorico Castra* is taken by Virgil to denote the whole Grecian camp, wherefore it is very probable that they had their extraction from one of the sons of Javan, the father of the Greek nation, and distinguished themselves from the other families of Javan, by assuming to themselves the name of the father of their family, as the others did, and consequently called themselves *Dodanim*, which the Greeks in time moulded into *Dorés*. The Greeks say of Dorus, the father of the Dorians, that he was the son of Neptune, who evidently was the same with Japhet; (see No. 405.) and though *Dodanim* was the grandson of Japhet, yet according to the usual way of speaking among the Hebrews, he was called the son of Japhet. The change of *Dodan* into *Dorus* is the more likely, by reason of the great likeness there is between the Hebrew D and R. Hence, (*viz.* from *Doris*.) some might pass over to the isle of Rhodes, which might take its name from those *Dodanim*, which by reason of the likeness of letters is sometimes writ *Rodanim*, which seems to have been the opinion of the Seventy Interpreters, by their rendering the Hebrew word *Dodanim* by Greek or Hebrew, *Rhodii*.

I proceed now to speak of the colonies of the posterity of Javan, that in process of time were made from their first settlements, and I shall begin with the two last mentioned, *Elishah* and *Dodanim*; for those lying on the western coast of the Lesser Asia, as they increased, peopled by degrees the many isles that lie on the adjoining sea, and so at length spread themselves into the European continent. The family of *Elishah* seems to have possessed themselves of most, or at least the most considerable isles lying in the sea between Europe and Asia, forasmuch as they are called by the prophet [Ezekiel xxvii. 7.](#) *the isles of Elishah*. What the prophet there says of the blue and the purple from the isles of *Elishah*, is very applicable to the isles of this sea, forasmuch as they did abound in this commodity, and are on that account celebrated by common authors, and some of them took their names from it. And the sea itself on which these isles were, seems originally to have been called *the Sea of Elishah*; which name, though it wore away in process of time in other parts, yet seems to have been all along preserved in that part, which to this day is frequently called the Hellespont, as if one should say *Elisæ Pontos*, *the Sea of Elishah*. And this derivation of the word Hellespont will appear yet more likely, when we consider that the descendants of *Elishah*, passing over into Europe, came afterwards to be termed *Hellenes*, and their country *Hellas*, a name which in process of time became common to all Greece; in which there were other footsteps of *Elishah*'s name to be found formerly, as in the city and province of *Elis*, in the Peloponnesus, in the city of *Eleusis*, in Attica; and in the river *Elissus*, and *Ilissus*, in the same province. Some think the *Campi Elisii*, so much celebrated among the Greeks, to have been so called from *Elishah*.

As to *Dodenim*, or the *Dorians*, the Spartans, or the Lacedemonians, looked on themselves to be of Dorick extraction, and there were formerly remainders of the name to be found in those parts of Greece. In the province of *Messena*, in the Peloponnesus, there was a town called *Dorion*, and of the other tract of Greece, lying above the isthmus of the Peloponnesus, there was a considerable part called *Doria*, *Dorica*, or *Doris*; to say nothing of *Dodona*: and all the Greek nation is sometimes called *Dores*, as was before observed, out of Virgil.

As to Kittim, or the Cittim, they probably sent their first colony to the neighbouring isle of Cyprus, which seems to be called the land of *Chittim*, *Isa. xxiii. 1-12*. But in process of time wanting more room, and therefore seeking out further, and finding the lower parts of Greece already inhabited by the descendants of Elishah and Dodanim, they still proceeded on, coasting along the western shores of Greece, until they came to the upper and northern parts of it, which not being yet inhabited, some of them planted themselves there, while some others of them descrying the coast of Italy, went and settled themselves in that country. Hence it comes to pass, in probability, that both Macedonia in Greece, and also Italy, are denoted in Scripture by the names of *Cittim*, or *Kittim*. The author of the book of Maccabees plainly denotes Macedonia by the land of *Chetiim*, when he says that Alexander, the son of Philip the Macedonian, came out of the land of *Chetiim*, *1 Mac. i. 1.*; so also *chap. viii. 5.* the said author calls Perseus king of Macedonia, king of the *Citims*. The more ancient name of this country was *Macetia*, and the Macedonians themselves are otherwise termed *Maceta*.

The place of Scripture where *Chittim*, by the consent of almost all expositors, denotes the Romans, is *Dan. xi. 29, 30.* for by the ships of *Chittim*, there mentioned, is understood the Roman fleet; by the coming whereof, Antiochus was obliged to desist from his designs against Egypt. There are also several footsteps of the name Chittim, or Cheth, to be found in Italy, among eminent writers; as a city of Latium, called *Cetia*, mentioned by Dionysius Helicarnasseus: another city among the Volsci, called *Echetia*, mentioned by Stephanus; also a river near Eumæ, called *Cetus*. Nay, there are not wanting authors who expressly assert the Romans and Latins to have had their extraction from the Citii, or Cetii, as Eusebius, Cadrenus, Suidas; whose testimonies are produced by Bochart; and this learned person observes further, that the word *Chetim* does, in the Arabic tongue, denote a *thing hid*, so that the name Latins might be originally only a translation of the old eastern name Chetim.

There remains now only the colonies of *Tarshish* to be spoken of, and wheresoever else they seated themselves it is highly probable that *Tartessus*, a city and adjoining country in Spain, and much celebrated by the ancients for its wealth, was a colony of Tarshish. Bochart has observed that Polybius, reciting the words of a league between the Romans and Carthaginians, mentions a place under the name of Tarscium; and Stephanus expressly says, that *Tarscium* was a city near Hercules's Pillars: the situation whereof agrees well enough with that of *Tartessus*. Again, what is said by Ezekiel, *chap. xxvii. ver. 12.* agrees very well with this Tarshish; for the words of the prophet run thus, "Tarshish was thy merchant by



reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs;” *i. e.* in the fairs of Tyre. Now, as has been before observed, Tartessus was celebrated among the ancients for its multitude of riches, and the metals mentioned by the prophet were such as Spain did formerly abound with. Some also are of opinion that the Etrusci of Italy, otherwise called *Turrheni* and *Tusei*, were a colony of Tarshish. The word *Etrusci*, without the initial E, (which was frequently added to derivatives,) contains the radicals of Tarshish.

The descendants of Tarshish were the most expert seamen, and consequently the chief merchants of the early ages of the world. Hence the whole Mediterranean sea seems to have been at length comprehended under the name of the sea of Tarshish. And because the descendants of Tarshish were wont to make longer voyages, and to adventure further into the open sea, than others did in those days, it is not unlikely that they had ships built for this purpose, and so of somewhat different make both as to size and shape from the vessels commonly used by others: and hence it is probable that all vessels built for longer voyages and greater burdens came to be called *ships of Tarshish*, because they were built like the ships of *Tarshish* properly so called.

Having observed these things concerning the settlements and colonies of the four families of Javan, I would here add something with respect to Javan himself, the father of this whole nation; and I would observe that it is probable that the colonies that passed over in process of time into Europe, though they were distinguished in reference to their distinct families by their distinct names, yet were all at first comprehended under the name of Jonians. Indeed the Scholiast in Aristophanes (as Bochart hath observed) expressly says, that all the Greeks were by the Barbarians called *Iaones*, *i. e.* Ionians. Hence the Ionian sea came to be extended anciently to the western coast of Greece, and that northwards up as far as the western coast of Macedonia. Now it is plain that the name Ionians was derived from the founder of this nation, Javan. For the Hebrew word, setting aside the vowels which are of disputable authority, may be read *Ion*, or *Jaon*. But supposing the word to be all along pronounced with the same vowels it has in the Hebrew text at present, it is granted by the learned in the same language, that the true pronunciation of the Hebrew vowel, *Kamets*, carries in it a mixture of our vowel *o* as well as *a*, so that the Hebrew Greek or Hebrew is very regularly turned into the Greek Greek or Hebrew, whence by contraction may be made Greek or Hebrew. Since therefore not only the forementioned Scholiast, but also Homer, styles those who were commonly called *Iones*, by the name of *Jaones*, it is not to be doubted but the Ionians were so called from Javan the founder of their nation. Agreeably to what has been said, we find the country of Greece denoted in the book of Daniel from time to time, the country of Javan, [Dan. viii. 21.](#) [Dan. x. 20.](#) [Dan. xi. 2.](#); and also in [Joel iii. 6.](#) And though the Athenians affirm that the Asiatic Ionians were a colony of theirs, yet Hecateus in Strabo affirms, that the Athenians, or Ionians of Europe, came from those of Asia.

Having spoken somewhat largely of the posterity of Gomer and Javan, because Europe appears to be chiefly peopled by them, we now proceed to take notice of the other sons of Japhet, among whom I shall speak next of *Tubal* and *Meshech*, which are so mentioned together from time to time in Scripture, that it is evident that their settlements were adjoining one to the other.

*Meshech* joined on to the nation of Gomer eastward, and so settling at first in part of Cappadocia and Armenia, what according to the present vowels in the Hebrew is Meshech, was by the Seventy Interpreters, and others, read Mosoch, and hence it is very probable that they are the same called by the Greeks Greek or Hebrew, *Mosci*, who were seated in those parts, and from whom no question but the neighbouring ridge of hills took the name of *Montes Moschici*, mentioned by the old geographers.

To the north of Meshech adjoined the first plantation of Tubal, who, by Josephus, is expressly affirmed to be the father of the Asiatic Iberians. The same historian asserting that when the Greeks called Iberi were originally called *Theobeli* from *Tubal*, adds hereunto that Ptolemy places in those parts a city called *Thabilica*. Mr. Bochart supposes the *Tibareni*, a people mentioned by old authors in this tract, to have been so called, from Tubal, by the change of L into R, which is very frequent. But that Meshech and Tubal seated themselves in those parts is in a manner put beyond dispute, by what is said of those two nations in [Ezek. xxvii. 13](#). "*Tubal* and *Meshech* were thy merchants; they traded in slaves and vessels of brass in thy market." For it is evident from the testimonies of heathen writers that the Pontic region, especially Cappadocia, was remarkable formerly for slaves, as also that in the country of the *Tibareni*, and Iberia, there was the best sort of brass. Mr. Bochart observes that the Hebrew word translated in this place *brass*, is sometimes rendered *steel*; and hence he remarks that as a piece of iron or brass is in the Arabic tongue called *Tubal*, probably from its coming out of the country of *Tubal*, so it is likely that from the excellent steel that was made in their country, some of the inhabitants thereof were denominated by the name of *Chalybes* among the Greeks: the word *Chalybs*, in the Greek language, signifying steel.

That the *Muscovites*, or *Moscoviles*, in Europe, were a colony originally of *Meshech*, or *Mosoch*, called by the Greeks, *Moschi*, is very probable.

Magog is, by the testimony of Josephus, Eustathius, St. Jerome, Theodoret, and, (as Mr. Mede expresses it,) by the consent of all men, placed north of Tubal, and esteemed the father of the Scythians that dwell in the east, and north-east, of the Euxine sea. This situation is confirmed by Scripture itself, [Ezek. xxxviii. 2](#). "Set thy face against *Gog*, in, or of, the land of *Magog*, the chief prince of *Meshech* and *Tubal*." Bochart conjectures that the mountain called by the Greeks *Caucasus*, took its name from *Gog*. But the name of *Gog* was entirely preserved in the name *Gogarene*, whereby was formerly denoted a country in those parts,

as we learn both from Strabo and Stephanus. And from hence perhaps in time was fashioned the name *Georgia*, *Gurgistan*, whereby at this very day is denoted a considerable tract in this quarter. That Gog denotes the *Scythians* in the prophecy of Ezekiel, may be rationally inferred from [Ezek. xxxix. 3.](#) where God speaks of Gog thus, "I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand." Now it is too well known to the learned to need proof, that the Scythians were remarkably famous of old for their skill in the use of the bow and arrow, insomuch that some among them for their winking with one eye when they shot, are said to have given them the name of *arimaspi*, *one-eyed*. Nay, it is thought by some, and not without ground, that the very name of Scythians was derived from shooting, forasmuch as in the German tongue shooters are called *Scutten*.

To say something of the colonies of *Magog*. In the panegyric of Tibullus to Messala, we find mention made by the poet of a people about the river Tanais, called *Magini*, which probably came from *Magog*. Yea, it is not improbable that the Mæotick lake into which the Tanais runs, took its name from the descendants of Magog; for *Magogitis*, or *Magotis*, the Greeks might naturally after their manner soften into *Maiotis*, which the Latins and we render *Mæotis*. We read in Pliny, that the city in Syria, called *Hierapolis*, was by the Syrians called *Magog*, which name it is thought most likely to have taken from the Scythians, when they made an excursion into Syria, and took this city. On the like account it is that the city in Judea, called *Bethsan*, was also called in after-ages, *Scythopolis*. Now Hierapolis being thus called Magog, it is not improbable but the adjoining part of Syria might be from thence called *Magagene*; which afterwards might be moulded into *Gomagene*, and so into *Comagene*; by which the northern part of Syria was denoted among the Greeks and Latins.

The next son of Japhet is *Madai*, who is almost universally looked upon to be the father of the *Medes*, who are all along denoted by the name of *Madai* in the Hebrew text. Bochart thinks the *Samaritans* a colony from those; he conjectures that the name of the Samaritans was originally *Sear-Madai*, which in the original language denotes *the remnant*, or *posterity*, of the *Medes*. See objections against this and another region allotted to Madai, in Pool's Synops. vol. i. col. 117, 118.

*Tiras*, or *Thiras*, the last son of Japhet, is by universal agreement esteemed the father of the Thracians. The name whereby the country of Thrace is called in oriental writers, plainly shows that the Greek name Thrace was originally derived from Thiras, the founder of the nation. Ancient writers also tell us, that here was a river, a bay, and a haven, each called by the name of *Atheyras*, and they mention a city in the peninsula of Thrace called Tyristasis, and a tract in this country called *Thrasus*, and a people called *Trausi*. We learn also from them that one of the names of Mars, the god of the Thracians, was Greek or Hebrew. Hence Homer calls Mars by an epithet Greek or Hebrew, *Mars Thurus*. We read also in old authors of *Tereus*, the son of Mars, and first king of the Thracians, and of one *Teres* king of *Odryssæ*, a people in Thrace: and the *Odryssæ* themselves are said to take their name from one *Odryssus*,

a great person among them, insomuch that in after-ages he was worshipped by the Thracians as a god. As for the colonies of Tiras, it is hardly to be doubted but some of them planted themselves in the country over against Thrace, on the north side of the Euxine sea. For there is a considerable river in those parts, called in both Greek and Latin writers *Tiras*. The very same as the name of the father of the Thracian nation, which river is now called the *Niester*. There was also a city of the name of *Tiras*, standing on this river. The inhabitants of these parts were also formerly known by the name of *Turitæ*, or *Tyragetæ*. Though probably the *Tyritæ* might denote the true descendants of Tyras; and the *Tyragetæ* might denote a mixed race, that arose out of the *Tyritæ* mixing with the *Getæ*, a bordering people, descendants of the *Cetim*, who settled in Macedonia.

It is not unlikely that *Tyras* might first sit down with his family in the Lesser Asia, in the country of *Troy*, which had nothing to part it from Thrace but the narrow strait of the Hellespont, and the ancient king named *Tros*, whence the country is denominated, was probably no other than *Tyras*. It is the common opinion and tradition among Greek writers, that the inhabitants on the east side of the Hellespont and Propontis, were originally or anciently Thracians.

We proceed next to the first plantations of the sons of Shem. There are five sons of Shem mentioned by Moses, *viz.* Elam, and Ashur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

I shall begin with the settlement of *Aram*, as being the first nation of the branch of Shem, adjoining to the nations of the branch of Japhet, already spoken of. For the portion that fell to the nation of Aram, lay in the countries called by the Greeks Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Syria. It is probable that *Armenia* took its present name from *Aram*. *Mesopotamia*, as it was so called by the Greeks, from its situation between the rivers Euphrates and Tygris, so it was called by the Hebrews *Aram Naharaim*, *i. e.* *Aram of, or between, the two rivers*. And whereas one part of this country, *viz.* that lying next to Armenia, was very fruitful, and the other to the south very barren, and so of the like sort with Arabia Deserta, to which it adjoined, hence the former is in Scripture distinguished by the name of *Padan-aram*, which is equivalent to, *Fruitful Aram*.

Aram's sons are four, *viz.* Uz and Hul, Gether and Mash. As for *Uz*, he is by a great agreement of the ancients said to be the builder of the city of Damascus, and his posterity are supposed to have settled the country about it. Here see Pool's Synopsis on [Gen. x. 23](#).

The family of Hul, or as it is in the original, Chul, may, with great probability be placed in Armenia, particularly the Greater Armenia, for there we find the names of several places beginning with the radicals of Chul, as Cholva, Cholvata, Cholimna, Colsa, Calura; and to mention but one more, Cholobatene, which last seems to have been formed from the oriental Cholbeth, which denotes the same as the house or dwelling of Chol. Now this Cholobatene being the name of a province in Armenia, from this especially we may gather with good probability that Chul with his family seated himself in those parts.

Between Hul to the north, and Uz to the south, their brother Mash seated himself, viz. about the mountain Masius. From this mountain issues out a river of Mesopotamia, called by Xenophon *Masca*, which probably comes from the name of this son of Aram, who otherwise is called in Scripture *Meshech*, the radicals whereof are plainly contained in the name *Masca*. The inhabitants of the tract adjoining to the M. Masius, are by Stephanus called *Masieni*, or *Masiani*.

*Gether* probably seated himself east of his brother Hul, on the eastern borders of *Armenia*; where some in Ptolemy observe a city called formerly *Getaræ*, and a river of the same country called *Getras*.

We now pass on to the nation of *Ashur*, which is eastward of the nation of Aram, in the country called *Ashur* in the eastern tongues, which is *Assyria*, properly and originally so called, living east of the Tigris, and wherein stood the city of Nineveh, which was afterwards called Acetabene, and also was sometimes by a change of S into T formerly called *Attyria*. The most ancient king of Assyria was said to be the son of *Zames*, i. e. *Shem*, and is styled in Suidas, and some others, *Thuras*, corruptly for *Atthuras*, i. e. *Ashur*; for *Ashur* in the Chaldee tongue is *Atthur*, or *Atther*. This *Thuras*, the son of *Zames*, was worshipped by the Assyrians as their Mars, or god of war.

That *Elam* seated himself in the southern tract beyond the river Euphrates, is beyond dispute, not only from the authority of the Scriptures, wherein the inhabitants of the said tract are plainly and frequently denoted by the name of *Elam*, but also from heathen writers, wherein we read of a country here called *Elymais*, and a city of the same name.

To the lot of *Arphaxad* is assigned by learned men the more southern part of *Mesopotamia*, where the plain or vale of Shinar lay, on the river Tigris, together with the country of Eden, and the tract on the east side of the same river, called *Arapachitis*, a name plainly derived from *Arpachshad*, which is the name of *Arphaxad* in the Hebrew text. That the vale of Shinar, with the country of Eden, was part of the first plantation of *Arphaxad*, is supposed on these probabilities: 1. That Noah, after the flood, returned and settled himself again in these parts, as well knowing the goodness of the soil and pleasantness of the country, which is confirmed by a town here called *Zama* from them. 2. That upon the dispersion of mankind and confusion of tongues, as the primitive Hebrew tongue was preserved in the family of *Arphaxad*, so agreeably hereunto this family still continued in the same parts where they then were, together with their grandsires, Noah and Shem. 3. This opinion may be confirmed from [Gen. x. 30](#). "And their dwelling was from *Mesha*, as you go unto *Sephar*, a mount of the east;" for the *Mesha* here mentioned is probably esteemed to be the same mountain as is before mentioned under the name of *Mash*, or *Mesius*, in the western parts of Mesopotamia; so that if the forecited text is to be understood of the descendants of Arphaxad, (as is thought by several learned men, and also by the historian Josephus,) it will import thus much, that the southern part of Mesopotamia, lying on the east of the mount *Mesha*, or *Mesius*, was



first peopled by the descendants of *Arphaxad*; (and accordingly we here find *Phalga*, a town probably named from *Peleg*, or *Phaleg*, settling there;) and so on eastward as far as to *Sephar*, a mount in the east. Now this mount *Sephar* is probably thought to be the mountain adjoining to *Siphare*, a city in *Aria*, and which lies directly east from *Mesha*; and though this be a long tract of ground, yet it will be but proportional to the numerous descendants of Arphaxad, especially by *Joktan*, of whom more by and by. 4. It is the tradition of the ancients, Eustathius, Antiochenus, and Eusebius, that *Salah*, the son of Arphaxad, seated himself in *Susiana*; and agreeably hereto, we read in old writers of a town called *Sela*. But now *Susiana* did contain part of the country of *Eden*, which adjoined to, or in all probability was part of, the vale of Shinar, largely taken. 5. It is further confirmed that Arphaxad seated himself in the vale of Shinar, because we find that *Terah*, and *Abraham* his son, came out of those parts, [Gen. xi. 31](#). “And *Terah* took *Abram* his son, and went forth with them from *Ur of the Chaldees*, to go into the land of Canaan.” Now it is confessed, I think by all, that *Chaldea* comprehended at least a great part of the vale of Shinar, and it is certain that it comprehended as much of the country of Eden as lay west of the common channel of the Euphrates and Tigris. On this text of Scripture seems to be grounded what Josephus saith of the Chaldeans being called the *Arphaxadeans*.

Having thus seen the first settlements of the descendants of Arphaxad, let us turn our eyes a little upon their after-colonies, particularly those that sprung from *Joktan*, of whom Moses reckons up no fewer than thirteen sons; and as Moses assigns their habitation from *Mesha* to mount *Saphar*, so in this tract learned men have observed the names of several places, which by their likeness to the names of *Joktan*’s sons, seem to tell their respective situations.

There is nothing certain concerning *Lud*, the remaining son of Shem, but that he did not seat himself in the country of Lesser Asia, called Lydia.

Ham was the youngest of the three sons of Noah. He had four sons, Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. We find Egypt twice or thrice in the book of Psalms called the land of Ham, whence it seems probable that Ham went thither himself, and there settled with his son Mizraim. And it is scarce to be doubted but the person denoted by the Greeks under the name of *Jupiter Ammon* (in honour to whom there was a temple erected in the parts of Libya adjoining to Egypt, much celebrated for its oracles) was no other than *Ham*.

It is well known that the nation of *Canaan* settled itself in the country so often called in Scripture *the land of Canaan*. Upon the dispersion of mankind, the country living on the east and south-east of the Mediterranean sea fell to the share of *Canaan*, so that he was seated between the nation of *Aram* to the north and east, and the nation of *Cush*, his brother, to the south and south-east, and *Mizraim*, another of his brothers, to the south-west: his western boundary was the Mediterranean sea. His descendants are thus reckoned up by Moses, [Gen. x. 15, 18](#). “*Canaan* begat *Sidon* his first-born, and *Heth*, and the *Jebusite*,

and the *Amorite*, and the *Girgasite*, and the *Hivite*, and the *Arkite*, and the *Sinite*, and the *Arvadite*, and the *Zemarite*, and the *Hamathite*.”

Of *Sidon* were the inhabitants of the city of *Sidon*, and the country about; which city, as is apparent both from sacred and ancient profane writers, was in the more early ages of the world much more considerable than *Tyre*. *Sidon* is called *Great Sidon*, [Josh. xix. 29.](#); but *Tyre* does not seem to have become considerable until about David's time. Homer never so much as once mentions *Tyre*, but often makes mention of the *Sidonians*, and *Tyre* is expressly called *the daughter of Sidon*, [Isa. v. 12.](#)

The second family of Canaan mentioned by Moses, is that of *Heth*, whose posterity placed themselves *in the southern parts of Canaan, about Hebron*, as appears from Abraham's concern with them there, [Gen. xxiii.](#) We also read that during Isaac's dwelling at Beersheba, Esau took him wives of *the daughters of Heth*, [Gen. xxvi.](#)

The *Jebusites* were seated about Jerusalem, which was originally called *Jebus*, [1 Chron. xi. 4.](#); so that the *Jebusites* joined on to the *Hittites* in the mountains towards the north. As the *Hittites* and *Jebusites*, so also the *Amorites*, dwelt *in the mountainous or hilly part of the land of Canaan*, as appears from. [Josh. xi. 3.](#) And the spies gave this account, [Num. xiii. 29.](#) “And the *Hittites*, and the *Jebusites*, and the *Amorites* dwell in the mountains, and the *Canaanites* dwell by the sea, and the coast of Jordan.” Now as the *Hittites* seem to have possessed the hill country to the west and south-west of Hebron, and the *Jebusites* to the north, so the *Amorites* might settle themselves at first in the hill country to the east and south-east of Hebron. This seems probable, because the mountainous tract lying next to Kadesh-Barnea, is called *the mount of the Amorites*, [Deut. i. 7.](#); and we are told, [Gen. xiv. 7.](#) that Chedorlaomer smote the *Amorites* that dwelt in *Hazezon-tamar*, which was the same place with *Engedi*, [2 Chron. xx. 2.](#) and so was seated in the hilly part of the land of Canaan to the east, or towards Jordan. And their neighbourhood to the country beyond Jordan might be the occasion that the *Moabites* were in process of time dispossessed thereof by the *Amorites*; whence that tract beyond Jordan is called *the land of the Amorites*; and Sihon, the king thereof, is always called *king of the Amorites*.

The *Girgasite* is the next family mentioned by Moses, who probably seated themselves at first *along the upper part of the river of Jordan*. Here, on the eastern side of the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee, we find in our Saviour's time a city called *Gergesa*.

The *Hivite* we find was seated in *the upper or northern parts of Canaan*, and so adjoining to his brother *Sidon*. For we read, [Judg. iii. 3.](#) that “the *Hivites* dwelt in mount Lebanon from mount Baal-Hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.”

In process of time, these families intermixed one with the other; whence we read of some *Hivites*, *Amorites*, and *Hittites* in some other places than those we have assigned them for their first settlements, and also the *Amorites* becoming the most potent nation in process

of time. Hence they are put to denote, frequently, any one or more of the other nations of Canaan.

Many of the posterity of Canaan of different families, either originally or afterwards, (possibly by being dispossessed of their original settlements by the Philistines, or by other means,) appear to have settled confusedly together, and to have become so intermixed that the names of their distinct families were not kept up, but they were called by the general name of *Canaanites*. Hence we read in the forecited passages, [Numb. xiii. 29.](#) the Canaanites dwelt by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

As to the remaining families of Canaan mentioned by Moses, the first of them that occurs is the *Arkite*; which is probably thought to have settled himself about that part of mount Libanus where is placed by Ptolemy and others a city called *Arce*. Not far from this settlement of the *Arkite*, did the *Sinite* likewise settle himself; for in the parts adjoining, St. Jerome tells us, was once a city called *Sin*. As for the *Arvadite*, the little isle of *Ardu*, lying up more north, on the coast of Syria, is supposed to have taken its name from the founder of this family. In the neighbourhood on the continent did the *Zemarite* probably fix, forasmuch as on the coast there we find a town called *Symyra*, not far from *Orthosia*. And Eusebius does expressly deduce the origin of the *Orthosians* from the *Samareans*.

The only remaining family is the *Hamathite*, or the inhabitants of the land *Hamath*, often mentioned in sacred writ, and whose chief city was called *Hamath*. This country lay to the north of all the rest of the posterity of Canaan.

The nation of *Cush* had its first settlement in the country adjoining to his brother Canaan on the south, that is in *Arabia*. That by *Cush* in Scripture, is denoted *Arabia*, and not *Ethiopia* in Africa, is manifest every where in Scripture, particularly from [Num. xxi. 1.](#) compared with [Exod. ii. 15-21.](#) and [Hab. iii. 7.](#) [2 Kings xix. 9.](#) [2 Chron. xiv. 9.](#) and [Ezek. xxix. 10.](#) "I will make the land of Egypt desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the borders of Cush." Now all that have any knowledge of old geography, know that *Syene* was the border of Egypt towards *Ethiopia* in Africa. There *Cush* being the opposite boundary cannot be *Ethiopia* in Africa, but must be *Arabia*.

The sons of *Cush* are *Seba*, *Havilah*, and *Sabtah*, and *Raamah*, and *Sabtecha*; to which Moses subjoins the two sons of *Raamah*, *Sheba* and *Dedan*; and then adds lastly that *Cush* begat *Nimrod*, who began to be a mighty one upon earth, [Gen. x. 7, 8.](#) &c. Now we shall find all these but the last seated in *Arabia*. As for *Seba*, the first son of *Cush*, he probably seated himself in the south-west of *Arabia*, where we find a city called *Sabe*. On the south-east side we find another city called *Sabana*, where we may therefore place *Sheba*, the grandson of *Cush*, by *Raamah*; and the reason why we choose this to be his situation, rather than the other side of the country, is, because it is on the eastern side of *Arabia* that we find his father and his brother situated; and it is likely he seated himself in their neighbourhood. On this account we find him always mentioned with his father and brother, as [Ezek. xxvii.](#)



22. “The merchants of Sheba and Raamah were thy merchants,” and chap. xxxviii. “Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish,” &c. Now these two names, *Sheba* and *Sebah*, being so much alike, the two different families were confounded by the Greeks, and called promiscuously *Sabeans*. Hence Pliny says that the *Sabean nation* inhabited those parts spreading themselves to both seas, *i. e.* from the Red sea to the gulf of Persia. But the sacred writers exactly distinguish them, Ps. lxxii. 10. “The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.”

On the same side of Arabia with Sheba was seated, as has been mentioned, both his father *Raamah* and his brother *Dedan*. For, as to the former, we find on this shore of the Persian gulf a city called *Rhegma* by Ptolemy; which it is not to be doubted was so called from this reason, for the Hebrew name, which in our translation is rendered *Raamah*, is in other translations, particularly the Septuagint, rendered (agreeably enough to the radicals) *Rhegma*. Nor far from Rhegma, mentioned by Ptolemy, we find on the same coast eastward another city called *Dedan*, now-a-days *Dadaen*, from which the neighbouring country also takes its name, as Bochart has observed, from Barboza, an Italian writer in his description of the kingdom of Ormuz.

On the same shore of the Persian gulf, but higher northward, we find in Ptolemy the situation of a city called *Saphtha*, whence it is probable that *Sabta*, the son of Cush, seated himself here.

Higher still to the northward was seated *Havilah*, or *Chavilah*, along the river Pison, on the western channel of the two, into which the common channel of the Tigris and Euphrates again is divided, before the waters thereof empty themselves into the Persian gulf. That *Havilah* was seated here, is confirmed in that Moses tells us it was seated on a branch of that common channel of which Euphrates and Hiddekel were a part: and in this country, where we have placed *Havilah*, there was, agreeably to what Moses says of *Havilah*, plenty of gold, and that good gold; which is agreeable to what ancient authors tell us of *Arabia*. Moses adds, that in *Havilah* was *Belodach*, which some take to signify *pearls*, others the *Bdellium gum*. It is much the most likely, however, that *pearls* are what are intended; for Moses, in describing the manna, says it was like coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of *Belodach*. Now it is evident from another description that the colour of manna was white, Exod. xiv. 31. which is opposite to *pearls*, as also is the roundness of the manna, but in nowise to the *Bdellium gum*. Hence the Talmudists, mentioning this description of manna, instead of saying it is like the colour of *Bdellium gum*, say it is like the colour of pearls; and it is certain that there is no place in the world that produceth so fine pearls, and in so great plenty, as the sea next to the shore of this country, where we place *Havilah*; as is evident from the testimony of Nearchus, one of Alexander’s captains; of Isidorus; of Chorax, who lived a little after; of Pliny, and Ælian, and Origen; of Benjamin, a Navarian; of Tudela, who lived five hundred and fifty years ago; of Texeira, a Portuguese; of Balbyn, Linscot, Vincent, Le Blanc, Tavernier, and Thevenot. And if we understood the *Belodach* of the *Bdellium gum*, this also

abounded in Arabia, and particularly near the Persian gulf, as appears from the testimony of many ancient writers. And as to the *Schoham*, which Moses says was to be found in *Havilah*, which we render *the onyx-stone*, it is doubtless some precious stone that is meant by this; and it is evident from ancient writers, both sacred and profane, that *Arabia* formerly abounded with precious stones. See [Ezek. xxvii. 22, 23](#).

And that this very country was the country of *Havilah*, is manifest from [Gen. xxv. 18](#). where we are told that the Ishmaelites dwelt *from Havilah unto Shur*, that is before Egypt; and from [1 Sam. xv. 7](#). where we are told that Saul smote the Amalekites *from Havilah until thou comest to Shur* that is before Egypt. In both which passages, by this expression, *from Havilah unto Shur*, is probably meant the whole extent of that part of Arabia from east to west; and it is evident that *Shur* was the western boundary of Arabia, from those passages, and also from [Exod. xv. 22](#). where we read that Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of *Shur*; and therefore it seems no less evident that *Havilah* was in the eastern extremity of Arabia, over against it, and consequently where we have placed it. Where we find in common authors a people placed, whose name retains the visible footsteps of the name of their forefathers, *Havilah*, or *Chavilah*, as it is in the original; thus, by Eratosthenes, are placed on these parts the *Chavlothi*; by Tresans, Anienas, the *Chaulosii*; by Dionysius Periegetes, the *Chablasii*; and by Pliny, the *Chaveleai*.

There remains now *Subteca*, who, we must not doubt, placed himself among the rest of his brethren, especially since there is room enough left for him *in the northern part of Arabia*. His descendants might from him regularly enough be styled at first by the Greeks *Sabsaceni*, which name might afterwards be softened into *Saraceni*, by which name it is well known that the people of this tract were formerly denominated; and this is the more probable, because Stephanus mentions a country in those parts called *Saruca*.

The reason why no mention is made in the Scriptures of the *Sabtaceans*, may be this, that those parts of Arabia lying next to the Holy Land, are by the sacred writers denoted by the name of the whole land of *Cush*, or *Arabia*, it being to them as it were *instar totius*; being the only part of the land of *Cush* they were usually concerned with; and they probably learnt it first in Egypt of the Egyptians; who, after their father Mizraim, called the country *the land of Cush*, it being natural to him to call it from the name of his brethren, rather than from one of his children.

Moses having named the other sons and grandsons of Cush, subjoins, [Gen. x. 8](#). “And Cush begat Nimrod.” By this distinct mention of *Nimrod* after the rest of his brethren, the sacred historian is supposed to intimate that Nimrod was indeed the youngest of the sons of Cush, but, however, the most remarkable of them: and accordingly it immediately follows in the text, “He began to be a mighty one upon the earth.”

By what method Nimrod became thus mighty, Moses seems to intimate by these words, “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.” He probably applied himself to hunting, to destroy

the wild beasts that began to grow very numerous, and very much to infest the parts adjoining to the nation of Cush; and by his great art and valour in destroying wild beasts, he inured himself and his companions to undergo fatigue and hardship, and withal to manage dexterously several sorts of offensive weapons. Being thus occasionally trained up to the art of war, and perceiving at length his skill and strength sufficient, he began to act offensively against men.

The country at first assigned to *Nimrod*, the youngest son of Cush, was probably the country on *the east of Gihon*, the eastern branch of the common channel of Euphrates and Tigris, after its second division, before it emptied itself into the Persian gulf, next to his brother Havilah, his brethren having possessed Arabia. This part next to Arabia was assigned to him, and so being the portion of one of the sons of Cush, was called *the land of Cush*, as it is by Moses when speaking of the river Gihon, "The same is it which compasses the whole land of Cush;" which country was formerly, by the Greeks and Latins, called by the name of *Susiana*, and is now called *Chuzestan*. The Nubian geographer, and some other Arabians, call it *Churestan*. The inhabitants of the land call it absolutely and plainly *Chus*, if we will believe Marius Niger. The same region is called *Cuthah*, [2 Kings xvii. 24.](#) speaking of the people transported thence into Samaria, by Salmanezer. The word *Cuthah*, or *Cuth*, undoubtedly came from the word *Cush*, or *Cus*, the last letter of which is often changed by the Chaldeans into a T, or Th, as Dion hath observed; so they called *Theor*, for *Sor*, and *Attyria*, for *Assyria*. There are yet many marks of the word *Cush* found in the same province. We find there the *Cassians*, neighbours of the *Uxians*, according to the position of Pliny, Ptolemy, and Arrian. There is also a little province of *Susiana*, *viz. Cissia*, and the people *Cissians*. The poet Eschylus takes notice of a city of that name, situated in the same land, and what is remarkable, he does distinguish it by its antiquity.

This country was probably named *Cush* before *Nimrod* was born, or at least when he was young, before he distinguished himself in the world, from Cush his father living here, in that part of the face of the earth, that fell to the lot of him and his posterity, that was nearest to the original settlement of Noah and his sons, and was the pleasantest and most beautiful, like Eden, on which it bordered. While Cush sent forth his elder sons to settle *Arabia*, it is likely that he staid here himself with his youngest son, who was probably very young when the earth was divided.

But *Nimrod*, when he found his strength and ability for war, and being grown famous for his extraordinary valour in destroying wild beasts, was not contented with the lot assigned him; but invades first the neighbouring part of the nation of Shem, which upon the division of the earth fell to the lot of the family of Arphaxad, and so makes himself master of the lower part of the land of Shinar, being a most pleasant and fruitful country, and pitching on that very place where the city and tower of Babel had been, began to build the capital city of his kingdom. Moses says, "The beginning of his kingdom was *Babel*, and *Erech*, and



*Accad*, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” As to *Erech*, it is probably the same that occurs in Ptolemy under the name of *Arecca*, and which is placed by him at the last or most southern turning of the common channel of the Tigris and Euphrates. The fields hereof are mentioned by Tibullus, on account of its springs of Naphtha. The *Archevites*, mentioned [Ezra iv. 9](#). are thought to be some that were removed from *Erech* to Samaria. What in the Hebrew is *Acchad*, is by the Seventy Interpreters writ *Archad*, whence some footsteps of this name are probably thought to be preserved in the river *Argades* mentioned by Ctesias, as a river near Sittace, lying at some distance from the river Tigris, and giving name formerly to Sittacene, a country lying between Babylon and Susa, and because it was very usual, particularly in those parts, to have rivers take their name from some considerable city they run by; hence it is not improbably conjectured, that the city *Sittace* was formerly called *Argad*, or *Acehad*, and took the name of *Sittace* from the plenty of Psitlacias, or Pistacias, a sort of nut, that grew in the country. Strabo mentions a region in those parts under the name of *Artacene*, which might be framed from *Archad*. As to the other city belonging to the beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom, viz. *Calneh*, and which is called, [Isa. x. 9](#). *Calno*, and [Ezek. xxvii. 23](#). *Cauneh*. It is mentioned as a considerable place, [Amos vi. 2](#). “Pass ye up into Calneh and see.” It is said by the Chaldee interpreters, as also by Eusebius and Jerome, to be the same with Ctesiphon, standing upon the Tigris, about three miles distant from Seleucia, and for some time the capital city of the Parthians. That this opinion concerning the situation of Calneh is true, is mightily confirmed from the country about Ctesiphon being by the Greeks called *Chalnoitis*; and since we are expressly told by Ammianus Marcellinus, that Pacnus, a king of the Parthians, changed the name of the city Ctesiphon, when he gave it that name, we may reasonably suppose that its old name was *Calneh*, or *Cholone*, and that from it the adjacent country took the name of *Cholonitis*.

And whereas it is said, [Gen. x. 11, 12](#). in our translation, “Out of this land went forth Ashur, and built Nineveh, and the city of Rehoboth, and Colah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah, the same is a great city.” It might have been rendered as agreeably to the original, and much more agreeably to the preceding verses, and the drift of the historian, *Out of that land he went forth into Ashur, and built Nineveh, &c.*; for Moses in the preceding verse having told us what was the beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom in the land of Shinar, then goes on to tell us how he extended it further afterwards to other cities beyond the land of Shinar into the land of Ashur.

*Nineveh* was a city that lay on the river Tigris, somewhat above the mouth of the river Lycus, where it runs into the Tigris.

*Rehoboth* is a word in the Hebrew tongue that signifies *streets*; and there being a city or town called *Birtha* by Ptolemy, and the said name denoting in the Chaldee tongue the same as Rehoboth does in the Hebrew, hence it is thought to be the same city, and it is not to be

doubted but the BIRTHA mentioned by Ptolemy is the same which Ammianus Marcellinus calls *Virta*. It was seated on the river Tigris about the mouth of the river Lycus.

As for *Calah*, or *Calach*, since we find in Strabo a country about the head of the river Lycus called *Calachene*, it is very probable the said country took this name from *Calach* which was once its capital city. Ptolemy also mentions a country called *Calacine* in those parts; and whereas Pliny mentions a people called *Classita*, through whose country the Lycus runs, it is likely that *Classita* is a corruption for *Chalachita*. To this city and country in all probability it was that Salmanezer translated some of the ten tribes, [2 Kings xvii. 6](#). He placed them in *Chalach*, as it is in the original.

Resen, the other city mentioned by Moses, is supposed to be the same with a city mentioned by Xenophon under the name of *Larissa*, lying on the Tigris, and being as Moses says between Nineveh and Calah, and was also said by Xenophon to have been strong and great, (but then in ruins,) being two parasangs, that is, eight miles, in compass, and its walls a hundred feet high and twenty-five feet broad, which agrees with what Moses says of *Resen*, "The same was a great city." *Larissa* was a Greek name, we find a city so called in Thessaly. There was another which the Greeks called by the same name in Syria, which the Syrians themselves called *Sizora*. It is therefore easy to suppose that the Greeks might change *Resen* into *Larissa*. It is likely that the Greeks asking, What city those were the ruins of? the Assyrians might answer, *Laresen*, *i. e. of Resen*, which word Xenophon expressed by *Larissa*, like the names of several Greek cities.

We proceed now to *Mizraim*, who by Moses is named second among the sons of Ham. And where he at first settled himself, we need not doubt, since the Hebrew text generally denotes *Egypt* by the name of *the land of Mizraim*, or simply *Mizraim*. I proceed therefore to the descendants of Mizraim. The names whereby these are denoted by Moses, are plurals. They are thus enumerated by Moses: "Mizraim begat *Ludim*, and *Anamim*, and *Lehabim*, and *Naphtuhim*, and *Pathrusim*, and *Casluhim*, (out of whom came *Philistim*,) and *Caphtorim*."

To begin with *Ludim*, whereby are denoted the *Ethiopians* in Africa, and who alone are commonly so called both in ancient and modern writers. That these *Ethiopians* are denoted in Scripture by the name of *Ludim*, and their country *Ethiopia* by the name of *Lud*, the learned Bochart has proved at large, by no fewer than ten distinct arguments: I shall mention only those that are drawn from the sacred Scriptures, as from [Isa. lxvi. 19](#). and [Jer. xlvi. 9](#). where *Lud* or *Ludim* are said to be very skilful in drawing their bow, which agrees punctually with the character given of the Ethiopians by many ancient writers.

As to *Anamim*, Bochart thinks the inhabitants of the country about Jupiter Ammon's temple might be denoted from this *Anamim*. The same learned person thinks the *Nasamones* took their rise and name, as also the *Amantes*, and *Garamantes*, and *Hammomantes*, mentioned by old writers, on the adjacent parts.



The *Lehabim* came next both in the text and in situation; for it is very probable that *Lehabim* and *Lubim* are one, and that from hence was derived originally the name of *Libya*, which, though at length extended to the whole African continent, yet at first belonged only to the country *Cyrenaica*. Now this country lying next over against Greece, hence the name of *Lehab*, or *Lub*, originally belonging to this tract only, was moulded into *Libya*, and given to the whole continent over against them on the other side of the Mediterranean sea, just as the name of *Africa*, properly pertaining only to that part of this continent which lies over against Italy, was therefore by the Latins extended to all the continent; or, to come to our own times, much after the same manner as we extend the name of Holland to all the Dutch provinces, and the name of Flanders to all the Spanish provinces, in the Netherlands, whereas they properly denote only the two particular provinces in the Spanish and Dutch Netherlands that lie next over against the island of Great Britain.

The *Naphtuhim* are probably enough placed by Bochart in the country adjoining to *Cyrenaica*, or *Libya*, properly so called, towards Egypt, viz. in *Marmorica*; for here we find in Ptolemy some remainder of the name in a place called *Aptuchi Fanum*. And in the heathen fables, *Aptuchus*, or *Aphtuchus*, or *Autuchus*, is said to be the son of *Cyrene*, from whom the city and country of *Cyrene* took its name.

The *Pathrusim*, or descendants of *Pathros*, are mentioned next by Moses, whereby are to be understood the inhabitants of the *Upper Egypt*, or *Thebais*, where Ptolemy places *Pathyris*, an inland town not far from Thebes; and agreeably hereto, the Septuagint translation renders the Hebrew *Pathros* by the Greek *Pathyris*.

The *Casluhim* are thought to have first settled in the country on the other side of Egypt, called *Casioti*, where is a mountain called *Casius*; and this situation of them is confirmed by what Moses says concerning them, viz. that from them sprang the *Philistines*, who in process of time made themselves masters of the adjoining tract of the land of Canaan.

That the *Caphtorim* were situated near to the *Casluhim*, is inferred not only from Moses's putting them next one to another in the forecited place of [Gen. x.](#) but also from this, that the *Philistines*, who are, in [Gen. x. 13.](#) said to be descended of the *Casluhim*, are elsewhere denoted by the name of *Caphtorim*, as [Deut. ii. 23.](#) [Jer. xlvii. 4.](#) and [Amos ix. 7.](#) which perhaps cannot be better accounted for than by supposing the *Casluhim* and *Caphtorim* to be neighbours, and so in time to have been mutually intermixed, or to be looked upon as one and the same people. Now the name *Caphtor* seems to be preserved in an old city of Egypt called *Captus*, from which, as the name of *Captetes* is still given to the Christians of Egypt, (whence the translation of the Bible used by them is called also the *Coptick* translation,) so it is not unlikely that the common name of Egypt was derived from it, it being called *Ægyptus*, for *Ægoptus*, as if one should say in Greek Greek or Hebrew *the land of Koptus*. And it is a good remark of the learned Mede, that the Greek Greek or Hebrew, or *Æa*, is likely derived from the Hebrew Greek or Hebrew, *ai*, or *Ei*; to which may be very pertinently

subjoined this remark, that in [Jer. xlvii. 4.](#) what we render *the country of Caphtor*, is in the Hebrew text termed *Ai Caphtor*, which are the two words which we suppose the Greeks to have moulded into the name Greek or Hebrew. Our translators observe on the forementioned place in Jeremy, that the Hebrew word translated *the country* in the text denotes also *an isle*, as it is rendered in the margin, agreeably to which it is observable that the city of *Captus* stood on a small island, so that upon the whole we need not doubt thereabout to fix the first settlement of the *Caphtorim*.

Of the four original nations descended from Ham, there remains now only that of *Phut* to be spoken of; and the first settlement of this is with good reason supposed to be in the parts of the Libyan or African continent, which join on next to those possessed by the descendants of *Mizraim*. For in Africa, properly so called, below Adrumentum, was a city named *Putea*, mentioned by Pliny; and in Mauritania there is a river mentioned by Ptolemy called *Phut*. St. Jerome is very full to the point, telling us that there is a river in Mauritania which was until his own time called *Phut*, and from which the adjacent country was called *Regio Phytensis, the country of Phut*. Mr. Bedford supposes it was the river Niger that was called by this name, and that the posterity of *Phut* settled themselves chiefly on that river, (as the first inhabitants of the earth were wont to choose the neighbourhood of rivers for their settlements,) and from thence spread themselves into other parts.

[415] [Gen. x. 1.](#) These things are evidences that all mankind are originally from one head or fountain, and of one blood, *viz.* 1. That all agreed in the same custom of *sacrifices*, which could be from nothing else than tradition from their progenitors. 2. Their all agreeing in counting by *decads*, or stopping at *ten* in their numerical computations, which Aristotle says, all men, both Barbarians and Greeks, did use. 3. Their having every where anciently the same *number of letters*, and the same *names* (or little varied) of them. 4. The remarkable affinity of all ancient *languages*. 5. Their dividing time into *weeks*, or systems of seven days, of which practice to have been general there are many plain testimonies. 6. Their beginning the day or revolution of twenty-four hours with the *night*. Yea, perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning *matrimony*. Thus, Dr. Barrow, vol. ii. of his Works, p. 93.

[405] [Gen. x. 1, 2.](#) Concerning *Japhet, the son of Noah*. *Neptune* is the same with *Japhet*, who is called *the god of the sea*, because mountains, places, islands, and the great peninsulas of Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and Spain, were peopled by his posterity. The name *Neptune* is derived from the same radix that *Japhet* is, even from Greek or Hebrew, *to enlarge*, whence Greek or Hebrew, *Japhet*, and Greek or Hebrew, *Nephtha*, in niphath, according to the allusion of Noah, *Japht Elohim Japhet*, [Gen. ix. 27.](#) “God shall enlarge *Japhet*.” proportionably whereunto *Neptune* was called by the Greek or Hebrew, which grammarians in vain attempt to deduce from the Greek tongue, seeing, as Herodotus in Euterpe asserts, the name *Poseidon* was at first used by none but the Libyans or Africans, who always honoured this god. *Poseidon* is the same with the Punic word Greek or Hebrew, *Pesitan*, which signifies

*expanse*, or *broad*, from Greek or Hebrew, *Pasat*, to *dilate* or *expand*. Japhet's name, and what is said of him, *God shall enlarge Japhet*, well suits with Neptune's character among the heathen, who is styled, *Late imperans* and *Late-sonans*, as also *one that has a large breast*. The genealogy of Neptune confirms that he is Japhet: he is the son of *Saturn*, i. e. *Noah*. See note on [Gen. i. 27](#). Gale's Court of the Gen. p. 1. b. 2. c. 6. p. 73, 74.

[400] [Gen. x. 6](#). Now what the heathen said of Jupiter is evidently taken from Ham, the son of Noah. Noah is the Saturn of the heathen, as is evident by note on [Gen. i. 27](#). It is fabled that Saturn had three sons, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, who divided the world between them. Sanchoniathon says, "The son of Saturn was *Zeus Belus*, or *Baal*, the chief god among the Phœnicians. It was a name assumed by Jehovah, the God of Israel, before abused to superstition, as appears by [Hosea ii. 16](#). It is elsewhere written Greek or Hebrew *Beel*, or Greek or Hebrew which answers to the Hebrew *Baal Shamaïm*, the Lord of heaven. Greek or Hebrew is derived from Greek or Hebrew, which signifies *to be hot*, and answereth exactly to the Hebrew *Cham*, from the radix *Chamam*, to *wax hot*. Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians called Jupiter, *Ammon*, from their progenitor *Ham*; whence Egypt is called [Ps. cv. 23, 27](#) the land of Ham," [Ps. cv. 23, 27](#). Also Plutarch testifies that Egypt in the Sacreds of Isis, was termed Greek or Hebrew whence this, but from *Cham*? And Africa of old was called *Hammonia*. The Africans were wont to worship *Ham* under the name of *Hanmon*. These things are more largely treated of by Cudworth, p. 337, 338, 339.

Again: Sanchoniathon terms Jupiter, *Sydyk*, or as Damascius in Photius, *Sadyk*. Now this name is evidently taken from the Hebrew *Saddik*, the just, which is a name given to God, as also to the first patriarchs, whence *Melchizedek*. The name Jupiter is evidently the same with *la Pater*, or Greek or Hebrew, that is, *Father Jah*, or *Jeu*. That God's name, *Jah*, was well known to the Phœnicians, who communicated the same to the Grecians, is evident by what Porphyry says of Sanchoniathon's deriving the materials of his history from *Jerombatus*, the priest of the god Greek or Hebrew. So Diodorus tells us that Moses inscribed his law to the god called *Jao*. So the oblique cases of Jupiter are from God's name, Jehovah, as *Jovi*, *Jove*, &c. The same name, *Jai*, in the oracle of Clarius Apollo, is given to Bacchus again. Jupiter was *Sabasius*, from that title of God, Jehovah, *Sabaoth*. (This Cudworth also notices, p. 259, 260.) The fable of Jupiter's cutting off his fathers *genitalia*, seems to arise from Ham's seeing his father's *nakedness*. Again, in the metamorphosis of the gods of Egypt, it is said that Jupiter was turned into a ram; which fable Bochart supposes to have had its rise from the cognation between the Hebrew words Greek or Hebrew or *Greek or Hebrew*, and Greek or Hebrew *a ram*, the plural number of both which is the same, *Elim*. The tradition of Bacchus being produced out of Jupiter's thigh, seems to come from that known expression to signify the natural proceeding of posterity from a father, *their coming out of his loins*. Gale's Court of the Gen. p. 1. b. ii. l. 1. p. 10, 11, 12, 13.



[410] *Gen. xi. 3, 4, &c. Concerning the building of Babel and confusion of tongues.* Bochart, in his preface to his *Phaleg*, about the middle, says, “What follows concerning the tower of Babel, its structure, and the confusion of tongues ensuing thereon, also of its builders being dispersed throughout various parts of the earth, is related in express words by Abydenus and Eupolemus in Cyrillus and Eusebius.” Bochart, in his *Phaleg*, gives us a description of the tower of Babel, out of Herodotus, parallel to that of the Scripture, and where it is said, *Gen. xi. 9. that it was called Babel, because the Lord confounded their language.* Hence pagan writers called those of this dispersion, and their successors Greek or Hebrew, *men of divided tongues.* So Homer, in the *Iliad*, Greek or Hebrew, *generations of men, having divided tongues.* Abydenus affirms, that it was a common opinion, that the men whom the earth brought forth gathered themselves together, and builded a great tower, which was Babel, and the gods being angry with it, threw it down. *Gale’s Court of Gen.* p. 1. b. 3. c. 8. p. 83.

[430] *Gen. xi. 3, 4, &c.* Concerning the tower of Babel, Cyril, b. 1. against Julian, quotes these words out of Abydenus, “Some say that the first men that sprang out of the earth, grew proud upon their great strength and bulk, and boasted they could do more than the gods, and attempted to build a tower where Babylon now stands; but when it came nigh the heavens, it was overthrown upon them by the gods with the help of the winds; and the ruins are called Babylon. Men, until then, had but one language, but the gods divided it, and then began the war between Saturn and Titan.” Grotius de Verit. b. i. sect. 16. Notes.

Dr. Winder supposes that the crime of the builders of Babel was an obstinate renouncing the orders before given by Noah, and agreed to by his sons, under the divine direction for a general dispersion and division of the earth among the various families of mankind, and that the builders of Babel were not the whole body of mankind, but that part of them which, according to the forementioned orders and regulations, were to be settled in parts that were to be westward of the original settlement where Noah dwelt; and that, after they had dwelt in Shinar, ambition might inspire some of their leaders with the thoughts of setting up a great empire. But that this supposes that there were at that time other tribes elsewhere, against which they might direct their ambitious projects. There appears (says he) to have been something of ambition either for power or fame, or both, in their design; for they said, Let us make us a name.

“There is” (says Dr. Winder, p. 127.) “a most noble authenticated confirmation of the Mosaic history, by this city or country retaining the name *Babel*, or *Confusion*, by which every age and nation called this great city, the supposed seat of the first empire, even according to heathen writers, which seems to be a name of infamy and reproach, which its own princes or inhabitants would not have given it without some such notorious undeniable circumstances obliging them to it. What a signal defeat (says he) was here given by Providence to this ambitious plan “*Let us make us a name;*” for what they aimed to erect as a monument

of their grandeur and glory, God indeed suffered to stand long, but then it was as a monument of their own infamy and folly, the impotency of their rebellion, and their decisive defeat.”

[240] *Gen. xi. 7. Concerning the confusion of languages.* The state of the world of mankind, with respect to variety of language, now and in all past ages that we can learn any thing of from history, does exceedingly confirm this account of the confusion of languages. Without this, it is very unaccountable how there should be so great a variety of language in so little a time, or indeed ever at all. Concerning this, the author of “Revelation Examined with Candour,” observes as follows: “It is true that the English and all living languages are in a perpetual flux; new words are added, and others die, and grow obsolete. But whence does this arise? Not at all from the necessary mutability of human things, but most evidently from the mixture of other tongues. Scholars add new words or terminations from the learned languages, either through affectation of learning or desire of adorning their native tongue with some words of more elegance or significance; and others from a commerce with other countries of different languages, naturally adopt some of their phrases and expositions into their own. And so our language varies; and what then? How does this affect the question concerning the continuance of the same language, where no other was ever taught or heard? The Jews spoke the same language from Moses to the Babylonish captivity: if their polity had continued, would they not speak the same language to this day?” [And here I would insert what Bedford in his Scripture Chronology observes, *viz.* that “the Arabic continued the same from the time of Job till later ages. The Arabic spoken by Christians in Asia at this day, is the same with that spoken by Mahomet, the impostor, which was much the same with that used in Job’s time; and the Chaldee remained the same from the time of Iaco till the date of the Babylonish Talmud; and the Greek continued the same from the days of Homer to Chrysostom.” See Bedford, p. 291 and 512.] The author of *Revelation Examined with Candour*, goes on. “Some of the inland inhabitants of Africa are found to speak the same language now which they spoke two thousand years ago (and in all probability the same observation is true of our neighbours, the Welch). Could they keep to one language for two thousand years, and could not the descendants of Noah keep to one language two hundred years? Could they keep their language amidst a variety of so many others about them, and when it is scarcely possible that they should be clear of all commerce with people of different tongues; and could not these keep their language, when it was impossible that they should have any commerce but with one another? Those Africans, to say nothing of the Welch, now keep their own tongue, though there are so many others in the world to taint, and by degrees to abolish it. If there were no other language in the world but theirs, does any man believe they would not continue to speak it for two thousand or ten thousand years more, if the world lasted so long? It is true, as arts increased, and customs changed, new terms and phrases might be added; when then new words would increase and adorn

the tongue; but sure no man would say it would destroy it, unless it be believed that new branches, or fruit, or flowers, do daily destroy the tree they shoot out from.”

“The learned author of the letter to Dr. Waterland seems to think, that all other languages sprang as naturally from the Hebrew, as many shoots from the same root, or many branches from the same stock: but I am confident, whoever carefully considers the genius of each of the ancient languages now extant, will find as little reason to believe that they all had their original from the Hebrew, as that all the variety of the forest and fruit-trees in the world were originally but so many shoots and branches from the palm-tree of Judea.

“Besides all this, if we consider that the language of Adam (if we could suppose it imperfect in him, when it was demonstrably inspired by God, yet) had time enough to arrive at full perfection in 1656 years; and that Noah and his sons had time enough to learn it in perfection before the flood; the youngest of his sons being about 100 years old at that time, and himself 600; we cannot with any colour of reason imagine that there could be any necessity of adding so much as one word to it before the building of Babel.” Thus far the author of *Religion Examined with Candour*.

And besides all this, the greater excellency and regularity of some of the ancient languages so early, when arts were in their first beginning, as the Latin and Greek, the latter of which was in great perfection in the days of Homer, seems to argue something divine in it. If the arts and learning of the nation had so early brought their language to such a pitch of perfection, they had made infinitely greater progress in this than in other things that pertain to human life.

The manner in which God confounded the languages of the posterity of Noah, seems to be by confounding their memory with respect to their former language, but not utterly destroying it; so that they still retained some notion of many of the words and phrases of their former language; hence it is found that other languages have in many words affinity to the Hebrew.

[275] [Gen. xiii. 10.](#) “And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as thou comest unto Zoar.” *Zoar* here probably is the same city which was elsewhere called *Zoan*, which was of old the chief city of Egypt. (See No. 254.) The Hebrew letter Greek or Hebrew, *Nun*, seems easily convertible into Greek or Hebrew, *Resch*, as in *Achon*, *Achor*. *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nebuchadrezzar*. *Zoan* was probably at this time the most famous and the royal city in Egypt. It stood in the Delta of Egypt, or that part of it that was near the sea, through which the river Nile ran in many branches, so that it was well watered every where, as the land about Sodom is here said to be; for “it had not only the river Jordan running through it, but the river Arnon from the east, the brook Zered ([Numb. xxi. 12.](#)) and the famous fountain Callirhoe (Pliny, lib. 5. c. 16.) from the south, falling into it.” (Complete Body of Divinity, p. 350.) Probably this fountain is the



same with the well, which the princes of Israel digged with their staves, [Numb. xxi. 16, 17, 18](#). And probably being a low flat country, which is sometimes called a plain, sometimes a valley, [Gen. xiv. 10](#). was in the time of the swelling of Jordan overflowed, as Egypt was with the Nilus.

[302] [Gen. xiv. 15, 16.](#), &c. Abraham in thus conquering the great kings and princes of the earth, and their united hosts, is a type of Christ and of the church. God seems to have granted this great victory to Abraham, as some earnest of those great blessings he had promised to him; the belief of which promises was attended with so much difficulty. Here was given some specimen of what Abraham's promised seed should do, which includes Christ and his church. Abraham might well represent Christ, for Christ is Abraham's seed, and he might well represent the church, for he was the father of the church, the father of all that believe, as the apostle testifies. And besides, Abraham and his household was then as it were God's visible church; God had separated Abraham from the rest of the world to that end that his church might be continued in his family. And though there were as yet some other true worshippers of God, who were not of his family, yet soon after the church was confined to his posterity. This victory of Abraham was doubtless intended as a sign and earnest of the victory that Christ and his church should obtain over their enemies, and over the nations of the world; because God himself makes use of it to this purpose in the [41st. chap. of Isaiah.](#): "Keep silence before me, O islands, and let the people renew their strength; let them come near, then let them speak; let us come near together in judgment: who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet." It is not probable that this victory of Abraham would be spoken of in such lofty language, and in expressions so much like those that are elsewhere made use of to represent Christ's glorious victories over the powers of earth and hell, if the one were not a type of the other. This victory of Abraham is in this place mentioned to that end, that the church, the seed of Abraham, might take it as a sign and evidence that they should not be subdued, but should subdue and conquer the world, as appears from what follows, [ver. 8](#). "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." [Ver. 10, 11](#). "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish." [Ver. 15](#). "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff."

Abraham conquered the chief nations and princes of the world, which was a seal of what God promised him, that he should be the heir of the world. [Rom. iv. 13](#). "For the

promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” He conquered them not with a hired army, but only with the armed soldiers of his own household. So the armies that go forth with Christ unto battle to subdue the world, (*Rev. xix. 14.* “And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean,) they are his church, which is his household. Abraham conquers the kings of the earth and their armies united, and joining all their force together, and therein his victory was a type of Christ’s victory, as in the *41st Isa. 6, 7.* speaking of this victory, “They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved.” Abraham by his conquest rescued Lot his kinsman; so Christ our near kinsman by his victory over our enemies, who had taken us captive, delivers us. Abraham redeemed Lot and the other captives freely, and would take nothing of them for his pains: so Christ freely redeems us. Abraham redeemed the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, that wicked people; which is a type of Christ’s redeeming sinners.

[129] *Gen. xv. 17.* “Behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passes between those pieces.” The smoking furnace, I am ready to think, signified the same as fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices, that is, the wrath of God in the midst of Jesus Christ. The furnace passed between the pieces, that is, as it were, through the midst of them. The burning lamp which followed was a fire of another nature; it was a clear bright light; whereas the other, though exceeding hot like a furnace, was all smoking. This signified the Holy Ghost, who is often compared to fire; and the lamp signified that light, glory, and blessedness which followed Christ’s enduring wrath, and was purchased by it, both for himself and for his people. And doubtless this also has respect to the church in Egypt of Abraham’s seed, and signified those things that God was now telling Abraham in his deep sleep. The smoking furnace signified their suffering grievous persecutions and afflictions in Egypt, which is called the iron furnace; and the shining lamp signified their glorious deliverance in the fourth generation, and being brought into the land of Canaan. *Isa. lxii. 1.* “And the salvation thereof shall be as a lamp that burneth.” The birds coming down, that Abraham frayed away, were to typify the devils, and their endeavours to devour Jesus Christ and the church; this thing may also signify the terrors and consolations that attend the wish of conversion and deliverance out of spiritual Egypt.

[363] *Gen. xv. 17.* “And it came to pass, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.” Here were four things that were significant of the death and last sufferings of Christ, all at the same time.

1. There were the sacrifices that were slain, and lay there dead and divided. Christ feared when his last passion approached, lest Satan should utterly devour him, and swallow him



up in that trial, and cried to God, and was heard in that he feared; and those fowls were frayed away that sought to devour that sacrifice, as Abraham frayed away the fowls that attempted to devour this sacrifice while it lay upon the altar.

2. The smoking furnace that passed through the midst of the sacrifices.

3. The deep sleep that fell upon Abraham, and the horror of great darkness that fell upon him.

4. The sun, that greatest of all natural types of Christ, went down, and descended under the earth, and it was dark.

“It is probable this furnace and lamp which passed between the pieces, burned and consumed them, and so completed the sacrifice, and testified God’s acceptance of it, [Judg. vi. 21. xiii. 19, 20.](#) and [2 Chron. vii. 7.](#) This was of old God’s manner of manifesting his acceptance of sacrifices, *viz.* kindling a fire from heaven upon them; ‘and by this we may know that he accepts our sacrifices, if we kindle in our souls a lively fire of divine affections in them.’” *Henry.*

[241] [Gen. xvi. 10-12.](#) “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude And shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” *The following observations are taken principally out of a book entitled Revelation Examined with Candour.* This prophecy is remarkably verified in the Arabs. The Arabs are the undoubted descendants of Hagar and Ishmael. Ishmael was circumcised at thirteen years of age; so have all those his sons from him until the establishment of Mahometanism, and many of them to this day, though some of them circumcise indifferently in any year from the 8th to the 13th, but all professing to derive the practice from their father Ishmael. He was an archer in the wilderness; his sons, the Arabs, have been the most remarkable archers in the world, and are so to this day, and in the wilderness too, where culture is not known. Hagar was a concubine and an hireling, and while she dwelt with Abraham, Abraham dwelt in tents, and was continually moving from place to place. Ammianus Marcellinus observes of the Arabs, that they had mercenary wives hired for a time. The learned Dr. Jackson makes it exceeding evident that the Arabs and the Saracens were descended from Ishmael, and also the writers of the life of Mahomet, and the writers of travels and voyages without number. In short, it is a point universally agreed upon all over the east and south. As the Ishmaelites lived under twelve princes by Moses’s account, so these principalities remained till later times, bearing the names of the twelve sons of Ishmael, as *Le Clerc* makes very evident.

The first part of the prophecy, *viz.* I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude, is fulfilled in them. The Hagarenes spoken of in Scripture, and the Arabs, especially the Scænitæ, were very numerous, and the Saracens were more numer-

ous than either. But this prophecy is most evidently fulfilled in that vast empire that the Saracens have set up in the world.

The next part of the prophecy is that he should be a wild man. The word which is translated *wild*, in this place signifies *a wild ass*: the literal construction of the phrase in Latin is *erit Onager Homo: He shall be a wild ass man*. The Arabs are above all nations a wild people, and have been so through all ages throughout so many hundred generations. They vary no more from their progenitors' wild and fierce qualities than the wild plants of the forest, never accustomed to human culture, do from the trees whence they are propagated. The dwelling of those Arabs and the wild ass is alike, and indeed the same. See [Job xxxix. 6](#).

The next part of the prophecy: His hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him. He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. The meaning of which words seems to be that they should be in perpetual enmity with all mankind, and yet should subsist in the face of the world. And such a sense of this prophecy seems to be agreeable to the idiom of scripture phrase. Thus when the Scripture speaks of brethren with respect to nations, sometimes nothing is intended but only other nations that are round about. So when it is said concerning Canaan, [Gen. ix. 25](#). "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren," it is not intended only, nor chiefly, and it may be not at all, that he should be a servant of servants to his literal brethren, *Cush, Mizraim, and Phut*, the other sons of Ham; but that he should be a servant to other nations; and it was fulfilled especially in his posterity's being subdued by the posterity of Shem and Japheth. When it is said, "He shall dwell," the meaning is, that they shall remain a nation, and still retain their habitation and possession without being cut off, or carried captive from their own land. In such a sense the word is used, [Psal. xxxvii. 27](#). "Depart from evil and do good, and *dwell* for evermore." This expression is explained by other passages in the Psalm, as [ver. 3](#). "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou *dwell* in the land." [Ver. 9](#). "Evil-doers shall be cut off, but those that wait on the Lord shall *inherit* the earth." [Ver. 10, 11](#). "Yet a little while and the wicked shall *not be*: yea, thou shalt diligently consider *his place*, and it shall not be. But the meek shall *inherit* the earth." [Ver. 18](#). "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their *inheritance shall be for ever*;" and [ver. 22](#). "For such as be blessed of him shall *inherit* the earth, and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off." [Ver. 29](#). "The righteous shall *inherit* the land, and *dwell* therein for ever." [Ver. 34](#). "And he shall exalt thee to *inherit* the land; when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it." It is also agreeable to the scriptural way of speaking, when it is said, "He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," to understand it, that they after all their opposition to it shall see him still subsisting and retaining his own habitation in spite of them: so the expression *in the presence of*, seems evidently to signify, [Psal. xxiii. 5](#). "Thou preparest a table before me *in the presence of* mine enemies." This is also remarkably fulfilled in the Arabs, for they have ever lived in professed enmity with all mankind, and all mankind

in enmity with them; they have continued in a state of perpetual hostility with the rest of their brethren, and yet have subsisted perpetually under it before their faces, and in spite of them all; they have neither been destroyed nor lost by mingling with other nations; they marry only in their own nation, disdaining alliances with all others. Their language continued so much the same through all ages, (as Bedford in his Scripture Chronology observes, that it continued much the same from the days of Job until latter ages,) shows that this nation has never been much mixed with other nations. They and the Jews only have subsisted from the remotest accounts of antiquity as a distinct people from all the rest of mankind, and the undoubted descendants of one man. And the Arabs never were subdued and carried captive, as the Jews have been. Alexander the Great intended an expedition against them, but was prevented by death. What Alexander intended, Antigonus, the greatest of his successors, attempted, but without success; being repulsed with disgrace, and the loss of above eight thousand men, he made a second and greater attempt, but without success.

They had wars afterwards with the Romans and Parthians, but were never either subdued or tamed: resembling in this (the only comparison in nature that suits them) the wild ass in the desert, and sent out by the same hand free, as he whose house is also the wilderness, and the barren land his dwelling, alike disdainful of bondage, scorning alike the multitude of the city and the cry of the driver. Pompey made war with them, and some part of them seemingly submitted, but never remained at all in subjection to him after this they misled and deluded Crassus to his destruction. Antony after this sent his horse to ravage Palmyra, but the city was defended from them by archers, who were probably Arabs. Afterwards their chief city was besieged by Trajan, one of the most warlike and powerful of all the Roman emperors. He went in person with his army against them with great resolution to subdue them, but his soldiers were strangely annoyed with lightnings, thunders, whirlwinds, and hail, and affrighted, and dazzled with the apparition of rainbows, and so were forced to give up the siege. After this, Severus, a great conqueror, after he had subdued all his enemies, marched in person against them with great resolution to subdue them with his greatest force, and warlike preparations, besieged the city twice, but it twice repulsed him with great loss; and when they had actually made a breach in the wall of the chief city, they were strangely prevented from entering by unaccountable discontents arising among the soldiers, and so they went away baffled and confounded. These Ishmaelites, when their wall was broke down, being invited to a treaty with the emperor, disdained to enter into any treaty with him. After this the Saracens set up a vast empire, and so the prophecy of their becoming a great nation that could not be numbered was most eminently fulfilled.

They also have dwelt in the presence of all their brethren, in another sense, *viz.* that all their brethren, the posterity of all the other sons of Abraham, and even the posterity of Isaac, have seen them remaining and unsubdued, and holding their own dwelling, when they all



of them, and even the posterity of Isaac and Jacob themselves, were conquered and carried away out of their own dwellings.

[301] [Gen. xvii. 10.](#) *Circumcision* signified or represented that mortification or the denying of our lusts, that is the condition of obtaining the blessings of the covenant. Totally denying any lust, is represented in Scripture by *cutting off*. Thus, cutting off a right hand, or right foot, is put for the denying of some very dear lust; so cutting off the flesh of a member so prone to violent lust, signifies a total denying of our lusts. A main reason why lust, or our natural corruption, is represented by the instrument of generation, is because we have all our natural corruption or lust by generation, *i. e.* by being the natural offspring of the corrupt parents of mankind. Therefore when God would signify that our original or natural corruption should be mortified, he appoints that the flesh of the part specified should be cut off.

Another reason why the seal of the covenant that God made with Abraham was appointed to be affixed to this part of the body, seems to be that God made this covenant not only with Abraham and for him, but him and his *seed*. It mainly respected his seed, as abundantly appears by the tenor of the words, in which the covenant was revealed from time to time; and therefore the seal was to be affixed to that part of the body whence came his seed. The covenant was made not with a man, but with a race of men ordinarily to be continued by natural generation; and therefore the sign of the covenant was a sign affixed to the instrument of generation. The sign was a purgation of the member of the body, by which offspring was procured, and was to be a sign of the purification of the offspring. God seeks a godly seed, and children that are holy.

*Corol.* Hence we learn that seeing the Gentiles now in the days of the gospel are admitted to the seal of Abraham as the Jews were, and are admitted to an interest in Abraham's covenant, and to the blessing of Abraham, so that Abraham is become the father now, not of one nation, but of many nations in the way of that covenant, as the apostle Paul abundantly teaches; then the posterity of Christians by natural generation are now God's people, and are a holy seed by Abraham's covenant, as the Israelites were of old. There are but two ways in which persons can become of Abraham's covenant, race, or generation: one is by generation by the natural instruments of generation, to which the seal of the covenant was affixed, and so continued from the root to the branches; the other is by ingrafting a new branch into that stock, that shall after ingrafting grow and bring forth branches, and bear fruit upon that stock, as the other branches did that were cut off to make room for them. In this way now many nations or generations are of Abraham's race, instead of one nation or family.

[355] [Gen. xviii.](#) Isaac, the interpretation of whose name is Laughter, was conceived about the same time that Sodom and the other cities of the plain were destroyed, and he was born soon after their destruction. So the accomplishment of the terrible destruction of God's enemies, and the glorious prosperity of his church, usually go together, as in [Isa. lxvi.](#)

13, 14. “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem and when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servant, and his indignation toward his enemies.” First the enemies of the church are destroyed, and then Isaac is born, as that prosperous state of the church is brought about, wherein their mouths are filled with laughter, and their tongue with singing. So the Egyptians were first overthrown in the Red sea, and then Moses and the children of Israel rejoiced in peace, and liberty, and sung that glorious song of triumph. So first Babylon is destroyed, and then the captivity of Israel is returned, and Jerusalem rebuilt. So when the heathen Roman empire was overthrown, then commenced that prosperous and joyful state of the church that was in the days of Constantine. So when antichrist is destroyed, there will follow that joyful glorious state of the church we are looking for. Isaac was the promised seed of Abraham, the father of all the faithful, the blessing he had long waited for, and when Sarah brought him forth, it represented the same thing as the woman in the [12th chap. of Rev.](#) “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” The accomplishment of the prosperous state of the church is in Scripture often compared to a woman’s bringing forth a child with which she had been in travail. It is so in particular by our Saviour, [John xvi. 19, 20, 21, 22.](#) “Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” Hereby is especially represented the accomplishment of the church’s glory, joy, and laughter, after the destruction of antichrist, or the throne of Rome, that is spiritually called Sodom.

[431] [Gen. xviii.](#) Concerning the burning of Sodom, &c. Diodorus Siculus, b. 19. where he describes the lake Asphaltites, says, “The neighbouring country burns with fire, the ill smell of which makes the bodies of the inhabitants sickly, and not very long-lived.” Strabo, b. 16. after the description of the lake Asphaltites, says, “There are many signs of this country being on fire, for about Mastada they show many cragged and burnt rocks, and in many places caverns eaten in, and the ground turned into ashes, drops of pitch falling from the rocks, and running waters stinking to a great distance, and their habitations overthrown; which give credit to a report amongst the inhabitants that formerly there were thirteen cities inhabited there, the chief of which was Sodom, so large as to be sixty furlongs round; but by earthquakes and fire breaking out, and by hot waters mixed with bitumen and brimstone,

it became a lake, as we now see it. The rocks took five, some of the cities were swallowed up, and others forsaken by those inhabitants that could flee.” Tacitus, in the fifth book of his history, has these words: “Not far from thence are those fields which are reported to have been formerly very fruitful, and inhabited by a large city, but were burnt by lightning, the marks of which remain, in that the land is of a burning nature, and has lost its fruitfulness; for every thing that is planted or grows of itself, as soon as it comes to an herb or flower, or grown to its proper bigness, vanishes like dust into nothing.” Solinus, in the 36th chap. of Salmasius’s edition, has these words: “At a good distance from Jerusalem, a dismal lake extends itself, which was struck by lightning, as appears from the black earth burnt to ashes. There were two towns there, one called Sodom, the other Gomorrah; the apples that grow there cannot be eaten, though they look as if they were ripe, for the outward skin encloses a kind of sooty ashes, which, pressed by the least touch, flies out into smoke, and vanishes into fine dust.” Grotius de Verit. b. i. sect. 16. Notes.

[359] [Gen. xix. 23, 24](#). “The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.” This signified that the terrible destruction of the wicked is at the beginning of the glorious day wherein the Sun of righteousness rises on the earth, and at the coming of Christ, Lot’s antitype, and visiting his church, the little city, the antitype of the church. So it was in the days of the apostles, in the morning of the gospel day, when Judea and Jerusalem were so terribly destroyed. So it was in the days of Constantine; and so it will be at the fall of Antichrist; and so it will be at the end of the world. See [Job xxxviii. 13](#). Note.

[336] So Dagon fell once and again before the ark early in the morning; so after the disciples had toiled all night and caught nothing, yet in the morning Christ came to them, and they had a great draught of fishes; so Christ rose from the dead early in the morning. It is said concerning God’s church, that “weeping may continue for a night, but joy will come in the morning.”

The children of Israel were all night pursued by their enemies at the Red sea; in the night they were in the sea, in a great and terrible east wind, but in the morning watch the Lord looked through the pillar of cloud and fire, and troubled the hosts of the Egyptians; and in the morning the children of Israel came up out of the sea, and the host of the Egyptians was destroyed, and the children of Israel rejoiced and sang. Jacob, after wrestling with the angel in the night, obtained the blessing in the morning. “He that ruleth over men shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds: and as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.” [2 Sam. xxiii. 4](#). [Psalm xlix. 14](#). “The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning, and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. In the morning, when the Sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings, the day comes that shall burn as an oven, (as that day burnt in which Lot entered into Zoar,) and all the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble,

and the righteous shall tread down the wicked, and they shall be as ashes under the soles of their feet.” [Mal. iv.](#) at the beginning. The church in the 59th Psalm, after expressing her great troubles from her enemies, and declaring how God should destroy them, says, [verse 16.](#) “But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning, for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.” So likewise the church, in speaking of her troubles, in [Psalm cxliii. 8.](#) “Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee.” It is said of the church, [Psalm xlvi. 5.](#) “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.” And then in the [8th verse.](#), it is said, “Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.” [Hosea vi. 1, 2, 3.](#) “Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind up. After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning, and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain and the former rain unto the earth.”

[276] [Gen. xix. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.](#) *Concerning the destruction of Sodom and the parts adjacent.* The very ground of that region, great part of it, seems to have been burnt up. For it was in great measure made up of bitumen, or what the Scripture calls slime, [Gen. xiv. 10.](#) “And the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.” And because of the abundance of bitumen in the lake of Sodom, it was called of old, and is still called, *Lacus Asphaltites*. It is full of bitumen, which at certain seasons boils up from the bottom in bubbles like hot water. This bitumen is a very combustible matter. It is in some places liquid, and in others firm; and not only lies near the surface of the earth, but lies sometimes very deep, and it is dug out of the bowels of it. So that the streams of fire that came from heaven set the very ground on fire; and therefore it is here, in the [28th verse.](#), that Lot looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and towards all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. So that the country burning was a very lively representation of the general conflagration; and by the melting of the bituminous ground in many places was probably a burning lake, and so was a lively image of hell, which is often called the lake of fire, and the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Note, that bitumen is a sulphurous substance, (see Bailey’s Dictionary,) and therefore is fitly compared to hell fire in Scripture, [Jude. 7th ver.](#) “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” There seems to be an evident allusion to the manner of the destruction of this country in [Isa. xxxix. 9, 10.](#) “And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke thereof shall

go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.” *Deut. xxix. 23.* “And the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath;” where we are expressly taught that the very ground of this country was burnt. The ground burning up sunk the land, and made this valley deeper, so that after that the waters of Jordan perpetually overflowed it; and besides, there was probably an earthquake at the same time, by which the ground subsided, as the tradition of the heathen was. It is probable that the same time as the meteors of their air were inflamed, the bitumen and other combustible matter that was in the bowels of their earth was also enkindled, or the fire that was first kindled on the top of the ground might run down in the bituminous and sulphurous veins deep into the earth, and being there pent up, might cause earthquakes, after those cities and inhabitants were all consumed, which might make the country to sink, and turn it into a bituminous and exceeding salt lake. The ground there was doubtless very likely to sink by an earthquake, being hollow, as it is evident it is still, in that since the surface of the earth hath been broken to let down the water at the river Jordan and other streams, there is no outlet out of the lake above-ground, but they have a secret passage under the earth. The bitumen there is mixed with abundance of nitre and salt, which by their repugnant quality might cause a more violent struggle in the fire that burnt down into the caverns of the earth to cause an earthquake. See many of these things in *Complete Body of Divinity*, p. 351,352.

[239] *Gen. xix. 26.*, *Concerning Lot’s wife.* Revelation Examined with Candour. “The unreasonable delay of Lot’s wife was without question occasioned by her solicitude for her children, which she left behind her. The story of *Niobe* weeping for her children, and being stiffened into stone with grief, is doubtless founded upon this history. Possibly, too, the fable of *Orpheus* being permitted to redeem his wife from hell, and losing her afterwards by looking unseasonably back, contrary to the express command given him, and then through grief deserting the society of mankind and dwelling in deserts, might be derived from some obscure tradition of this history. Sodom was now the liveliest emblem of hell that can be imagined. It was granted to Lot by a peculiar privilege to deliver his wife thence. He was expressly commanded, *Gen. xix. 17.* “Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.” By her looking back, contrary to this command, his wife was lost; after which he quits the city, and dwells alone in the mountains. Here are all the main circumstances of the fable, and the poets had nothing to do but to vary and embellish as they liked best.

[380] But his wife looked back from behind her, and she became a pillar of salt. What happened to Lot’s wife when she looked back as she was flying out of Sodom, is typical of what commonly happens to men that are guilty of backsliding when they have begun to



seek deliverance out of a state of sin and misery, and an escape from the wrath to come. The woman was there stiffened into a hard substance; which signifies the tendency that backsliding has to harden the heart. She became a senseless statue; which signifies the senselessness which persons bring on them by backsliding. There she was fixed, and never got any further; which typifies the tendency that backsliding has to hinder persons from ever escaping eternal wrath.

[361] *Gen. xxi. 10, 11.* “Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bond-woman and her son; for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.” The son of the bond-woman is men’s own righteousness; which is the son of the first covenant, given at mount Sinai, which is Hagar; and Isaac, the son of the free-woman, is Christ, as applied to the soul by faith: he is the child of promise, and the son of the free-woman: at least this is part of the signification. It is Sarah, the mother of Isaac, that urges the casting out of the bond-woman; so it is the church in its ministry and ordinances, which is the mother of Christ in the souls of believers, that urges the casting out our own legal righteousness. It is Christ that is the heir of the blessings of the covenant; it is by his merits only that we have a right or title to those blessings; we must cast out our own righteousness, and not have any manner of regard to that, as though that had a right, or as though a right came by that. [“And the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight, because of his son.”] This signifies how very hard and grievous it seems to persons wholly to cast out their own righteousness, the son of the legal covenant from mount Sinai, because they are our own works, our own offspring, that are dear to us, as Ishmael was to his father Abraham.

[138] *Gen. xxi. 8.* “And Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.” This typifies the weaning of the church from its milk of carnal ordinances, ceremonies, and shadows, and beggarly elements. Upon the coming of Christ, the church under the Old Testament is represented as being in its minority; and the apostle tells us that babes must be fed with milk, and not strong meat. Christ therefore dealt with his disciples just as a tender mother does with her child, when she would wean it from the breast. There was a great feast provided, which represents the glorious gospel feast provided for souls when the legal dispensation ceased by the coming of Christ. It may also signify the weaning of souls from the enjoyments of the world at conversion, and the spiritual feast which they find instead of them.

[362] *Gen. xxii. Concerning Abraham’s offering up his son Isaac.* God’s command to Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, considered with all its circumstances, was an exceeding great trial. Abraham had left his own country and his father’s house, and all that was dear to him, and followed God, not knowing whither he went. First, he left Ur of the Chaldees with his father. This was a great trial, but this was not enough. After this he was required also to leave Haran and his father’s house there, after he had been there settled in hopes of a blessing which God encouraged him that he would give him in a posterity. When he came

there he found a famine in the land, and was forced to fly the country and go down into Egypt for sustenance; and God appeared unto him time after time, promising great things concerning his posterity. Abraham waited a long time, and saw no appearance of the fulfilment of the promise, for his wife continued barren, and he made his complaint of it to God. God then renewed and very solemnly confirmed his promise; but did not tell him that it should be a child by his wife, and therefore after he had waited some time longer, he went in to his maid; but God rejected her son, and he waited thirteen years longer, till he was an hundred years old, before he obtained the son promised; and then God gave him but one, without any hopes of his having any other. After this, at God's command, he cast out his son Ishmael, though it was exceedingly grievous to him, on encouragement of great blessings in Isaac and his posterity. And now, at last, God commands him to take him and offer him up for a burnt-offering. He does not merely call to see him die, though that would have been a great trial under such circumstances; but he is to cut his throat with his own hands, and when he has done so, to burn his flesh on the altar, an offering to God to that God that carnal reason would have said had dealt so ill with him, after he had lived long enough to get fast hold of his affections; after he was weaned from Ishmael, and had set all his heart on Isaac; and after there began to be a most hopeful prospect of God's fulfilling his promises concerning him. And God gave him no reason for it. When Ishmael was to be cast out, the reason assigned was, that *in Isaac his seed should be called*. But now, in seeming inconsistency with that reason, Isaac must die, and Abraham must kill him; and neither one nor the other must know why, nor wherefore; and, as Mr. Henry observes, how would he ever look Sarah in the face again? with what face could he return to her and his family, with the blood of Isaac sprinkled on his garments? "Surely a bloody husband hast thou been to me," would Sarah say to him, as Zipporah said to Moses, [Exod. iv. 25, 26](#).

[7] [Gen. xxii. 8](#). "My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt-offering." This was fulfilled in Christ.

[350] [Gen. xxiii](#). *Concerning Abraham's buying, in Canaan, the possession of a burying-place*. Canaan is the land that God made over to Abraham by covenant; and yet he gave him none inheritance in it to live upon, as Stephen observes; no, not so much as to set his foot on, [Acts vii. 5](#). But the first possession he had in it was the possession of a burying-place, or a possession for him to be in after he and his were dead; which signifies this, that the heavenly Canaan, the land of promise, the rest that remains for the people of God, is a land for them to possess, and abide and rest in, after they are dead: they do not enter upon the possession of it, until after they are dead, and then they are gathered to their possession in Canaan. Therefore it was so ordered that Jacob and Joseph so much insisted on it to be buried in that land.

[161] [Gen. xxiv. 15](#). Rebekah, and Rachel, and Zipporah, Moses's wife, those types of the church, all found their husbands, who were types of Christ, when coming out to fountains

to draw water; which typifies this, that Christ is found by believers in a way of the use of the means of grace. The woman of Samaria found Christ when coming to draw water.

[71] [Gen. xxv. 22.](#) “And the children struggled together in the womb.” I believe this had reference to the spiritual war that is in the soul of the believer, Christ’s spouse, between the flesh and spirit: the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these two are contrary one to another.

[35] [Gen. xxvii. 29.](#) “Let the people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.” Hence we learn that the prophets themselves may not understand their prophecies, for Jacob thought that this should be accomplished of Esau.

[406] [Gen. xxvii. 18, 19.](#) “And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and he called the name of that place Bethel,” &c. So, [chap. xxxi. 13, 45.](#) and [xxxv. 14.](#) From hence the heathen *Bætylia*, mentioned by Philo Biblius out of Sanchoniathon. *The god Uranus* excogitated *Bætylia*, having fashioned them into living stones. Bochart conceives that Sanchoniathon, instead of *living* stones, wrote *anointed* stones, D’rj (from the radix *tw*, *Shuph*, which, among the Syrians, signifies to anoint) which Philo Biblius read ~~XXXX~~; whence he changed *anointed*, into *living* stones. So Damascius tells us, *I saw a Bætylus moved in the air*. The Phœnicians, imitating Jacob at Bethel, first worshipped the very stone which the patriarch anointed. So Scaliger, in Euseb. tells us that “the Jews relate so much, that although *that Cippus*, or stone, was at first beloved of God, in the times of the patriarchs, yet afterwards he hated it, because the Canaanites turned it into an idol.” Neither did the Phœnicians worship only this stone at Bethel; but also, in imitation of this rite, erected several other *Bætylia*, on the like occasion as Jacob erected his pillar of stone as a memorial of God’s apparition to him. So in like manner both the Phœnicians and the Grecians, upon some imaginary apparition of some god, (or dust, rather,) would erect their *Bætylia*, or pillars, in commemoration of such an apparition. So Photius, out of Damascius, tells us that near Heliopolis, in Syria, Asclepiades ascended the mountain Libanus, and saw many *Bætylia*, or *Bætyli*; concerning which he relates many miracles. He relates also that these *Bætylia* were consecrated, some to Saturn, and some to Jupiter, and some to others. So Phavorinus says, *Bætylus is a stone which stands at Heliopolis, near Libanus*. This stone some also called *im<sup>^</sup>m-*, which is the same word by which the Seventy render Jacob’s pillar. Gale’s Court of the Gen. p. l. b. 2. c. 7. p. 89, 90.

[169] [Gen. xxviii. 18-22.](#) “And he took the stone that he had set for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it And this stone which I have set up for a pillar shall be God’s house.” This anointed pillar is a type of the Messiah, or Anointed, who is often called a stone or a rock, and is the house of God, wherein the Godhead dwells and



tabernacles. He was signified by the tabernacle and temple, as Christ tells us, when he says, "Destroy this temple," &c. And he, we are told, is the temple of the new Jerusalem. This is the stone that was Jacob's pillow; it signified the dependence the saints have upon Christ, and that it is in him they have rest and repose, as Christ invites those that are weary to come to him, and they shall find rest. The psalmist says he will lay him down and sleep, and awake, the Lord sustaining him. And as the stones of the temple rested on the foundation, so the saints, the living stones, rest upon Christ, building and resting upon that rock. This stone signified the same with the other that he built there when he returned: [chap. xxxv. 7](#). "And he built there an altar, and called the place *El-beth-el*, because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother." [Ver. 14](#). "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon."

[417] [Gen. xxxiii. 1-7](#). As Jacob's family returned to the land of Canaan, after Jacob had been long banished from thence, so it is probable will be the return of the spiritual Israel to God, its resting-place, and as it were to the promised land, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to a state of glorious rest, plenty, prosperity, and spiritual joy and delights, in the latter days, which is often represented by the prophets as bringing God's people into the land of Israel, and recovering them from foreign lands, where he had driven them. Jacob, at his first entrance, meets with great opposition from those professors who are often in Scripture represented by the elder brother, as Cain, and Ishmael, and Zarah, the son of Judah, who first put forth his hand, and David's eldest brother, and the elder brother of the prodigal. But Jacob's meek and humble behaviour towards his opposing brother, to soften and turn his heart, teaches the duty of Christians. Jacob's family was divided into several companies, one going before another with a space between; so the return of the church of God will be by several companies, that will come in one after another in successive seasons of the pouring out of the Spirit of God, with a space between. In Jacob's family, the lowest and meanest went first, and afterwards the more honourable and most amiable, and best beloved; so, in the spiritual return of the church of Christ, God will first bring in the inferior sort of people; he will save the *tents* of Judah first, agreeable to the prophecy, [Zech. xii. 7](#). "The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, do not magnify themselves against Judah." And the first outpouring of the Spirit will be the least glorious, and they that are first brought in are not only inferior among men, but the least pure, beautiful, and amiable as Christians in their experiences and practice. In Jacob's family went first the hand-maids and their children; so this is the blemish of the first children of Christ that shall be brought in at the glorious day of the church, that though they will be true children of Jacob, yet shall they be as it were children of the handmaids, with much of a legal spirit, *i. e.* spiritual pride and self-confidence. After these comes Leah and her children, who were more honourable and better beloved

than the former; she was a true wife, but yet less beautiful and less beloved than his other wife: so after the first outpouring of the Spirit there will be a work of God that will break forth, that will be more glorious and more pure than the first. In Jacob's family came last of all the beautiful Rachel and Joseph, Jacob's best beloved and dearest child of all the family; so will it be in the church of God in days approaching. Jacob goes before them all, leads them all, and defends them all; so doth Christ go before his church as their leader and defence.

[126] [Gen. xxxvii. 28.](#) "And they lift up Joseph out of the pit." Joseph was here a type of Christ; he was designed death by his own brethren, as Christ was; he was cast into a pit, whereby his death and burial was signified. He was lifted out again, and his resurrection was an occasion of their salvation from famine and death.

[127] [Gen. xxxviii. 28. &c.](#) "Zarah put his hand out first, but Pharez, from whom came Christ, broke forth before him." This imports much the same thing as Isaac's casting out Ishmael, as Jacob's taking hold of Esau's heel when they were born, and afterwards getting his birth-right of him, and as David's getting the kingdom from Saul.

[407] [Gen. xli.](#) *The history of Joseph's advancement in Egypt, &c.* "The Apis and Serapis of the Egyptians seems to signify Joseph, because, 1. It was the mode of the Egyptians to preserve the memories of their noble benefactors by some significative hieroglyphics, or symbols; and the great benefits which the Egyptians received from Joseph in supplying them with bread-corn, is aptly represented under the form of an ox, the symbol of a husbandman. Thus Suidas (in Serapis) tells us, "that Apis, being dead, had a temple built for him, wherein was nourished a bullock, the symbol of a husbandman." According to which resemblance also, Minutius, a Roman tribune, was in very like manner honoured with the form of a golden ox, or bull. 2. Joseph is compared to a bullock in Scripture, [Deut. xxxiii. 7.](#) "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." 3. The same may be evinced from the names *Apis* and *Serapis*, for *Apis* seems evidently a derivative from 3\*, *Father*, as Joseph styles himself, [Gen. xlv. 8.](#) "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt." As for *Serapis*, it was the same with *Apis*, and also a symbol of Joseph, which Vossius collects from this: 1. It had a bushel on its head, as a symbol of Joseph's providing corn for the Egyptians. 2. From the *etimon* of Serapis, which is derived either from Tier, *an ox*, or from  $\wedge v$ , *a prince*, and *Apis*, both of which are applicable to Joseph." Gale's Court of Gen. p. 1. b. 2. c. 7. p. 93, 94.

[128] [Gen. xli. 14.](#) "And they brought Joseph out of the dungeon." By Joseph's being cast into the dungeon, is signified the death of Christ; by his being delivered, his resurrection; and the ensuing great advancement of Joseph, to be next to the king, signifies the exaltation

of Christ at the right hand of the Father. Joseph rose from the dungeon, and was thus exalted to give salvation to the land of Egypt and to his brethren, as Christ, to save his people.

[103] [Gen. xliv. 32, 33](#). “For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bond-man to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.” Judah is herein a type of his offspring, Jesus Christ.

[382] [Gen. xlviii. 21](#). “And Israel said to Joseph, Behold, I die, but God shall be with you.” So Joseph, when he was near his death, said to his brethren after the like manner, [Gen. 1. 24](#). “And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” Thus the blessing of the presence of God with the children of Israel, and his favour and salvation, is consequent on the death of their father, and their brother, and Saviour: shadowing this forth, that the favour of God, and his presence and salvation, is by the death of Christ. He, when near death, said to his disciples, [John xvi. 7](#). “It is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” And elsewhere he promises that the Father and the Son will come to them, and make their abode with them. Isaac’s and Jacob’s blessing their children before their death, and as it were making over to them their future inheritance, may probably be typical of our receiving the blessings of the covenant of grace from Christ, as by his last will and testament. We find the covenant of grace represented as his testament. Christ, in the [14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John.](#), does as it were make his will, and conveys to his people their inheritance before his death, particularly the Comforter, or the Holy Spirit, which is the sum of the purchased inheritance.

[403] [Gen. xlix. 10](#). “Until Shiloh come.” “Silenus, so famous among the poets, whom they place in the order of their gods, is derived from hence. Diodorus, lib. 3. says, the first that ruled at Nisa was Silenus, whose genealogy is unknown to all, by reason of his antiquity, which is agreeable to what the Scriptures say of the Messiah, [Isa. liii](#). “Who shall declare his generation?” And elsewhere, “To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the everlasting Father;” and other passages. As for *Nisa*, where Silenus reigned, it seems to be the same with *Sina*, (as was showed elsewhere. See No. 401.) The Messiah dwelt there. It was he that dwelt there in the bush. And there he manifested himself and spake with Moses and the children of Israel. This is represented as his dwelling-place several times in Scripture; and therefore, when God redeemed the children of Israel from Egypt, and brought them there, he is represented as bringing them to himself. Near this mountain was the altar called *Jehovah-Nissi*, which is a name Moses gave the Messiah. Of *Shiloh* it is said, and to him shall the nnp» *the gathering, or the obedience*, (as the word signifies,) of the people be. Thus Silenus is made by the poets to be the greatest doctor of his age, and he is called Bacchus’s preceptor, *i. e.* according to Vossius’s account, Bacchus



was Moses, (see No. 401.) and Silenus, or Shilo, or Christ, instructed Moses on mount Sinai, or Nisa, the place where Bacchus and Silenus were said to be. Bacchus and Silenus are made by the poets to be inseparable companions. Another attribute given to Silenus is, that he was carried for the most part on an ass, which Bochart refers to that of [Gen. xlix. 11.](#) “Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes.” The mythologists fable Silenus as a comrade of Bacchus, to be employed in treading out grapes; this Bochart refers to, [Gen. xlix.](#) “He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes;” and is agreeable to what is said of the Messiah elsewhere in the Scripture, “I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people was none with me.” They characterize Silenus as one that was always drunk, as it is supposed from what follows, [Gen. xlix. 12.](#) “His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk,” which Solomon makes the character of one overcome with wine. [Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.](#) “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.” They ascribe to Silenus for his meat cow’s milk, which Bochart makes to be traduced from [Gen. xlix. 12.](#) “And his teeth white with milk.” That Silenus is the same with Shilo, further appears from that of Pausanius Eliacon 2. ~~XX~~, *the monument of Silenus remains in the country of the Hebrews.* See Gale’s Court of Gen. p. 1. b. 2. c. 6. p. 67-69.

[383] [Exod i. 6, 7.](#) “And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation; and the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them.” After the death of Christ, our Joseph, his spiritual Israel began abundantly to increase, and his death had an influence upon it. It was like the sowing of a corn of wheat, which, if it die, bringing forth much fruit. [John xii. 24.](#) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” From the call of Abraham, when God first told him he would make of him a great nation, to the deliverance of his seed out of Egypt, was 430 years, during the first 215 of which they were increased but to 70, but in the latter half, those 70 multiplied to 600,000 fighting men; so sometimes God’s providence may seem for a great while to thwart his promises, and go counter to them, that his people’s faith may be tried, and his own power the more magnified; and though the performance of God’s promises is sometimes slow, yet it is always sure; at the end it shall speak, and not lie, [Heb. ii. 3.](#) “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?”

[432] [Exod. ii. Concerning Moses.](#) Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. I. reports, out of the books of the Egyptian priests, that an Egyptian was slain by the words of Moses; and Strom. V. he relates some things belonging to Moses, out of Artapanus, though not very truly. Justin, out of Tragus Pompeius, says of Moses, “He was leader of those that were banished, and took away the sacred things of the Egyptians; which they, endeavouring to recover with arms, were forced by a tempest to return home; and Moses being entered into his own country of Damascus, he took possession of mount Sinai.” And what follows is a mixture of truth and falsehood; where we find *Arvas* written in him, it should be read *Arnas*, who is *Aaron*, not the son of Moses, as he imagines, but the brother, and a priest. The Orphic verses expressly mention his being taken out of the water, and the two tables that were given him by God. The verses are thus

So was it said of old, so he commands. Who’s born of water, who received of God The double Tables of the Law.

The great Scaliger, in these verses, instead of *hulogenes*, with a very little variation of the shape of a letter, reads *hudogenes*, *born of the water*.

The ancient writer of the Orphic verses, whoever he was, added those lines after he had said, that there was but one God to be worshipped, who was the Creator and Governor of the world.

Palemon, who seems to have lived in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, has these words: “In the reign of Apis the son of Phoroneus, part of the Egyptian army went out of Egypt and dwelt in Syria, called Palestine, not far from Arabia.” Several things are related about his coming out of Egypt, from the Egyptian writers, Monethro, Lysimachus, Choeremon. The places are in Josephus against Apion, with abundance of falsities, as coming from people



who hated the Jews; and from hence, Tacitus took his account of them. But it appears from all these compared together, that the Hebrews descended from the Assyrians, and possessing a great part of Egypt, led the life of shepherds, but afterwards being burdened with hard labour, they came out of Egypt under the command of Moses, some of the Egyptians accompanying them, and went through the country of the Arabians unto Palestine, Syria, and there set up rites contrary to those of the Egyptians.

Diodorus Siculus, in his first book, where he treats of those who made the gods to be the authors of their laws, says, "Amongst the Jews was Moses, who called God by the name Greek or Hebrew. Jehovah," which was so pronounced by the oracles, and in the Orphic verses mentioned by the ancients, and by the Syrians.

Strabo, in his sixteenth book, speaking of Moses as an Egyptian priest, (which he had from the Egyptian writers, as appears in Josephus,) says, "many who worship the Deity agreed with him, (Moses,) for he hath said that the Egyptians did not rightfully conceive of God, when they likened him to wild beasts and cattle; nor the Libyans, nor the Greeks, in resembling him to a human shape; for God is no other than the Universe which surrounds us, the earth, and the sea, and the heaven, and the world, and the nature of things, as they are called by us. Who, says he, (*i. e.* Moses,) that has any understanding, would presume to form any image like to those things that are about us? Wherefore we ought to lay aside all carved images, and worship him in the innermost part of a temple worthy of him, without any figure." He adds that this was the opinion of good men. He adds also that sacred rites were instituted by him, which were not burdensome for their costliness, nor hateful as proceeding from madness. He mentions circumcision, the meats that were forbidden, and the like; and after he had shown that man was naturally desirous of civil society, he tells us, it is promoted by divine and human precepts, but more effectually by divine.

Pliny, book xxx. chap. 1. says, "There is another party of magicians which sprung from Moses." Juvenal has these lines

They learn, and keep, and fear the Jewish law, Which Moses in his secret volume gave.

Tacitus, Hist. V. according to the Egyptian fables, calls Moses one of them that were banished.

Dionysius Longinus, (who lived in the time of Aurelian the emperor, and favourite of Zenobia, queen of the Palmyrians,) in his book *Of the Sublime*, after he had said that they who speak of God, ought to take care to represent him as great and pure, and without mixture, adds, "Thus does he, who gave laws to the Jews, who was an extraordinary man, who conceived and spake worthy of the power of God, where he writes in the beginning of his laws, *God spake, What? Let there be light; and there was light. Let there be earth; and it was so.*"

Chalcidius took many things out of Moses, of whom he speaks thus, "Moses was the wisest of men; who, as they say, was enlivened, not by human eloquence, but by divine inspiration."

Numenius, as Eusebius quotes his words, book viii. chap. 8. says, “Afterwards Jamnes and Mambres, Egyptian scribes, were thought to be famous for magical arts, about the time that the Jews were driven out of Egypt, for those were they that were chosen out of the multitude of the Egyptians, to contend with Musœus the leader of the Jews, a man very powerful with God by prayers, and they seemed to be able to repel those sore calamities which were brought upon Egypt by Musœus.” Origen against Celsus refers us to the same place of Numenius.

Artapanus, in the same Eusebius, b. ix. ch. 27. calls them the priests of Memphis, who were commanded by the king to be put to death, if they did not do things equal to Moses.

Strabo, in his 14th book, after the history of *Moses*, says, “that his followers for a considerable time kept his precepts, and were truly righteous and godly.” And a little after he says, “that those who believed in Moses, worshipped God and were lovers of equity.”

These things concerning Moses are taken from Grotius, de Verit. h. 1. sect. 16.

[154] *Exod. ii.* Moses in the ark upon the waters is a type of the church. The church of God is like a babe, in infirmity and weakness, in helplessness of itself, and dependence upon a superior help, and in that the members of it are all in a spiritual sense become as little children. And it is like a babe upon the waters floating through all manner of changes, dangers, and troubles, and yet upheld and preserved in Christ the ark. He was especially a type of the church of the Jews in their oppressed condition in Egypt. It was a wonder they were not swallowed up by their enemies, and drowned and lost in their afflictions, and the multitude of their adversaries. Moses in the water and not drowned, is much such another type as the bush all in a flame and not burnt. He was also herein a type of every elect soul, who is naturally all overwhelmed in sin, and misery, and danger, and is redeemed or delivered, as Moses was taken out of the water.

[408] *Exod. ii.* Moses is the same with the Egyptian Osiris; for, 1. Moses is the same with Bacchus, as has been shown before, No. 401.; and Diodorus tells us that Osiris was called by the Greeks Dionysus, the name of Bacchus.

2. Diodorus tells us that Hercules was the chief captain of Osiris’s army, who was Joshua, as has been shown, No. 402. 3. Diodorus tells us that Osiris had in his army Anubis covered over with a dog’s skin, which thence was pictured with a dog’s head, and called the dog keeper, &c.; all which seems to refer to *Caleb’s* name, which signifies *a dog*. 4. Pan is said to war under Osiris, which is the same with Christ, whom God promises should go with Moses when he says, MS “*my presence shall go with him.*” See No. 404.

5. Osiris is said to have horns from the mistake of Moses’s character, who is thence pictured with horns, because of his beams of light the word in Hebrew for *horns* and *beams* being the same.

6. Moses with the princes of the tribes carried up the bones of Joseph into Canaan: hence the poets’ fable of *Osiris’* bones, &c. See Gale’s Court of Gen. p. 1. b- 2. c. r. p. 94, 95.

[159] *Exod. ii. 5.* Pharaoh's daughter became the mother of Moses, which typified the calling of the Gentile church, that is naturally the daughter of Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh, which becomes the church of Christ, and so his mother; and also is to represent that all the saints of which the whole church consists, are naturally the children of the devil, that by conversion become the spiritual mother of Christ, as Christ says that whosoever shall do the will of his Father which is in heaven, the same is his mother, &c. The whole church, which is often represented as the mother of Christ, is in her constituent parts naturally an Egyptian, and the daughter of Pharaoh. She found Moses when she came down to wash herself in the river. The river here represents the Holy Ghost, and the washing is the washing of regeneration, by which souls are brought to Christ, which is signified by baptism, by which their admission into the Christian church is declared and sealed. Pharaoh's daughter is more than once made use of in Scripture, to signify the church, especially the Gentile. So was Pharaoh's daughter that became Solomon's wife, for the church is figuratively both the wife and mother of Christ.

[384] *Exod. ii. 5.* Pharaoh's daughter came to Moses herself, into the same river into which Moses was cast. So, if we would find Christ, and be the spiritual mother of Christ, we must die with Christ, be made conformable to his death, be buried with him by baptism; must die to sin; must be crucified to the world, and die to the law, and be willing to suffer affliction and persecution with him. By such mortification and humiliation is the soul washed in the river into which Christ was cast.

[439] *Exod. ii. 6.* "And behold, the babe wept." As Moses, in the water, was a type of the church in affliction, so his weeping a little before he is taken out of the water, seems to be typical of the spirit of repentance, mourning, and supplications often spoken of in the prophets, given to the church a little before her deliverance from adversity.

[412] *Exod. iii. 14.* "I am that I am," &c. Some of the heathen philosophers seem to have derived notions that they had of the Deity from hence. Plato and Pythagoras make the great object of philosophy to be Greek or Hebrew, *that which is*; Greek or Hebrew, *that which truly is*: and also Greek or Hebrew, *being itself*. The Seventy render this place in Exodus thus: Greek or Hebrew

w, that the philosophers by their Greek or Hebrew, and Greek or Hebrew, meant *God*, appears by what Jamblicus saith of Pythagoras, "by Greek or Hebrew, *Beings*, he understood *sole and self agents, immaterials, and eternals*. Other beings indeed are not beings, but yet are equivocally called such by a participation with these eternals." So Plato, in his *Parmenides*, (who was a Pythagorean,) treating of Greek or Hebrew, which he makes the first principle of all things, thereby understands God. So, in his *Timæus* Locrus, he says, Greek or Hebrew, *Being is always; neither hath it beginning*. So again in his *Timæus*, folios 37, 38. he proves nothing properly *is*, but God, the eternal essence, "to which," says he, "we do very improperly attribute those distinctions of time, *was*, and *shall be*." Plutarch says, Greek or Hebrew, "*The*

*true Being*, is eternal, ingenerable, and incorruptible, unto which no time ever brings mutation." Hence in the Delphic temple there was engraved "Greek or Hebrew, *Thou art*." Gale's Court of Gen. p. 2. b. 2. ch. 8. p. 173, 174, 175.

That Plato by Greek or Hebrew, meant *God*, appears by his own words in his Epist. 6. fol. 323. "Let there," says he, "be a law constituted and confirmed by oath, calling to witness the God of all things, the Governor of beings present, and things to come, the Father of that governing cause whom, according to our philosophy, we make to be the *true Being*, Greek or Hebrew" &c. This is the same with him that revealed himself to Moses by the name *I am that I am*, out of the bush, that was the Son of God. G. C. of Gen. p. 1. b. 3. c. 5. p. 64. Plato seems evidently to have heard of this revelation that God made of himself to Moses by the name of *I am*, &c. out of the burning bush in mount Sinai, and to have a plain reference to it in his Philebus, fol. 17.; he confesseth, "The knowledge of the Greek or Hebrew," &c. was from the gods, who communicated this knowledge to us, by a certain Prometheus, together with a bright fire. G. C. of G. p. 2. b. 3. c. 2. p. 228.

[457] [Exod. iii. 14.](#) "And God said unto Moses, *I am that I am*; and he said, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, *I am* hath sent me unto you." "We are informed that there was an ancient inscription in the temple at Delphos, over the place where the image of Apollo was erected, consisting of these letters, Greek or Hebrew; and Plutarch introduces his disputants querying what might be the true signification of it. At length Ammonius, to whom he assigns the whole strength of the argumentation, concludes that "the word "Greek or Hebrew was the most perfect title they could give the Deity, that it signifies thou art, and expresses the divine essential Being, importing that, though our being is precarious, fluctuating, dependent, subject to mutation, and temporary; so that it would be improper to say to any of us, in the strict and absolute sense, *thou art*; yet we may with great propriety give the Deity this appellation, because God is independent, uncreated, immutable, eternal, always and every where the same, and therefore he only can be said absolutely *To Be*. Plutarch would have called this Being to Greek or Hebrew. Plato would have named him Greek or Hebrew, which he would have explained to signify Greek or Hebrew, implying to be essentially, or self-existent." Shuckford's Connections, vol. 2. p. 385, 386.

[505] [Exod. iii. 18.](#) "And you shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us, and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." That is, inform Pharaoh that your God that hath met with you, has instructed you to ask this of him. In this Pharaoh was not treated with any falsehood or unjust deceit. The utmost that can be supposed by any objector is, that here is an implicit promise, that if he would let them go three days' journey into the wilderness, they would return again after they had there served their God, and received the revelation of his will, which he should there make to them. But if there had been, not only an implicit, but an express, promise of this, it might have been consistent with God's real

design, and the revelations of it that he had made to Moses, and by him to the people, without any false or unjust dealing. God knew that Pharaoh would not comply with the proposal, and that his refusal would be the very occasion of their final deliverance. He knew he would order it so, and therefore might reveal this as the event that should finally be brought to pass, and promise it to his people, though he revealed not to them the exact time and particular means and way of its accomplishment. Conditional promises or threatenings of that which God knows will never come to pass, and which he has revealed will not come to pass, are not inconsistent with God's perfect justice and truth; as when God promised the prince and people of the Jews in Jeremiah's time, that the city should surely be preserved, and never should be destroyed by its enemies, if they would repent and turn to God, and cleave to him, though it had been often most expressly and absolutely foretold that Jerusalem should be destroyed by the Chaldeans; and as the apostle Paul denounced unto the mariners that were about to flee out of the ship, that if they did, the ship's crew must perish, though he had before in the name of God foretold and promised that there should be the loss of no man's life, but only of the ship.

[443] [Exod. iv. 6, 7.](#) "And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as the other flesh." This sign is much like the foregoing, of casting the rod on the ground, and its becoming a serpent; and much the same thing is signified, but only more is signified in this latter sign than in the former. By Moses's hand is represented the hand or arm of the Lord, which often in the Old Testament signifies the Messiah. By God's plucking his hand out of his bosom, is meant his appearing for the salvation of his people. While God long forbears to appear for his churches salvation, while they are longing and waiting for him, he as it were hides his hand in his bosom; [Ps. lxxiv. 11.](#) "Why withdrawest thou thine hand, even thy right hand? Pluck it out of thy bosom." There are remarkable appearances of God in the world for the salvation of his people, which are both by the coming of the Messiah, both of which are long wished and waited for before they are accomplished. The first is God's appearing in the world for the redemption of the church, by laying the foundation of her salvation in the first coming of the Messiah, after the church had long waited for him, while God had hid his hand in his bosom. At length the arm of the Lord is made bare, the Messiah appears, but in such a manner that it was to the surprise and astonishment of those that saw him many were astonished at him, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. They were offended in him. He had no form or comeliness, and when they saw him, there was no beauty that they should desire him. He appears in the form of sinful flesh. He was as it were diseased with the leprosy, because himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses. He was made sin for us, as though he

had been all over leprous or sinful. God's second remarkable appearance will be in the Messiah's second coming for the actual salvation of his people, when he will appear without sin unto salvation, without the leprosy of our sin, and will appear in that glory that he had with the Father before his humiliation, which he emptied himself of at his first coming. God having answered his prayer in glorifying him with his own self, with the glory he had with him before the world was: as Moses's hand, the second time he plucked it out of his bosom, was restored as it was at first. This type of the redemption of the Messiah was fitly given on this occasion, and as a sign of the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and the carrying them through the Red sea, the wilderness, and Jordan, into Canaan, because the redemption of the Messiah, both fundamental and actual, was variously represented and presignified in that great work of God.

[195.] *Exod. iv. 20. Moses's rod.* "And Moses took the rod of God in his hand." This rod typified the word, both the personal word, and the word of Revelation. The word of God is called the rod of God's strength, *Ps. cx. 2.* It is called the rod of Christ's mouth, *Isa. xi. 4.* It is expressly represented by the rod of an almond-tree, *Jer. i. 11.* Moses's rod was the rod of an almond-tree. Jesus Christ is also called a rod. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." He is frequently called a branch, or sprout, a tender plant, &c.

If we consider this rod as representing the revealed word of God, then Moses or Aaron, who kept and used the rod, represent Christ. A rod is the instrument of a shepherd, by which he governs, directs, defends, and orders his flock, and this rod was that that Moses kept sheep with, which he was found with when he was feeding his father-in-law's sheep, when God appeared to him in the bush. The same that a rod or staff is to a shepherd and his flock, the same is the word of God to Christ and his spiritual flock. As Moses used it in leading Jethro's flock of sheep, so he used it in leading God's people Israel. As the word of God is the instrument Christ uses to save his people, and to destroy their enemies, and work those wonders that are wrought in bringing them to salvation, and which belong to the application of redemption, so Moses used this rod in the temporal deliverance of his people. It is the word of God that is used to remove all obstacles, and overcome all opposition in the way of a sinner's conversion and progress in holiness; as Moses's rod was made use of to divide the Red sea.

If the rod be considered as representing Christ, then Moses or Aaron represent God. Moses cast his rod on the ground, and it became a serpent, and he took it up, and it became a rod again, signifying how that Christ, when he was sent down by God to the earth, and was made sin for us, became guilty for our sakes, was accursed, and appeared in the form of sinful flesh: he appeared in our stead, having our guilt imputed to him, who are a generation of vipers. Thus, when the children of Israel were bitten with fiery serpents, Christ was represented by the brazen serpent. The rod being become a serpent, swallowed the magicians'



rod or serpents; so Christ, by his being made sin for us, destroyed sin and Satan. When Moses took up his rod from the ground, it was no longer a serpent, but became a rod again, so when God took up Christ from his stroke of humiliation, he was acquitted, justified, he had no longer the guilt of sin imputed to him, he no longer appeared in the form of sinful flesh. Rulers and princes are compared to rods, [Ezek. xix. 11, 12, 14.](#) and to branches, [Ps. lxxx. 15, 17.](#) so Christ himself is often called a rod and branch.

It is by the word of God, or by Christ, that God works all his wonders in and for the church: and Moses wrought wonders by his rod. It is by Christ that all obstacles and difficulties are removed in order to our salvation. As the Red sea was divided by Moses's rod, it is by Christ, and in his name only, that God's people prevail over their enemies. The children of Israel prevailed while Moses held up his rod, and when he let it down, Amalek prevailed; Moses held up the rod in that battle as the banner or ensign of the armies of Israel, as is evident from [Exod. xvii. 15.](#) so Christ is lifted up as an ensign, [Isa. xi. 10.](#)

When this rod budded, and blossomed, and bare fruit, that which it brought forth was almonds, intimating this, that the spreading of the word of God in producing its effects in the world will be rapid. The almond-tree is a tree of a very sudden growth, and speedily brings its fruit to perfection. [Jer. i. 11, 12.](#) So the word of God is quick and powerful; this is the way which the powerfulness of it is shown in the suddenness of its producing its great effects, [Isa. lxvi. 7, 8.](#) "Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child: who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children."

As Moses and Aaron represent God, the rod represents Christ: as Moses and Aaron represent Christ, the rod represents the word: as they represent ministers, the rod represents two things, *viz.* the word of God which they preach, and their faith; and this rod was Moses's staff, and this staff represents the same as Jacob's and Elisha's staves. See note on [Numb. xxi. 18.](#)

[442] [Exod. iv. 20.](#) *Moses's rod.* One thing at least typified by this rod is faith, the same that was signified by Jacob's staff with which he passed over Jordan, and that he leaned upon in his last sickness, that the apostle speaks of in [Heb. xi.](#) and Elisha's staff that he bid the servant lay on the dead child, and the staves of the princes with which they digged the well, and David's staff he took in his hand when he went against Goliath. The word properly signifies *a staff* as well as *rod*, such a staff as persons walk with, or lean upon: the word comes from a root, one signification of which is, *to lean.*

The word translated *bed.* [Gen. xlvii. 31.](#) (Jacob bowed himself upon the *bed's* head,) comes from the same root, and therefore the apostle renders it *staff,* in [Heb. xi.](#) The word is not the same in the original with that used to signify Elisha's staff that was laid on the child, but it is a word of the same signification, and therefore both words are used to signify

the stay of bread, the latter in [Isa. iii. 1.](#) and the former in [Levit. xxvi. 23.](#) This word is used to signify Judah's staff, that he gave to Tamar as a pledge, [Gen. xxxviii. 19.](#)

[390] [Exod. v. to xiv.](#) inclusive. *Concerning Pharaoh's hardness of heart and obstinacy in refusing to let the children of Israel go, and the manner of God's dealing with him.* In Pharaoh's behaviour is very lively represented the behaviour of impenitent sinners when the subjects of reproofs and corrections for their sins, and under convictions of conscience and warnings, and fears of future wrath, with respect to parting with their sins, or letting go the objects of their lusts. Indeed it is an instance of this very conduct; for Pharaoh in refusing to let the people go, refused to let go the objects of his lusts: in keeping them in bondage, he kept his sins. His pride was gratified in his dominion over that people. He was loth to let them go, because he was loth to part with his pride. His covetousness was also gratified by the profits he had by their slavery; he would not let them go because he would not part with the object of his covetousness.

God commanded him to let the people go, he sent his commands from time to time by the hand of Moses and Aaron, and warned him of the ill consequence if he refused: so God counsels and warns sinners by his word, by his ministers. God first made known his will to Pharaoh in a mild and gentle manner, chap. v. at the beginning; but that was so for from being effectual, that he was only the worse for it. Instead of letting the people go, he only increased their burdens: so God is wont in the first place to use gentle means with sinners. But impenitent sinners are not the better, but the worse, for the gracious calls and counsels of the word of God; they sin with the greater contempt for it: as Pharaoh took God's command in disdain. He said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" Then God proceeded to lay greater matter of conviction before Pharaoh, and to warn him of the mischief that would come upon him by his refusal, by turning the rod into a serpent; (see notes on that miracle, [Exod. vii.](#)) and when he still hardened his heart, then God began to chastise him, by turning the water into blood, which was not only a chastisement, but also a clear and loud warning of the future destruction he would bring upon himself by his obstinacy. (See notes on that plague.) So God is wont to give sinners fair warning of the misery and the danger of their sins before he destroys them. After this, when God's hand pressed Pharaoh, and he was exercised with fears of God's future wrath, he entertained some thoughts of letting the people go, and promised he would do it; but from time to time he broke his promises when he saw there was respite. So sinners are often wont to do under convictions of conscience and fears of wrath; they have many thoughts of parting with their sins; but there is never a divorce actually made between them and their lusts; it is common for sinners when under affliction and threatening dispensations of providence, to make promises of amendment, as in times of sore sickness, and when in danger of death and damnation, but soon to forget them when God's hand is removed, and future damnation more out of sight. In such cases sinners are wont to beg the prayers of ministers, that God would remove his



hand and restore them again, as Pharaoh begs the prayers of Moses and Aaron, [Exod. viii. 8](#). “Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people, and I will let the people go that they may sacrifice unto the Lord;” and so [ver. 28](#). so [ch. ix. 27, 28](#). and [x. 16, 17](#). Pharaoh was brought by God’s judgments and terrors to confess his sin with seeming humility, as [Exod. ix. 27](#). “And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time, the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.” This was when there were mighty thunderings; and it follows in the next verse, “Entreat the Lord that there may be no more mighty thunderings.”<sup>541</sup> So [chap. x. 16, 17](#). “And he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you; now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once.” So sinners oftentimes under affliction and danger of future wrath, and when God thunders upon their consciences, seem very penitent and humble, and are much in confessing their sins, but yet have not their lusts divorced from them, have no thorough disposition to forsake them. Pharaoh, in the struggle that was between his conscience and his lusts, was contriving that God might be served, and he enjoy his lusts, that were gratified by the slavery of the children of Israel. Moses kept insisting upon it that God should be served, and sacrificed to; Pharaoh was willing to consent to that, but he would have it done without his parting with the children of Israel. [Exod. viii. 25](#). “And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.” So it is oftentimes with sinners under fear of divine wrath; they are for contriving to serve God and enjoy their lusts too; they are willing to be very devout in many duties of religion, but without parting with their beloved sins. How do some wicked men amongst the papists and elsewhere seem to abound in acts of devotion! how much pains do they take, how much trouble and loss are they at! they are like the Samaritans that worshipped the God of Israel, and served their own gods too. So did the Jews, [Jer. vii. 9, 10](#). “Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal; and come and stand before me in this house?” And [Ezek. xxiii. 39](#). “For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it, and lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.” Moses objected against complying with Pharaoh’s conscience, and proposed in this matter that serving God and continuing in the land of Egypt among the Egyptians in slavery to them, did not agree together, and were inconsistent one with another. The Egyptians, their taskmasters, would abhor that service that God required, and would not tolerate it, but would kill God’s worshippers; and therefore there was a necessity of a separation to be made between Israelites and Egyptians, in order to God’s being served. So the service of God and our still continuing in the service of our lusts, are inconsistent one with another, as Christ says, “ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” There is a necessity of forsaking one in order



541 [Exod. ix. 28](#)

to cleave to the other. If we retain our sins, if we do not part from them, they will kill those duties wherewith God is served.

When Pharaoh saw that it would not be consented to that the people should only sacrifice to their God in the land, then he consented to let them go, provided they would not go far away. He was not willing to part with them finally, and therefore would not let them go clear, but would have them within reach, that he might bring them back again. So it is often with sinners, with respect to their sins; they will refrain a while from them, but will not wholly part with them, taking an everlasting leave of them, quitting all hopes or expectations of ever having any thing more to do with them. Afterwards, when God's plagues came still harder upon Pharaoh, he consented to let the men go, if they would leave the women and children, [Exod. x. 8, 9, 10.](#) and then after that, when God's hand pressed him still more sorely, he consented that they should go, even women and children, provided that they would leave their cattle behind them; but he was not willing to let them go and all that they had, [Exod. x. 24.](#) So it oftentimes is with sinners, when pressed with God's judgments, or fears of future wrath; they are brought to be willing to part with some of their sins, but not all; they are brought to part with the more gross acts, but not so to part with their lusts in lesser indulgencies of them; whereas we must part with all our sins, little and great, and all that belongs to them, even women and children, and cattle; they must all be let go, with their young and with their old, with their sons and with their daughters, with their flocks and with their herds. There must not be a hoof left behind. At last, when it came to extremity, Pharaoh consented to let the people all go, and all that they had; but he was not stedfastly of that mind; he soon repented and pursued after them again; and then, when he was guilty of such backsliding, he was destroyed without remedy, which is often the case with sinners. Note, when there is only a forced parting with sin, though it be universal, yet it is not sincere, nor is it like to be persevering.

God exercised abundance of patience with Pharaoh before he destroyed him, and the warnings that were given him were louder and louder, and God's judgments upon him greater and greater, and God's hand and design in them became more and more manifest. First, God only sends a command from him, directing Moses to deliver it, and let it be accompanied with humble entreaties, paying him the honour due to a king, [Exod. iii. 18.](#) and [v. 3.](#) After that, Moses spake with more authority; God made him a god to Pharaoh, and he no more besought him as a subject, [Exod. vii. 1.](#) and his word was confirmed by miracles. But in the first place, the miracles were such as did not hurt them, but only warn them, as that turning the rod into a serpent; and then God proceeded to miracles that were hurtful, which yet were imitated by the magicians; but then God proceeded further, to do things that the magicians could not imitate, but themselves confessed manifested the finger of God. And then, that the evidence might be still clearer, and God's meaning in those plagues plainer, God proceeded to sever between the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel

dwelt, and the rest of Egypt; and then in the next plague God severed even between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt; and then in the next plague, the plague of boils and blains, was not only beyond what the magicians could do, but the magicians themselves were the subjects of the plague, and were grievously tormented, so that they could not stand before Moses. And this plague was brought upon them by the ashes of the furnace, wherein they employed the children of Israel in their slavery in burning the brick they made, that Pharaoh might see wherefore God was angry, and did so chastise him. After this, Pharaoh was more particularly and fully warned of God by his word than ever before, and was forewarned what those plagues would at last come to if he continued still obstinate, [Exod. ix. 13.](#), &c. And then after this God brought the plague of hail and thunder, that was more terrifying and threatening than any heretofore; and then to complete the destruction caused by the hail, the locusts were sent to eat up what the hail had left. Then came the plague of darkness, with frightful apparitions of evil angels, (see Note,) which was more terrifying still than any that had gone before, and the distinction made in it between the children of Israel and the Egyptians was more remarkable, for they had light in their dwellings where they dwelt mingled with the Egyptians. And then before that great destruction by the last plague, Pharaoh was again particularly warned of what was coming, and when, and in what manner, it would come, much more fully and particularly than ever, [Exod. xi. 4.](#), &c. And then came the last and greatest plague that preceded Pharaoh's own destruction, attended with the greatest tokens of God's wrath, and a remarkable distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians; and last of all, Pharaoh himself, with all the prime of Egypt, was destroyed in the Red sea.

[385] [Exod. vii. 9-12.](#) Moses's rod, when cast unto the earth, became a serpent. So Christ, when sent down to the earth, appeared in the form of sinful flesh; he was made sin for us. So Christ was represented by the brazen serpent that was made in the form of the fiery serpents that bit the people. Moses's rod, when on the ground in the form of a serpent, swallowed up the serpents of the magicians. So Christ, by being made sin, he swallowed up the devils, the parents of sin, when he appeared in the form of sinful flesh, and for sin he condemned sin in the flesh; by being made a curse he destroyed the curse; by suffering the punishment of sin he abolished the punishment of sin; and at the same time that, being made sin, he destroyed sin and the devil, and so swallowed the serpents in that sense. So he received and embraced sinners, (that are in themselves serpents) by his love and grace, so that they became as it were his pleasant food, and so he swallowed down serpents. In this sense God's people are represented as his pleasant food; they are represented as the wheat in opposition to tares, and as his good grain in opposition to chaff. See [Isa. vi. 13.](#) "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and shall be eaten; as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."

[385] [Exod. vii. 9, 10](#). Moses's rod, that had been a shepherd's staff, to lead, protect, and comfort a flock of sheep, and by which Moses led and comforted Israel as a flock when cast upon the land of Egypt, became a serpent, a terrible, hurtful, and destructive creature. So Christ, that is a shepherd to his people, their protection and comfort, is destructive to unbelievers, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence: his salvation is poison to them through their rejection of it. They have a greater fall by the second Adam than by the first, and Christ will at last be a lion to destroy them, as that pillar of cloud of fire that gave light to the Israelites was a cloud and darkness to the Egyptians. So the word of God, (which is another thing signified by the rod,) which is a means of the salvation of Israel, is a sword to destroy the Egyptians.

Christ was represented by a serpent in the wilderness, because he was made sin *for* believers, but he will be made sin *to* unbelievers; he was made a curse for Israel, a serpent for them, but he will be the greatest curse to sinners, a terrible serpent to the Egyptians. So the Saviour of Israel proved the most dreadful destroyer of the Egyptians; and the word of God by Moses, which proved the salvation of his people, was their destruction. This seems to be one thing intended by this miracle, for there seems to be something threatening to the Egyptians, for the serpent had a very terrible appearance and motion, as appears by Moses's fleeing before it, when he first tried the experiment at mount Sinai. It was something threatening of the plagues that were coming. God was pleased first to threaten the Egyptians, and give them warning of approaching judgments, before he began to execute them.

[471] [Exod. xii. 2](#). "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year unto you." Because in this month God wrought out for them that great typical redemption out of Egypt, representing the redemption of Jesus Christ, and also because he intended at the same time of year actually to complete the work of spiritual and eternal redemption of his church by the death, resurrection, and ascension of the great Redeemer. It is probable that the Israelites, as well as other nations, had till now begun the year in autumn, about the autumnal equinox, about which time of year there is reason to think the world was created. But as now God at the time of the redemption changed the day of their sabbath, (as Mr. Bedford in his Scripture Chronology makes probable,) so he changed the beginning of this year from the autumnal equinox, the time when the old creation was wrought, to the spring, about the vernal equinox, the time of the new creation. The old creation was wrought in the fall of the year, the time when things are just going to decay, and to a kind of ruin, and winter approaching, that shuts up the whole face of the earth as it were in a state of death; the Orderer of all things probably thus signifying that the old creation was not to continue, the heavens and the earth that then were should be shaken, and soon begin to decay, as it did by the Son of man; the curse which that brought, which was in effect its ruin, as it were, brought all to its chaotic state again, and laid a foundation for its actual total destruction. But the work of redemption was wrought in the spring, sig-

nifying that as in the spring the world as it were revives from a state of death, and all things are renewed, and all nature appears in blooming beauty, and as it were in a state of joy; so, by the redemption of Christ, a new world should be created, and the spiritual world, the elect creation, should be restored from death, and brought to a new, glorious, and happy life.

[280] [Exod. xii. 15.](#) *Concerning leaven.* It was a most fit type of the corruption of the heart by reason of its sourness, and because of its infecting spreading nature, so that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, (in which respect also it is a fit type of false doctrine, as [Matt. xvi. 6, 11, 12.](#)) and because of its swelling nature, for the nature of corruption is to swell self, it radically consists in inordinate self-love, and primarily is manifest in pride and self-exaltation. The swelling nature of leaven represents the nature of corruption with respect to its principle, *viz.* inordinate self-love; and the sourness of it represents its nature with respect to its tendency, which is enmity.

But especially is leaven a fit type of original sin, by reason of the manner of its propagation; for as original sin is propagated from father to son, and so from generation to generation, so it is with leaven, one lump leavens the next, and that the next, and so leaven is propagated from lump to lump, for ever. The old lump leavens the new, and therefore is called the old leaven.

[351] [Exod. xii. 35, 36.](#) “And they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and the Lord gave the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required, and they spoiled the Egyptians.” The treasures that the children of Israel by this means carried forth out of Egypt were very great, even so as in a great measure to leave Egypt empty of its wealth, and so as to enrich the Israelites. [Psal. cv. 35.](#) “He brought them forth also with silver and with gold.” [Gen. xv. 14.](#) “They shall come out with great substance.” When a person is redeemed by Christ out of spiritual bondage, at the same time they are set at liberty they are also enriched, they have great substance given, as it were gold tried in the fire, and those riches are the spoils of their enemies, all that spiritual wealth, glory, and blessedness, and even heaven itself, is in some sort the spoils of Satan; that which God has deprived him of to give to the saints, as the earthly Canaan was taken away from the Canaanites and giants of the land, the enemies of the Israelites, and given to them. So heaven was taken from the fallen angels; they were driven out thence by the spiritual Joshua, to make room for the saints. The devils left heaven, in all probability, by their opposition and envy towards the saints, and rising up in open hostility against Christ as their head, revealed to be such in God’s decrees; and so their hostility against the spiritual Moses, and Joshua, and their seed, and seeking to keep them down: these spiritual Egyptians and Canaanites left their spiritual and heavenly possessions, riches, and honours, and inheritance, and God took it from them and gave it to them that they opposed and sought to impoverish and destroy, and impoverished them to make those

they hated rich with their riches. Yea, they themselves, though their enemies, are made in some sense to give them their own riches to enrich them and impoverish themselves, for they are made by Divine Providence the occasions of their being brought to their spiritual and eternal riches and glory. Satan has been the occasion of the saints' heavenly riches and glory in tempting man to fall, and so giving occasion for the work of redemption, and then in procuring the death of Christ, and oftentimes is made the occasion of particular advantages that the church obtains at one age and another, and his opposition to the nature of particular elect souls, is always turned to be an occasion of their riches and fulness; so that all the wealth and glory that the church has, is in a sense, and indeed in many ways, *from Satan*, though he seeks nothing but her destruction.

Another thing signified, is that the church of Christ, when redeemed from her enemies and oppressors, especially from Rome, heathen and antiChristian, that is spiritually called Egypt, should have their wealth and glory given into their hands, as is foretold by the prophets, [Psal. lxxviii. 30](#). "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submits himself with pieces of silver." [Zech. xiv. 14](#). "And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel in great abundance." [Isa. lx. 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17](#). and [chap. lxi. 6](#). which was fulfilled in the days of Constantine the Great, and will be more gloriously fulfilled at the fall of antichrist. Thus the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just, and Christ shall have a portion divided to him with the great, and shall divide the spoil with the strong.

It is to be noted that the tabernacle in the wilderness was made of these spoils the children of Israel took from the Egyptians. It was made of those jewels of silver, and gold, and raiment; so all the utensils and holy vessels of the tabernacle, the ark, and the mercy-seat, and the cherubim, and the candlestick, and table of shew-bread, and altar of incense and laver, and his seat, and also the priests' vestments, the twelve precious stones of the breastplate, as afterwards the temple, was built chiefly of these vast treasures that David took from his enemies; whereby is signified several things.

1. That God's church, that in Scripture is represented as Christ's house or temple, and as his raiment and ornament, and as a golden candlestick, &c. is wholly constituted of those saints that are his jewels, that are the spoils of his enemies, that were once his enemies' possession, but that he has redeemed out of their hands. Those precious gems that are near his heart, and are as it were his breastplate.

2. That Christ himself, that is the antitype of the tabernacle and temple, and especially of the ark and the altar, is one that has been rescued out of Satan's hands, and comes to be an ark and altar, no other ways than by his resurrection and ascension, whereby he was delivered from captivity to Satan.



3. Hereby is signified that the church of Christ, when it shall be fully redeemed from the tyranny of Rome, that is spiritually called Egypt, shall be adorned and beautified with the wealth of her enemies; that vast wealth that has hitherto been improved to gratify the avarice and pride of the church's enemies, shall then be improved to holy purposes, to build up the church of Christ, to beautify the place of God's sanctuary, and to make the place of his feet glorious, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into the church. Thus Satan shall be spoiled of his wealth and glory, and that which used to be improved in his service, shall be taken from him, and shall be improved in the service of Christ; so that what he hath swallowed down he shall vomit up again.

[463] *Exod. xiii. 2. Concerning the pillar of cloud and fire, or the cloud of glory.* This pillar of cloud and fire, and also the cloud of glory on mount Sinai, and in the tabernacle and temple, was a type of Christ in the human nature. The cloud was a fit representation of the human nature, being in itself a dark body, a vapour, a weak light thing, easily driven hither and thither by every wind, or the least breath of air; while it continues, is a most mutable thing, sometimes bigger, and sometimes less, constantly changing its form, puts on a thousand shapes, and it quickly vanishes away, is easily dispersed and brought to nought; a little change in the air destroys it, a little cold condenses it, and causes it to fall and sink into the earth. See *2 Sam. xiv. 14.* A little increase of heat rarifies and causes it wholly to disappear. A cloud is a most fit representation of the human nature of Christ, because it is derived from the earth, but yet is a heavenly thing.

The bright, glorious, and inimitable fire or light that was in the midst of the cloud, represented the divine nature united to the human. The cloud was as it were a veil to this fire, as Christ's flesh was a vest to the glory of the divinity. When Christ took the human nature upon him he veiled his glory, the bright and strong light of the glory within, which otherwise would have been too strong for the feeble sight and frail eyes of men, was moderated, and as it were allayed and softened, to make it tolerable for mortals to behold. Thus the glory of God is exhibited in such a manner in our incarnate Saviour, so as it were to moderate, soften, and sweeten the rays of divine glory, to give us a greater advantage for free access to God, and the full enjoyment of him.

[456] Another thing signified by God's glorious appearing in a cloud, was probably the mysteriousness of the divine essence and subsistence, and of the person of Christ, and of the divine operations. Thus it is said, *Psal. xcvi. 2.* "Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." *1 Kings viii. 12.* "The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness." *Psal. xviii. 11.* "He made darkness his secret place. His pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." *Prov. xxx. 4.* "What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" *Isa. ix. 6.* "His name shall be called Wonderful." *Judg. xiii. 18.* "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" God's nature is unsearchable, 'tis high as heaven; what can we do? 'Tis

deeper than hell; what can we know? His judgments are a great deep, which we cannot fathom, and a cloud that we cannot see through; we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.” [Job xxxvii. 19](#). In the cloud of glory there was an excellent lustre, but it was veiled with a cloud; there was a darting forth of glorious light, and an inimitable brightness. But if any over-curious eye pried into it, it would find it just lost in a cloud. God clothes himself with light as with a garment, but yet he makes darkness his pavilion. Thus the blessed and only Potentate dwells in the light which no man can approach unto, and is he whom no eye hath seen nor can see, [1 Tim. vi. 16](#).

[130] [Exod. xv. 25, 26](#). “And the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet,” &c. “I am the Lord that healeth thee.” This tree is the tree of life, and signified Jesus Christ; it signifies God himself, and the waters are God’s people, as it is here explained in the 26th verse; the trees being cut down, represented the death of Christ, and being cast into the water, his uniting himself to his people by coming down from heaven, by taking our nature, and by his Spirit.

[172] [Exod. xv. 27](#). “And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees; and they encamped there by the waters.” These twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees, are a representation of the church. The twelve wells of water answer to the twelve tribes, twelve patriarchs, twelve heads of the tribes, and twelve apostles. They signify the church itself, and then they answer to the twelve tribes. The church is compared to a fountain or spring of water, [Cant. iv. 12](#). The hearts of believers are like wells of living water, the water being the grace of the Spirit. Or they signify the ministry of the church, and so they answer to the twelve patriarchs, and twelve apostles; the twelve patriarchs were the fathers and fountains of Israel, according to the flesh; and the twelve apostles, and gospel ministers, are the fathers of Israel, spiritually. Through the twelve apostles, Christ delivered his pure doctrine to the world, as through so many fountains of pure water, and through gospel ministers in general, Christ communicates the living water of his Spirit to the church, as through so many springs, or pipes, or conveyancers, [Zech. iv. 12](#). The twelve fountains signify Christ himself; he is represented by twelve fountains, as the Holy Ghost is represented by seven lamps, [Rev. iv](#). and he is called twelve wells, according to the number of the instruments by which he communicates himself. However, in which sense soever we take it, the water represents the Holy Spirit. Christ communicates himself to his church only by his Spirit; he dwells in their hearts by his Spirit, the ministers of the gospel are instruments of the conveyance of the Spirit, the hearts of particular believers are fountains of living water, that is, of the Spirit.

The seventy palm-trees signify the church, which is compared to a palm-tree. [Cant. vii. 7, 8](#). Deborah, the type of the church, dwells under the palm-tree. Believers are compared to palm-trees, [1 Kings vi. 29](#). “And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, within and without;” which



represented saints and angels: the number seventy answers to the seventy elders which were representatives of the whole congregation of Israel, and are called the congregation, [Numb. xxxii. 12.](#) [Josh. xx. 6.](#) or church, which is a word of the same signification.

It is probable the palm-trees grew so about these twelve fountains, that their roots were watered and received nourishment from them.

[59] [Exod. xvi. 19, 20.](#) "Let no man leave of it till the morning," &c. Hereby perhaps we are designed to be taught our absolute dependence every day upon God, for the supplies of his grace and spiritual food. We not only depend on him for the first conversion of the soul, but daily depend on him for grace afterwards. This manna must be given us every day, or we should be without food. We are taught not to rest in and live upon past attainments, but to be continually looking to God, and by faith fetching from him fresh supplies. We must not lay up in store the grace of this day for to-morrow, to save us the trouble of seeking and gathering more. We never have any to spare; hereby we shall make a righteousness of what we receive and do; and when we make that use of it, it is like manna that breeds worms and stinks.

[473] [Exod. xvii. 9.](#) "I will stand on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand." Moses's rod, as has elsewhere been observed, signifies three things, each of which it signifies in this case. 1. It signifies faith, by which God's people overcome their enemies: "for this is the victory that overcomes, even our faith."

Mr. Henry says this rod was held up to God by way of appeal to him. Is not the battle the Lord's? Is not he able to help, and engaged to help? Witness this rod, the voice of which thus held up was that of [Isaiah li. 9, 10.](#) "Put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab?"

2. It represents the word of God, the rod of his strength, which is the weapon by which Christ, the antitype of Moses, overcomes his church's enemies. This is the sword which proceeds out of his mouth.

3. Christ himself lifted up as the banner of his militant church. Christ is prophesied of in [Isa. xi.](#) as *a rod*, "a rod out of the stem of Jesse;" and in the same place it is said, "He shall stand for an ensign of the people," and their ensign as an army brought out of Egypt, and fighting and conquering their enemies; the children of Edom, in particular, are mentioned, [ver. 1-10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16.](#) This ensign and banner is *Jehovah-Nissi*, Jehovah our banner, agreeable to the name of the altar Moses built on this occasion, [ver. 15.](#) Moses stood on the top of a hill, and there lift up this ensign, the wonder-working rod, which had brought such plagues on their enemies, and such marvellous deliverance for them before, that the people at the sight of it might be animated in the battle. Christ himself, when he was lifted up on the cross, that he might draw all men to him, was lifted up on a hill. He stood and cried on the top of a hill, even the mountain of the temple at the feast of tabernacles. God hath exalted him to heaven, set him on his holy hill of Zion; caused him to ascend a high hill, as the hill



of Bashan; hath set this rod in the mountain of the height of Israel, and from thence his glory is manifested to gather men to him, and to animate his church to fight his battles. From thence his glory was manifested on the day of Pentecost after his ascension, and from thence it will be manifested to his church, when they shall go forth to their victory over antichrist and all their enemies. He will shine forth on that mountain of the house of the Lord, from behind the veil, from between the cherubim; and all flesh shall behold it, and so all nations shall flow together to the mountain of the Lord shall be gathered to this ensign and then shall that be fulfilled, in [Isa. xi. 10](#). “At that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek;” [ver. 12](#). “And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth.”

[205] [Exod. xvii. 15](#). “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *Jehovah-Nissi*.“ (*i. e. The Lord my banner*). Altars were types of Christ, and therefore were sometimes called by the name of God, as Jacob called the altar he built in Bethel, *El Bethel*, or *the God of Bethel*. The special reason of Moses’s calling this altar, that he built on occasion of their victory over Amalek, *the Lord my Banner*, was that Christ in that battle was in a special type represented as the banner of his people, under which they fought against their enemies, to which they should look, and by which they should be conducted as an army were by their banner or ensign, *viz.* in Moses holding up the rod of God in his hand on the top of the hill, as verses [9, 10, 11, 12](#). That rod was a type of Christ, as has been shown, No. 195. Moses, while the people were fighting with Amalek, held up this rod as the banner under which the people should fight: while Moses held up this rod, Israel prevailed, and when he let it down, Amalek prevailed.

This is agreeable to what God commanded when the children of Israel were bitten with fiery serpents. [Num. xxi. 8](#). “Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole;” in the original it is, “set it for a banner,” or “ensign,” or “upon an ensign.” In all likelihood, the brazen serpent was set up on one of the poles of the standards or ensigns of the camp, and probably on the standard of the tribe of Judah, which was a lion, and was a type of Christ, who is the lion of the tribe of Judah: so it is prophesied that Christ should stand for an ensign. [Isa. xi. 10, 12](#). “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel.”

[474] [Exod. xx. 24, 25, 26](#). “An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me And if thou wilt make an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it: neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar.” These rules have respect to what was to be done now immediately, the altars they were to erect, and the sacrifices that were to be offered in the wilderness before the building of the tabernacle. God’s altar was to be very plain and very low, so that they might have no occasion to go up to it

by steps. The heathen greatly adorned their altars with the curious works of their own hands, and worshipped in high places, and built their altars very high, thinking hereby to put great honours on their gods, and make their services very acceptable to them. But God lets his people know that their seeming adorning, by their own art and handy work, will be but polluting, and their recommending themselves by their high altars will be dishonouring themselves, and showing their own nakedness: perhaps typifying this, that whenever men ascend high and exalt themselves in their own works or righteousness in God's service, they show their own nakedness, and pollute his worship, and render the services they offer abominable to God. Mr. Henry has this note on this rule for plain affairs: "This rule being prescribed before the ceremonial law was given, which appointed altars much more costly, intimates that after the period of that law, plainness should be accepted as the best ornament of the external services of religion, and that gospel worship should not be performed with external pomp and gaiety."

[63] [Exod. xxiii. 26.](#) "Behold, I send an angel before thee," &c. This does not seem to be the same angel spoken of in the [33d chap.](#) which was a created angel, but the Son of God; for what was spoken here before was in the name of the Father.

[112] [Exod. xxiv. 18.](#) "And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights." Moses being so long in the mount with God when he received his mind and will to reveal to Israel, represents Christ's being in heaven with his Father to receive his mind and will to reveal to his church his being from all eternity in the bosom of the Father; and it may be particularly forty days, because Christ came down from heaven, signified by this mount; it was four thousand years from the beginning of time, and from the creation and fall of man, and since the covenant of grace first took place, and Christ actually became the Mediator between God and man; which, putting ten for a thousand, and every age or century for a day, answers to forty days. That mount, when Moses was in it with God, typified heaven, as the apostle teaches, [Heb. viii. 5.](#)

[285] [Exod. xxv. 10.](#), &c. "And they shall make an ark of shittim-wood," &c. The ark was upon many accounts a lively type of Jesus Christ. The ark was united to the Godhead, it had the cloud of glory over it and upon it, which was the symbol of God's immediate presence. The ark was the throne of God; [Jer. iii. 17.](#); *i. e.* it was that that was his immediate seat, and where he was present in a higher manner than he was in any other place, or to which his presence was united in a more immediate manner than to any thing else. God was present in the land of Canaan, or the holy land, more than in any other part of the face of the earth. God was present in Jerusalem, the holy city, or city of God, above all other places of the land of Canaan, and he was present in his temple above all other places in that city, as a king is more immediately present in his own house than in any other part of the royal city. But God was present with the ark, which was his throne, more than in any other part of his house. So the human nature of Christ is as it were the throne of God, where God

is present, more than in any other part of the whole universe. It is of all created things the highest and most immediate seat of the divine presence; that in which God resides in a higher and more eminent manner than in any other part of the highest heaven itself, that is his temple. The ark, in itself, was in some respects a mean thing for the throne of God and for the symbol of God's most immediate presence. It was only a wooden chest; it appeared without that form and pomp which the heathen images had, on which account the heathens despised it, and the children of Israel were often ashamed of it, and had a mind to have images in the stead of it, as the heathen had. So the human nature of Christ is in itself a mean thing; man is but a worm; the human nature has no glory in itself; it is but a vessel, that must receive its fulness from something else. As this chest in itself was empty, its fulness was what was put into it. Christ, when he was on the earth, appeared without form or comeliness, without external pomp and glory. The Jews, when they saw him, saw no beauty wherefore they should desire him, and he was despised by the Gentiles; he was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Though the ark was in some respect mean, yet it was exceeding precious; though it was made of wood, yet it was over-laid with gold. So the man Jesus Christ was exceeding excellent; though he was a man, one of the mean race of mankind, yet he was a holy man, perfectly holy, endowed with excellent graces and virtues. Christ God man, Mediator, is wonderful; his name is secret, his person and offices are full of unfathomable mysteries. Hence Christ's name is called Wonderful, as the prophet Isaiah says; and the angel that wrestled with Jacob says, "Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret, or wonderful?" and [Isa. chap. liii.](#) says, "Who shall declare his generation?" and again, in [Prov. xxx.](#) "What is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" As an ark is a thing shut up, what is in it is secret; hence secret things are called *arcana*. The mercy-seat was upon the ark, and never was separated from it, which shows that God's mercy is only in and through Jesus Christ. The ark was God's chest, or cabinet. Men's cabinets contain their most precious treasure: which denotes the infinite dignity and preciousness of Christ in the sight of God the Father, and the infinite love the Father hath to him, and delight he hath in him. The beloved Son of God is his most precious treasure, in which God's infinite riches, and infinite happiness and joy, from eternity to eternity, does consist. Cabinets are made to contain a treasure; so the ark contained the precious treasure of the law of God, and the pot of manna: the one signifying divine holiness, of which the law of God is an emanation and expression; and the other signifying divine happiness, for manna was spiritual and heavenly bread, or food; but food is the common figure in Scripture to represent happiness, delight, and satisfaction; or in one word, those two things that were contained in this cabinet, signified the Holy Spirit, which is the same with the divine good or fulness of God, his infinite holiness and joy. Christ is the person in whom is the Spirit of God, and therefore he is called the Anointed. In him dwells this fulness of the Godhead: he is the cabinet of God the Father in which is contained all his treasure. In him the Father beholds infinite beauty, (or holiness,

which is the beauty of the divine nature,) and in him the Father has his food, or infinite delight and satisfaction.

The ark in the temple was not only God's cabinet, containing his treasure, but it was also Israel's cabinet; it contained the greatest treasure of the children of Israel. (See Note on [Isa. iv. 5.](#)) So Christ is the greatest treasure of his church; he is their pearl of great price; he is the church's portion and chief good; in him is contained all the church's fulness; of his fulness she receives, and grace for grace; all her happiness, all the covenant blessings that she hath, are bound up in Christ. The church hath the Holy Spirit, which is the sum of all her good, no other-wise than through Christ and in Christ. God hath given the Spirit not by measure unto him and from him; it flows to his members as the oil on Aaron's head went down to the skirts of his garments: particularly it is only in and through Christ that the church hath holiness expressed in the law of God, and happiness expressed by the pot of manna.

The ark itself, considered separately from the things it contained, was only a repository and vehicle to contain other things more precious than itself. So the human nature of Christ is only a repository or vehicle to contain and convey that which is infinitely excellent and precious. In this human nature of Christ dwelt God himself. The divine Logos dwelt in it by his Spirit, signified by the law and manna. The Spirit of God never dwelt in any other creature in anywise as it dwells in the man Christ Jesus; for in him he dwells without measure, on which account also he is called *Christ*, or *Anointed*. By the Spirit of God dwelling in so high and transcendent a manner, the human nature is united to the divine in the same person. And as that human nature of Christ is as it were the container or repository of the Deity, a vessel full of the divine nature, so is it as it were the vehicle of it, by which it is conveyed to us, in and through which it might be as it were ours in possession; for it is by the Godhead being united to the nature of man, that it becomes the portion of men, as the ark of old was as it were the vehicle of the Deity to the children of Israel. It was that by which they had the Deity, whose dwelling-place is heaven, dwelling among them as their God, and by which God maintained a gracious communication with them.

The human nature of Christ had the Logos, or the Word of God, dwelling in it, as the divine eternal person of the Son is often called. This was typified by the ark's containing the word of God in it, written in tables of stone, and in the book of the law. Christ is the light of the world, as that law contained in the ark is represented as the light of the congregation of Israel, [Deut. xxxiii. 2.](#) From his right hand went a fiery law for them. Christ is the bread of life that came down from heaven; he is that that was signified by the manna in the wilderness, as Christ teaches in the 6th chap. of John; and he is so by the Spirit that dwells in him, and that he communicates, which was typified by the ark's containing manna, the bread from heaven.

The law that was put into the ark signified the righteousness of Christ, including both his propitiation and obedience. Christ's preparedness for both, is signified in the 40th Psalm by that law, *Thy law is within mine heart*. God's law was put within Christ's heart, as the law was put within the ark. Hence he satisfied the law by his sufferings; for it was out of regard to the honour of God's law, that when he would save them that had broken it, he had rather himself suffer the penalty of the law, than that their salvation should be inconsistent with the honour of it; and it was also because God's law was within his heart that he perfectly obeyed it.

God was wont to manifest his glory from above the ark in the holy of holies, so it is only by Christ that God manifests his glory to his church; they see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; he is the effulgence or the shining forth of his Father's glory. So God was wont to meet with the children of Israel over the ark, and there speak with them, and give forth his oracles and answers; so it is by Christ only that God reveals himself to his church. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son that is in the bosom of his Father, he hath declared him."

The ark is called the ark of the covenant; the covenant that God made with the people was contained in it. The covenant that God hath made with mankind, is made in Christ. The covenant was made with him from eternity; the covenant was then committed to him from us. The promises were given us in Christ; it is he that reveals the covenant, and he is the Mediator and surety of the covenant. The book of the covenant was shut up in the ark, which denotes the mysteriousness of the things contained in this covenant, as was said before; things shut up in an ark are secret, or arcana; and especially hereby seems to be signified that the great things of the covenant were in a great measure hidden under the Old Testament, they were covered as with a veil. As Moses put a veil over his face, so he hid the covenant in the ark. The ark itself was hidden by the veil of the temple, and the book of the covenant was hid by the cover of the ark, *i. e.* they were as it were hidden under Christ's flesh: the carnal typical ordinances of the Old Testament are in Scripture represented as Christ's flesh, [Rom. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.](#) [Colos. ii. 14.](#) The veil signified the flesh of Christ; [Heb. x. 20.](#) and so doth the cover of the ark, or the ark considered as distinct from what was contained in it. The covenant of grace was, and the glorious things of the gospel were, contained in that book that was laid up in the ark; but it was as it were shut up in a cabinet, hid under types and dark representations. Christ rent the veil from the top to the bottom; so he opened the cabinet of the ark. The faces of the cherubims were towards this ark, and the mercy-seat upon it, to pry into the mysteries of the person of Christ and of this covenant of grace; for "these things," as the apostle Peter says, "the angels desire to look into."<sup>542</sup>



The ark was carried on staves, on the Levites' shoulders; so Christ is brought to his church and people in the labours of the ministers of the gospel.

It seems, by [Jer. iii. 16, 17.](#) as if the ark were a type of the church as well as of Christ; but no wonder: the church hath such a union and communion with Christ, that almost all the same things that are predicated of Christ, are also in some sense predicated of the church. Christ is the temple of God, and so is the church; believers are said to be his temple, and they together are said to be built up a spiritual house, &c. The law is in Christ's heart, [Psal. xl.](#) As the law was in the ark, so God promises to put his law into the hearts of his people. Christ is the pearl of great price; he is the Father's treasure, his chief delight; so the church is his cabinet, and believers are his jewels. The ark represents the human nature of Christ especially, or the body of Christ, and the church is called the body of Christ.

[475] [Exod. xxv. 23-40](#) to the end. *Concerning the shew-bread table, and the golden candlestick.* These both were to stand continually in the holy place, before the veil of the holy of holies, one on the north side, and the other on the south. Each of these seems to represent both a divine person and also the church. Each represents a divine person; the shew-bread represents Christ, and was set on the south side at God's right-hand, as Christ is often represented as being set at God's right-hand in heaven, being next to God the Father in his office, and above the Holy Spirit in the economy of the persons of the Trinity. The candlestick, or at least the oil and lamp of it, represent the Holy Spirit, and is set at the left-hand of God's throne. Christ is as it were the bread of God. He is so called, [John vi. 33.](#) He is the portion of God the Father, in whom is his infinite delight and happiness, and as our Mediator and sacrifice. He is as it were the bread of God; as the ancient sacrifices, that were only typical of Christ, are often called the bread of God. This bread is called *the shew-bread*, in the Hebrew *Lechem Plannim*, *the bread of God's face*, or *presence*. So Christ, in [Isa. lxiii. 9.](#) is called *Malak phannim*, *the angel of God's face*, or *presence*. This bread had pure frankincense set on it, which undoubtedly signifies the merits of Christ, and so proves the bread, that had this pure frankincense on it, to be a type of Christ. And besides this, the bread and frankincense are called an offering made by fire unto the Lord, [Lev. xxiv. 7, 9.](#) which is another proof that this bread and incense were a type of Christ offered in sacrifice to God; the bread was prepared to be as it were the food of God, by being baked in the fire, and the frankincense, when removed for new to be set on, was probably burnt in the fire on the altar of incense. There were twelve cakes of shew-bread, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, to signify that Christ, as offered up in sacrifice to God, is offered as representing his people and church, and presenting himself to God in their name. This bread represents Christ not only as presented in the presence of God as the bread of the saints, for this bread was eaten by the priests in the temple, [Lev. xxiv. 9.](#) So Christ is often spoken of as the bread of the saints. He is the bread they will feed upon in heaven, which is the holy temple of God, where the saints are all kings and priests.

This bread also represents the church, who are spoken of not only as partaking of Christ, the divine bread, but as being themselves the bread of God, [1 Cor. x. 17](#). God's people are very often, in both the Old Testament and the New, spoken of as God's food, his fruit, his harvest, his good grain, his portion, &c. This seems to be one reason why the shew-bread was to be in twelve cakes, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, because the bread represented the church, as the twelve precious stones in the breastplate did. These loaves had frankincense set on them, to represent that God's people are not acceptable food to God, any otherwise than as rendered so by the incense of Christ's merits; the loaves of shew-bread were to be set on the table anew every sabbath, representing these several things.

1. That in God's finishing the work of redemption, or in Christ's finishing of it, when he rested from it Christ especially became the bread or sweet food of God, wherein he was refreshed; as God is said to have rested, and to have been refreshed, when ht finished the work of creation, so much more when Christ finished the work of redemption.

2. As the sabbath day especially is the day of the worship of Christ's church, so on that day especially does Christ present himself as their Mediator, and present his merits as their sweet food and incense of God to recommend them and their worship to the Father.

3. Christ is, on the sabbath day, especially set forth as the bread of his church in the preaching of the word, and administration of the sacrament. On the sabbath day, the disciples came together to break bread, and it is then especially that his saints do feed upon him, in meditation, hearing his word, and partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as the priests ate the shew-bread on the sabbath.

4. The sabbath is that time wherein especially God's people do present themselves to God as his portion through Christ.

5. The time wherein in a most eminent manner they shall be presented by Christ, and will present themselves to God as his portion, is on the time of their eternal rest (the antitype of the sabbath) in heaven.

6. This is also the time wherein they will in the highest degree feed and feast on Christ as their bread, as the priests ate the shew-bread in the temple on the sabbath.

In the golden candlestick that stood before the throne, on the left side was a representation both of the Holy Spirit and of the church. The pure oil olive that fed the lamps is indisputably a type of the Holy Ghost; and it is evident, from [Rev. iv. 5](#). compared with [chap. i. 4](#). and [v. 6](#). and [Zech. iii. 9](#). and [iv. 2, 6, 10](#). The burning of the lamp represents that divine, infinite, pure energy and ardour wherein the Holy Spirit consists. The light of the lamps filling the tabernacle with light which had no windows, and no light but of those lamps, represents the divine, blessed communication and influence of the Spirit of God, replenishing the church, and filling heaven with the light of divine knowledge in opposition to the darkness of ignorance and delusion, with the light of holiness in opposition to the darkness of sin, and with the light of comfort and joy in opposition to the darkness of sorrow and misery.



This light being communicated from a candlestick, represents the way in which these benefits are communicated to the church, *viz.* the way of God's ordinances, which are called a candlestick, [Rev. ii. 5.](#)

It is evident that the candlestick represents the church from the [4th chap. of Zech.](#) and the [1st of Rev.](#) and [Matt. v. 13, 14, 15.](#) and [1 Tim. iii. 15.](#) The matter was gold, as the church is constituted of saints, God's precious ones. The candlestick was like a tree of many branches, and bearing flowers and fruit, agreeable to the very frequent representations of the church by a tree, an olive-tree, a vine, a grain of mustard-seed that becomes a tree, the branch of the Lord, a tree whose substance is in it, &c. The continuance and propagation of the church is compared to the propagation of branches from a common stock and root, and of plants from the seed. In this candlestick, every flower is attended with a knop, apple, or pomegranate, representing a good profession attended with corresponding fruit in the true saints. Here were rows of knops and flowers one after another, beautifully representing the saints' progress in religious attainments, their going from strength to strength. Such is the nature of true grace and holy fruit, that it bears flowers that promise a further degree of fruit, the flower having in it the principles of new fruit; and by this progress in holiness, the saint comes to shine as a light in the world. The fruit that succeeds the uppermost flower, is the burning and shining lamp, representing several things:

1. That the fruit of a true saint, or his good works and holy life, is as it were a light by which he shines before men, [Matt. v. 13, 14, 15.](#)
2. That in a way of holy practice, and by progress in holiness, the saints obtain the light of spiritual comfort.
3. That in the way of going from strength to strength, and making progress in holiness, they come at last to the light of glory.

The lamps were fed wholly by oil constantly supplied from the olive-tree, representing that the saints' holiness, good fruits, and comfort, are wholly by the Spirit of God, constantly flowing from Christ. The oil that was burnt in the lamps before God, was an offering to God; so God is the prime object of the grace and holiness of the saints, their divine love flows out chiefly to him, as Mary's precious ointment was poured on the head of Christ, but ran down to the skirts of his garments. Their good works are acceptable sacrifices to God through Christ, and are not of the nature of Christian works, if not offered to God, as if there be nothing of a gracious respect to God in them. The saints' light shines before God, their gracious and holy practices are pleasant to him, and of great price in his sight, as the light is sweet; and the light shone around and filled the temple, as the odour of Mary's box of ointment filled the house. The inhabitants of the temple had the benefit of the light of the candlestick, as the saints of God have especially the benefit of the good works of the saints.



The propagation of the church through successive generations is sometimes represented in Scripture by the gradual growing of a tree, and shooting forth its branches. And when the church is represented as bringing forth fruit as a tree, by her fruit is sometimes meant her children, or converts; and therefore one thing that may be intended by fruit and flowers succeeding one another in this candlestick, may be the continuance of the church and gradual increase, her bringing forth fruit, and that in order to the bringing forth more fruit, until she hath reached the latter-day glory, when God shall bring forth her righteousness as the light, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth; then shall she come to a state of glorious light, of truth, knowledge, holiness, and joy.

[143] [Exod. xxviii. 30.](#) “And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment, the Urim,” &c. Called the breastplate of judgment, because in matters of judgment that were too hard for the judges, they were to come to the priest, who was to inquire of God by Urim and Thummim, in the breastplate, for a determination, according to [Deut. xvii. 8, 9.](#)

[476] [Exod. xxx. 7, 8.](#) When the high priest lighted and dressed the lamp, then was he to burn incense on the golden altar of incense; signifying; that the sweet and infinitely acceptable incense of Christ’s merits was by the Holy Spirit signified by the lamp, (see No. 475.) It was by the eternal Spirit that Christ offered up himself without spot to God. It was by the Holy Spirit many ways. It was by the Holy Spirit that the human nature of Christ was united to the divine Logos, from which union arises the infinite value of his blood and righteousness. It was by the eternal Spirit that Christ performed righteousness. It was by the Spirit of God that Christ was perfectly holy, and performed perfect righteousness. It was by the Holy Spirit not only that his obedience was perfect, but performed with such transcendent love. It was by this Spirit that his sacrifice of himself was sanctified, being an offering to God in the pure and fervent flame of divine love which burnt in his heart, as well as in the flame of God’s vindictive justice and wrath into which he was cast. And it was by this that his obedience and sacrifice were offered with such a love to his people, for whom he died, as implied a perfect union with them, whereby it was accepted for them.

[441] [Exod. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxiv.](#) There are many things in the circumstances of this second giving of the law that we have an account of in these chapters, that are arguments that these two transactions did represent the two great transactions of God with mankind in the covenant of works and covenant of grace.

It was in this last covenanting of God with the people, especially, that Moses appeared as a mediator, to which the apostle has respect, [Gal. iii. 19.](#) It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator, when the people had broken the covenant given at first with thunder and lightning; the law then was made use of as a school-master to convince them of sin. God threatened to leave them, and not go up with them, and when the people were overwhelmed by it, and mourned when they heard the evil tidings, God then further awakened them and terrified them, sending such a message as this to them, “Ye are a stiff-necked

people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee; therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.” Thus this awful threatening was given forth with some hope and encouragement that peradventure they might live, given in that last clause, *that I may know what to do unto thee*. By thus applying the terrors of the law, God brought the people to put off their ornaments, which were typical of their own righteousness. [chap. xxxiii. 5, 6.](#)

Moses now acted as a mediator, and not merely as an intermessenger, as he did in the first giving of the law. He offers his life for theirs; he offers up himself to be accursed and blotted out of God’s book for them, after he had told the people that they had sinned a great sin, and peradventure he should make atonement for their sin, which is to do the part of a mediator. See [chap. xxxii. 30, 31, 32.](#)

On this occasion, the Lord speaks to Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend, when he came to speak to God in behalf of the people; well representing the intercourse of our Mediator with the Father, [chap. xxxiii. 11.](#) And on this occasion God made all his goodness pass before Moses, and proclaimed himself “the Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity,” &c. [Chap. xxxiii. 19.](#) and [xxxix. 5, 6, 7.](#)

The covenant the first time was written on tables that were the workmanship of God, as the soul and heart of man in innocency was; which workmanship of God was destroyed by man’s apostacy: so, upon the children of Israel’s apostacy, Moses brake the tables that were the workmanship of God. The covenant now was written in tables that were the workmanship of Moses, the mediator, as the law of God after the fall is written in the fleshly tables of the heart renewed by Christ.

God promises, that in fulfilment of the covenant he now the last time enters into with his people, he will do wonders, such as have not been done in all the earth, and that all the people should see the work of the Lord. So God in the way of the new covenant that he entered into with Christ, did those great things by Christ in the work of redemption which are so often spoken of in Scripture as being so exceeding wonderful.

God made this covenant with Moses, the typical Mediator, as the head and representative of the people, and with the people in him or under him as his people, that he showed mercy to for his sake. [Chap. xxxiv. 27.](#) “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with *thee* and with Israel;” and [verse 10.](#) “Behold, I make a covenant before all *thy* people; I will do marvellously.”

Before Moses came down from the mount in wrath with the tables broken; so Christ comes as God’s Messenger to execute wrath for the breaking of the covenant of works. Now he comes down with the tables of the testimony in his hand, with his face shining. This being typical of the light of grace with which Christ’s face shines in God’s Israel. See Note on [Exod. xxxii. 19.](#) and [xxxiii. 1.](#)

[404] [Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15](#). “And he said, My presence shall go with thee (in the original Greek or Hebrew ). And he said, if thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence.” Hence probably the heathen Pan and Faunus, the god of shepherds the shepherds were the Israelites that were by the Egyptians called the shepherds, because a shepherd was a strange thing in their country. Hence Pan is supposed to be one of Bacchus’s principal commanders, because *God’s presence* is here promised to be with Moses and the people, to help them in their wars. And Pan going with Bacchus to war, is said to have put astonishing fears on all their enemies, which arises from the great terrors with which the God of Israel (whose shepherd) brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, with which he terrified the Egyptians and Israel themselves, and all nations, by what appeared when God gave the law; and so the great terrors sent into the hearts of their enemies in Canaan, so very often spoken of. See [Gen. xxxv. 5](#). [Exod. xv. 14, 15, 16](#). [Deut. ii. 25](#). and [xi. 25](#). [xxxiv. 12](#). and [Josh. ii. 9](#). and [Exod. xxxiv. 10](#). and [Ps. cvi. 22](#). [Deut. vii. 27](#). and [x. 17, 21](#). [xxvi. 8](#). [Exod. xxiii. 27](#). God never manifested himself so much to the heathen nation in his awful terrors, as he did in the affair of leading Israel as their shepherd out of Egypt through the wilderness into Canaan, and settling them there. Those fears and terrors are spoken of as from the presence of the Lord. [Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8](#). “O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah: The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence, Greek or Hebrew, of the Lord, (the Pan or Faunus of the heathen,) even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of the God of Israel,” (the shepherds,) and [Ps. xcvi. 4, 5](#). “His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the *presence* of the Lord, at the *presence* of the Lord of the whole earth.” For terror and trembling is often spoken of as what properly arises from the presence of the Lord. [Isa. lxiv. 1-3](#). “O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations might tremble at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.” So [Isa. xix. 1](#). [Jer. v. 22](#). [Ezek. xxxviii. 20](#). Whence that proverbial expression, *panic fears*. Bochart says that *Faunus* among the Latins is the same god, and of the same original, with *Pan*. Pan is said to be an Egyptian god, to come up with Bacchus (*i. e.* Moses) to fight against the giants. That which God promised Moses when he said, “my presence shall go with thee,” was *his Son*; the same with *the angel of his presence*, spoken of [Isa. lxiii](#). and therefore when Christ was crucified. Hence the relation of Plutarch touching the mourning of the demoniac spirits for the death of their great god, Pan, and the ceasing of their oracles thereupon. Bochart says, “The Hebrew Greek or Hebrew, *Pan, one that is struck, or strikes with astonishing fears*.” See Court of Gen. p. 1. b. 2. c. 6, 7, 70,71.



[266] *Exod. xxxiii. 18-23.* Moses, when he beseeches God to show him his glory, seems to have respect to a visible glory; something to be seen with his bodily eyes, yet not exclusive of an inward sweet sense of those glorious perfections, of which the external glory by which God manifests himself is a semblance, which was wont to accompany the external discoveries of divine glory that God made to the prophets, the external glory being made by the Spirit of God accompanying being made a means of a sense of the spiritual glory, as the music of a song of praise is the means of a sense of the excellency of divine things. But by the context it is manifest that it was a visible glory that Moses had a most immediate respect to. Moses seems to have apprehended from what he had seen of the visible manifestations which God had made of himself to him; and it may be from the apprehensions which other holy men before him had entertained concerning God, from what God had revealed to them; that there was some transcendent external majesty and beauty, some immensely sweet and ravishing brightness, the sight of which would exceedingly fill the soul with delight, that was immensely above all that he had yet seen. And God, in his answer to Moses, and in what he did in compliance with his request, seems to allow Moses's apprehension to be just, which probably was because it was God's design to all eternity to appear to the bodily eyes of his saints in such an external glory in the person of Christ God man; and Moses's acquired right from the visible manifestations of an external glory which God had often made. These were indeed an intimation that there was such a transcendent external glory in some sort belonging to God, even to the second person of the Trinity, in that it was established in God's gracious decree and eternal agreement of the persons of the Trinity; on the foot of which establishment were all God's proceedings with the church of Israel, that Christ should everlastingly be united to an external nature, and in that be manifested to his church in an external glory. The external manifestations which he had made of himself to Moses and other holy men, were presages and prelibations of this. Moses longed to see and enjoy that of which they were specimens and prelibations. Christ is the glory of God in his image, and no man hath seen God at any time, but it is he that always manifested himself by visible appearances. God granted to Moses to see something of this glorious brightness, as he passed by, so much from a view as it were of his back, but not of his face. Probably this, as he passed by in a visible form, shone with an ineffably sweet and glorious brightness, far exceeding all the brightness that is ever seen in the world, for glory and delightfulness. (Vid. No. 265.) But God tells him that he cannot see his face, for no man should see him and live; *i. e.* not only could they not see that spiritual glory in which he manifests himself in heaven; but there is evidently a respect to an external glory: no man should see that external glory of God's face, in which God intended to manifest himself to his saints in heaven to all eternity, in the face of Jesus Christ.

*Corol.* Hence the glory of Christ at his transfiguration was not that glory in which the human nature of Christ appears in heaven, and especially that in which it will appear after

the day of judgment; only a shadow and faint resemblance of it; for that glory, God says, is such as no man can see and live; and so, of the appearances of Christ's visible glory that Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the apostle Paul, and the apostle John had.

[267] [Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19.](#) "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." Moses, from his finding his great acceptance and favour with God in the power that his prayers and intercessions had with him, so as it were to appease God's wrath against the congregation of Israel, which was so great for their making the golden calf; and from his obtaining, by prayer, the promise of so great a favour as that God's presence should go with them, which promise was made with this gracious declaration made of God's favour to him; "For thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name;" and from God having in all this spoken to Moses, as a man speaks to his friend: this great mercy of God to him has two effects on Moses.

1. It gives him a sense of God's excellency and glory, especially the excellency of his mercy and free goodness from this manifestation of it to him and his people after their great sin, and makes him long for a full sight of the glory of so excellent and good a being.

2. It encourages him to ask for this exceeding great mercy of seeing God's glory. God's mercy and favour being so very great in past instances, encourages him to ask yet farther and more exceeding favour; and we do not find that God rebukes Moses as being too forward and presumptuous in such a request, or as not being content with so great mercy as he had received already, but on the contrary seems to manifest an approbation of his making such an improvement of mercy already received, for he grants his request so far as is consistent with his present state. Several things are observable, concerning the manner of God's showing Moses his glory, wherein, though it was extraordinary, it is agreeable to the manner of God's discovering himself to the souls of his people in this world.

1. It was not face to face, which is reserved for the heavenly state; [1 Cor. xiii. 12.](#); but it was as it were a view of *the back* instead of the face.

2. It was as *passing by*. Herein is a great difference in the manner in which the saints have the discoveries of God's glory, and that wherein they shall see him hereafter. Hereafter they shall dwell in his presence, they shall be fixed in an everlasting view of the glory of God, their eye shall be perpetually feasted with a full vision of his face; but here, when the saints have extraordinary discoveries of the glory of God, they are transient and short; sometimes it is only a glance; Christ stands behind the wall for the most part, and when he shows himself it is through the lattice as passing by a window, but hereafter they shall be in his presence-chamber with him. Here the saints see God as passing by before them, and then he is gone.



3. Hereby is properly represented how imperfect are the spiritual discoveries which the saints have of God here. They see God as it were when he is gone by, they have somewhat of a sight of him, but yet very imperfect, as of the back of one that is just gone by, giving of them a sense that he is indeed an infinitely glorious being if they could but have a full sight of him: they can see so much as to give an idea of what might be seen, if they could but come at it. They seem to be as it were on the borders of seeing it, and their appetite is excited to see it; but while they are admiring and longing, and reaching after it, it is gone and passed away.

4. The discovery of God's spiritual glory is not by immediate intuition, but the word of God is the medium by which it is discovered: it is by God's proclaiming his name. So God reveals himself to the saints in this world, by proclaiming his name in the joyful sound of the gospel.

5. It is by causing his goodness to pass before him, which is agreeable to the way in which God discovers himself to his saints by the gospel, which in a peculiar manner is a manifestation of the glory of divine grace or goodness. Divine grace is the leading attribute in that discovery, which God makes of his glory by the gospel, wherein God's goodness is revealed more than any; wherein, and wherein especially, it is revealed as free and sovereign; and which is another thing that is a peculiar glory of the gospel, it is a mutation of free and infinite grace, as consistent with strict justice in punishing the Son; and therefore both are mentioned together in that proclamation God makes of his name to Moses, as in the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses of the following chapter.

6. While God draws nigh to Moses, and he is in God's presence, Moses is commanded to hide himself in the clefts of the rocks, that God may not be a consuming fire to him, and that he may be secured from destruction, while the burning blaze of God's glory passes by, (as Watts expresses himself,) which typifies the same Redeemer who is as the munition of rocks, and as a strong rock, and the hiding-place of his people; who is compared to a great rock to secure from the burning heat of the sun by its shadow, and was typified by the rock out of which water was fetched for the children of Israel. God's people can be secured from destruction when they are in the presence of God, and in his approaches and converse, no other way than by being in Christ, and sheltered by him from being consumed by the flames of God's pure and spotless holiness.

7. God covered him with his hand while he passed by, not only that he might not see more of the glory of God than he could bear, but also that his deformity and pollution might not be discovered, to bring on him destruction from the presence of that infinitely pure and holy God, and from the glory of that power that passed by. So in Jesus, God covers our deformity and pollution, he beholds not iniquity in Jacob, nor sees pollution in Israel; he turns away his eye from beholding our transgression; therefore it is that we are not consumed in our intercourse with God.

8. Moses beholds God's glory through a crevice of the rock, as through a window at which he looked out; which represents the manner of God's discovering himself to his people in this world, which is as standing behind a wall and showing himself through the lattice.

Another reason why God makes all his goodness to pass before Moses, seems to be, that this was the attribute that God had wonderfully been exercising towards Moses, and the congregation of Israel, whereby Moses was now especially affected with that attribute, and especially longed to see the glory of it, as was before observed. And at the same time God tells Moses that he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom he will show mercy, because he had wonderfully manifested the sovereignty of his mercy in forgiving, as he had done, a people that had so exceedingly transgressed as the congregation of Israel had done in making the golden calf; and also that Moses might not be lifted up by God's bestowing such unspeakable favours on him as he had done, and now promised to do in answer to his request, but might be sensible that it was not for his worthiness, but his own sovereign pleasure. And another reason is, that the glory of God's goodness is that part of God's glory, of which such a poor, feeble, corrupt creature as man is can best bear the sight, while he lives and remains such; for it is the most mild and gentle attribute, and the manifestation of it affords a cordial and support to enable him to bear it.



[88] [Levit. xii. 6.](#) “She shall bring a young pigeon or a turtle dove;” which typifies repentance as well as love. [Ezek. vii. 16.](#) “They shall be as doves in the valleys, each one mourning for his iniquity.” This is a proper sacrifice for original sin that the child brought into the world with it by the parents’ means, a sacrifice both for the parents’ and children’s sin.

[204] [Levit. xxiii. 34, 35, 36.](#) [Matt. i.](#) [Luke ii.](#) *The feast of tabernacles The birth of Christ Lord’s day.* Bedford, in his Scripture Chronology, makes it appear exceeding probable that Christ was born on the feast of tabernacles; as also Mather on the Types. And besides what Mr. Mather on the Types observes of this feast, and of the time of Christ’s birth, there are the following things observed by Mr. Bedford.

1. He shows that in this month, about the same time of the year that Christ was born, the world was created; thus the beginning of the new creation and the old, the creation of the first Adam and the second, are at the same time of year.

2. That Moses, this type of Christ, came down from mount Sinai, which was a type of heaven, on the first day of this month, and declared that God was appeased, and the people pardoned, and his face shone as if the divinity had inhabited the manhood, so that the Israelites could not look upon him; and he then gave directions that they should immediately set about building the tabernacle, (which was hitherto hindered by, and because of, the golden calf,) seeing that God would now dwell among them, and forsake them no more: upon this the people bring their offerings, which were viewed and found to be sufficient. And then immediately they pitch their tents, knowing that they were not to depart from that place before the divine tabernacle was finished. And thus they set about this great work with all their might, at this time of the year. Hence the fifteenth day of this month, and seven days after, were appointed for the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, when God dwelt in the midst of them.

3. That Christ was not only born at the feast of tabernacles, and so circumcised on the last day, or eighth day of that feast, which was a great day, and probably appointed out of respect to the circumcision of Christ that was to be on that day; but also that the feast of tabernacles in which Christ was born fell out on the first day of the week, and so the eighth day of the feast, on which he was circumcised, also fell on the same day of the week.

4. That the feast of the dedication of the temple of Solomon, (which was a type of the body of Christ, as well as the tabernacle,) was not only held on the feast of tabernacles, the feast on which Christ was born; but also that that feast happened to be on a Sunday, as the day of Christ’s birth was, and so the last and great day of the feast was also held on a Sunday. Vide Scripture Chronology, book iv. chap. iv.

5. I would further observe, that on that day the Godhead did, in a sensible manner, descend in a pillar of cloud, to inherit the temple, as in the incarnation of Christ, the Godhead descended to dwell in flesh. See No. 396. Note on [Zech. xiv. 16.](#), &c.

[315] [Num. x. 10.](#) *Concerning the festival of the new moon.* The change of the moon at her conjunction with the sun, seems to be a type of three things.



1. Of the resurrection of the church from the dead by virtue of her union with Christ, and at the coming of Christ; for the moon at her change, that lost all her light, and was extinct, and seemed to die, revives again after her conjunction with the sun.

2. Of the conversion of every believing soul, which is its spiritual resurrection. The soul in its conversion comes to Christ, and closes with Christ, as the moon comes to the sun, into a conjunction with him. The soul in conversion dies to sin, and to the world, crucifies the flesh with the affections and lusts, dies as to its own worthiness, or righteousness, whereby it is said in Scripture to be dead to the law, that it may receive new life, as the former light of the moon is extinct at its conjunction with the sun that it may receive new light. In order to our coming to Christ aright, we must not come with our own brightness and glory, with any of our own fulness, strength, light, or righteousness, or happiness, but as stripped of all our glory, empty of all good, wholly dark, sinful, destitute, and miserable. As the moon is wholly divested of all her light at her conjunction with the sun, we must come to Christ as wholly sinful and miserable, as the moon comes to the sun in total darkness. The moon as it comes nearer the sun grows darker and darker; so the soul, the more it is fitted for Christ, is more and more emptied of itself that it may be filled with Christ. The moon grows darker and darker in her approach to the sun; so the soul sees more and more of its own sinfulness, and vileness, and misery, that it may be swallowed up in the rays of the Sun of righteousness.

3. The change of the moon at her conjunction with the sun, signifies the change of the state and administration of the church at the coming of Christ.

The sun is sometimes eclipsed in his conjunction with the moon, which signifies two things: *vis.*

1. The veiling of his glory by his incarnation; for as the sun has his light veiled by his conjunction with the moon in its darkness, so Christ had his glory veiled by his conjunction or union with our nature in its low and broken state: as the moon proves a veil to hide the glory of the sun, so the flesh of Christ was a veil that hid his divine glory.

2. It signifies his death. The sun is sometimes totally eclipsed by the moon at her change; so Christ died at the time of the change of the church, from the old dispensation to the new. The sun is eclipsed at his conjunction with the moon in her darkness; so Christ, taking our nature upon him in his low and broken state, died in it. Christ assumed his church and people, in their guilt and misery, and in their condemned, cursed, dying state, into a very close union with him, so as to become one with him; and hereby he takes their guilt on himself, and becomes subject to their sin, their curse, their death, yea, is made a curse for

them; as the sun as it were assumes the moon in her total darkness into a close union with himself, so as to become one with her, they become concentred, and become as it were one body circumscribed by the same circumference, and thereby he takes her darkness on himself, and becomes himself dark with her darkness, and is extinct in his union with her. The moon, that receives all her light from the sun, eclipses the sun, and takes away his light. So Christ was put to death by those that he came to save; he is put to death by the iniquities of those that he came to give life to, and he was immediately crucified by the hands of some of them, and all of them have pierced him in the disposition and tendency of that sin that they have been guilty of; for all have manifested and expressed a mortal enmity against him. It is an argument that the eclipse of the sun is a type of Christ's death, because the sun suffered a total eclipse miraculously at that time that Christ died.

The sun can be in a total eclipse but a very little while, much less than the moon, though neither of them can always be in an eclipse; so Christ could not, by reason of his divine glory and worthiness, be long held of death, in no measure so long as the saints may be, though it is not possible that either of them should always be held of it.

The sun's coming out of his eclipse is a figure of Christ's resurrection from the dead. As the sun is restored to light, so the moon, that eclipsed him, begins to receive light from him, and so to partake of his restored light. So the church, for whose sins Christ died, and who has pierced Christ, rises with Christ, is begotten again to a living hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is made partaker of the life and power of his resurrection, and of the glory of his exaltation, is raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in him. They live; yet not they, but Christ lives in them, and they are married to him that is risen from the dead. God having raised Christ, Christ quickens them who were totally dark and dead in trespasses and sins, and they are revived by God's power, according to the exceeding greatness of his power that wrought in Christ Jesus, when he raised him from the dead.

The moon is eclipsed when at its full in its greatest glory, which may signify several things.

1. That God is wont to bring some great calamity on his visible church, when in its greatest glory and prosperity, as he did in the Old-Testament church, in the height of its glory in David and Solomon's times, by David's adultery and murder, and those sore calamities that followed in his family, and to all Israel, in the affairs of Amnon, and especially Absalom, and in the idolatry of Solomon, and the sore calamities that followed, and particularly the dividing the kingdom of Israel. So he did also on the church of the New Testament after Constantine, by the Arian heresy, &c. God doth thus to stain the pride of all glory, and that his people may not lift up themselves against him, that he alone may be exalted.

2. That it is often God's manner to bring some grievous calamity on his saints, at times when they have received the greatest light and joys, and have been most exalted with smiles

of heaven upon them; as Jacob was made lame at the same time that he was admitted to so extraordinary a privilege as wrestling with God, and overcoming him, and so obtaining the blessing. And so Paul, when he was received up to the third heaven, received a thorn in the flesh, lest he should be exalted above measure, he had a messenger of Satan to buffet him; so grievous a calamity it was that he laboured under, that he besought the Lord thrice that it might be taken from him. Sometimes extraordinary light and comfort is given to fit for great calamities, and sometimes for death, which God brings soon after such things; so when God gives his own people great temporal prosperity, he is wont to bring with it some calamity to eclipse it, to keep them from being exalted in their prosperity, and trusting in it.

[337] [Numb. xi. 10, 11, 12.](#), &c. “Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent, and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly. Moses also was displeased; and Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant, and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people; have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?” [Ver. 15.](#) “If thou deal thus with me, kill me out of hand, and let me not see my wretchedness.” Moses, though God gives this testimony concerning him, that he was very meek above all men upon the face of the earth, yet could not bear the perverseness of the congregation of God’s people. How much therefore does Christ’s meekness go beyond that of Moses! Moses was not willing to bear the burden of all that people upon him; but Christ, the angel of God’s presence, is willing to bear them all with all their frowardness and perverseness. Moses said, “Have I conceived this people, have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth a sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?” But Christ willingly thus carries his people in his bosom unto the promised land, for they are his children; he has begotten them, and he never casts them off for their frowardness; he willingly obeys his Father when he commands him, saying, Carry this people, &c. [Isa. lxiii. 8, 9.](#) “For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction, he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” [Deut. i. 31.](#) “And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son in all the way that he went, until ye came into this place.” [Isa. xl. 11.](#) “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead, those that are with young.” Moses said, *Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?* but Christ was willingly afflicted and tormented for the sake of a perverse people, his enemies. Moses desired to be killed, to be delivered from the burden of bearing the people to the land of promise, rather than bear it. But such

was Christ's love to them, that he desired to be killed that he might bear them to the land of promise.

[118] [Numb. xii. 6, 7, 8.](#) "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make known myself to him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream: my servant Moses is not so; with him will I speak apparently, and not in dark speeches." It is evident from this that it was God's common manner to speak to the prophets in words that they did not understand themselves. Therefore, in reading the prophets, we read not such an interpretation as would be natural for the prophets themselves to put upon the prophecy; for the Holy Ghost spake in what words he pleased to employ, and meant what he pleased, without revealing his meaning to the prophets. The prophecy of Scripture is not of a private interpretation, but they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

[307] [Numb. xix.](#) The ashes of the red heifer of which was made the water of separation for the purification of those that were legally unclean. This heifer, being a female, doubtless does more directly signify the church of Christ, than Christ himself. She was a heifer without spot, having no blemish, because it was the church of saints that are pure and upright ones, those that are not defiled with any pollution, showing hypocrisy, or want of evangelical perfection; they are Israelites indeed in whom is no guile, and those in whom God does not behold iniquity or see perverseness. The slaying and burning of this heifer signifies the sufferings and persecutions of the church of Christ, and the fiery trial which she was to undergo. The persecutions of the church of Christ have mainly been carried on by burning. The purifying with the ashes of this heifer, signifies that the church and people of God should be purified by her sufferings, and as it were by the ashes of the martyrs. The purifying of God's people, and taking away their sins, and refining them as silver, and making them which, is often declared to be the end of the suffering and persecutions of God's people, and it is the way in which it pleased God to lay the foundation of the purity of his church, *viz.* by continuing it for many ages under extreme persecutions, first under the tyranny of Rome heathen, and nextly under antichrist, and so to fill up, as the apostle expresses himself, what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ: for Christ does as it were suffer in his members, in all their affliction he is afflicted; the church is his body, and in this sense the slaying and burning this heifer represents the sufferings of Christ, as they represent the sufferings of his people, whereby they are made conformable to Christ's death, and partakers of his sufferings. It pleases God to lay the foundation of the spiritual purity and prosperity of his church, in the first place, in his eldest Son, even Jesus Christ, and secondarily in the blood of the martyrs, Christ's younger brethren, that are as it were God's youngest son. See Notes on Joshua's prophecy concerning the rebuilding of Jericho.

This was not to be a cow, but a heifer, and also without spot or blemish, which is very agreeable to the description that is given of the church of Christ in Revelation, in the time of their persecution. [Rev. xiv. 4, 5.](#) "These are they which were not defiled with women, for

they are virgins And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

And it must be a red heifer, which signifies the militant state the church is in under those sufferings, conflicting with her enemies. The colour red, is often so used in Scripture. So Christ, while he is warring with his enemies, is represented as being red in his apparel, [Isa. lxiii.](#) and as being clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, [Rev. xix. 3.](#) So God’s saints are clothed in red until they have got through their sufferings, and are in a triumphant state; then they are represented as having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, [Rev. vii. 14.](#)

It was to be a heifer on which never had come yoke; which most fitly represents the Spirit and practice of God’s true church in the time of persecution from her enemies, which refuses to submit to the yoke, that they would oppose whatever cruelties they exercise them with. She will not call any man on earth master or lord will not be subject to their impositions will not forsake the commands of God, nor be subject to the commandments of men will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth will not worship the beast, nor his image, nor receive his mark in their forehead, nor in their hand. They stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, not submitting to the yoke of bondage, [Gal. v. 1.](#)

This heifer was sacrificed to God; so are the martyrs represented as sacrificed. They offer up themselves a sacrifice to God through the Holy Spirit, and the souls of the martyrs are represented as souls under the altar. She was to be burnt without the camp, as the martyrs, especially those suffering under antichrist, are rejected and cast out of the communion of their persecutors, as not being of the church of Christ.

Her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with the dung, were to be burnt: the suffering of the martyrs burns up their carnality and corruption, and cleanses all their filthiness.

The peculiar use of the ashes of the red heifer was to purge from pollutions by dead bodies. So the use for which God designs the suffering and persecutions of his church, is to rouse his people from coldness and deadness in religion, and from carnality, and worldly or fleshly mindedness, whereby some become as dead carcasses; for he or she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while he liveth. Carnal things are well compared to dead carcasses, for they are fleshly, and they are filthy and loathsome like stinking flesh.

[73] [Numb. xxiii. 23.](#) “According to this time shall it be said of Jacob, and of Israel, What hath God wrought?” That is, God shall do a very strange and wonderful thing for Jacob and for Israel. Such interrogations denote the wonderfulness of the thing about which the interrogation is, as [Isa. lxiii.](#) “Who is this that cometh from Edom?” &c. And [Ps. xxv.](#) “Who is this King of glory?” See Notes on that Psalm. “According to this time;” that is, what he hath done at this time, is a shadow and representation of it. He hath now redeemed out of Egypt, with the strength of an unicorn, and there is no enchantment against him, as in the words

immediately foregoing; and hereafter he shall send Jesus Christ to redeem them out of spiritual Egypt; with a greater strength shall he redeem them from the power of the devil.

[418] **Numb. xxiv. 17.** “And shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.” It would be unreasonable on many accounts to suppose that this *Sheth* is the same with *Seth* the son of Adam, and so that by the children of Sheth is meant all mankind. But the Sheth here mentioned is a founder of one of the chief families of the Moabites; probably one of the sons of Moab. The father of the people called from him *Shittim*, as the posterity of *Heth* are in Scripture from him called *Hittim*, which we translate Hittites; whence that part of the land where those people dwelt was called *Shittim*, which was the part of that land in which the people now were, where Balaam beheld them when he blessed them; he beheld them in the inheritance of the people of *Sheth*, or the land of the *Shittim*, or *Shittites*, as appears by the first verse of the next chapter, and **Josh. ii. 1.** and **iii. 1.** and **Mic. vi. 1.** All that renders this doubtful is, that the radical letters in *Seth* and *Shittim* are not the same, as in one is Greek or Hebrew, and the other Greek or Hebrew

[468] **Deut. vi. 13.** “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and swear by his name.” It might have been rendered swearing in the name, or into the name, in the original *Bishmo*. And the thing chiefly intended here by it seems to be, the making that public, solemn profession of faith in the name of God, of being the Lord’s, and being dedicated to his honour and glory, and that covenanting and avowing to be the Lord’s, and serve him, that is very often in Scripture called by the name of swearing. A public profession of religion has respect to two things.

It has respect to something present, *viz.* their belief, or faith: this is the profession God’s people make of their faith. It has respect also to something future, *viz.* their future behaviour in the promises or vows that are made in a public profession.

It is evident that the profession that is made in the latter, *viz.* in the promises and vows of the covenant, is often called swearing; but the profession that is made in the former, which relates to their faith, is a no less solemn profession. In the public profession they make of religion, they profess what is present with the same solemnity as they promise what is future. They declare what their faith is with the same solemnity with which they declare their intentions. Both are declared with an oath one an assertory oath, and the other a promissory oath; and the whole profession is called swearing in, or into, the name of the Lord. In the former part of it, they swear their faith in the name of the Lord, and swear that they are God’s; that their hearts are his, and for him. In the latter part they swear to live to his honour and glory, which is often called his name. And by the whole they appear by their profession to be God’s people, which in Scripture is often expressed by being called by God’s name; and so by this swearing they come into the name of God, as persons when they make profession of religion by baptism, are said to be baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The former part of this profession of religion, viz. the profession of faith in God, is called saying, or swearing, the Lord liveth. [Jer. v. 2.](#) “And though they say, The Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely.” They have sworn by them that are no God, *i. e.* had openly professed idol worship. [Chap. iv. 2.](#) “And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.” That this saying that the Lord liveth was in their profession of faith in the true God in the public profession they made of his name, is confirmed by [Jer. xlv. 26.](#) “Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord liveth:” *i. e.* they shall never any more make any profession of the true God, and true religion, but shall be wholly given up to heathenism. And [Jer. xiii. 16.](#) “And it shall come to pass if they will diligently learn the way of my people, to swear by my name, The Lord liveth, as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then shall they be built in the midst of my people.” Here is a promise to the heathen, that if they would forsake their heathenism and turn to the true God, and the true religion, and make an open and good profession of that, they should be received into the visible church of God. [Jer. xvi. 14, 15.](#) “Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of the north:” *i. e.* God’s people, in their public profession of their faith, shall not so much insist on the redemption out of Egypt, as on a much greater redemption that shall hereafter be accomplished. We have the same again. [Jer. xxiii. 7, 8.](#) [Hos. iv. 15.](#) “Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye into Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven, nor swear, The Lord liveth.”

This has respect to that public profession of religion which the ten tribes made at Bethel, (here called Bethaven,) the place of their public worship before the calf that was set up there, by which they pretended to worship Jehovah. [Amos viii. 14.](#) “They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth.” They had also places of public worship at Dan (where was one of their calves) and at Beersheba. See [chap. v. 5.](#)

The words, *Jehovah liveth*, summarily comprehended that which they professed in their public profession of religion. They signified hereby their belief of a dependence upon that all-sufficiency and faithfulness that is implied in the name Jehovah, which will appear by the consideration of the following places, [Josh. iii. 10.](#) “Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you.” [1 Sam. xvii. 26.](#) “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” [Ver. 36.](#) “Seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.” [2 Kings xix. 4.](#) “It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God.” Also [ver. 16.](#) and [Isa. xxxvii. 4.](#) “The stock is a doctrine of vanities But the Lord is the true God (Heb. the God of truth).



He is the living God.” “He is the living God, and stedfast for ever.” “The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.” So 2 Sam. xxii. 47. Other places showing that by Jehovah’s living and being the living God, is meant his being all-sufficient and immutable, and faithful. Gen. xvi. 49. Deut. v. 26. Josh. iii. 10. compared with Exod. iii. 14. and vi. 3. with the context. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36. 2 Kings xix. 4, 16. Ps. xlii. 2. and lxxxiv. 2. Isa. xxxvii. 4. Jer. x. 10. with the context. Jer. xxiii. 36. Hos. i. 10. 2 Sam. xxii. 47. Ps. xviii. 46. Job xix. 25. Matt. xvi. 16. John vi. 69. Acts xiv. 15. Rom. ix. 26. 2 Cor. iii. 3. and vi. 16. 1 Tim. iii. 15. and iv. 10. and vi. 17. Heb. x. 31. and xii. 22.

The things professed in a public profession of religion are two, faith and obedience. The faith that was professed, was called believing in God and believing in the name of God (*Beshem*, with the prefix *Beth*). Gen. xv. 6. “And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Exod. xiv. 31. “And the people believed the Lord” (in the original believed in the Lord). 2 Kings xvii. 14. “Did not believe in the Lord their God.” 2 Chron. xx. 20. “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established.” Ps. lxxviii. 22. “They believe not in God.” Dan. vi. 23. “Because he believed in his God.” The other thing is a believing obedience. This is called a walking in the name of God (still with the same prefix *Beth*). Mic. iv. 5. “All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in *the name* (*Beshem*) of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” And that solemn professing or swearing wherein both these were professed by a like idiom of speech, was called a swearing in the name (*Beshem*) of the Lord.

Agreeably to this way of speaking, in the New Testament, when persons solemnly profess the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and are devoted to them in their baptism, they are said to be baptized *in the name* of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Making a public profession of religion or of faith in God, is often called making mention (*Zakar*) of the Lord, or of the name of the Lord; and this in the original commonly is making mention *in the Lord*, or *in the name of the Lord*, with the prefix *Beth*, as they are said to swear *in the name of the Lord*. Thus, Amos vi. 10. “Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord,” (in the original *Beshem*, *in the name*,) *i. e.* we may not make profession of our God, being under the dominion of the heathen. Ps. xx. 7. “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God;” in the original, we will remember or make mention (for the word is the same as before) *in the name of the Lord our God*, with the prefix *Beth*, *i. e.* we will openly profess and declare our faith and trust in the Lord, &c. Isa. xxvi. 13. “O Lord, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee (*Beka*, *in thee*) only will we make mention of thy name, *i. e.* we will forsake all other lords, and renounce our profession of idolatry, and profess and worship thee alone. They that professed the worship of false gods, are said to make mention *in their name*. Hos. ii. 17. “I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered (or mentioned, for still the word is the same) by their name,”

(*Bishmain, in their name,*) *i. e.* their name and worship shall no more be professed. So [Josh.](#)

[xxiii. 7.](#) neither make mention of the name (in the original, *in the name*) of their gods, nor swear by them.

This abundantly confirms that swearing by or in a God, signifies what was done in the public profession of his name and worship, which is signified by making mention in his name. This also may evidently appear in [Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.](#) “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which *swear by the name (Beshem, in the name)* of the Lord, and *make mention* of the God (*Belohei, in the God*) of Israel, but not in truth and in righteousness, for they call themselves of the holy city.” By their profession they were visibly of the church of God, were called by the name of Israel, and called themselves of the church.

That profession which in the law of Moses and many other places, is called swearing by the name or *in the name* of the Lord, with the prefix Greek or Hebrew, is evidently the same with swearing to the Lord, with the prefix Greek or Hebrew [Isa. xix. 18.](#) “In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts.” (*Laihovah.*) In [1 Kings xviii. 32.](#) it is said that Elijah built an altar *in the name* of the Lord, *Beshem*, that is, to the name of the Lord. Here the prefix *Beth* is evidently of the same force with *Lamed* in [1 Kings viii. 44.](#) “The house that I have built for thy name,” or to thy name. Here *Leshem* is plainly of the same signification, in speaking of building a house to God, with *Beshem* in the other place, that speaks of building an altar to God.

*In* and *to*, or the prefixes *Beth* and *Lamed*, are manifestly used as of the same signification in the case of swearing to a God, or an object of religious worship, in the same sentence in [Zeph. i. 5.](#) “That swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham.” The words are thus, that swear to the Lord, (*Laihovah,*) and that swear *in* Malcam (*Bemalcam*). In [Gen. xxiii. 8.](#) “Entreat for me to *Ephron*, the son of Zoar. *To Ephron*, in the original, is *Be Ephron*, with the prefix *Beta*.”

What is meant by swearing to the Lord, (*Laihovah,*) we learn by [2 Chron. xv. 12, 13, 14.](#) with the context, *viz.* publicly and solemnly acknowledging God, and devoting themselves to God by covenant. [Deut. xxix. 10-15.](#) “And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul and they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice.” [Deut. xxix. 10-15.](#) We also may learn what is meant by swearing to the Lord, by [Isa. xlv.](#) “Unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;” together with the apostle’s citation and explication of this place, which instead of the word *swear*, uses *confess*, in [Rom. xiv. 11.](#) and [Phil. ii. 10.](#) which, in the apostle’s language, signifies the same as making open and solemn profession of Christianity. [Rom. x. 9, 10.](#) “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,

and shalt believe with thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” In that place in the [45th of Isa. ver. 23](#). it is said, “Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” This is the profession of their faith in Christ, and is the same with what is called *making mention* of God’s righteousness. [Ps. lxxi. 16](#). “I will go in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.” The phrase *make mention*, as was observed before, is used for making a public profession; and here in this place in Isaiah glorying in God, and blessing themselves in him, (or in his righteousness and strength,) are joined with swearing to him, as they are in [Jer. iv. 2](#). “And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory;” and [Isa. lxiii. 11](#). The king shall rejoice in God, every one that sweareth by him shall glory.”

The prefix *Beth* is put for *into* as well as *in*. See innumerable instances of this in places referred to in the Concordance, under these words, *enter, put, brought*, [Judg. ix. 26](#). went over to Shechem, in the Hebrew *Beshechem*. To choose other gods, is in [Judg. x. 14](#). expressed by *choosing in them*, with a prefix *Beth*. Agreeably to the manner of speaking among the Hebrews, confessing Christ before men, [Matt. x. 32](#). is, in the original, confessing *in* him. “He that shall confess in me, Greek or Hebrew, before men, I will confess *in him*, before my Father, and before his angels.”

[Judg. xvii](#). “Ask counsel now of God,” *Belohim*, with the prefix *Beth*.

[144] [Deut. xii. 20](#). “When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy borders and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh, thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.” That is, thou mayest so eat it at home, without carrying it to be sacrificed; as appears from the context.

[121] [Deut. xxi. 23](#). “For he that is hanged is accursed by God.” The instances we have of those that were hanged, are agreeable to this. Thus the heads of the people that joined themselves to Baalpeor were hung up before the sun, that the fierce anger of God might cease. [Numb. xxv. 3, 4](#). So the seven sons of Saul were hanged, to remove God’s wrath from the land. Ahithophel, who was cursed by David in God’s name, hanged himself. Absalom was hanged in an oak for his rebellion against his father: “For it is written, Cursed is every one that setteth light by father or by mother.” The kings of the cursed cities of Canaan were hanged. Haman was hanged, for he was a type of antichrist. Judas hanged himself, having been declared accursed by Christ before.

[113] [Deut. xxxii. 50](#). “And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people.” God ordered that Aaron and Moses should go up to the tops of mountains to die, to signify that the death of godly men is but an entrance into a heavenly state. It is evident that heaven is sometimes typified by the tops of the mount by [Heb. viii. 5](#). compared with [xii. 22](#). So

Christ was transfigured in the mount, and appeared in glory with both Old-Testament and New-Testament saints, and the glory of God in a cloud, to be a type of the heavenly state. Vide Note on [Exod. xxiv. 18.](#) No. 71.

[173] [Josh. vi. 26.](#) and [1 Kings xvi. 34.](#) “And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.” Jericho herein was a remarkable type of the church of the elect. Jericho was a devoted cursed city, it was devoted to perfect and to eternal destruction. To perfect destruction, in that every man, woman, and child, ox, sheep, and ass, were destroyed by God’s command, and it was forbidden ever to be built again. So the elect are naturally under the curse of the law, which devotes those that have broke it to perfect and eternal destruction. However, this city was one very capable of being redeemed from that curse; but that was only by the curse being transferred upon him that built it. So the church of the elect could have the curse removed no other way but by its being laid upon Christ, who undertook to restore it. So Hiel the Bethelite represented Christ, who is from the true Bethel, or house of God, even heaven. He was to lay the foundation of it in his first-born, and in his youngest son to set up the gates of it. So his eldest son represented Christ who is the first-born of every creature, and is our elder brother. The foundation of the redeemed and restored church is laid in the blood of the first and only-begotten Son of God. The gates of it were to be set up in his youngest son: so after the church is redeemed by Christ, the gates of it are to be set up in the blood of the martyrs. It is in that way the church is to be erected and finished, and brought to its determined glory and prosperity in the world, even through the sufferings and persecutions of believers. Jericho, though once an accursed city of the Canaanites; yet, after it was thus redeemed from the curse, became a school of the prophets. [2 Kings ii.](#) and [iv. 38.](#) [vi. 1, 2.](#)

[209] [Josh. x. 12, 13, 14.](#) *Concerning the sun and moon’s standing still.* This great event was doubtless typical; and as the sun was made to be a type of Christ, and is the most eminent type of him in all the inanimate creation, and is used as a type of Christ in Scripture, for he is the “Sun of righteousness,” and “the light of the world,” &c.; so doubtless the sun here, when it stands still to give the children of Israel light to help them against their enemies, is a type of Christ. The sun did as it were fight for the Israelites by his light; so Christ fights for his people: and the way that he does it, is chiefly by giving them light. Hereby he helps them against the powers of darkness, and overthrows the kingdom of darkness. Christ was at that time actually fighting for Israel as the captain of the host; he had a little before appeared in a visible shape with a sword drawn in his hand, and told Joshua that as the Captain of the host of the Lord he was come, [Josh. v. 13, 14.](#) And there was now a double type of Christ’s fighting for his people against their spiritual enemies; Joshua was then fighting as the captain of the host of Israel, who bore the name of Christ; for *Joshua* is the same with *Jesus*, and he was an eminent type of him; and at the same time the sun stood over Joshua fighting for Israel against their enemies. While Joshua or Jesus thus fought, the sun appeared also fighting in the same battle, being a type of the true Joshua or Jesus. It was a great thing for the sun to stand still to fight for Israel, and to help them to obtain the possession of

Canaan, but not so great a thing as for Christ, who is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, the Creator and Upholder of the sun, to appear as he did, to deliver his people from their spiritual enemies, and to make way for their obtaining the heavenly Canaan. The sun, though so great and glorious a heavenly body, and though so high above the earth, yet did forego its natural course was greatly put out of the way, and deprived of that which naturally belonged to it, for the sake of Israel, laid aside its glory as the king of heaven, was as it were divested of the glory of its dominion over heaven and earth, which it has by its course through all heaven and round the earth. For it is by its course that nothing is hid from its light and heat, by which it has influence over all, and as it were rules over all. [Psal. xix. 6.](#) The influence of the heavenly bodies is called in Scripture their dominion. [Job xxxviii. 32, 33.](#) But this glory as king of heaven and earth was laid aside to serve and minister unto Israel. But this was not so great a thing as for the eternal Son of God, the infinite fountain of all light, who is infinitely above all creatures, the Sun of righteousness, in comparison of whose brightness the sun is but darkness, and therefore will be turned into darkness when he appears. I say it was not so great a thing as for him to lay aside his glory as King of heaven and earth, and appear in the form of a servant to serve men, and came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and should even give his life to destroy and confound our enemies, and obtain for us the possession of the heavenly Canaan. The sun, who by its course was wont to fill heaven and earth, now confined itself to the land of Canaan, for the sake of Israel, so Christ, who, being in heaven filled all things, [Eph. iv. 10.](#) by his incarnation confined himself to the land of Canaan, and to a tabernacle of flesh. Hence it is not any way incredible, not at all to be wondered at, that God should cause such a miracle for the sake of the Israelites, or that nature in so great an instance should be made to yield and give place to Israel's interest, when the God of nature did as it were deprive himself of the glory that he had from the beginning of the world, yea, before the world was, even from all eternity, ([John xvii. 5.](#)) the glory that naturally belonged to him, and as it were give up all for man, that he should become incarnate, and deliver up himself to death for the spiritual Israel.

The moon, which is a type of the church, also stood still at that time to fight against the Amorites for the church; for the church fights with Christ against the spiritual Amorites. The church militant is Christ's army, they go forth with Christ, and under Christ, to fight the good fight of faith, and are soldiers of Jesus Christ. Christ and the church are represented going forth together in battle. [Rev. xix. 11.](#), &c. Both the sun and moon stood still at that time, that there might there be a representation of the same thing in heaven that there was on the earth: there was Joshua and Israel fighting God's enemies on earth, and there the sun and moon fighting against them in heaven, and both represented Jesus and his church fighting against their spiritual enemies.

[209] Josh. x. 12, 13, 14. *Concerning the sun's standing still.* This is supposed to give occasion to the story of Phaeton the son of Sol and Clymene, who, desiring his father to let him guide the chariot of the sun for one day, set the world on fire. So we read that it was about the space of one day that the sun stood still, and this in all probability caused an extraordinary scorching and distressing heat in many parts of the world. And Mr. Bedford, in his Scripture Chronology, observes that mention is made of it in the Chinese history, that in the reign of their seventh Emperor Yao, the sun did not set for ten days together, and that the inhabitants of the earth were afraid that the earth would be burnt, for there were great fires at that time. This happened in the sixty-seventh year of that emperor's reign, and so the time of it Mr. Bedford observes, according to their account, exactly agrees with scripture history. Scripture Chronology, p. 489. And he observes that it is natural for men in things of great antiquity to enlarge beyond the truth. And what the Chinese history mentions about great fires in many places, agrees with the story of Phaeton's setting the world on fire. And indeed to have the day more than twenty-four hours, for besides the twelve hours that the sun stood still, the time of the sun's course above the horizon was probably more than twelve hours, for it was probably later in the year than the vernal equinox: I say to have the sun so long above the horizon, and twelve hours of it together, so extraordinarily near the meridian, shining down with a perpendicular ray all that time, must needs cause exceeding heat in many places.

[169] Josh. x. 13. "And the sun stood still and the moon stayed." God thereby showed that all things were for his church, all was theirs, the whole earth, and the sun, moon, and stars, were made for them.

[117] Josh. x. 13. "The sun stood still and the moon stayed." *The moon stayed*; not that the moon's staying helped them, but it was because the earth was stopped, and so all the heavenly bodies were stopped, that is, they kept their position with respect to the horizon.

[224] Josh. xi. 8. "And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them even unto great Zidon." Bedford, in his Scripture Chronology, p. 195, and 493. supposes that great numbers of them made their escape from thence, and from neighbouring sea-ports, by shipping, to all the shores which lay round the Mediterranean and Egean seas, and even to other parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, of which, says he, the learned Bochart hath given us a large account, in his incomparable Canaan, and particularly shown that the names of most places are of Phœnician or Hebrew extraction. About this time they set up their two pillars at Tangier, with this inscription in the Phœnician language, "*We are they who fled from the face of Joshua the robber, the son of Nun.*" About this time they built the city of Carthage, which at first they called *Carthada*, which in the Chaldee and Syriac languages signifies *The New City*. This building of Carthage, says he, p. 195. not only appears from the common consent of all historians, but also from the remains of the Carthaginian language, which we have in Plautus, where he brings in a youth from thence, speaking in

such a manner that many learned men have proved it to be the Hebrew, or language of Canaan, and the Carthaginians are frequently called Phœnicians and Tyrians, because they came from this country. Being thus used to sailing and merchandise, they soon carried on a larger trade, and settled other colonies near Gibraltar, both in Europe and Africa. The learned Bochart thus tells us, that these expeditions were computed to be in the times of the heroes. And Bedford says, p. 493, that hence the story of Dido and Eneas, as mentioned in Virgil, must be false and groundless. Neither is it probable, says he, that the widow of a priest flying the country unknown to the king, could carry with her so great a number of men to a new colony, as should undertake to build so great a city. So she brought not inhabitants there, but found them there, and did not so properly build, as repair and enlarge, the town to which she came. She built the tower which was called *Bozrah*, or *A Fort*, in Hebrew, and from thence called *Byrsa*, or *A Hide*, in Greek, and so occasioned the fabulous story that Dido bought the place to build the city on with little bits of leather marked, which was anciently used instead of money. But others tell us that when she arrived on the coast of Africa she was forbidden to tarry there by Hiarbas, king of the country, lest she, with her company, might seize on a great part of his dominion, and therefore she craftily desired of him only to buy so much ground as might be compassed with an *ox hide*; which, when she had obtained, she cut it into small thongs, and therewith compassed two and twenty furlongs, on which she built the city afterward named *Carthage*, and called the castle *Byrsa*, or *Hide*. All this we owe to the fertile invention of the Greeks, to make every thing derived from them: whereas Dido, coming from Tyre, knew nothing of that language; and besides, the old Carthaginian language was the Phœnician or Hebrew, as appears by the old remains thereof, which we have in Plautus's *Pœanulus*.

It looks exceedingly probable, that when Joshua had smitten the vast army of Hazor, and the kings that were with him, and chased them into Zidon, that all that could, would flee by ship; for that was a great sea-port, and therefore they had opportunity to escape this way, and they had enough to terrify them to it, for they had heard how Jehovah, the God of Israel, with a strong hand had brought off the people from Egypt, and had divided the Red sea, and drowned the Egyptians there, and fear and dread had fallen upon them, and their hearts had melted at the news, [Exod. xv. 14, 15, 16](#). And they had heard how that God was among the people in the wilderness, and how he was seen face to face, and how that his cloud stood over them, and how he went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. [Numb. xiv. 14](#). And their dread and astonishment was renewed by hearing how they had destroyed Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan; they had trembled, and anguish had taken hold on them, at the news. [Deut. ii. 25](#). As Rahab told the spies that terror was fallen upon them, and all the inhabitants of the land did faint, and even melt, neither was there any more courage left in any man because of them. [Josh. ii. 9, 10, 11](#). God did as he promised. [Exod. xxiii. 27](#). "I will send my fear before thee, and I will destroy



all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee.” Their terror was greatly increased by God’s drying up the Jordan, [Josh. v. 1.](#) and then causing the walls of Jericho to fall down flat, and after that his causing the sun to stand still, and so miraculously destroying the five kings of the Amorites in a storm of thunder, and lightning, and hail, and their utterly destroying their cities in all the southern parts of Canaan, and they had heard how that Joshua was positively commanded to smite them, and utterly destroy them, and make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them, and how that Joshua had given no quarters to their neighbours. And now when the king and people in all the northern parts of Canaan had gathered together such a vast strength of people, as the sands upon the sea-shore, with innumerable horses and chariots, as [Josh. xi. 4.](#) And yet they were suddenly vanquished. Joshua was still pursuing with a design utterly to destroy them according to his order, and had pursued them even to great Zidon. When they therefore came there, they must needs be in the utmost consternation, and if there were any ships there it could be no otherwise, but that all that could fled in them; and that they would not trust to the walls of Zidon, for they did not know but they would fall down flat, as the walls of Jericho had done; and that not only multitudes should be slain, but many of them driven away to the ends of the earth, agrees best with the expression so often used of God’s driving them out before the children of Israel.

And besides there could be no room for such multitudes in Zidon, and a few neighbouring cities; for they, with those that Joshua had slain of them, had before filled all the land of Canaan, north of the tribe of Ephraim, even to mount Hermon, and to Zidon, and they were under a necessity to seek new seats abroad where they could find them.

[360] [Joshua vii.](#) *Concerning Achan, the troubler of Israel.* Achan was that to the congregation of Israel, that some lust or way of iniquity indulged and allowed, is to particular professors. Sinful enjoyments are accursed things: wherever they are entertained God’s curse attends them. The cursed things that Achan took, were a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge fifty shekels weight, that when he saw he coveted. So the objects of men’s lusts, which they take and indulge themselves in the enjoyment of, are very tempting and alluring, appearing very beautiful, and seeming very precious. Achan took those and hid them in his tent under-ground, so that there was no sign or appearance of them above-ground, they were concealed with the utmost secrecy. So very commonly the sins that chiefly trouble professors, and provoke God’s displeasure, and bring both spiritual and temporal calamities upon them, are secret sins, as David calls them, hidden by some lust, as Achan’s, as it were under-ground. Lust is exceedingly deceitful, and will hide iniquity, and cover it over with such fair pretences and excuses, that it is exceedingly difficult for persons to discover them, and to be brought fully to see and own their fault in them. The silver and gold was covered over with the goodly Babylonish garment; (as it is said the silver was under it;) so persons are wont to cover their secret wickedness with a

very fair hypocritical profession: an hypocritical profession is a Babylonish or antiChristian garment. It is the robe of the false church. God charges Israel not only with stealing, but dissembling, when Israel had transgressed in the accursed thing; and God was not among them; they were carnally secure and self-confident, they thought a few of them enough to subdue the inhabitants of Ai; which represents the frame that professors are commonly in when they indulge some secret iniquity. But they could not stand before their enemies, they were smitten down before them; so, when professors secretly indulge some one lust, it makes them universally weak they lie dreadfully exposed to their spiritual enemies, and easily fall before them. The congregation seem to wonder what is the matter that God hides himself from them; so Christians oftentimes, when they are going on in some evil way that the deceitfulness of sin hides from them, wonder what is the reason that God hides himself from them. They lay long upon their faces, crying to God without receiving any answer. So when persons harbour any iniquity, it is wont to prevent any gracious answer to their prayers: their prayers are hindered, their iniquity is a cloud through which their prayers cannot pass. When they were troubled and destroyed, they took a wrong course they betook themselves to prayer and crying to God, as though they had nothing else to do, whereas their first and principal work ought to have been diligently to have inquired whether there was not some iniquity to be found among them, as implied, [ver. 10](#). So Christians, when God greatly afflicts them, and hides his face from them, and manifests his anger towards them, are commonly wont to do: they cry, and cry to God, as if they had nothing else to do, but still secretly entertain the troubler, and it never comes into their hearts to inquire, Am I not greatly guilty with respect to such a practice or way that I allow myself in, in my covetousness, or in my proud, or contentious, or sensual, or peevish and froward behaviour? God mentions it as an aggravation of the sin of the congregation in Achan, that they had even put the accursed thing among their own stuff; so, when professors allow themselves in any unlawful gain, or enjoyment, they commonly put it among those things that are theirs, that they may lawfully enjoy or make use of. If men continue in such evil ways, and do not depart from them, they are ruinous to the soul, however they may plead that they think there is no hurt in them. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. So God says to Israel, [ver. 12](#). “Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed thing from among you.” God directed the congregation of Israel to make diligent search in order to find out the troubler: all were to be examined, tribe by tribe, and family by family, and man by man. So when God hides his face from us and frowns upon us, we ought diligently and thoroughly to examine all our ways, and to take effectual care that none escape thorough examination; to examine them first in their several kinds, as they may be classed with respect to their objects, views, and otherwise, and then to proceed to a more special examination and inquiry, and never leave until we have thoroughly examined every particular way and practice; yea, to examine act by act, and to bring all before God, to be tried by

him, by his word and Spirit, as all Israel was brought before the Lord to be tried by him. By this means Achan was thoroughly discovered, and brought to confess his wickedness; so, if we be thorough in trying our ways, and bringing all to the test of God's word, seeking the direction of his Spirit also with his word, it is the way to discover the sin that troubles us, and thoroughly to convince the conscience, and make it plainly to confess the iniquity. The congregation after they had found out the accursed thing, they brought it out of the earth and out of the tent, and spread it before the Lord. So persons, when they have found out the sin that has troubled them, should confess their sins and spread them before the Lord. And we must not content ourselves only with confessing the sin to God, but must deal with it as the children of Israel did with Achan; we must treat it as a mortal, and most hateful, and pernicious enemy; we must turn inveterate, implacable enemies to it; must have no mercy on it; must not spare it at all, or be afraid of being too cruel to it; must aim at nothing short of the life of it, and must resolve utterly to destroy and extirpate it; we must as it were stone with stones, and burn it with fire. So Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord. (See Notes on [1 Sam. xv. 32, 33](#). See also [2 Cor. vii. 11.](#).) And we must not only destroy that sin, but all its offspring, its whole family, and its oxen and asses, and all that belongs to it, every thing that springs from it, every evil that has attended or sprung from it; we must serve them all alike, and as this was done to Achan, not only by a particular individual, but by all Israel, so we must do it with all our hearts and souls; we must be full in it; there must be nothing in our hearts that is favourable to the troubler, or that has not a hand in its death. Israel, after they had thus slain the troubler, raised over him a great heap of stones, as a monument of what had been. So when we have slain the troubler, we must keep a record of the mischief we received by the sin, to be a constant everlasting warning to us to avoid it, and every thing of that nature, for the future. This is the way to have the Lord turn from the fierceness of his anger.

[116] [Josh. xx. 6](#). "And ye shall dwell in that city until ye stand before the congregation." The seventy elders are here called the congregation or church, which are words of the same signification. So the elders of the church, they are called the church in the New Testament.

[352] *Judg. i. 12, 13, 14, 15. Concerning Othniel and Caleb's daughter.* Othniel in this story is a type of Christ. As Othniel, Caleb's nephew, obtained Caleb's daughter, his first cousin, to wife, by war, and the victory he obtained over Caleb's enemies, and taking a city from them to be a possession for Caleb and his heirs; so Christ, who, as nearly related to both God and us, is fit to be a Mediator between God and us, has obtained the church, God's daughter, by war with God's enemies, and the victory he has obtained over them, and by his redeeming a city, the spiritual Jerusalem, or Zion, out of their hands, to be a possession for God and his heirs. Achsah, Othniel's wife, moves her husband to ask of her father a blessing, and an inheritance. So it is by the intercession of Christ that the church obtains of God the blessings and the inheritance she needs. She complains to her father that she inherited a south, *i. e.* a dry, desert land; she asks of him springs of water, and Caleb granted her request; he gave her freely and abundantly; he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs. And if men, being evil, know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him! When Caleb's daughter inhabited a south land, and dwelt in the quenched places of the wilderness, she asked springs of water, both the upper and the nether springs. So, when the souls of God's people are in a droughty, pining, languishing condition, it is not a new thing for them to go to their heavenly Father through the mediation of Christ, for all such supplies as they need; he will give them springs of water like the upper and the nether springs. Godliness hath the promise of the things of this life, and that which is to come. God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly. Achsah improved that time to move her husband to intercede for her, when she came to him; which should teach us, when we are brought especially nigh to Christ, and have specially seasons of communion with him, to be careful then to improve our interest in him, and to seek his intercession for us with the Father for such blessings as we need.

But this probably has a special respect to some particular seasons of God's blessings on the church, and the accomplishing a glorious alteration in the state of things for her sake; and particularly two seasons.

1. That glorious change that was made at and after Christ's first coming. The church before that did as it were inhabit a south land, was held under weak and beggarly elements, was under the ministration of death, the letter, and not the spirit. But when Christ came nigh to the church, he took her nature upon him; he came and dwelt with us, and received his church into a much greater nearness to himself; and through his mediation was obtained of God a far more glorious dispensation, springs of water in abundance, a ministration of the Spirit, the Spirit was abundantly poured out upon her, and her inheritance was greatly enlarged. Instead of being confined only to the land of Canaan, she had the Roman empire given with all its wealth and glory, and so had the nether springs, as well as the upper.

2. That glorious change that will be accomplished in favour of the church at the fall of antichrist. Now the church of Christ does as it were inherit a dry land, and has so done for a long time dry both upon spiritual and temporal accounts; both as to the upper and nether springs, and is much straitened in her inheritance. But the days will soon come wherein Christ will come in a spiritual sense, and the church shall forsake worldly vanities, and her own righteousness, and shall come to Christ, and then God will gloriously enlarge her inheritance, and will bestow both spiritual and temporal blessings upon her in abundance.

[211] [Judg. v. 20](#). “They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.” The learned Bedford, in his *Scripture Chronology*, p. 510. supposes that Sisera, with his army, had passed the river Kishon, and that when Barak came to engage him, God appeared against Sisera in a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning; and the battle continuing all day, and Sisera and his host being at last put to flight, the Israelites pursued in the night; and that the way that the stars fought for them was by shining with an extraordinary brightness to help the Israelites in their pursuing the enemy, who, when they came to the river Kishon, went in; but the storm having swelled the river, the swift stream carried them away; and that there was thunder and lightning. Then he argues from the [15th verse of the foregoing chapter.](#), where it is said that the Lord discomfited Sisera and all his chariots, and all his hosts. He says the word in the original signifies to strike a terror by the noise of thunder and lightning, and the truth is, it is no where said that God discomfited the enemies of God’s people where this word was used, but that it appears that God fought against them with thunder and lightning. So [1 Sam. vii. 10.](#) and [Josh. x. 10.](#) (vide Notes on [Heb. iii. 11.](#)) and [2 Sam. xxii. 15.](#) [Psal. xviii. 4.](#)

There are several things that make this opinion of Mr. Bedford probable. This was an instance wherein God had extraordinarily appeared against the enemies of Israel, as appears by this song; and this verse of this song seems to intimate something miraculous of God’s appearing in it, and it was the more probable that there was something miraculous for a prophetess being at the head of the army of Israel, and then God had in this manner appeared from time to time fighting against the enemies of his people. So he fought against the Egyptians at the Red sea; so he terrified his enemies in all the neighbouring countries with amazing thunders and lightning, when he entered into covenant with his people at Sinai. So God fought against the Amorites before Joshua. So God fought against the Philistines in Samuel’s time. [1 Sam. vii. 10.](#) So God fought for David. (See Notes on [Psal. xviii. 7.](#), &c.) So God seems to have fought against Sennacherib’s army in Hezekiah’s time, [Isa. xxx. 30.](#) “And so Hezekiah prophesied that God would appear against the enemies of his people.” [1 Sam. ii. 10.](#) And the reason why Deborah begins this song with taking notice that God appeared with thunder and rain for his people in the wilderness, [ver. 4, 5.](#) as he had done at the Red sea and at mount Sinai, probably is because God never had so appeared for them in the deliverance that she celebrates in this song. God appeared so for his people when he took them

first into covenant and made them his people; and now he had appeared in like manner again, and so appears to be still the same God; she therefore mentions it as celebrating his covenant faithfulness: and then it is in no wise to be supposed that the river Kishon, that is elsewhere called a brook, [Psal. lxxxiii. 9.](#) was by any means sufficient to sweep away and drown an army, unless extraordinarily swelled by rain. Again, it is probable, because the great battle in which the enemies of the church shall be destroyed, and that shall usher in the glorious times of the church that we read of in the [16th chap. of Rev.](#) is represented as being accompanied with thunder, and lightning, and hail; but it is compared to this battle at Megiddo, and therefore the place where it is fought, is said to be in the Hebrew tongue, Ar-Megeddon, *i. e.* the mount of Megiddo, and it is probable that the way Mr. Bedford mentions was the way in which the stars fought against Sisera: it is most likely that the stars fought against Sisera the same way that the sun fought against the Amorites, *viz.* by giving light to Israel, that they might be avenged of their enemies, [Josh. x. 13.](#) As this that God wrought now was parallel with that in Joshua's time, in that God fought against the enemies of Israel in a storm of thunder and lightning; so if we suppose the stars shone at night with miraculous brightness to help Israel against their enemies, it will in a good degree be parallel to another instance; for then the day was lengthened for them by the sun's standing still, and now the day is as it were lengthened by causing the stars to shine in a miraculous manner to supply in a great measure the want of daylight; the sun fought then, and the stars now, and both by giving light, but only there is this difference, the sun fought standing still, but the stars fought in their courses or paths, as it is in the original. This instance is very parallel with that at the Red sea; for there God fought against their enemies with thunder and lightning, and drowned them in the Red sea; and here God fought against them with thunder and lightning, and drowned them with their horses and chariots in the river Kishon. Hence we may possibly see a reason why the great destruction of God's enemies before the glorious times of the church is compared to this influence, rather than to either of those two great influences of God's wonderfully destroying his enemies, *viz.* because this is parallel to both, and what is peculiar to both, is here comprised, *viz.* the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red sea, which is peculiar to the first, has here an equivalent in the drowning of the host of Sisera in Kishon; and the sun's standing still and fighting, is here answered by the stars fighting in their courses; and the Holy Ghost might rather choose to compare it to this, because the sun's standing still was a representation of Christ's humiliation. (Vide Note on [Josh. x. 12, 13, 14.](#)) But Christ will be for them fighting as in a state of humiliation at that time when introducing the glorious times of the church, and Christ will not then personally appear fighting as he did in his state of humiliation, but he will fight by his Spirit in his saints, which are called *the stars of heaven.*

Christ will fight by increasing their light, and so their enemies shall be destroyed, and they shall fight in their courses, and in running the race that God hath appointed them; and

it is compared to this rather than the instance at the Red sea, for the children of Israel, and Moses, and the pillar of cloud, being in the Red sea, was a type of Christ's humiliation.

That there should be such things at the battle with Sisera, and yet not mentioned particularly in the history, is not strange; for so there was thunder and lightning at the Red sea, and in the day when the sun and moon stood still, and at Baal-Perazim, and yet it is not mentioned in the history.

[364] [Judg. vi. 37, 38, 39, 40](#). Concerning *Gideon's Fleece*. There being first dew on the fleece, when it was dry upon all the earth besides, and then dew on all the ground, but dry upon the fleece, was a type of the Jews being in the first place the peculiar people of God, and favoured with spiritual blessings alone when all the world besides were destitute, and then the Jews being rejected, and remaining destitute of spiritual blessings when the Gentile nations all around them were favoured with them. Gideon was a type of Christ; his overcoming that innumerable multitude of Gentile nations with trumpets, and lamps, and earthen vessels, typifies Christ's conquering the Gentile world by the sound of the trumpet of the gospel, and by carrying the light of the gospel to them by ministers that are as earthen vessels; this event was accompanied with what was typified by the fleece. A sheep is a creature often used to typify Christ. The Jewish nation was as it were Christ's clothing; they are sometimes represented as such; first they only had the word and ordinances, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit. It was remarkably poured out on them in the day of Pentecost: there was that plenty of dew, that was a bowl full of water, when the Gentile nations were destitute: but afterwards the Gentile nations received the gospel, and God's Spirit was poured out on them, and the Jews were rejected, and have now remained dry for many ages.

[223] [Judg. xi. 30, to the ends](#). Concerning *Jephthah's vow and his offering up his daughter*. That Jephthah did not put his daughter to death and burn her in sacrifice, the following things evince.

I. The tenor of his vow, if we suppose it to be a lawful vow, did not oblige him to it; he promised that whatsoever came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, should surely be the Lord's, and he would offer it up for a burnt-offering. He was obliged no more by this vow than only to deal with whatsoever came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, as those things that were holy to the Lord; and by right burnt-offerings to God, were to be dealt with by God's own law, and the rules that he had given. Supposing it had been an *ass*, or some *unclean beast*, that had come forth to meet him, as Jephthah did not know but it would, his vow would not have obliged him to have offered it in sacrifice, or actually to have made a burnt-offering of it, but he must have dealt with it as the law of God directed to deal with an unclean beast that was not holy to the Lord, and that otherwise must have been actually a burnt-offering to the Lord, had it not been for that legal incapacity of the impurity of its nature. All living things that were consecrated were to be as it were burnt-offerings to God, *i. e.* they were actually to be offered up a burnt-sacrifice, if not of a nature that rendered

it incapable of this, and then in that case something else was to be done that God would accept instead of offering it up a burnt-sacrifice. The direction we have in [Lev. xxvii. 11, 12, 13](#). “And if it be any unclean beast of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the Lord, then he shall present the beast before the priest, and the priest shall value it whether it be good or bad; as thou valuest it who art the priest, so shall it be. But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereunto of the estimation,” *i. e.* it should be valued by the priest, and the man should, after it was valued, determine whether he would redeem it, or no, and if not he was to break its neck, if an ass; [Exod. xiv. 12, 13](#). or if other unclean beast, it must be sold according to the priest’s estimation; [Lev. xxvii. 27](#). (as is elsewhere directed to be done to unclean beasts that were holy to the Lord, [Exod. xxxiv. 20](#).) but if he would redeem it, if it were an ass, he was to redeem it with a lamb; [Exod. xiv. 12, 13](#). if other unclean beast he was to add the fifth part to the priest’s estimation, that is, he was to give the value of the beast, and a fifth part more. And if Jephthah had done this in case an unclean beast had met him, he would have done according to his vow. If he had in such a case gone about to have offered an unclean beast a burnt-sacrifice, he would dreadfully have provoked God, his vow could be supposed to oblige him to no other than only to deal with the unclean beast that was consecrated as the law of God directed to deal with it instead of offering it a burnt-offering. And so when it was his daughter that met him, he might do to her according to his vow without making her a burnt-sacrifice, if he did that to her which the law of God directed to be done to a dedicated person, instead of actually making them a burnt-sacrifice, by reason of the incapacity which, by the mercy of God, attends a human person to be a burnt-sacrifice. For to offer either a man or an unclean beast in sacrifice to God, are both mentioned as a great abomination to God, and as what were universally known so to be. [Isa. lxvi. 3](#). “He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood.” But the more fully to clear up the difficulties that attend this matter, I will particularly observe some things concerning the laws that related to persons that were consecrated, so as to become holy to the Lord.

1. Every living thing that was holy to the Lord, whether of men or beasts, was by right a burnt-offering to God, and must be either actually made a burnt-sacrifice, or something else must be done to it that God appointed to be in lieu of burning it in a sacrifice. Thus the first-born of men and beasts, they were all holy to the Lord, and must either be offered up a burnt-sacrifice, or be redeemed, the first-born of men and of unclean beasts were to be redeemed.

2. Persons that were devoted to God by a singular vow, unless they were those that were devoted to be accursed, (of which [Lev. xxvii. 28, 29](#).) were to be brought and presented before the Lord, that the priest might estimate them, and they were to redeem according to the priest’s estimation. But beasts that might be sacrificed were to be sacrificed. [Lev. xxvii. 7-9](#). (See §§§ on v. 2.)





3. Persons that were thus devoted to God by the vow of their parents, were yet to remain persons separate, and set apart for God after they were redeemed. This may appear from several things.

*First.* The redemption was only to redeem them from being slain in sacrifice; it was not to redeem them from being holy to the Lord, or persons set apart, and sanctified to him.

*Secondly.* The first-born were appointed to be given or consecrated to God. [Exod. xiii. 2.](#) and [xxii. 19.](#) And they were by God's law holy to the Lord, in the very same manner as persons devoted to him by a singular vow, as is evident, because they were to be redeemed in the same manner, and at the same price, as is evident by comparing the beginning of the [27th chapter of Levit.](#) with [Numb. xviii. 15, 16.](#) God, in giving the rule for the redemption of the first-born in the latter place, evidently refers to what he had before appointed in the former place, concerning persons devoted by a singular vow, and so likewise the firstlings of unclean beasts were to be redeemed in the same manner as unclean beasts that were devoted, as appears by comparing [Levit. xxvii. 11, 12, 13.](#) with [v. 27.](#) but yet the first-born still remained separated to God as his special possession, after they were redeemed. Hence the Levites were accepted for the first-born to a tribe separated to God after the first-born were thus redeemed.

*Thirdly.* Persons that were dedicated to God by the vow of their parents, were Nazarites, as well as those that were separated by their own vows; the word Nazarite, signifies one that is separated; they might be separated by their parents' vows or their own. This is very evident in instances that we have in Scripture. Thus Samuel was a Nazarite by the vow of his mother. [1 Sam. i. 11.](#) "And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." And so it was with respect to Samson, [Judg. xiii. 5.](#) But the Nazarite was to continue separated to God, as long as he remained under the vow by which he was devoted.

4. Those that were thus devoted to God to be Nazarites, were to the utmost of their power to abstain from all legal pollutions. [Lam. iv. 7.](#) With respect to defilements by dead bodies, they were required to keep themselves pure with greater strictness than the very priests, except the high priest alone, and were obliged to as great strictness as the high priest himself. [Num. vi. 6, 7.](#) compared with [Lev. xxi. 10, 11.](#) And though only some legal impurities are expressly mentioned, as what the Nazarite was to avoid, yet it is to be understood, that he is to his utmost to separate himself from all legal defilements, agreeable to his name, a Nazarite, or a separate person. The Nazarite was to abstain from all legal impurities in like manner as the priests, and even as the high priest; there are like directions given to one as to the other; the high priest was on no account to defile himself with the dead, and was forbidden to drink wine, or strong drink, when he went into the tabernacle of the congreg-

ation. [Lev. x. 9.](#) The priests were to abstain from all manner of legal defilement as far as in them lay. [Lev. xii.](#) at the beginning.

If it be objected against this, that the Levites who were accepted to be the Lord's instead of the first-born that were holy to the Lord, were not obliged to such strictness, I answer, that this may be one reason why God did not look on the first-born as being fully redeemed by the Levites being substituted in their stead, but there were still extraordinary charges required of them for the maintenance of the Levites, much more than in proportion to the bigness of the bribe; and God might accept this as an equivalent for their not being so strictly separated, as he accepted extraordinary redemption money for the odd number of the first-born, that were more than the Levites. [Num. iii. 46, 47.](#) and [xviii. 15, 16.](#)

5. Those that were devoted to God to be Nazarites by a singular vow, were to devote themselves wholly to religious exercises, and to spend their lives in the most immediate service of God; for though this is not particularly expressed, but only some things are expressed that they should abstain from, yet this is implied in their being God's, his being separated to the Lord, [Num. vi. 11.](#) his being holy to the Lord, [Num. vi. 6.](#) All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy; and [ver. 8.](#) all the days of his separation he shall be holy unto the Lord. In like manner as in the second commandment, there are only some things particularly mentioned, that we should abstain from on the sabbath, but it is only expressly said that the day should be spent in religious exercises, yet it is implied in that, that the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord our God, and that we are commanded to keep it holy. This was evidently Hannah's intention in her vow, whereby she devoted Samuel to be a Nazarite, as was explained by her own words and practice. [1 Sam. i. 28.](#) "Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord;" and accordingly she brought him and left him in the sanctuary, to dwell continually there, and there to spend his time in sacred business. [1 Sam. ii. 11.](#) "And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house, and the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest." [Ver. 18.](#) "But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child girded with a linen ephod."

6. It was necessary that a woman that was devoted to be a Nazarite (for a woman might be a Nazarite, [Num. vi. 2.](#)) should thenceforward avoid marrying, and refrain from all carnal intercourse with men. If she was a virgin when she was devoted, it was necessary that she should continue a virgin until her vow was ended; and if she was devoted for her whole life, she must continue a virgin for ever; and if she was a widow, she must continue in her widowhood, and that on two accounts.

*First.* Marrying would be contrary to the obligation that has been taken notice of, that the Nazarite was under, with the utmost strictness to avoid all legal defilements, for marrying unavoidably exposed to great legal impurities, and of long continuance. (See [Lev. xii.](#)) There were scarcely any legal impurities to which the children of Israel were exposed, except the leprosy, that were so great as those that marriage brought women into. Being therefore de-

voted to God to be holy to the Lord, in the utmost possible legal purity, she must avoid marrying, and then these legal impurities rendered her incapable of those sacred offices and services that she was devoted to. It incapacitated her from conversing on holy things, or drawing near to God in ordinances, as much as being defiled by the dead body of a man incapacitated a priest from his work and office. [Lev. xii. 4](#). And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days: she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purifying be fulfilled;” which, in all, for a son made up forty days, and for a daughter fourscore days, which must needs be very inconsistent with the circumstances of the Nazarite that was devoted wholly to attend on God, and holy exercises, in the way of the Jewish ordinances. If the Nazarite were a male, his marrying did not expose him to such legal impurities. The Nazarite was to observe as strict a legal purity, as the high priest himself, as has been observed; but he for the greater purity was allowed to marry none but a virgin: therefore doubtless the woman herself that was a Nazarite was obliged to continue a virgin.

*Secondly.* Marrying would utterly destroy the main design of her being dedicated in the vow of a Nazarite, which was, that she might be wholly devoted to the more immediate service of God in sacred things. If she was married, her time must unavoidably be exceedingly taken up in secular business and cares, in tending and bringing up children, and in providing for and taking care of a family, which exceedingly fills married women’s hands and hearts, and is as inconsistent as possible with the design of the vow of the Nazarite. Hence the woman that was devoted to the special service of God’s house in the primitive church (though not devoted to God so solemnly, nor in so great a degree as the Nazarite) must be one that was not married, and never like to marry, and it was looked upon and spoken of by the apostles as sinful in such to marry. [1 Tim. v. 11](#).; “But the younger widows refuse, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;” and the reason that is given why they should be widows that were like ever to continue so, and free from all worldly care, was that they might be the more entirely at liberty for religious duties. [Ver. 3, 4, 5](#). “Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.” Those widows in the primitive church, seem to be in some degree in imitation of the Nazarites in the Jewish church. Anna the prophetess was in all probability a Nazarite, or one that after her husband’s death had devoted herself to the service of God, by such a vow as that we have been speaking of, and therefore continued in widowhood to so great an age, because her vow obliged her to it, and therefore she, throwing by all worldly care, devoted herself wholly to the immediate service of God. [Luke ii. 36, 37](#). “And there was one Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and she was



a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” The like expression with that the apostle uses, concerning widows, [1 Tim. v. 5](#).

And therefore when we have an account that after Jephthah’s daughter had been let alone two months, to go up and down the mountains with her companions to bewail her virginity, we are told that she returned to her father, who did to her according to his vow. That which Jephthah did was, that he took her up to the sanctuary before the Lord, and presented her before the priest, that he might estimate her, then paid according to her estimation. Thus the Jews that came out of the captivity vowed that they would offer the first-born of their sons. [Neh. x. 35](#). Whereby she was redeemed from being made a burnt-sacrifice, according to the law; and by thus presenting her in the sanctuary, and offering up that which is accepted instead of her blood, she was actually separated according to the vow; her separation began from that time, and thenceforward she was to begin her strict abstinence from all legal impurities, and to spend her time in sacred offices; and it is probable that Jephthah thenceforward left her in the sanctuary, to dwell there as long as she lived, as Hannah did to her son Samuel, whom she had devoted to be a Nazarite. [1 Sam. i. 22](#). “I will not go up till the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever; and as the other Hannah, or Anna, did with herself after she had devoted herself to perpetual widowhood as a Nazarite, of whom we read, [Luke ii. 37](#). “That she was a widow of fourscore years old, and departed not from the temple.” And there probably Jephthah’s daughter continued in supplications and prayers, night and day, for she was eminently disposed and prepared for such duties by that remarkable spirit of piety that appeared in her resignation, with respect to the vow her father had made concerning her, and what time she did not spend in duties of immediate devotion, she might spend in making of priests’ garments; [Exod. xxxv. 25, 26](#). in other business subsequent to the work of the sanctuary, as there might be enough found that a woman might do.

II. The nature of the case will not allow us to suppose that that was done that was so horrid and so contrary to the mind and will of God, as putting of her to death, and offering her as a burnt-sacrifice. God took great care that never any human sacrifice should be offered to him; though he commanded Abraham to offer up his son, yet he would by no means suffer it to be actually done, but appointed something else with which he should be redeemed; and though God challenged the first-born of all living things to be his, yet he appointed that the first-born of men should be redeemed, and so in all cases wherein persons were holy to the Lord, the law makes provision that they should not be slain, but redeemed. It is particularly forbidden in the law of Moses in the strictest manner, that the children of Israel should not worship God by offering up their children in sacrifice to him. [Deut. xii. 30, 31](#). There God charges them not to worship him in the manner that the inhabitants of Canaan had worshipped their gods; and then mentions, as the most abominable thing in their worship,

that they had offered up their children for burnt-offerings. And God, by the prophet Isaiah, declares such sacrifices to be abominable to him in the forementioned, [Isa. lxvi. 3](#). See also [Jer. vii. 31](#). with my note on that text. It would have been symbolizing with the abominable customs of the heathen nations around, especially that of offering human sacrifices to the idol Moloch, which God ever manifested a peculiar detestation of. Here particularly observe, [Deut. xii. 29, to the end](#); and the nature of the case will not allow us to think that Jephthah in this instance committed such abomination. It is not likely but that he, being a pious person, as he is spoken of by the apostle, would have been restrained from it by God, and then what was done was doubtless agreeable to the mind and will of God, for God otherwise would not in so extraordinary a manner have assisted her so quickly and readily to resign herself to it; there seems most evidently an extraordinary divine influence on her mind in the affair, for her resignation did not arise from insensibility or indifference of spirit, as is evident, because she desired time so to bewail what was to be done to her; and upon the supposition that she was to be slain, it would be impossible, without an extraordinary influence on her mind, for her to be so resigned. Her resignation was from pious considerations, and holy and excellent principles; as is evident from what she says to her father, when she sees him passionately lamenting the issue of his vow, of which we have an account in the [36th verse](#). “And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth, forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.”

If what he had vowed to do was so abominable a thing as to kill her in sacrifice, it would not have been her duty to say as she does, Do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; but she seemed to be influenced to express herself as she did, by the Spirit of God, and her resignation is recorded of her, as a very excellent thing in her.

III. Her being to be slain in sacrifice seems inconsistent with her request; to go up and down the mountains to bewail her virginity: it would have been rather to bewail her untimely end.

IV. It seems evident that she was not slain, by the [39th verse](#), where it is said that it came to pass, that at the end of two months she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow, which he had vowed, and the consequence of it is immediately added, and she knew no man. This clause seems evidently to be exegetical of the foregoing, *viz.* that he did to her according to his vow, or to explain what that was that he did, *viz.* devote her to God in a perpetual virginity.

If she had been slain it is not at all likely that it would have been mentioned that she knew no man, for that she had known no man before this, had been already expressed in her going up and down the mountains to bewail her virginity; and nobody would suppose that she would marry and have children after she was devoted to death, and it had been determined both by herself and her father that it should be put in execution; and besides,



there would have been no occasion to mention her not knowing man as soon as the two months were out wherein she bewailed her virginity, and she had returned from going up and down the mountains; the vow was immediately executed.

V. It is no argument that Jephthah thought himself obliged to put her to death, that he so lamented when his daughter met him, as in [verse 35](#). “And it came to pass when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me, for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back;” for she being his only child, by her being devoted to be a Nazarite, his family was entirely extinct, he had no issue to inherit his estate or keep his name in remembrance, which in those days was looked upon as an exceedingly great calamity. Thou hast brought me very low, *i. e.* thou hast quenched my coal, and brought perpetual barrenness on thyself. (See Pool’s Synopsis, at the end of [Judg. chap. xi.](#))

[139] [Judg. xiii. 20](#). “For it came to pass when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. Christ, by thus going into the flame in which the kid was sacrificed, and ascending in it, signified that he was the great sacrifice that was to be offered up to God, and was to ascend as a sweet savour to God from off the altar in the flame of his holy wrath. That was the substance represented by these shadows, the sacrifices of kids and lambs, &c.

[377] [Judg. xiii. xiv. xv.](#) *The History of Samson*. Samson was charmed with the daughters of the uncircumcised Philistines, and, as it were, bewitched with them. These daughters represent those lusts, or objects of their lusts, with which men are charmed and infatuated. Samson’s uniting himself with these daughters of the Philistines, proved his ruin. He had warning enough to beware of them before he was utterly destroyed by them. First, he was deceived by one of them, and suffered great damage by her falseness, by the woman of Timnath; though he loved her, she proved an enemy to him, and treacherously deprived him of thirty sheets, and thirty changes of garments, and then she was taken from him; she proved false to him, and left him. So she served him as the objects of men’s lusts often serve them; they promise them a great deal, but never afford them any thins; they are like a pleasing shadow at a distance, that does us a great deal of damage in the pursuit, and when we come nigh them and hope to embrace them, and to be paid for our damages, they afford us nothing but disappointment. Samson’s being thus served by a daughter of the Philistines, might be a warning to him not to be concerned with them any more. But after this Samson was insnared again, and went in to a harlot at Gaza, which suddenly brought him into imminent danger of his life, so that he very narrowly escaped, as in the beginning of [chap. xvi.](#) But yet after this he unites himself with Delilah, and had sufficient from her to make him sensible that, she was his enemy time after time, had he not been utterly infatuated and bewitched; but vet he would not take warning, and at last she deprived him of the seven locks of his head, in which signified the consideration and sense of the mind; and bringing a

person to a stupid and senseless state. (See Notes on [Numb. vi. 5.](#) concerning the Nazarite's not shaving his head.) When persons' sense, consideration, and watchfulness is gone, their strength will soon be gone. And then God departed from Samson, and he became the miserable condemned captive and slave of the Philistines, who tormented him, and insulted over him, and made themselves sport in his misery, and at last it proved his death.

[80] [Judge. xvi. 25.](#) When the Philistines had prevailed over Samson, and were making sport with him, he overthrew them. The devils thought to have had fine sport with God's people when they had got him their captive, but this captivity to him was the occasion of one of them who represented the rest of his brethren, even Christ, giving of them a most dreadful overthrow; and when they had Christ their captive, and thought to have triumphed and made themselves merry over him, for he was for a time in a sort their captive, being the captive of his ministers, and being more especially delivered to his power to tempt and afflict, as the Philistines did Samson: [Luke xxii. 53.](#) "This is your time, and the power of darkness:" I say, while they thought to have had sport with him, yea, when they had actually brought him forth, and were making themselves sport with him as his instruments did, and doubtless the devil joined with them; he gave them a most dreadful overthrow at his death, as Samson did; he destroyed Satan's kingdom, and overthrew Dagon's temple.

[125] *Ruth.* The story of Ruth's forsaking her own people for the land and people of Israel, typifies the calling of the Gentile church. Naomi is a type of the Jewish church, that is the mother of the Gentile church; not the Jewish nation that was rejected, but the true church of God in Israel, to whom Ruth says, in the [16th verse.](#) "Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Naomi sets before her daughter the case of going with her, and the advantages of staying in her own land. So did Christ set before men the case of being his disciples, and so do his ministers in the church.

It typifies the universal church, and the conversion of every believer. We are all born in sin, as Ruth was born in Moab, and was born a Moabite; a state of sin is, as it were, our father's house, and sinners are our own people; when we are converted we forsake our own people and father's house, as the church in the [45th Psalm.](#)

[92] [1 Sam. i. and ii.](#) chapters. By Hannah's song after the birth of Samuel, I am ready to think that Peninnah and Hannah were designed for types of the church of the Jews, and the church of the Gentiles. The expressions are much like those that are used in the prophets, when speaking of the calling of the Gentiles. The whole song, and especially the verse, seems evidently to refer to gospel times, particularly these expressions, "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth, and shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed." By God's king and anointed, she did not mean any king that then ruled over Israel, for there was none, nor was it known that there ever could be one, there was no such design then on foot.

[64] [1 Sam. vi. 14.](#) “And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Bethshemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone And the Levites took down the ark of the Lord, and set it on the great stone.” The cart seems purposely to be stopped in this field, because of the name of the owner being the same with Christ’s, who was signified by the ark, and because of the great stone, which also represented Christ.

[93] [1 Sam. xvii. 25.](#) David won the king’s daughter by victory over Goliath; so Christ wins the church by victory over Satan.

[94] [1 Sam. xxii. 2.](#) “And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was bitter of soul, gathered themselves to him, and he became captain over them.” Herein he was a type of Christ.

[72] [1 Sam. xxv. 41.](#) “And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.” She was a type of the church, and herein speaks that which represents the disposition of a true Christian, according to Christ’s command and example. [John xiii.](#)

[198] [2 Sam. xii.](#) It may be worth the while to observe the analogy there was between David’s sin in the matter of Uriah, and the judgments after. He was guilty of shedding of blood, and he was punished with this in his own family, one of his own children shedding the blood of another. Absalom’s shedding Amnon’s blood, and afterwards he, though his own son, seeking to shed his blood, and with Absalom the greatest part of his subjects that used to be loyal and have a good affection for him, had their hearts turned against him, and became his enemies, and sought to shed his blood, and afterwards Absalom’s blood was shed, greatly to the grief of David his father.

He was guilty of most aggravated uncleanness in his adultery with Bathsheba, and he was punished with uncleanness in his own family in a most aggravated manner, by the horrid incest and rape of his own son upon his own daughter, and afterwards Absalom his son, that was very dear to him, going in to his own concubines many of them, and that on the top of the house in the sight of the sun, and in the sight of all Israel, on purpose to render his father as odious and contemptible as possibly could be.

[216] [2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.](#) These last words of David seem to be wholly a prophecy of the Messiah; he begins as the prophets were wont to begin their mystical speeches about things to come. “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue; the God of Israel, the Rock of Israel spake to me.” He begins much after the manner that Balaam began his two last prophecies, [Numb. xxiv.](#) wherein he prophesied of Israel’s future happiness, and spake particularly of Christ. What is here rendered, “*he that ruleth over men must be just,*” might better be translated, “*he that shall rule over men shall be just.*” The words in the original are p’l\* onus. The two first words are literally translated, *the ruler over men*, or *the person ruling over men*, reserved to time present, past, or to come, indifferently; *must be*, is supplied in our translation, the word *just* only is expressed in the original, and we may as





well and better supply *shall be just*, than *must be*, for the verb *is*, or *be*, is more frequently understood in either of the tenses than *must be*, or *ought to be*. That he should rule in the fear of the Lord, is agreeable to the character of the Messiah given in [Isa. xi. 1, 2.](#) where he is prophesied of, as he is here, as the branch of the stock or house of David, and that prophecy is very parallel to this, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” He is called *He that is to rule over men*, rather than *He that is to rule over Israel*, because when he comes, his kingdom should not be confined to that one people, but he should reign over all nations, and to the utmost ends of the earth; to him the gathering of the people should be, and men should be blessed in him; all nations should call him blessed.

It is the Messiah that is intended that shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, and as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Christ is both as the rain and the sun that causeth the grass to grow, and also as the grass itself that flourishes under the benign influence of those. The person of Christ as head of the church, is as the morning sun arising after a night of darkness, or as the clear sun breaking out of a thick cloud, showing in the tender grass Christ mystical; or Christ in his members is as the tender grass itself springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. This signifies both the glory and blessedness of his reign.

1. It signifies his prosperity and glory as a king; the springing and flourishing of grass is a simile elsewhere used to express glory and prosperity. [Psal. xlii. 7.](#) “Though the wicked do grow as the grass, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish,” &c. So [Job v. 15.](#) “Thou shalt know that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.” So here the same is promised of the seed or offspring of David. Christ in his state of humiliation was a tender plant, and a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness; but when he rose from the earth God made him to spring as the grass out of the earth, and after his resurrection he was a glorious, and flourishing, and most fruitful branch, as is prophesied of the branch of the stock of David. [Isa. iv. 2.](#) “In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely.” [Jer. xxiii. 5.](#) “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper.” And so in many other places wherein Christ is prophesied of, under the appellation of the branch, he seems to be spoken of as a flourishing Branch. David here in his last words comforts himself in the respect of the glorious prosperity of his offspring.

2. Hereby is signified the happiness of his kingdom, not only the glory of the King, but the happiness of those that enjoy the blessings of his reign, which is still the prosperity of

Christ's mystical body. [Psal. lxxii. 6, 7.](#) "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish."

[Verse 5.](#) "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." My house, that is, my offspring, my posterity, those of my family that are to succeed me in the throne. We often find the posterity of David called the house of David. Though my successors and offspring be not just, and do not rule in the fear of God, (as David by the Spirit foresaw that they would not,) though they are not as the light of the morning, and as the tender grass springing out of the earth, though he make it not to grow, *i. e.* my house, for that he was speaking of. It is the same in other words that was expressed in the first clause of the verse, though my house be not so with God; and there is special reference had to the last clause of the preceding verse, where it was foretold that the Messiah should be as the tender grass springing out of the earth. Though my house or offspring be not so, be not made to grow as the grass: the house or lineage of David seems to have been spoken of under the figure of the root or shoot of a plant, as a family or race is often so called in Scripture. [Judge v. 14.](#) "Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek." [Isa. xiv. 29.](#) "Out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice," *i. e.* the serpent's race or offspring; and so [verse 30.](#) "I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay the remnant." [Dan. xi. 7.](#) "Out of a branch of her root shall one stand up," *i. e.* out of her posterity; and so [Hosea ix. 16.](#) "Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit; yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of the womb." The family or lineage of Jesse, or David, is particularly in the prophecies of the Messiah compared to the root or stem of a plant, as in the forementioned, [Isa. xi. 1, 2.](#) "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

And to these last words of David all the prophets seem to refer when they prophesy of Christ under the name of the Branch, for he is here prophesied of, not as the tender grass springing out of the earth: and the lineage of David seems to be spoken of under the figure of a root or stock; and when it is said, Though he make it not to grow, the word signifies to grow as a branch, it might have been translated, Though he make it not to branch forth: the word here used is of the same radix as the word used when Christ is prophesied of as the Branch; the word that is translated *branch* is *noi*, and the word that signifies *to grow*, is *nox*, which is the verb here used. David here foresaw that God would not make his root or stock to grow in his successors that should reign in the kingdom of Judah, and therefore, with reference to this, the prophet Jeremiah foretelling of Christ, says, [chap. xxxiii. 15.](#) "In those days and at that time I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." His being called a righteous Branch, and his executing judgment and justice in the land, seems to be with reference to

David's last words, where it is said, He shall be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord. So [chap xxiii. 5](#). "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth."



[191] [2 Sam. xxiii. 4, 5](#). "As the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain although he make it not to grow." It is probable from this that David speaks of the Messiah, that Christ is called the branch or the sprout; he is compared in Isaiah to a tender plant.

[44] [2 Sam. xxiii. 16](#). "And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gates, and took it and brought it to David; nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out before the Lord." No doubt but this was ordered for a type of something evangelical; otherwise it is wonderful how and why it should happen that he should long for the water of that particular well, and for what reason he should esteem it unlawful for him to drink it. Bethlehem being the place of Christ's birth, the waters of it may signify the same as the water of the sanctuary, the water of the New Jerusalem, or the water of life. This was the price of the blood of those three mighty men; so is the water of life of the blood of the mighty Son of God. They obtained it by conquering Israel's enemies; so doth Christ by the conquest of the enemies of his spiritual Israel. David would not drink it, but poured it out before the Lord; so we ought to give all the glory of our salvation unto God; as God gives it unto us by the blood of Christ, we ought to give it all back again unto God in praise.

[215] [2 Sam. xxiv. 9](#). Concerning the seeming difference in the account of the number of Israel when David numbered them in Samuel, and in Chronicles. See Bedford, p. 559. Scripture Chronology.

The number of all Israel in the book of Chronicles, were eleven hundred thousand men. [1 Chron. xxi. 5](#). And the book of Samuel saith that they were only eight hundred thousand. [2 Sam. xxiv. 9](#). So that here are three hundred thousand difference. On the other hand the book of Samuel saith that the men of Judah were five hundred thousand. [2 Sam. xxiv. 9](#). And the book of Chronicles saith that they were only four hundred and seventy thousand. So that here also is thirty thousand difference. For the reconciling this great and double diversity, it is to be observed that there were four and twenty thousand soldiers and officers that attended David monthly, so many every month. [1 Chron. xxvii. 1-16](#). And these make in all, two hundred and eighty-eight thousand. These were like a standing guard about the king every month, and ready for any sudden expedition. There were besides these, the rulers of the tribes and the officers under them, and therefore allowing a thousand officers to every twenty-four thousand, (as we cannot well allow less,) there will be the twelve thousand wanting, which added to the two hundred and eighty-eight thousand, make just three hundred thousand, and these were not put into the account in Samuel. Thus in the tribe of

Judah, if twenty-four thousand legionary soldiers, and a thousand officers over them, be added to the four hundred and seventy thousand, there will be but five thousand wanting in the number; and as this was David's own tribe, which was faithful to him in all difficulties and troubles, it is no wonder if so many of them were employed in some other extraordinary offices. These Joab put into the account, because their number and list had been long known, and because the king would not put a tax upon his own servants.

[217] [2 Sam. xxiv. 18, to the end.](#), and [1 Chron. xxi. 18, to the end.](#), and [xxii. 1](#). The temple and altar where those sacrifices were to be offered that were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, were by God's orders erected on a threshing-floor, a place where wheat was wont to be threshed, that it might become bread to support men's lives. The wheat that was here threshed, or the bread that was made of it, seems to be typical of Christ, that bread which came down from heaven, who is often typically represented by bread, by flour, and wheat. Vide Note on [2 Kings iv. 45](#). And the threshing of this wheat to prepare it for our food, seems to represent the sufferings of Christ, by which he was prepared to be our spiritual food, and therefore this very wheat that was threshed on this floor was the first meat-offering that was offered to God on the altar that was built in this place. And the threshing instruments, that were typical of the instruments of Christ's sufferings, in being the instruments wherewith the corn was threshed, are made use of as the fuel for the fire, in which David offers sacrifice in this place, and the fire in which that very wheat that they had threshed was burnt; and the same oxen that in that place were used to labour in treading out the corn, were the first sacrifice that was there offered; so that before they were sacrificed on the altar, they in their labours in that place were typical of Christ, who underwent such great labours to procure bread for our souls; and they were sacrificed for men, there, in that very place, where they were used to labour for the good of men; as Christ was crucified in that very land where he had laboriously spent his life for the good of men, and where his goodness had been so distinguishingly manifested for so many ages, and in that very city, Jerusalem, where he had especially laboured, and which city had been for many ages distinguished by his goodness above all others in the world. Those oxen were sacrificed on a fire that was made of their own instruments, their own yokes and other instruments that they had borne; [2 Sam. xxiv. 22](#). as Christ carried his own cross.

[281] [1 Kings iii. 1](#). Solomon's marrying Pharaoh's daughter seems to be a type of two things,

1. Of the calling of the Gentile church. The Egyptians were aliens from the nation of Israel, but now she that was an Egyptian is not only made an Israelite, but she is made the queen in Israel: so the Gentile church, when she was called, was not only received to like privileges that the Jewish church were used to enjoy, but to vastly greater privileges.

2. The union of Christ with his whole church in all ages is typified; for the church is made up altogether of those that were sinners by nature, aliens from God and Christ, and

the children of the devil. Pharaoh is often used in Scripture as a type of the devil. She that is made the church and spouse of Christ, is naturally the daughter of the spiritual Pharaoh.

But especially does this seem to typify what shall come to pass in the last and most glorious times of the church, for the reign of Solomon is especially a type of those times. At that time especially will there be a great gathering of the Gentiles unto Christ; multitudes of nations, that until then were gross heathens, will be espoused unto Christ, and then will the grace and love of Christ be in a most remarkable manner exercised towards sinners, and great sinners, and those that were distinguished as the children of the devil; then will many nations be brought to the church that before were the church's greatest enemies, as Pharaoh was a grand enemy of God's church and people, but yet now his daughter is married to the prince of Israel. And particularly the nations that have been subject to antichrist, who is spiritually called Pharaoh, shall then be espoused by Christ; this type is fulfilled at the same time with those prophecies, [Isa. xix. 24, 25](#). "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt, and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." Egypt and Assyria were remarkable enemies of Israel, and both in their turns held them in bondage and slavery. See also other prophecies of the calling of Egypt.

[6] [1 Kings vi](#). It appears that the temple was a type of Christ, inasmuch as Christ is said to be the temple of the new Jerusalem, in the Revelation, and because he calls himself this temple. So the tabernacle before. Hence the reason why they were commanded to sacrifice no where else; why they were commanded to look to it in their prayers, &c.

[148] [1 Kings vi. 7](#). "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building." This temple represents the church of God, who are called God's temple, or spiritual house; Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, and all the saints as so many stones. Particularly, by Solomon's temple is meant the church triumphant, as by the tabernacle, the church militant, by the exact finishing, squaring, and smoothing of these stones before they were brought thither, represents the perfection of the saints in glory; heaven is not a place to prepare them, they are all prepared before they come there; they come perfectly sinless and holy into heaven; this world is the place where God hews them, and squares them, by his prophets and ministers, by the reproofs and warnings of his word, which God compares to a hammer, and by persecutions and afflictions. There shall be no noise of those tools heard in heaven, but all the lively strains of this spiritual and glorious building are exactly fitted, framed, and polished before they come there.

[273] [1 Kings vii. 15.](#), &c. *Concerning the brazen pillars Jachin and Boaz*. These pillars were set in the porch of the temple, or at the entry into the temple, which was a type of heaven, to show how strongly the entrance of God's elect and covenant people into heaven is secured by God's immutable establishment and almighty power; and also how certain

their happiness shall be, when once they are entered; and that their happiness, which is supported by those pillars, shall be as perpetual and immovable as the pillars, as [Rev. iii. 12](#). “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.” *Jachin, he shall establish*, signifies both God’s decree and promise, for they, by the covenant of redemption, become the same: God’s decree of election is in Christ, an eternal promise and oath, and the promise made in time, is but an expression of that for the dependence and comfort of the saints; it is as it were a temporal decree a promise is but an expression of a purpose, it is that in words that a purpose is in heart. The chapiters were made of lilies and pomegranates the lilies especially denoting the honour, glory, and beauty of the saints. Lilies and flowers are used for a representation of honour, glory, and beauty, in Scripture. [Isa. xxvii. 1](#). “Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys,” &c. [Cant. ii. 1, 2](#). “I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley; as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.” The pomegranates signify the sweet fruit they shall bring forth and enjoy, the fruit of holiness that they shall bring forth, and the fruits of happiness, or that pleasure and satisfaction they shall enjoy. These spiritual fruits are often compared to pomegranates in Solomon’s Song, and more frequently than to any other sort of fruit, as [chapter iv. 3, 13](#). and [vi. 7, 11](#). and [vii. 12](#). and [viii. 2](#).

There was a very great number of those pomegranates on those chapiters, to signify the abundant happiness that is laid up for the saints. The fruits were hung on net-work and chain-work, to show how the graces of God’s Spirit, and the spiritual fruits of holiness and happiness are interwoven one with another, and are connected together, and depend one on another, as it were by a concatenation.

[249] [1 Kings xi. 3](#). “And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines.” Solomon could not but know the law of Moses, in which it is prescribed concerning the king, [Deut. xvii. 16](#). “But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses, forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way, neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away, neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.” But without doubt Solomon either put some wrong interpretation upon this law, or, on some account or other, thought himself exempt from the obligation of it: possibly because when God had appeared to him, and asked him what he should give him, and he requested a wise and understanding heart, and did not ask that earthly glory that other kings set their hearts upon; God told him that he would give him riches and honour, so that there should not be any among the living like unto him all his days, *i. e.* that God would give him outward state and glory above all that other kings valued themselves upon; but in those days it was looked upon among the kings of the earth as great part of the state and grandeur of a king to have a great number of wives and concubines, and horses, as well

as to have a great deal of silver and gold. Solomon might look on this promise of God to him, as a dispensation from the obligation of the whole law of Moses, which was given to restrain the ambition, and set bounds to the earthly grandeur, of the king of Israel.

[154] [1 Kings xvii. 6.](#) “And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning,” &c.; which typified the same thing as Samson getting honey out of the lion. “Out of the eater came forth meat.” It was also more miraculous that such a ravenous bird should bring him meat and not eat it himself.

[283] [2 Kings ii. 11, 12, 13.](#) *Concerning Elijah’s translation.* Elijah’s ascension into heaven seems to be a type of the ascension of Christ. Before he ascended, he asked his disciple Elisha what he should give him; so Christ when he ascended gave gifts unto men. When Elijah ascended, his mantle fell from him, which is a type of the righteousness of Christ, as righteousness is often in Scripture represented by a garment. Christ, though he himself went away, yet left his righteousness for his church and people here below. The efficacy of what he did and suffered, still remained for the justification of sinners here below, though he himself was gone; and the saving fruits and benefits of it were communicated more abundantly after his ascension than before. God exalted him with his own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. Elisha received a double portion of his spirit when he ascended; so when Christ ascended, he sent down abundant measures of his Holy Spirit on his disciples and followers. The condition of Elisha’s receiving a double portion of Elijah’s spirit, was his seeing him when he ascended; so it is by faith in the ascended Saviour, that we receive the Holy Spirit from him. We can receive no spiritual benefits from him any otherwise than as we see him in his glorious exaltation by an eye of faith.

[472] [2 Kings v. 19.](#) “And he said unto him, Go in peace.” These words do not at all imply that the prophet approved of the design Naaman had just before declared of bowing in the house of Rimmon. There indeed seems here to be some difficulty; at first view, it looks as if these words of the prophet manifested an approbation of what he had expressed. But a particular consideration of the circumstances of the affair may serve wholly to remove the difficulty, and to make it manifest that they implied no such approbation. For it is to be considered that the Syrians were now at war with Israel. We have an account but a little before this, [1 Kings xxii.](#) of a great battle of the king of Syria of his thirty-two captains with both the kings of Israel, and we have no account of any peace made after this; but, on the contrary, it appears by the [2nd and 3rd verses of this chapter.](#), and by what we have an account of in the next chapter, that the war still continued, and Naaman was the chief actor in the war, and had been the chief instrument of the mischief that the Syrians had done Israel, for he was the captain of the host of the king of Syria, or general of his army, and a very valiant, successful general, and he by whom the chief exploits had been done, that had been accomplished by the Syrians in war, as is signified in the [first verse of this chapter.](#), and was

probably, under the king, the chief general that led the Syrians in the battle forementioned, wherein Israel received that great defeat wherein their king was slain, which seems to be the thing aimed at in the first verse of this chapter, when it is said that by him he had given deliverance in victory (as it is in the margin) unto Syria. And those things were now fresh in memory, being but two or three years before; so that Naaman must needs know that it would be a remarkable thing if so great and terrible an enemy to Israel as he had been, and one that Israel had suffered so much from, and an enemy that they had now cause to fear above all enemies on earth (the war between the two nations yet continuing). I say he must be sensible that it would be a remarkable thing if he came into the midst of the land of Israel, and to that great prophet that was as it were the father of that people, and should be suffered to return again to his own country in peace; and there is reason to think that he did not come and go without a trembling fear, lest he should be troubled on this score. It was the manner among the heathen nations at that day, as the Syrians knew, for their augurs, diviners, magicians, and those who had immediate intercourse with their gods, which were their prophets, to interest themselves in affairs of their respective nations, and for the nations to have great dependence upon them in time of war. And they doubtless had heard the great things the prophets of Israel had done for them against their enemies, Moses, Samuel, and others, and how the prophets had assisted the Israelites against their nation, even in that generation. (See [1 Kings xx.](#)) And the Assyrians appear apt enough to discern how this very prophet Elisha assisted the king of Israel in war. (See the [next chapter.](#)) And doubtless Naaman now looked upon this prophet who had healed him of his leprosy as a man of great power, and judged that he could easily destroy him, and though as yet he had received no hurt from his power, but great good, yet he seems to be full of fear and jealousy, as appears by this, that although Elisha had bid him go in peace, thereby signifying that no harm should be done him on account of the war with Syria, and for his being so great an enemy to Israel, yet when he sees Gehazi coming after him, his fears are excited anew. He was afraid that the prophet had a reckoning to require of him, and therefore, as soon as Naaman sees him, he immediately lighted down from his chariot to meet him, and his first question is, *Is there peace?* (for so it is in the Hebrew, [verse 21.](#)) The prophet was sensible what Naaman's fears were, and probably knew that he made him the offer of a large present, partly for that end to secure his favour and friendship, that he might not hurt him, and that his fears were increased by his refusing his present. He was afraid that this was a sign that he would not be friends with him; for accepting of presents was looked upon as a token and seal of friendship and peace. And therefore Manoah's wife says, "If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have accepted an offering at our hands." And therefore Jacob urges Esau to accept his present, because he desired a seal of peace and friendship with Esau. And when after the prophet had utterly refused Naaman's present, Naaman professes a design of changing his religion. This probably still is one thing he has in view, thoroughly to reconcile this great



prophet to him. The prophet fully knowing Naaman's circumstances and apprehensions, it is with respect to these things that he says to him, Go in peace, signifying no more than that he bid him farewell, and that though he had refused his present, yet he need not fear his troubling him, or taking the opportunity, now he was in the land of Israel, to do him any mischief on account of the war between Israel and Syria, or for his having been so terrible and destructive an enemy to his country, designedly avoiding making any reply at all to those things he had been saying to him, as his request that he would give him two mules' burthen of earth, that he might offer sacrifice to God, or his design which he had taken occasion to signify to him of bowing in the house of Rimmon. He neither answers his request by commanding that any earth should be given him, or giving him leave to take it. He says nothing at all about it, nor does he make any observation on his intimated design, but only takes leave of him, and lets him understand that he may go in peace, without fear of any such mischief as he seemed to be guarding against. And Naaman seems to understand him. When the prophet spake of peace, there is reason to think that he understood him to mean what he himself means, when presently after he speaks of peace, saying to Gehazi, "Is there peace?" fearing that the prophet now intended to molest him as an enemy. And the words themselves, according to the common use of such phrases, did not carry any more in them. Thus, when Judah, after the cup had been found in Benjamin's sack, says to Joseph, "Behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also with whom the cup is found," Joseph answers, [Gen. xliv. 17.](#) "God forbid that I should do so; but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant, and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father;" as much as to say, I have no quarrel with you for your brother's crime, but will dismiss you without doing you any harm. So "Let us make a covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no harm, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace;" and [ver. 31.](#) "And Isaac sent them away, and they departed in peace." So it is noted of Abner, [2 Sam. iii. 21.](#) after he had been carrying on a war against David in favour of Ishbosheth, that he came and conversed with David, and David sent him away, and he went in peace, *i. e.* David did not do him any hurt for his having acted before as his enemy. So [Josh. x. 20, 21.](#) it is noted of the people of Israel, that after they had been carrying on a successful war against the Amorites, and had slain them with a great slaughter, the people returned to the camp in peace, and that none moved his tongue against the children of Israel. Many other places might be mentioned where such phrases are used in the same manner. But I shall now mention but one more in [2 Chron. xix.](#) at the beginning. We are informed, that after Jehoshaphat had been to war with the Syrians, to assist Ahab, he returned to his house in peace; the meaning is only, that he was not slain, as Ahab was, and returned without receiving any hurt in the war; not that he returned under the divine smiles, and with his favour and approbation, for he did not so return, but, on the contrary, he in his return met

with a severe rebuke from God, and denunciation of his wrath for the business he had been about.

Here, perhaps, it may be objected, that it is hardly credible that the prophet should make no reply to what Naaman had said, the occasion so naturally leading him to it, and duty obliging him to manifest his disapprobation of it, if it was sinful.

As to his not replying when the occasion naturally led to it, it may be observed, that the former part of Naaman's speech seemed much more to lead to and require some reply, wherein he desires of the prophet that he would give him two mules' burthen of earth; what he there purposes, is in the form of a request to Elisha. "Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given unto thy servant two mules' burden of earth," &c. As to what he says concerning bowing in the house of Rimmon, he therein indeed expresses his intention, but asks no request of the prophet. He does not ask his leave, or his opinion, or advice, nor does he ask him any question, or propose any thing to him for his opinion, or as though he expected any reply. But yet it is evident, in fact, that he makes no reply at all to the former part of his speech, that was evidently proposed to him for that end, that he might have a reply. He consecrates no earth for an altar for Naaman, he gives no orders to his servant to give him his two mules' burthen of earth, nor does he say a word signifying that he consents he should take it, approving of his design of building an altar with it, but bids him farewell, without any reply at all. And therefore it is not incredible that he should make no reply to that part of his speech which comes in incidentally, that did in nowise so naturally lead the prophet to answer.

As to the latter part of the forementioned objection which relates to the prophet's being bound in duty to forbid what Naaman declared to be his intention, or to have manifested his disapprobation of it, if it were unlawful, when so fair occasion was given him to express his mind concerning it: to this I would say,

1. The prophets spake under the immediate direction of heaven; they were to deliver God's messages, and were only the agents to utter his words. In this whole affair of Naaman he acted in his character of a prophet, and Naaman is now addressing him as such, and God was not pleased to put any reply into his mouth.

2. God herein dealt with Naaman, as he commonly does with such hypocrites that pretend to be his servants, but are joined to idols. [Hos. iv. 17.](#) "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." [Matt. xv. 14.](#) "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind." It was just so with Naaman as it was with the elders of Israel in Chaldea, they pretend to worship the God of Israel alone, but yet living among idolaters, and in subjection to them, they thought they might comply with the people of the land, who now were their masters, in some of their

idoltrous customs, seeing they must render themselves very obnoxious by refusing, and they came to the prophet Ezekiel to inquire of him something concerning this affair; but God replies by the prophet, “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face, should I be inquired of at all by them?” Again, [chap. xx. 1.](#) certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before me. [Ver. 3.](#) “Thus saith the Lord God, Are ye come to inquire of me? as I live, saith the Lord, I will not be inquired of by you,” with [ver. 31.](#) “For when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day; and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? as I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.” That what was the especial reason of God’s treating them with such manifestations of abhorrence, and refusing any intercourse with them, was, that they joined idolatry with a profession of his name under a pretence of worshipping him, or had a disposition so to do, is manifest by [ver. 39.](#) “As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts and your idols.” And that the thing that was in their mind about which they came to Ezekiel to inquire, was whether they might not comply with the people they dwelt among in some of their idoltrous customs, though they professed in heart to serve the true God only, is plain from [ver. 32.](#) “And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.”

3. Though Elisha made no reply to what Naaman had said of bowing in the house of Rimmon, and so did not directly declare his dislike of it, yet his manner of treating Naaman on this occasion, (though no other than friendly,) if duly weighed, and rationally reflected upon by Naaman, would sufficiently show him the prophet’s disapprobation of it, and in a manner tending more to convince and affect him than if he had directly forbid it. Naaman made a proposal to Elisha of taking two mules’ burthen of earth of the land of Canaan, (as though he highly valued the very dust of that land,) to build an altar to Elisha’s God, doubtless expecting that Elisha would show himself much pleased with it, and desires to have this earth as given and consecrated by Elisha. But Elisha does not grant his request, he takes no notice of it, intimating that he looked on his pretences not worthy of any regard, and immediately, without saying one word to what he had said, sends him away, and takes his leave of him, as not thinking it worth his while to enter into any conversation with him about such a mongrel worship as he proposed, nor desiring any unnecessary communion with such an idolater.

[170] [2 Kings vi. 6.](#) “And he cut down a stick and cast it in thither, and the iron did swim.” The iron that sunk in the water represents the soul of man that is like iron, exceeding heavy with sin and guilt, and prone to sink down into destruction, and be overwhelmed with misery, which is often compared to deep waters. The stick of wood that was cast in,

represents Christ, that was of a contrary nature, light, and tended not to sink, but to ascend in the water and swim; as Christ's being of a divine and perfectly holy nature, though he might be plunged into affliction, and misery, and death, yet he naturally tended to ascend out of it, it was impossible he should be holden of it. Christ was plunged into woe and misery, and the death that we had deserved for ourselves, to bring us out of it. The stick when that rose brought up the iron with it; so Christ when he rose brings up believers with him; they are risen with Christ, that they may walk in newness of life. Christ is the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's; he rose again for our justification, and hath thereby begotten us again to a lively hope.

[222] [2 Chron. xxii. 1, 2.](#) "So Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, reigned; forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign." Here a great difficulty arises, for whereas Joram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem, and so he died when he was forty years old; and immediately the inhabitants of Jerusalem set Ahaziah upon the throne, who was his youngest son, yet this Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign, and so he will prove to be two years older than his father.

*Answer.* The book of Chronicles doth not mean in this place that Ahaziah was so old when he began to reign, for the book of Kings tells us plainly that he was twenty-two at that time, so that those forty-two years have reference to another thing, particularly to the house of Omri, and not the age of Ahaziah, for if we count from the beginning of the reign of Omri, we shall find that Ahaziah entered into his reign in the two and fortieth year from thence. The original words therefore are not to be translated as we render them. Ahaziah was two and forty years old, but Ahaziah was the son of the two and forty years, and this was anciently observed in that history among the Jews, called *Soder Olam*, or the order of the world. Now the reason why his reign is dated differently from all the rest of the kings of Judah, is because he did according to all the wickedness of the house of Omri, for Athaliah his mother was Ahab's daughter, and she both perverted her husband Joram, and brought up this her son, Ahaziah, in all the idolatry of that wicked house; and therefore Ahaziah is not thought fit to be reckoned by the line of the kings of Judah, (and of the house of David, and the ancestors of Christ,) but by the house of Omri and Ahab. Thus a particular mark is set upon Joram by the evangelist Matthew, who leaves out the three succeeding generations, *viz.* Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, and mentions Uzziah as the next. Here the three descents are omitted, according to what the psalmist saith, [Psal. xxxvii. 28.](#) "The seed of the wicked shall be cut off." See the letter # which is the last letter of *y\», the seed*, and of *yv\, the wicked*. But out of that acrostical and alphabetical Psalm, in that very place, Dr. Lightfoot, vol. 1. p. 417. saith that this omission is most divinely done from the threatening of the second commandment, "Thou shall not commit idolatry, for I will visit the sins of the fathers on the children unto the third and fourth generation." It is the manner of Scripture very often

to leave out men's names from certain stories and records, to show a distaste at some evil in them. Thus all Cain's posterity is blotted out of the book of Chronicles, as it was out of the world by the flood. So Simeon is omitted in Moses's blessings, [Deut. xxxiii.](#) for his cruelty at Shechem, and to Joseph. So Dan and Ephraim, at the sealing of the Lord's people, [Rev. chap. vii.](#) because of idolatry, which began in the tribe of Dan. [Judg. xviii.](#) (and afterwards had its principal seat in the tribe of Ephraim). So Joab, from among David's worthies, [2 Sam. xxiii.](#) because of his bloodiness to Abner and Amasa. And such another close intimation of God's displeasure at the wickedness of Joram, is to be seen, [2 Chron. xxii. 1, 2.](#) where the reign of his son Ahaziah is not dated according to the custom and manner of the other kings of Judah, but by the style of the continuance of the house of Omri.

And Ahaziah alone, among all the kings of Israel, might be reckoned in this manner, because in his time the whole house of Ahab was cut off by Jehu, after the battle at the field of Naboth, the Jezreelite, where Joram, the last king of Israel, of the house of Ahab, or Omri, was slain, and Ahaziah was slain with him, and two and forty of his brethren perished with the house of Ahab. (This I suppose is from Bedford.) It is not unusual in Scripture to mention a number of years as a certain date, without expressing the epochs. So in [Ezek. i. 1.](#) and [viii. 1. xx. 1. xxiv. 1. xxvi. 1. xxix. 1. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 1. chap. xxix. 17. xxx. 20.](#) That Hebrew phrase, *The son of (so many) years* does not always signify the person's being so old. As for instance, [xiii. 1.](#) *Saul reigned one year*; in the original it is, *Saul was the son of one year*. It may be noted further, that the Scriptures, in dating kings' reigns, do not always make the person's birth that epoch from whence the date is taken, as concerning Absalom, [2 Sam. xv. 7.](#) See also Notes on [2 Kings xxiv. 8.](#)

[278] [2 Chron. xxv. 9.](#) "And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." Amaziah seemed to look upon it a hard thing to part with so great a sum. But the words that the prophet spake to him were not vain words. God plentifully rewarded Amaziah for obeying God's command in this particular, for God gave him success against his enemies, that he was going to war with, and he obtained a victory over the children of Edom, as in [ver. 11, 12.](#) so that he obtained the same end without the help of the army of Israel that he aimed at, by paying the one hundred talents to hire their help, and therefore lost nothing by not taking them with him; and probably Amaziah was much more than paid for his hundred talents by the spoils of his enemies. But yet this was not all that God did in reward for his obeying his command by the prophet, for though he carried himself very wickedly after this, so as to bring God's judgments on himself during his life, yet God seems to have remembered what he had done in his son Uzziah's days; and Amaziah's success in this very expedition against the Edomites was the occasion of vastly enriching his son Uzziah. For that which seems in times past to have been the principal source of the wealth of the kings of Judah, was the trade that they had by the Red



sea to Ophir for gold, which was carried on from two seaport towns upon the Red sea, viz. Elath, and Ezion-geber, which places were in the land of Edom, as appears by [1 Kings ix. 26, 27](#). “And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Elath, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom;” and by means of this trade very much it was, in all probability, that Solomon so enriched the country in his time, so as to make silver as plenty as stones there. The principal sea-port that was made use of until Jehoshaphat’s time, was Ezion-geber; but Jehoshaphat having there left his fleet that he had prepared to send from thence to Ophir, his ships being broken to pieces on the rocks there, as [1 Kings xxii. 48](#). they seem after that to have made use of Elath instead of Ezion-geber, as being a safer harbour. The kings of Judah continued in the possession of this trade to Ophir, as long as they continued in the possession of the land of Edom, where those sea-ports were, which was until the days of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat; but in his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves, as [2 Kings viii. 20](#). And so the kings of Judah from that time lost Elath and their trade to Ophir, until the days of Amaziah, who conquered them, and brought them into subjection again in that expedition spoken of in the context, to assist in which he had given the one hundred talents to the army of Israel. But God gave him such success without this hired army, that he brought the country under, and so recovered Elath; and his son Uzziah rebuilt it, and so renewed the trade to Ophir from thence, as in the next chapter, [ver. 1, 2](#). “Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father, Amaziah. He built Elath, and restored it to Judah, and by this means he became an exceeding wealthy prince, and filled the land with riches; and therefore Isaiah, who, in the beginning of his prophecy, prophesied in the days of Uzziah, says, [Isa. ii. 7](#). “The land also is full of silver, and there is no end of their treasures.”

“This king lost one hundred talents by his obedience, and we find just that sum given to his grandson, Jotham, as a present, [chap. xxvii. 5](#). Then the principal was repaid, and for interest, ten thousand measures of wheat, and as many of barley.” *Henry*.

[132] [Neh. ix. 14.](#) “And madest known unto them the holy sabbath.” It seems that before they had lost the sabbath, that is, they had lost the beginning and ending of the week, reckoning from the creation, until God made it known to them, upon occasion of their being brought out of Egypt on the same day of the week, and there was thereby new occasion given for this sanctifying that day.

[46] *Esther The Book of Esther.* It appears to me very probable, that this book of Esther is a history that is a shadow of gospel things and times, by the agreement of it with events, and the agreeableness to the names of other typical histories of the Old Testament. The great feast that Ahasuerus made, is the gospel feast. Christ’s incarnation, life, and death, and the benefits thereof, are frequently represented in the Old Testament and New, by the making of a feast; the feast is made both unto the great and small, [chap. v.](#) agreeing with the universality of the gospel offer. It was made in the king’s palace, as the gospel feast is made in the house of God; it was a rich and glorious feast, [verses 6 and 7.](#) answering to the excellency of gospel benefits. None was compelled, but every man ate and drank according to his pleasure; so the gospel benefits are offered to all, but every one is left to his own choice, none are compelled. Vashti, the queen, is the church, or God’s people, who is called the queen in gold of Ophir. Vashti is sent for to this feast to appear before the king; so when the gospel feast was made, the call was made more especially to the Jews that had hitherto been God’s people; they were a long while urged to come, and earnestly invited, before God left them and turned to the Gentiles. Vashti, though she was the king’s own wife, refused to come, for she had a feast of her own; so the Jews, though God’s peculiar people, refused to come to the glorious feast he made through their pride and vanity, trusting in their own righteousness, in their own wisdom, being foolishly fond and proud of their own ceremonies, temple, and superstitions, being lifted up that they were Abraham’s seed and God’s peculiar people, as queen Vashti’s high station made her too proud to obey the king. Upon this, Ahasuerus repudiates Vashti, and gives the royal estate to another. So we find the rejection of the Jews and calling of the Gentiles compared to God’s repudiating his ancient church, and taking another better than she. Esther was exceedingly fair and beautiful, and the king delighted in her. So Christ’s heart is ravished with the beauty of the church. Mordecai is the gospel ministry; he nourished and brought up Esther, and was as a father to her: [chap. ii. ver. 7.](#) and so the church was nourished by God’s ministers. He brought her to Ahasuerus; so the gospel ministers present the church as a chaste virgin to Christ, [2 Cor. xi. 2.](#) Esther must be purified before she is married to the king, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours; so God’s people must be prepared, and purified, and sanctified with the sweet graces of God’s Spirit, before they are admitted to the full enjoyment of God’s love. So the Christian church was three centuries preparing, before she had the royal crown put on her head, as in the house of Constantine the Great. When the king set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti, then the king made a great feast unto

all his princes and servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts according to the state of the king, [chap. viii](#). So when God's people are sufficiently prepared, they shall be admitted to that glory which is compared to a feast, and shall receive gifts according to the state of the King of kings. Likewise in Constantine's time, it was a time of joy and rejoicing to Christians, as the time of a feast, and a time of glorious liberty. Mordecai used to sit in the gate of the king's palace; the place of God's ministers is in his house, which is the gate of heaven, which is God's palace.

After these things God promoted Haman the grand enemy of God's people above all others, ([chap. iii](#).) who seems to typify antichrist (as will appear probably by the agreement in many things,) whom God in his providence advanced above all, and gave him dominion over all the world. Haman was exceeding proud and haughty; so antichrist is the most remarkable son of pride that ever was, exalting himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, showing himself that he is God, having a mouth speaking great things. Haman, like antichrist, loved to have every body else bow to him, and could not bear it that Mordecai did not bow, nor do him reverence, as the true ministers of God will not submit to do obeisance to the pope and his haughty clergy, which has always filled them with the greatest rage. Haman, like antichrist, was of a most malicious, persecuting spirit, and persecuted and sought the destruction of all the people of God. [Chap. iii. verse. 6](#). "And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai." The king gave him power to do as he would with this people. [Chap. iii. 11](#). "And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given unto thee, the people also to do with them as seemeth good to thee;" so God gave antichrist power over his people. [Rev. xiii. 8](#). "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations;" and [chap. xvii. 17](#). "For God hath put it into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast." Deliverance is obtained for the Jews by Esther's humble prayer; so it will be by the earnest prayer of the church, that God's people shall be delivered from antichrist, and God will extend the golden sceptre of his grace, as the king to Esther. At that time the good works of God's people and ministers shall come into remembrance to be recorded, as Mordecai's were; and God will not rest until he has delivered them, as Mordecai's good deeds were found by the king in the records. Haman exceedingly affected pomp and sovereignty, he desired to wear the same apparel that the king wore, and to ride on the king's horse, and to wear the king's crown, and to be honoured as the king himself; so antichrist would be honoured and obeyed as God himself, would assume the power that belongs to God alone, and is for wearing the crown of Christ himself, and usurping the throne, showing himself that he is God. But Haman, to his great mortification, sees Mordecai exalted to this same honour, and which is more mortifying, he is forced to do it himself,





and he is put in subjection to him, and made to run before him like a servant; he brought himself to this by the very means by which he intended to advance himself. Thus God is wont to do, to order it with respect to the enemies of his people: those same means by which they proudly seek to advance themselves, God turns to their depression; and thus God has done and will do by antichrist; God will exalt his people, and make them to reign with Christ, and to sit down with him in his throne, and to be partakers of his glory, and shall be arrayed with holiness, which is Christ's own royal robe, and Christ's delight in them to honour them shall be publicly manifested, and his saints shall reign on earth, and antichrist and all their enemies shall be put under their feet, and they shall gnaw their tongues for pain. Haman at last was hanged on the same gallows that he prepared for Mordecai. So God is wont to bring upon his people's enemies the very evil they intended for them, and they fall into the pit which they have digged; so it will be with antichrist. [Rev. xiii. 10.](#) "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword;" and [Rev. xviii. 6.](#) "Reward her even as she rewardeth you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double." Haman intended to hang Mordecai a cursed death; so the pope dispenses God's curses, but at length falls into it. So we find, [chap. viii.](#) that the house of Haman was given to queen Esther, and Mordecai is put in his place; so shall it be with the saints. Europe, which has been the house of antichrist, shall be in the possession of protestants, and all his power and dominion shall be given to the saints. The Jews' glorious victory over all their enemies after those things, the growing greatness and honour of Mordecai, the gladness and seeking of the Jews, and their peace and prosperity afterwards, are figures of the glorious peace and prosperity of the church after the final overthrow of antichrist.

[145] *Book of Job*. It seems to have been the custom of those that were counted their wise men in the early ages of the world, when they discoursed upon any head of wisdom, or delivered their minds on moral, spiritual, or philosophical subjects, to address each other in long set discourses, in a style at once lofty and poetical, dark and mysterious, which was their manner of teaching and discoursing. Now Job was one of those wise men that exercised himself very much in contemplation and instruction, and it seems that those that answered him were otherwise men that were his companions, that he used to converse with upon matters of wisdom before. And therefore we have so many of this kind of discourses with Job upon this notable occasion. These discourses were called parables. So Balaam took up his parable; so we read that Job continued his parable, [chap. xxvii. 1.](#) and [xxix. 1.](#) We read of this kind of speeches oftentimes in the Old Testament under the name of parables, as [Prov. xxvi. 7, 9.](#) “The legs of the lame are not equal, so is a parable in the mouth of fools. As a thorn goeth into the hand of the drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.” It was only they that were or would be accounted wise men, that used to utter their minds in such parables. [Psal. xlix. 3, 4.](#) “My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable, I will open my dark saying upon the harp.” And [Psal. lxxviii. 2.](#) “I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old.”

[202] *The Book of Job Extract out of Bedford’s Scripture Chronology*, p. 365, 366. “The place where *Job* lived is generally supposed to be Idumea, because we meet with a person called Uz, among the sons of Esau, [Gen. xxxvi. 28.](#) from whom a part of Idumea was anciently called the land of Uz, [Lam. iv. 21.](#) We meet also with Eliphaz the son of Esau, and Teman his son; [Gen. xxxvi. 15.](#); and therefore it is probable that Eliphaz, the Temanite, the friend of Job, might be Jobab, one of the kings that reigned in the land of Edom. [Gen. xxxvi. 34.](#)

“But in answer to all this it may be considered that there is another Uz, the son of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, [Gen. xxii. 20, 21.](#) who married Milcah, of the same family from which Isaac and Jacob took wives by the direction of their parents, and consequently most likely to be a family in which religion might be kept up in that purity as we find it to be in Job.

“As to the land of Uz, the Septuagint calls it *Ausitis*, but never calls that Uz in the land of Edom by this name. Nabor lived at Haran, on the south of the Euphrates, and no doubt his son might live with him, and his family give a name to this country; and we find in Ptolemy a people called *Aisitæ*, which the learned Bochart supposes should be written *Ausitæ*, who extended themselves from the river Euphrates southward into Arabia Deserta, and here both he and Bishop Patrick, our excellent commentator, supposes Job to have been born. Besides, Job is said to be one of the greatest of all the men of the east. Now the land of Uz, in Idumea, can in no respect be called the east. It lay almost north from Egypt, and south from Canaan, and south-west from the country of Midian, where Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, lived. But the south part of the country of *Ausitis* or *Uz*, lay not only east

from Canaan, but eastward from all the countries in which the Israelites travelled whilst they were in the wilderness. As for the name of Eliphaz, it is not impossible but two men in different countries might have the same name, and then Eliphaz, the friend of Job, might not be the son of Esau from Teman, but the son of Ishmael from Tema, [Gen. xxv. 13, 15.](#) whom Abraham in his life-time sent eastward to inhabit the east country, [Gen. xxv. 6.](#) and where we find them in the neighbourhood of Uz. In those parts it is probable that Bildad the Shuhite, a son of Abraham, from Shuah by Keturah, ([Gen. xxv. 1, 2.](#)) might live, who was sent thither with the rest of his brethren, (as in the forementioned [Gen. xxv. 6.](#)) And as *Buz* was the brother of Uz, [Gen. xxii. 20, 21.](#) so Elihu the Buzite, being of that family, might well live in those parts, especially since he seems to be of a religious family, the son of Barachel, that is, he blesseth God, or God blesseth. Besides this, Elihu was of the kindred of Ram, or Aram, that is, a Syrian, as Laban was also called, [Gen. xxviii. 5.](#) who dwelt with his ancestors in Padan-aram, or the country of Aram. (But it is more probable that the Ram here mentioned is the Aram mentioned [Gen. xxii. 21.](#)) To this may be added that the Sabaeans who took away Job's oxen, and the Chaldeans who took away his cattle, were near neighbours to this part of the country of Uz, the son of Nahor; but lay so remote from Uz, in Idumea, that they could not make an excursion thither. It is allowed also that Job spoke the Arabic language in perfection, whence he is called *the divine of the Arabians*, and the book which goes under his name is full of Arabic words and phrases; and we may more rationally expect this language to be spoken in Arabia itself than in Idumea, and therefore there is little reason to think that Moses would call him Job in one place, and Jobah in another, where the difference of words is not only evident in every translation, but in the Hebrew language they do not begin with the same letter. The one *y\\*tt*, and the other *aai*»." Thus far Bedford. It seems likely that the land of Uz where Job lived, was the latter Uz, or the Ausitis of the Septuagint, upon this account; it is much more probable that we should find so much of religion and piety, and of the presence of God, in the country of the posterity of Nahor, who is spoken of as a holy worshipper of the true God, whose covenant God was ([Gen. xxxi. 53.](#)) the God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, than in Idumea, among the posterity of so wicked a man as Esau, who is branded in Scripture for folly and impiety; of whom and his posterity it is recorded that God hated them; who was undutiful to his parents, and a persecutor; who began to struggle with Jacob in the womb, to signify that he and his posterity should be the enemies of the church, and whose posterity are always spoken of as the church's enemies; so that oftentimes the children of Edom are put for all the church's enemies. In general it is much more likely to find piety among the posterity of Ishmael, than of Esau; for there is no such promise concerning Esau that he should live before God, as there is concerning Ishmael. And accordingly we find Eliphaz in this book a holy man, of Ishmael's posterity. Esau's posterity, as they descended from a wicked father, so they chiefly descended from



mothers of the accursed nations of Canaan that were Esau's wives, and were the more likely on that account to have wickedness descend to them, and God's curse entailed upon them.

Concerning the penman of the book of Job, Bedford thinks that it was written originally by some person that belonged to Arabia, the country where the things were transacted and spoken, because the style is not like the rest of the books of Moses, or indeed to any other parts of the Old Testament, but more concise and obscure, and that there are such a vast number of Arabic words and phrases to be found in it. It has been observed by several that the book of Job abounded with Arabisms, so that Job has been called *the Arabian divine*. And he thinks that the substance of this book was written originally by Elihu, one of the speakers in it; first, because when Job's friends who came to lament with him, and to comfort him, are mentioned, Elihu is not named among the number, because he himself was the historian and penman, who gave this account, and therefore he named not himself when he named the rest; and secondly, because he thought that he seems to speak of himself as the historian. [Chap. xxxii. 15, 16, 17.](#) "They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking when I had waited, for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more. I said, I will answer also; I also will show mine opinion."

It looks to me probable, chiefly on the former of these reasons, and if it was written originally by an inhabitant of the country, as the forementioned reason of the Arabic style argues strongly that it was, no person seems to be so likely as Elihu; for as it was doubtless at first written by an inspired person, and probably, therefore, by some person in that country of eminent piety and wisdom, for such were the persons that were wont to be inspired, and to be improved as the penman of holy inspired writings; and it probably also was some person that lived near the time when the things were transacted, for true religion vanished away out of Arabia not long after, and such men therefore were not there to be found; and it is not probable that there were any other persons of such eminent piety and wisdom as those mentioned in that book; but of them, be sure, no one was so likely to be the penman as Elihu, who stood most indifferent in the affair, and was most approved of by God in what he said and acted in it, of any of them. Bedford also thinks it probable that Moses, when he kept the flock of Jethro, the priest of Midian, might meet with this book; which seems the more probable, because priests, even in all nations, and in the most ancient times, used to be the keepers of books and records, especially those that were looked upon sacred; and it is very likely that a priest of Midian should have this book, for the Midianites were related to the people that dwelt in Job's country, and particularly to one of the speakers in the affair, *viz.* Bildad, the Shuhite, for Shuah and Midian were brothers, being both the children of Abraham, by Keturah, [Gen. xxv. 1, 2.](#) And it was so early then that the relation was more fresh in their memory, and it is more likely still that Jethro should have such a book, he being a priest of the true God, like Melchizedek. And Moses might probably take the more notice of the book, for its being so adapted to his own improvement in the banished,

afflicted circumstances he was then in, and also the circumstances of his brethren, the children of Israel, in their great affliction in Egypt, for whose sake Bedford supposes he translated it into Hebrew, to teach them patience under their afflictions, and added the historical part, or he might alter the phrasing of the historical part, and add such expressions as would make it more intelligible to his own people, which were needless in the country where the things were transacted.

[111] [Job viii. 8.](#) “For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself for the search of the fathers.” The people of God that lived before there was any written revelation, depended very much upon the teaching and tradition of their fathers; those that lived near the flood were but a few removes from Adam, they might have Adam’s own instructions, without having them through many hands; and those that lived in Job’s time they had doubtless abundance of traditions from the antediluvians, who might be instructed from Adam himself, and who, through their vast age, had abundant opportunity to acquire great knowledge and experience. It is very probable that much of the learning that was in the heathen world was the corrupted remains of what was declared to mankind by those that came out of the ark. Job lived in early days after the flood, and there is abundance of philosophy in this book, which in all probability they derived by tradition from their fathers, quoted in this book, as here in this place, and [15th chap 10, 18, 19.](#) verses, there is a plain referring to tradition from the beginning of the world, or from the second beginning after the flood; it is evident, by the 19th verse, they quoted the fathers then as we do the Scriptures now.

[101] [Job xxvi. 7.](#) “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” By stretching out the north over the empty place in the former part of the verse, seems to be meant the extending the northern parts of the wide plain of the earth, as they took it to be, over an empty abyss of space, much the same as hanging the earth upon nothing in the latter part of the verse.

[115] [Job xxxiii. 14, 15, 16.](#) “For God speaketh once, yea, twice In a dream, in a vision of the night.” Also, [chap. iv. 12, 13., &c.](#) It was a common thing, before there was any written revelation, for God to reveal himself to holy men in visions and dreams. See [Numb. xii. 6.](#) [Gen. xv. 1.](#) and [ver. 12, to the end.](#) [Gen. xlvi. 2, 16.](#) “Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.” By affliction, that is, when men will not hearken to God’s instructions and warnings in his word, (that in those days was wont to be given after this manner, and delivered from father to son,) then he chastens them in his providence to make them hear.

[149] [Job xxxvi. 30.](#) “Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.” In the original, the roots of the sea, by which he means the extreme parts of the sea, where the clouds and the sea meet in the horizon, and those parts of the sea that are below the horizon, which they conceived to be drawn down, which is agreeable to the

metaphor used in the foregoing, wherein the clouds that overspread the skies are represented by the curtains of a tabernacle; he spreadeth his light upon it, that is, upon his tabernacle, upon those curtains, the clouds, which are like a bright covering on the inside of it.

[434] *Concerning the Book of Psalms.* That the penman of the Psalms did pretend to speak and write by the inspiration of the Spirit of God as much as the prophets when they wrote their prophecies, the following things do confirm:

1. Singing divine songs was of old one noted effect of the inspiration of the Spirit of God in the prophets, insomuch that such singing was called by the name of prophesying. [1 Sam. x. 5, 6.](#) “Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy, and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them.” See also [1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 3.](#) This seems to have been the most ancient way of prophesying. Inspired persons of old used to utter themselves in a parable, as sometimes it is called, or a kind of song. Thus it was that Miriam uttered herself when she did the part of a prophetess, [Exod. xv. 20, 21.](#) “And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances, and Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” She, in the [12th chap. of Numb. ver. 2.](#) boasts that God had spoken by her as well as by Moses. She seems to have reference to this time, for it does not appear that God ever had spoken by her at any other time, and it is probable that it was from her being inspired at that time, (or at least chiefly,) that she was called a prophetess. And this was the way that Moses delivered his chief and fullest prophecy concerning the future state of Israel, and the church of God, and the world of mankind, in that song in the 32nd of Deut.; the words were all indited by God, as appears by [Deut. lxxi. 19, 20, 21.](#) And Moses’s blessing of the children of Israel, and his prophecy of their future state, in [Deut. iii.](#) is delivered *song-wise*, which especially appears in the beginning and ending. And so are Balaam’s prophecies, or parables. Jacob’s blessing and prophecies concerning the future state of the posterity of his twelve sons, [Gen. xlix.](#) is delivered in a like style, as may be plain to any one that observes. Zechariah is said to prophesy in uttering a song, [Luke i. 67.](#)

2. Singing these very psalms in the sanctuary by the musicians that David appointed, is called prophesying, [1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 3.](#) And Asaph is called a seer, or prophet, and represented as speaking as such in uttering those psalms that he penned, [2 Chron. xxix. 30.](#)

3. We are expressly informed of David in an eminent instance, wherein he uttered himself in a remarkable manner as the sweet psalmist of Israel, that he did proress himself to speak by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God. [2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.](#) &c. “Now these be the last words of David.” (And then in what next follows David’s words begin, as may be confirmed by comparing them with [Num. xxiv. 3, 4, 15, 16.](#)) “David, the son of Jesse, hath said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said: The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me.” In its being said that these are the last words of David, it is implied that there had been many other words; that he, as



the sweet psalmist of Israel, had uttered many things before; and when David, in these his last words, says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me," it must be understood of all these words spoken of in this place, whether mentioned or referred to, all the words that he had uttered as the sweet psalmist of Israel. And there can, perhaps, no other good reason be given why he should be mentioned under that character of the sweet psalmist of Israel here in the introduction of these his last words, rather than all other places of his history, but only because these were the last words that David had uttered as the sweet psalmist of Israel, and as it were the sum of all those preceding records referred to, expressing the main drift and substance of those holy songs he had sung by the inspiration of the Spirit of God all his life-time, and the *ultimum*, the chief thing, he had in view in those psalms.

4. It is evident that the penman of the Psalms did pretend to speak by a spirit of prophecy, because the Psalms are full of prophecies of future events, as [Psal.xi. 6.](#) [Psal. xxii. 27.](#), to the end. [Psal. xxxvii. 9,10,11.](#) [Psal. lx. 6, 7, 8.](#) [Psal. lxiv. 7.](#), to the end. [Psal. lxxviii. 31.](#) [Psal. lxxix. 34, 35, 36.](#) [Psal. lxxii.](#) [Psal. lxxxvi. 9.](#) [Psal. xcvi. 13.](#) [Psal. cii. 13-22.](#) [Psal. cviii.](#) [Psal. cxxxviii. 4, 5.](#) [Psal. cxlix. 7, 8, 9.](#) And many other things in the Psalms are uttered in a prophetic manner and style.

5. It is also most manifest that the penman of the Psalms did pretend to speak by the Spirit, and in the name of the Lord, as the prophets did. By this, that God in the Psalms is very often represented as speaking, and the words are evidently represented as his words, in like manner as in the prophets, as [Psal. xiv. 4.](#) [Psal. 1. 7-14.](#) [Psal. lxxxi. 6-16.](#) [Psal. lxxxii. Psal. liii. 4.](#) [Psal. lxxxi.](#) [Psal. lxxxvii.](#) [Psal. xci. 14, 15, 16.](#) [Psal. xcvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.](#) [Psal. cxxxii. 14.](#), to the end. [Psal. xlv. 16.](#), to the end. [Psal. ii. 6.](#), to the end. [Psal. xxxii. 8.](#), to the end. [Psal. lx. 6, 7, 8.](#) [Psal. lxxviii. 13.](#) [Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4, 19-37.](#) [Psal. cviii. 7, 8, 9.](#) [Psal. cx. 1, 4.](#)

[440] *The Book of Psalms.* It is a further confirmation of these things, that we find that David very early was endowed with the spirit of prophecy and miracles; he wrought a miracle when he slew the lion and the bear, and acted and spake by that spirit of prophecy when he went forth against Goliath, as is very apparent by the story.

[506] *The Book of Psalms.* That this is divinely inspired may lie further argued from this, that it is every way probable that what are called the songs of Zion, and the Lord's song, in [Psal. cxxxvii. 3, 4.](#) are songs contained in this book. It appears that Zion, or God's church, had sacred songs fancied as such in the world, and that they were properly called the Lord's songs, which argues that they had God for their author, and were consecrated by his authority, as a *word* being called the *word of the Lord*, argues it to be a word that came from God, and as a house being called *the house of the Lord*, signifies its being a house consecrated to God by divine authority. So of *the Lord's day*, *the city of God*, *the altar of God*, &c. &c.

When all the utensils of the temple were exactly, and even in the most minute circumstances, formed by divine direction, it would be strange if the songs of the temple, which are vastly more important and material in the worship of God, should not be formed by



divine direction. These were not merely external circumstances of divine worship as the other, but the very matter of the worship. As David was divinely instructed in all the place, and form, and instruments of the temple, and all the new ordinances relating to the attendance and orders of the priests, and the Levites, and the circumstances of their ministration, and particularly of the singers, it would be strange if the songs that they were to sing, the most material and effectual thing of all, should not be of divine appointment, but should be left wholly to human wisdom and invention. (See [1 Chron. vi. 31.](#) and [xvi. 4-7. 6, 25,](#) to the end, and [chap. xxv.](#) and [to the end,](#) especially ver. 19 and 21.

We have an account that David and Samuel the seer acted jointly in appointing the orders of the porters of the Levites, [1 Chron. ix. 22.](#) and much more the orders of the Levites that were to be singers. It is noted that some of those Levites themselves that were appointed by David as chief musicians, or singers, were seers, or prophets. So of Heman, [1 Chron. xxv. 5.](#) And the expressions there lead us, in this verse and the context, to suppose that he acted as a prophet in that matter in assisting David in composing psalms, and appointing the order of singers. Yea, it is expressly said that the order of the singers was appointed by David with the assistance of the prophets, by the commandment of the Lord. [2 Chron. xxix. 25.](#) “And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king’s seer, and of Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.” And Asaph, another of the chief musicians, and penman of many of the psalms, is spoken of as acting as a seer, or prophet, in this matter. [Ver. 30.](#) “Hezekiah the king commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the seer.” (See the like of Jeduthun, [chap. xxxv. 15.](#))

[95] [Psalm viii. 2.](#) “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.” It seems to me that mankind are principally intended here by babes and sucklings; it is of God’s loving-kindness to men that the psalmist is speaking, to the end of the psalm; by the enemy and the avenger is meant the devil. Men are as babes and sucklings in comparison of the angelic nature. By so advancing the human nature, the devils are disappointed and triumphed over.

[298] [Psalm xvii. 4.](#) “Concerning the works of men, b; the word of thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the *destroyer*.” By the destroyer here is doubtless meant the devil, the same with him that is called Abaddon and Apollvon in the Revelations. God’s people under the Old Testament were sensible that there was an evil and malignant spirit, or invisible agent, that sought the ruin of man, as even the heathen nations had a notion of evil daemons. This evil spirit the Hebrews were wont to call by several names; one was *Satan*, or *the adversary*. So it is said Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number the people. So in several other places in the Old Testament. Another name was *the destroyer*; so devils



are called destroyers in [Job xxxiii. 22](#). “Yea, his soul draweth nigh unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.”

[328] [Psalm xix. 4, 5, 6](#). “In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race: his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and nothing is hid from the heat of it.” It appears to me very likely that the Holy Ghost in these expressions, which he most immediately uses about the rising of the sun, has an eye to the rising of the Sun of righteousness from the grave, and that the expressions that the Holy Ghost here uses are conformed to such a view. The times of the Old Testament are times of night in comparison of the gospel day, and are so represented in Scripture, and therefore the approach of the day of the New-Testament dispensation in the birth of Christ, is called the day-spring from on high visiting the earth. [Luke i. 78](#). “Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;” and the commencing of the gospel dispensation as it was introduced by Christ, is called the Sun of righteousness rising. [Mal. iv. 2](#). But this gospel-dispensation commences with the resurrection of Christ. Therein the Sun of righteousness rises from under the earth, as the sun appears to do in the morning, and comes forth as a bridegroom. He rose as the joyful, glorious bridegroom of his church; for Christ, especially as risen again, is the proper bridegroom, or husband of his church, as the apostle teaches. [Rom. vii. 4](#). “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit to God.”

He that was covered with contempt, and overwhelmed in a deluge of sorrow, hath purchased and won his spouse; (for he loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself;) now he comes forth as a bridegroom to bring home his purchased spouse to him in spiritual marriage, as he soon after did in the conversion of such multitudes, making his people willing in the day of his power, and hath also done many times since, and will do in a yet more glorious degree. And as the sun when it rises comes forth like a bridegroom gloriously adorned, so Christ in his resurrection entered on his state of glory. After his state of sufferings, he rose to shine forth in ineffable glory as the King of heaven and earth, that he might be a glorious bridegroom, in whom his church might be unspeakably happy.

Here the psalmist says that God has placed a tabernacle for the sun in the heavens; so God the Father had prepared an abode in heaven for Jesus Christ; he had set a throne for him there, to which he ascended after he rose. The sun after it is risen ascends up to the midst of heaven, and then at that end of its race descends again to the earth; so Christ when he rose from the grave ascended up to the height of heaven, and far above all heavens, but at the end of the gospel-day will descend again to the earth.

It is here said that the risen sun rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race. So Christ, when he rose, rose as a man of war, as the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle; he rose to conquer his enemies, and to show forth his glorious power in subduing all things to himself, during that race which he had to run, which is from his resurrection to the end of the world, when he will return to the earth again.

Here the going forth of the sun is from the end of heaven and his circuit to the end of it, and that nothing is hid from the heat thereof; so Christ rose from the grave to send forth his light and truth to the utmost ends of the earth, that had hitherto been confined to one nation, and to rule over all nations in the kingdom of his grace. Thus his line goes out through all the earth, and his words to the end of the world, so that there is no speech or language where his voice is not heard, as is here said of the line and voice of the sun and heavenly bodies in the two foregoing verses, which are by the apostle interpreted of the gospel of Jesus Christ. [Rom. x. 16, 17, 18.](#) “But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? so then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say. Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.”

That the Holy Ghost here has a mystical meaning, and has respect to the light of the Sun of righteousness, and not merely the light of the natural sun, is confirmed by the verses that follow, in which the psalmist himself seems to apply them to the word of God, which is the light of that sun, even of Jesus Christ, who himself revealed the word of God: see the very next words, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”

[171] [Psalm xl. 6, 7, 8.](#) “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened (or bored): burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” God often declared that willing obedience was better than sacrifice: the psalmist is here declaring his giving of it the preference in his practice according to God’s mind: he did not rest in sacrifices, or look upon his duty as consisting mainly in them, but was willingly obedient; he delighted to do God’s will; he loved his service; God had bored his ear, alluding to the law, [Exod. xxi. 5.](#) by which it was appointed that if the servant loved his master’s service, and freely chose it, his master should bore his ear with an awl. *Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required; then said I, Lo, I come*, as a willing servant says to his master when he is called: in *the volume of the book it is written of me*, that is, it is written in the public records, that I voluntarily chose my master’s service, and that my ears were bored, alluding still to that law and custom. If the servant loved his master and chose his service, he was to be brought unto the judges, and was to declare his choice, and his ear was to be bored before them, and because the end of bringing of him to them, was that they might take notice of it, and be witnesses of it, that the servant might

afterwards be obliged by his act. We may conclude that there was a record written of it, it was not merely trusted to their memories; for then if the judges should forget it, or should die, the servant might go free; or if it was not the custom at first to record it, yet very probably it was in David's time. It seems they used to convey lands at first without writings; [Ruth iv. 7.](#); but not afterwards. [Jer. xii. 10.](#) I *subscribed the evidence*, or as it is in the Hebrew, *I wrote in the book*. But the psalmist also speaks here prophetically, and is representing Christ. Christ freely and willingly became God's servant by becoming incarnate, and therefore, instead of the words, "Mine ear hast thou bored," has these, "A body hast thou prepared me;" and as the servant that had his ear bored, learned obedience by what he suffered; it was a testimony of his real desire to serve him, that he was willing to suffer this in order to it. So did Christ learn obedience by the things that he suffered by the sacrifice of his body; so that when it is said, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, but a body hast thou prepared for me;" it is as much as if he had said, These sacrifices of beasts, &c. are insignificant in themselves, but my crucifixion is the true sacrifice that God delights in.

[507] [Psalm xlv.](#) The great agreement between the *Book of Solomon's Song* and the 45th Psalm, and the express and full testimonies of the New Testament for the authority and divine inspiration of that Psalm in particular, and that that bridegroom there spoken of is Christ, whose bride the New Testament abundantly teaches us is the church: I say this agreement with these full testimonies are a great confirmation of the constant tradition of the Jewish church, and the universal and continual suffrage of the Christian church for the divine authority and spiritual signification of this song, as representing the union and mutual love of Christ and his church, and enervates the main objection against it. They agree in all particulars that are considerable, so that there is no more reason to object against one than the other.

They are both songs of love.

In both the lovers spoken of are compared to a man and a woman; and their love, to that which arises between the sexes among mankind.

Both these songs treat of these lovers with relation to their espousals one to another, representing their union to that of a bridegroom and bride.

In both the bridegroom is represented as a king, and in both the bride is spoken of as a king's daughter. [Psal. xliiii. 13.](#) "The king's daughter is all glorious," &c. [Cant. vii. 1.](#) "How beautiful are thy feet O prince's daughter!"

In both the bridegroom and bride are represented as very fair or beautiful. The bridegroom, [Psal. xlv. 2.](#) "Thou art fairer than the sons of men." [Cant. v. 10.](#) "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand."

In both the bridegroom is represented as greatly delighted with the beauty of the bride. [Psal. xlv. 11.](#) "So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." [Cant. iv. 9.](#) "Thou hast ravished



my heart, my sister, my spouse: thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.”

In both the speech of the bridegroom is represented as exceeding excellent and pleasant. *Psal. xlv. 2.* “Grace is poured into thy lips.” *Cant. v. 16.* “His mouth is most sweet.”

In both the ornaments of the bride are signified by costly, beautiful, and splendid attire; and in both she is represented as adorned with gold. *Psal. xlv. 9.* “Upon thy right-hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.” And *13, 14.* “Her clothes are of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work ” *Cant. i. 10.* “Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, and thy neck with chains of gold. We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.” And *vii. 1.* “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter!”

The excellencies, and amiable and honourable endowments, of the bridegroom in both are represented by perfumed ointment. *Psal. xlv. 7.* “Hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” *Cant. i. 3.* “Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.”

In both the excellent gifts or qualifications of these lovers, by which they are recommended to each other, and delighted in one another, are compared to such spices as myrrh, aloes, &c. And in both the sense those lovers have of this amiableness, and that sense where they have comfort and joy, is represented by the sense of smelling. *Psal. xlv. 8.* “All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia whereby they have made thee glad.” *Cant. i. 13, 14.* “A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me. My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire.” And *ver 12.* “While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.” *Cant. ii. 13.* “Let us see whether the vines give a good smell.” *Chap. iii. 6.* “Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?” *Cant. iv. 14.* “Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.”

Indeed in some parts of the psalmist makes use of more magnificent representations of the bridegroom’s excellency. *Ver. 3.* “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously.” So we find it also with respect to the bride. “Who is it that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” And in both these representations the excellencies of these lovers are represented as martial excellency, or the glorious endowments of warriors.

In both these songs the bride is represented as with a number of virgins that are her companions in her majestic honours. “She shall be brought in unto the king The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.” So in many places of Solomon’s Song. The spouse is represented as conversing with a number of the daughters of Jerusalem that sought the bridegroom with her, and therefore she speaks in the plural number. *Cant.*

i. 4. “Draw me, we will run after thee, we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine.”

The representation in both of the manner of the bride’s being brought in to the king with her companions, with great joy, is exactly alike. [Psal. xlv. 14, 15.](#) “She shall be brought in unto the king in raiment of needlework. The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee, with gladness, and with rejoicing shall they be brought unto thee; they shall enter into the king’s palace.” Compare this with [Cant. i. 4.](#) “The king hath brought me into his chambers, we will be glad and rejoice in thee.”

Those who are the friends of the bridegroom that are united to him, and partake of his dear love, are in both these songs represented as gracious and holy persons. [Psal. xlv. 4.](#) “In thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, meekness, and righteousness.” [Cant. i. 4.](#) “We will remember thy love more than wine. The upright love thee.”

To represent the excellency of the bridegroom’s place of abode, in [Psal. xlv. 8.](#) the excellent materials that his palace is made of are mentioned. It is represented as made of ivory. In like manner as the excellent materials of his palace are spoken of [Cant. i. 17.](#) “The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.” As elsewhere, the materials of his chariot are mentioned, *viz.* the wood of Lebanon, gold, silver, and purple. [Cant. iii. 9, 10.](#)

It is objected by some against Solomon’s Song, that some expressions seem to have reference to the conjugal embraces of the bridegroom. But perhaps there is nothing more directly suggesting this than the [14th, 15th, and 16th verses of the 45th Psalm.](#), where seems to be a plain reference to the manner in Israel in which the bride at night used to be led into the bridegroom’s bed-chamber, her bridemaids attending her: in the [14th and 15th verses.](#), and then immediately in the next verse, we are told of the happy fruits of this intercourse in the offspring which they have: Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children.

It is supposed by many to be very liable to a bad construction, that the beauty of the various parts of the body of the spouse is mentioned, and described, in Solomon’s Song. But perhaps these are no more liable to a bad construction than the [13th verse of the 45th Psalm.](#), where there is mention of the beauty of the bride’s clothes, and her being glorious within; where setting aside the allegory or mystical meaning of the song, what is most naturally understood as the most direct meaning, would seem to be that she had not only glorious clothing, but was yet more glorious in the parts of her body within her clothing, that were hid by her clothing.

[163] [Psalm xlv. 7.](#) “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee, &c. The manifestation of Christ’s loving righteousness, and hating wickedness, here spoken of, that was thus rewarded, was his humiliation and death, whereby he exceedingly manifested his regard to God’s holiness and law. That when he had a mind that sinners should be saved he was freely willing to suffer so much rather than it should be done with any injury unto that holiness and law.

[16] [Psalm xlviii. 7.](#) “Thou breakest the ships of Tar-shish with an east wind.” It was by the gospel, which was as the light that cometh out of the east and shineth to the west, whereby Satan’s pagan kingdom in Europe was overthrown.

[17] [Psalm xlix. 3, 4.](#) “My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable. I will open my dark sayings upon the harp.” Being about to speak of a future state and the resurrection, which were great mysteries in Old-Testament times, and perhaps a future state is here more plainly spoken of than any where else in the Old Testament, the psalmist really speaks right down plain about it, to the [14th vers.](#), where he speaks how impossible it is by strength, riches, or wisdom, to avoid death; Good and bad, and all, die; and takes notice of the folly of men to fix their hearts on riches; For, says he, like sheep they are laid in the grave, &c. and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning, &c. But he says, notwithstanding this certainty and un-avoidableness of death, [ver. 15.](#) “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me;” and goes on to the end of the psalm to show the misery of the wicked in comparison of the godly.”

[54] [Psalm lxxv. 8.](#) “Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice.” By the outgoings of the morning and evening may be meant the east and the west, and so signify the same as the ends of the earth in the former part of the verse.

[319] [Psalm lxxviii.](#) The bringing up of the ark of God out of the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite, into the city of David, on the top of mount Zion, on which occasion this psalm was penned, was the most remarkable type of the ascension of Christ that we have in the Old Testament. Then Christ rode upon the heavens by his name JAH Before, his divinity was veiled; he appeared a mere man, and as a worm and no man; he has as it were laid aside his glory as a divine person, emptied himself of the name and form of God; but now he appears in his ascension as God, in the glory of his divinity, in the name and glory of the great JAH or JEHOVAH [Ver. 4.](#) “Then he rode upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old.” [Ver. 33.](#) As the apostle says, he ascended up far above all heavens. As the inhabitants of the land of Canaan were gathered together to attend the ark in this its ascension into mount Zion; [2 Sam. vi. 15.](#) [1 Chron. xv. 3, 25, and 28.](#) [2 Sam. vi. 19.](#) [1 Chron. xvi. 2.](#) so without doubt the inhabitants of the heavenly Canaan were gathered together on occasion of Christ’s ascension to attend him into heaven. For he ascended into heaven in like manner as he shall descend at the last day, [Acts i. 11.](#) with like glory and magnificence, and with a like attendance. He shall come at the last day in the glory of his Father. So he, without doubt, ascended in that glory after his human nature was transformed as it was, as it passed out of our atmosphere. That Christ entered heaven with divine glory, is manifest by “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, that the King of glory may come in,” &c. Christ will descend at the last day with the clouds of heaven, and so he ascended into heaven. ([Acts i. 9.](#) and [Dan. vii. 13.](#) with Notes.) Christ will descend to judgment; and so he ascended to judge and confirm the angels,

to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sin, and by his knowledge to justify many, and to judge the prince of this world, and to execute judgment on the wicked; and as he will descend with all the heavenly hosts of both saints and angels, so he ascended. They came forth out of heaven to meet the King of glory as he ascended. As the Roman generals after a signal battle and victory over their enemies abroad, far distant from Rome, when they returned in triumph (which is a great type of Christ's ascension,) had multitudes to attend them, so had Christ in his ascension into heaven. See in how many respects the Roman triumphs were like Christ's ascension, *Mastricht*, p. 597. vol. 2. See also the description of a Roman triumph, *Chambers's Dictionary*. As Christ's descent will be attended with the general resurrection, so was his ascension with the risen bodies of many of the saints, and was followed with a great spiritual resurrection of the world.

As the ark in its ascension into mount Zion, was attended with the princes of the people; [Psal. lxxviii. 27.](#) [xlvii. 9.](#) and with the captains of their hosts, [1 Chron. xv. 25.](#) and with the ministers of the sanctuary, [1 Chron. xv. 4.](#), &c. so Christ, in his ascension, was attended with the angels, who are called the principalities and powers of heaven, and are the mighty champions in God's armies, and the ministers of the heavenly sanctuary, as they are represented in Revelations. Shall a departing soul of a saint ascend to heaven with a convoy of angels, being carried by angels into Abraham's bosom? and shall not the King of saints and angels in his ascension into heaven, be attended with myriads of angels? That Christ was attended with multitudes of angels in his ascension into heaven, is manifest by the [17th and 18th verses of the 68th Psalm](#). "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." These are the chariots in which Christ ascended, as Elijah, in his ascension into heaven, did not ascend without chariots and horses of fire to convoy him. These were a symbol of the convoy of angels by which he was conducted into heaven; as those chariots and horses of fire were that defended the city where Elijah was from the Syrians, as appears by [2 Kings vi. 16, 17](#). Those in Christ's triumphant entrance into heaven answer to the triumphant chariot in which the victor entered the city of Rome, and also was attended with the princes, and rulers, and captains of the people, and ministers of his sanctuary, as he was attended with the patriarchs, and prophets, and holy princes, and martyrs, more eminent first of the Old Testament, as that church which was in being before Christ's ascension, and with many of them with their prison bodies.

Though many of the angels attended Christ from the top of mount Olivet, yet it appears to me probable that the place where he was met by the whole multitude of the heavenly hosts, saints and angels, was in the upper parts of the earth's atmosphere, beyond the region of the clouds, at the place where it is said a cloud received Christ out of the sight of the disciples, as they stood beholding him as he went up, and that that cloud that received him was



a symbol of that glorious host of saints and angels: a heavenly multitude is called a cloud. See [Heb. xii. 1.](#) with Notes. A host of angels seems to be here represented by that cloud of glory in which God appeared in mount Sinai, spoken of in this [68th Psalm; in the 17th verse.](#) where the psalmist speaks of the thousands of angels that convoy Christ to heaven, it is added, “The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, his holy place.” (See the places there cited in the margin.) When Christ passed out of sight of earthly inhabitants, then he joined the heavenly inhabitants. The atmosphere belongs to the earthly world: so far Satan’s power extends, who is god of this earthly world, and prince of the power of the air. When Christ had gotten out of this world, then heaven met him and received him, and it is probable that Christ’s human nature there had its transformation into its glorious state; it was not transformed at his first resurrection, for he appeared as he used, and conversed, and ate, and drank with his disciples; nor was it transformed at his first ascent from the surface of the earth, for the disciples beheld him, and knew him as he went up, because he appeared as he used to do, but the disciples beheld him so long until he was transformed, for so long they might behold him; but when he was transformed into his heavenly glory, it was not meet that they should behold him any longer while in this mortal state, for this state is not the state appointed for us to behold Christ in his glory; nor indeed could they see him so and live; and therefore when he was transformed, a cloud hid him from them. As long as Christ was within the limits of this earthly world, it was meet that he should remain in his earthly state; but when he passed out of this world and met heaven, it was meet that he should be transformed into his heavenly state; an earthly body might subsist as far as the region of the clouds, but it could not subsist farther. Christ ascended from thence to heaven in his glorified state with all his holy angels; and at the last day he will descend from heaven in the same glorified state, with all the holy angels, and no farther; for there the saints on earth shall meet him, being caught up in the clouds, or to the region of the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and from thence shall Christ be seen in his glory by all that shall remain on this earth. When Christ came to meet the heavenly hosts in their glory, and to be in the midst of them, it was not meet that he should remain any longer in his earthly state, for flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God; so far Christ ascended slowly and gradually, as earthly bodies are wont to move, so that the disciples could see him as he went up, but from thence, without doubt, he mounted with inconceivable swiftness, answerable to the activity of a heavenly glorious body.

As they attended the ark in its ascension with great joy and with shouts, and the sound of the trumpet, and all kinds of music, singing God’s praises, [2 Sam. vi. 15.](#) [2 Chron. xv. 28.](#) with the context in that and the following chapters; this represents the glorious joy and praise with which the heavenly hosts attended Christ in his ascension. [Ps. xlvii. 5.](#) “God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.” [Ps. xlvii. 5.](#) the very same as is said concerning the ascension of the ark in [2 Sam. vi. 15.](#) That was an exceeding joyful



day in Israel; it is said they brought up the ark with joy. [2 Chron. xv. 2.](#) “David danced before the lord with all his might.” So Christ’s ascension is represented as an exceeding joyful occasion. [Ps. xlvii. 6.,](#) &c. “On that occasion sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises,” &c. [And in this 68th Psalm ver. 3.](#) “Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before the Lord; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice;” and [ver. 25.](#) “The singers went before, and the players on instruments followed after, among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.”

When the ark was ascended and placed on the throne of God’s mercy-seat, David dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine, [2 Sam. vi. 19.](#) and [1 Chron. xvi. 3.](#) So speaking of Christ in this [psalm, ver. 18.](#) [the psalmist says,](#) “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also.”

David brought the ark into the tabernacle in Zion with sacrifices offered to God, and when he had offered the sacrifices, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord, and gave men gifts, [1 Chron. xvi. 1, 2, 3.](#) and [2 Sam. vi. 17, 18, 19.](#) So Christ, when he ascended, entered into heaven with his own blood, the blood of that sacrifice that he had offered, and so obtained the blessing for men which he then gave to them, by sending down the Holy Spirit upon them.

David, when the ark was ascended, returned to bless his household; so Christ, when he was ascended, returned by his Spirit to bless his church, which is the household of God, and is Christ’s house, as the apostle calls it in the [3d chap. of Hebrews.](#)

When David thus returned to bless his household, Michal, that had been his wife before, despised him, because he troubled himself so much, and made himself so vile, and therefore was Michal rejected; but of the maidservants whom Michal contemned, was he had in honour; so the Jewish church that had been Christ’s church before his ascension, yet because Christ humbled himself so much, and made himself so vile, they despised and rejected him, and called him king of the Jews in contempt, as Michal calls David king of Israel in contempt. Therefore, when Christ returned by his Spirit to bless his household after his ascension, the church of the Jews was rejected and became barren; but the Gentile nations, whom the Jewish church used to contemn as poor slaves, while they called themselves the children of God and free, of them was Christ had in honour. Michal was Saul’s daughter, David’s persecutor, that was at the head of affairs in Israel before David; but David tells Michal that God chose him before her father; so the priests, and elders, and scribes were the father of the Jewish church, were at the head of affairs in God’s church before Christ, and were Christ’s persecutors, but God chose him before them.

The glorious attendants and consequents of Christ’s ascension are in a very lively manner represented in this psalm, and other divine songs, that seem to be penned on occasion

of the removing the ark, as particularly Christ's glorious victory over his enemies, [verses 1, 2, 18](#). The destruction of Satan's kingdom and his church's enemies that followed, [ver. 12, 14, 16, 23-30](#). A terrible manifestation of wrath against obstinate sinners, [ver. 6, 21](#). The publishing the gospel in the world, [ver. 11, 33](#). A remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, [ver. 9](#). A great increase of the privileges of the church, and a more abundant measure of spiritual blessings, [ver. 3, 10, 13, 18, 19, 24, 28, 34, 35](#). The calling of the Gentiles, [ver. 6, 29, 31, 32](#). A glorious salvation from slavery and misery to those who are sinners and enslaved, [ver. 6, 13, 20, 22](#). The like might be observed of other songs penned on this occasion, as [Ps. xlvii](#). and that which is given us in [1 Chron. xvi](#).

[210] "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God, even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. Thou, O Lord, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary." By this place, together with [Judg. v. 4](#). it is manifest that there was a great shower of rain upon the camp of Israel at mount Sinai, at the time of the giving the law there. The case seems to have been thus: on the day when the law was given, which was the day of Pentecost, there appeared a thick cloud upon mount Sinai, which was the same cloud that had gone before them and conducted them, now settled upon the mount, but only increased and gathered to a great thickness; and there were great thunders and lightnings seen and heard out of that cloud, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. When God descended on the mount, the mount quaked greatly, and this earthquake was of great extent, so as to reach to distant countries, [Hag. ii. 6, 7](#). and was so great as to move mountains and throw down rocks, and great part of the mountains; hence we have those expressions of the mountains skipping like rams, and the little hills like lambs, &c. And then mount Sinai appeared altogether on fire, which burnt to the midst of heaven; and then the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder; and then the Ten Commandments were given with a voice of awful majesty out of the midst of the fire; and when this was finished, it was followed with the most amazing thunders and lightnings from the thick cloud of glory, which was on the mount, which cloud spread wider and wider until it covered the whole heavens, and there was a great shower of rain, with thunder and lightning out of it; and the storm spread abroad, so as to reach far countries, which, with exceeding thunder and lightning, terrified distant nations. Hence the apostle speaks of a tempest that was at this time, from this place, in [Heb. xii. 18](#). Thus, when the Lord gave the word, great was the company of them that published it, [ver. 11](#). When God gave forth his voice at mount Sinai, and thundered there by the ministration of angels, the report was as it were carried into all nations round about, and there were thunders that uttered their voices in all parts of the world, (or at least the adjacent countries,) to answer it. Thus the prophet Habakkuk, speaking of this, [Hab. iii. 3](#). says, "His glory covered the heavens," (*i. e.* the cloud, that was called *the cloud of glory*;) and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, and covered the

heavens in the blaze of lightnings that then streamed forth almost continually; as in the next verse, [ver. 4](#). “And his brightness was as the light.” And thus it was expressed in the [6th and 7th verses](#)., “He stood and measured the earth; he beheld and drove asunder the nations; the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble;” and thus in [Heb. xii. 18](#). there is said to be at that time not only fire, and black ness, and darkness, but also tempest.

*Corol. I.* Hereby we may the more fully see how lively a representation what was done on this day was of what was done afterwards on the same day of Pentecost in the days of the gospel. Now God descended from heaven on mount Sinai; then God descended from heaven on mount Zion, or on his church met together in Jerusalem. Now God revealed the law; then God did in an extraordinary manner by his Spirit make known the mysteries of the gospel. Now God’s voice was uttered from mount Sinai in thunder, and great was the company of them that published it, and the voice of his thunder went forth into all the world, and the world was enlightened with lightnings; then was God’s voice in his word and in his glorious gospel uttered in the spiritual mount Zion, and the light of the glorious gospel then began to shine forth in Jerusalem, of which voice and light, thunder and lightning is a type, for the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is as the fire, and as the hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces. This thunder and lightning was out of the cloud of glory, the symbol of God’s presence; so the voice of the gospel is the voice of Christ, a divine person, and the light is the light of Christ’s glory. And then, or after that time, was first fulfilled what was typified by God’s voice and light going forth from mount Sinai, and spreading abroad into all nations round about; for then first did the powerful voice of God’s word, and the powerful and glorious light of truth, go forth and spread abroad into Gentile nations; then was the coming of Christ in the gospel as the lightning that cometh out of the east, and shineth even to the west. The trumpet of mount Sinai was a type of the trumpet of the gospel. As in the day of Sinai there was a great earthquake; so consequent on the pouring out of the Spirit in the day of Zion, was there the greatest change and overturning of things on the face of the earth, that ever had been. Earthquakes often denote great revolutions, in Revelations and elsewhere in Scripture. God’s voice in the day of Sinai, shook the heavens and earth, and shook all nations; see [Heb. xii. 26, 27](#). compared with the foregoing verses, and [Haggai ii. 6, 7](#). “As the earthquake then shook down towers, and palaces, and other buildings of the heathen, yea, and threw down rocks and mountains;” so God’s voice in the gospel, after the gospel Pentecost, overturned the heathenish kingdom of Satan, and shook down all its magnificence, the mighty fabric that Satan had been building up for many ages; and those things were overthrown that had been established in the heathen world time out of mind, and had remained until now, immovable, like the everlasting hills and moun-



tains. God's enemies abroad in the heathen world on the day of Sinai, were greatly terrified and scattered, and many of them destroyed; which is a type of the amazement that Satan and the powers of darkness were put into, by the sudden and wonderful spreading of the gospel, and how the enemies of God were scattered and destroyed thereby, and God's pouring down a great and plentiful rain on the camp of Israel, on the day when the law was given. The refreshing shower that fell on Israel, did well represent those divine instructions God was then giving to them. [Deut. xxxii. 1.](#) "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, or the showers upon the grass," was a lively type of the great and abundant pouring out of the Spirit on the Christian church, on the day of Pentecost, and on the world, in consequence of that. The pouring out of the Spirit is often compared to showers of rain: this rain was the more lively type of the effusion of the Holy Spirit, because it was a very refreshing rain to the congregation of Israel, as it is said in the [9th verse of this Psalm.](#) "Thou didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary;" that was a weary land wherein they then were, being an exceeding dry and parched wilderness, where there is scarcely ever any rain. Horeb, one name of mount Sinai, signifies dryness, as it is called a land of drought, and it lay far south, and it was now a hot time of the year, wherein the sun was just at the summer solstice, being about the end of May, so that the shower by its cooling and sweetening the air was very refreshing to them, and therefore was the more lively type of the sweet influences of the Spirit of God on their souls; and this shower was the more lively type of the pouring out of the Spirit still, because it was a shower out of the cloud of glory, or that cloud that was the symbol of God's presence, so that it was a refreshment from God, as the fire from heaven on the altar proceeded out of a pillar of cloud and fire. [Levit. ix. 24.](#) (Note, manna out of the pillar of cloud and fire.) Manna, their daily bread, came down on the camp, out of the pillar of cloud and fire, and so did more lively represent the true bread from heaven, even Jesus Christ, who is a divine person, and dwells in the bosom of the Father; and as their meat, so their water: the refreshing rain, which signified also a divine person, *viz.* the Holy Ghost, was out of the cloud of glory.

Note, that when mention is here made of God's sending a plentiful rain, whereby he did confirm or strengthen his inheritance when it was weary, respect is also probably had to the children of Israel's being refreshed by a shower of rain that descended on them, at the same time that a destructive hail fell on their enemies, on the day that the sun and moon stood still; for as has been observed in Notes on [Hab. iii. 11.](#) No. 208. that storm of hail did not arise until the end of the twelve hours of the sun's standing still; and the sun probably stood still near the meridian, and Joshua began the battle very early in the morning after their travelling all the night before; so that after that night's watching and travelling, they had continued in battle and pursuit about eighteen hours, and great part of the time under a very great and extreme heat of the sun, which must necessarily arise from its standing still

so long at a meridian height, and shining down on their heads with a perpendicular ray. So that by that time without doubt the army of Israel were exceeding weary and faint, and the clouds that covered the heavens, sent forth no hail on them, but probably it was rain where they were, and a very great shower, which cooled and sweetened the air, and was a great refreshment to them after such toil and extreme heat. If the rain was frozen in some places, doubtless it was a very cool rain where they were, which was needed to cool the air, after such extreme heat. So that it was now with this cloud that arose, as it was with the pillar of cloud and fire at the Red sea, as that was a cloud and darkness to their enemies, and sent forth thunder and lightning to confound them, [Psal. lxxvii. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#) but gave light to the Israelites; so now the cloud that arose, sent forth destructive hail and thunder on the Amorites, but sent a most refreshing rain on Israel, whereby they were strengthened, after they had been made faint with the heat of the sun, and the toil of battle.

*Carol. II.* Hence we may learn what the apostle Paul meant by [1 Cor. x. 2.](#) where he says that “their fathers were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea,” he means that they were baptized in the cloud, by the cloud’s showering down water abundantly upon them, as it seems to have done at two times, especially; one was while they were passing through the Red sea, for there seems to have been a remarkable storm of rain, and thunder, and lightning, out of the cloud of glory, while the children of Israel were passing through the Red sea, [Psal. lxxvii. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#) And thus God looked through the pillar of cloud and fire about the morning watch, and troubled all their hosts; he confounded them with perpetual flashes of thunder and lightning, which greatly affrighted the horses, and made them run wild, and jostle one against another, so as to overturn and break the chariots that they drew, and many of them lost their wheels; but it was only a plentiful shower on the Israelites. And so they were baptized by the water that came out of the pillar of cloud, representing the blood that came out of Christ, and the Spirit that comes forth from him; and so God now at the time when they were coming out of Egypt (for the Red sea was the bounds of Egypt) baptized them, to wash and cleanse them from the pollutions of Egypt, and to consecrate them to himself.

Another time was at mount Sinai, when God had brought them to himself there, when he first entered into covenant with them there, whereby they became his people, and he their God; he consecrated them to him, and sealed that covenant by baptizing them by water out of the cloud.

Hence we prove an argument for baptism by sprinkling or affusion, for the apostle calls this affusion or sprinkling, baptism, comparing it to Christian baptism; and when God himself immediately baptized his people by a baptism, by which he intended to signify the same thing that Christian baptism signifies, he baptized by affusion and sprinkling.

[254] [Psalm lxxviii. 43.](#) “How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan.” Wells, in his Sacred Geography, from hence very probably supposes that

*Zoan*, in the time when Moses wrought these miracles in Egypt, was the royal city, or the city where the Pharaohs had their seat; for we know that Moses wrought those miracles in the presence of Pharaoh, and therefore doubtless near the city where he dwelt, or in the fields about that city. *Zoan* was probably from the beginning the seat of their kings, and that it is because it was so noted a city, and especially so known to the children of Israel, who had been bond-slaves in Egypt under Pharaoh, who dwelt in *Zoan*, that such particular notice is taken of it in [Numb. xiii. 22](#). “Now Hebron was built seven years before *Zoan* in Egypt.” And Dr. Wells observes, that this seems to have been the royal seat long after, even until Isaiah’s time, though *Noph* and *Hanes* were two other cities where the kings of Egypt did then sometimes reside. [Isa. xix. 11](#). “Surely the princes of *Zoan* are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish; how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?” [Ver. 13](#). “The princes of *Zoan* are become fools, the princes of *Noph* are deceived; they have seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.” [Isa. xxx. 4](#). “For his princes were at *Zoan*, and his ambassadors came to *Hanes*.” *Zoan* is the same with *Tanis*. By the Seventy interpreters, *Noph* is the same with *Memphis*, *Hanes* is the same with *Tahapanes*; [Jer. ii. 16](#). and *Tahapanes*, where we read that Pharaoh had a house, [Jer. xliii. 9](#). called in [Ezekiel xxx. 18](#). *Tehaphnehes*, the same that was called *Daphne* by the Greeks. Soon after Isaiah’s time, *Noph*, or *Memphis*, became the capital city. [Ezek. xxx. 13](#). Wells’s Sacred Geography, p. 8, 9. and p. 49, 50.

[349] [Psal. lxxxiv. 3](#). “Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars.” The expletive even, which is not in the original, hurts the sense. “Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God,” seems to be a distinct sentence from the foregoing, and comes in as an ardent exclamation, expressing the longing of David’s soul after God’s altars, as is rather to be added to the foregoing verse, where the psalmist had said, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God;” and then his thoughts of the birds having a nest, and so living distinguished from him, a poor exile, that was cast out of house and home, and had not where to lay his head, and was banished from God’s house, which is the worst part of his banishment: this comes in, as it were, in a parenthesis, and then follows the exclamation, “Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God!” Such an interpretation is exceedingly agreeable with the context, and the frame the psalmist was in.

[203] [Psalm xc. 10](#). Bedford’s Scripture Chronology, p. 395. When God had positively declared that the Israelites should wander forty years in the wilderness, and that all of them except Joshua and Caleb should die there; and when he did thus cut short the age of man, to what it is at this time, then Moses penned a melancholy psalm, in which he tells us how they were consumed by God’s anger for their impieties, and how man’s age is come to seventy

or eighty years, after which there is only labour and sorrow, instead of those hundreds that they lived before.

Here we may observe, that as sin at first brought death into the world, so sin did afterwards shorten the age of man before the flood: the patriarchs lived almost to a thousand years. But the sin which brought the flood, took away one half of man's age, so that they who were born afterwards never attained to the age of five hundred. At the confusion of Babylon it was shortened again in the same manner, so that none born after that time lived up to two hundred and fifty, as it is easy to observe by computing their ages. After the death of the patriarchs, when the true worship of God was very much declined in their families, and the rest of mankind were overrun with superstition and idolatry, the life of man was shortened again, so that we read of none born since, who exceeded a hundred and five and twenty; neither did the ages of men stand at that measure, but at the frequent murmurings and provokings of God in the wilderness, a third part more, or thereabouts, were cut off from the age of man, and the common limit of man's life was brought to seventy or eighty years, or thereabouts, or more particularly to eighty-three or eighty-four years which very few exceeded, and which Moses speaks of in the before-mentioned psalm, composed upon that occasion. And though the sins of mankind have been very great and universal since that time, yet the age of man's life has not been shortened any more, because a shorter space would hardly have been sufficient for the finding out and improvement of arts and sciences, as well as for other reasons.

[168] [Psalm xci. 11.](#) "He will give his angels charge concerning thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." As a father gives the elder children charge concerning the younger, to lead them and bear them up, and keep them from falling.



[65] [Prov. iv. 23.](#) “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” It is probable here is an allusion to the blood’s issuing from the heart. The heart is the fountain of the blood, which is called the life. [Gen. ix. 4.](#) and other places. Solomon was so great a philosopher, that doubtless he understood that the heart was the fountain of the blood.

[462] [Prov. xxx. 27.](#) “The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.” The following is taken from the Evening Post of January 4th, 1748. Extract of a letter from Transylvania, Aug. 23, concerning the locusts that had lately appeared there.

“These dreadful creatures with which we are afflicted, move in two columns; the first places they invaded were the territories of Bellegisch, and Banoize, where they passed the night; the next morning they directed their flight towards Peekska, Maradick, &c. And the day following towards Irriga, where they have ate the leaves, the grass, the cabbages, the melons and cucumbers, to the very roots. Yesterday they were in motion towards Schuliom, bending their flight manifestly towards Zealmo and the parts thereabouts. They continue in the air, or if one may use the expression, they march generally two hours and a half at a time. They form a close compact column about fifteen yards deep, in breadth about four musket shot, and in length near four leagues. They move with such force, or rather precipitation, that the air trembles to such a degree as to shake the leaves upon the trees. They darken the sky in such a manner, that when they passed over us, I could not see my people at twenty feet distance.

“P. S. At this instant we have notice that two swarms more are approaching, which after having settled in the neighbourhood of Warasch, have returned back by Nerraden and Iasack, making a prodigious buzz, or humming noise, as they passed.” The same account is also in the Boston Gazette of January 26th, 1748.

[90] [Eccles. i. 6.](#) “The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuit.” Whenever the wind blows from one quarter for a long time there must needs be a circulation in the atmosphere. When the wind blows from the north, there must at the same time be another wind from the south, or in some other place, otherwise long and strong winds would leave some regions empty of air, and it would mightily heap up in others. This I take to be what is meant in this place.

[91] [Eccles. ii. 16.](#) “There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool.” Man’s reason naturally expects a future reward, and that all the good, that good and wise men have of their labour, should not be confined to this short life.

[316] [Eccles. vi. 3.](#) “So that the days of his years be many and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he *have no burial*. I say that an untimely birth is better than he.” *Have no burial, i. e.* is one that God takes no care of in his death, does him no honour, takes no care of either soul or body, as having any value for, or care of, either, or any respect for their memory. For it is the wicked that the wise man is here speaking of, the same that is spoken

of [chap. viii. 12, 13](#). which is a place very parallel with this. And it will be further evident by comparing this and the following verse with [chap. v. 13-17](#). Burial is the respect which friends show to the memory and remains of those that are dead. God will show no regard to any thing that remains of wicked men after death. God treats their souls when they die, and will treat their bodies at the resurrection, with contempt, as men treat the dead bodies of those creatures they have no honour or regard for, and are abominable to them, as are the carcasses of unclean beasts. [Jer. xxii. 19](#). “He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.” And [Isa. xiv. 19, 20](#). “But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. Thou shalt be joined unto them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land.” God takes care of the righteous when they die, he finds a repository of rest for their souls, and their dust is precious to him. As God buried Moses in the mount, they are gathered to their fathers and received into Abraham’s bosom, but God treats the souls of the wicked when they die as men treat the dead, putrid carcass of an ass or a dog: they are cast forth out of the city of God’s Jerusalem, and shall be for ever shut out thence.

[147] *Solomon’s Song*. The name by which Solomon calls this song, confirms me in it that it is more than an ordinary love song, and that it was designed for a divine song, and of divine authority; for we read, [1 Kings iv. 32](#). that Solomon’s songs were a thousand and five; this he calls the Song of songs, that is, the most excellent of all his songs, which it seems very probable to me to be upon that account, because it was a song of the most excellent subject, treating of the love, union, and communion between Christ and his church; of which, marriage and conjugal love was but a shadow. These are the most excellent lovers, and their love the most excellent love.

Mr. Henry, in the introduction to his Exp. of this book, says, “It appears that this book was taken in a spiritual sense by the Jewish church, for whose use it was first composed, as appears by the Chaldee paraphrase, and the most ancient Jewish expositors.” In the same place he says, “In our belief both of the divine extraction and spiritual exposition of this book, we are confirmed by the ancient, constant, and convincing testimony, both of the church of the Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and who never made any doubt of the authority of this book, and of the Christian church, which happily succeeded them in that trust and honour.”

[231] *The Book of Solomon’s Song*. The divinity of this song is confirmed from the allusions there seem to be in the New Testament to things herein contained; and particularly Christ, in [John iv. 10, 14](#). speaking of a well of living water, seems to allude to the [15th verse of the 4th chapter](#). of this song, “a fountain of gardens, a well of living water.” So in [Eph. v. 18](#). there seems to be an eye to [chap. v.1. of this song](#). See Notes on that passage in Ephesians.

[336] It is one argument that the *Book of Canticles* is no common love song, that the bridegroom or lover there spoken of so often calls his beloved, “My sister, my spouse.” This well agrees with Christ’s relation to believers, who is become our brother and near kinsman by taking upon him our nature, and is our brother, and the son of our mother by his incarnation, as thereby he became a son of the church, and used the ordinances appointed in it, and so has sucked the breasts of our mother, and we are become his brothers also by the adoption of his Father. But this appellation would not well suit a common spouse among the Jews, who were so strictly forbidden to marry any that were near of kin to them, and particularly to marry a sister. [Lev. xviii. 9.](#) “The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or the daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.” It is neither likely that the Jews would marry such in Solomon’s time, nor that it would be the custom to compare their spouses to such, especially that they would insist so much on such an appellation as though it was an amiable thing, and a thing to be thought of and mentioned with delight and pleasure, to have a spouse that was a sister, when God’s law taught them to dread and abhor the thought of it.

[436] *The Book of Canticles.* The following places in the Psalms are a confirmation that by her, whom the bridegroom in this book calls “My love,” “My dove,” “My sister,” “My spouse,” and the like, is meant the church, *viz.* [Psal. xxii. 20. xxxv. 17. lx. 4, 5. cviii. 6. cxxvii. 2. lxxiv. 19.](#)

[460] *The Book of Solomon’s Song, no common love song, but a divine song, respecting the union between the Messiah and the church.* It is an argument of it that such figures of speech are made use of from time to time in this song, as are elsewhere used concerning the Messiah and the church. [Chap. i. 3.](#) Grace is elsewhere compared to ointment. That, [chap. i. 3, 4.](#) *Draw me,* is parallel with [Jer. xxxi. 3.](#) There the Lord, speaking to the church of Israel, under the name of the virgin of Israel, says, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore, with loving-kindness have I *drawn* thee.” [Ver. 4.](#) “The King hath brought me into his *chambers;*” and elsewhere the saints are represented as dwelling in the *secret place* of the Most High. [Hos. xi. 4.](#) “I draw them with the bands of love.” Representing the bridegroom as a shepherd, and the spouse’s children as kids and lambs, [chap. i. 7, 8,](#) is agreeable to frequent representations of the Messiah and the church in the Old Testament. The ornaments of the spouse are here represented as jewels and chains of silver and gold, [chap. i. 10, 11.](#) and [iv. 1-9.](#) Compare these with [Ezek. xvi. 11, 12, 13.](#) The excellencies both of bridegroom and bride are compared to spices, [chap. i. 12, 13, 14. iv. 6, 10, 13, 14, 16. v. 5, 13. viii. 2.](#) and ointment perfumed with spices, [chap. i. 3. iv. 10.](#) The same spices were made use of to represent spiritual excellencies in the incense, and anointing oil in the tabernacle and temple, and also in the oil for the light. [Exod. xxx. 28. Chap. i. 16.](#) “Our bed is green.” This is agreeable to the figures of speech often used concerning the church. The comfort the spouse enjoyed in her bridegroom is compared to a shadow and the fruit of a tree. [Chap. ii. 2.](#) is agreeable

to [Isa. xxxv. 1,2.](#) and [lv. 13.](#) and [Hos. xiv. 5.](#) [Chap. ii. 3, 5.](#) is agreeable to [Prov. iii. 18.](#) “She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her;” and [viii. 19.](#) “My fruit is better than gold.” So the Messiah, in the prophecies, is often compared to a tree and branch. The comforts the bridegroom and bride have in each other, are in this book often compared to wine. [Chap. i. 2. ii. 5. v. 1.](#) So wine was made use of in the tabernacle and temple service to represent both the comforts the church has in Christ, and also the gracious exercises and good works of the saints offered to God. See also [Proverbs ix.2.](#) [Isa. xxvii. 2.](#) [Hosea xiv. 7.](#) [Zech. ix. 15.](#) and [x. 7.](#) The comforts the bridegroom and bride here enjoy mutually in each other are in the song compared to wine and milk, agreeable to [Isa. lv. 1.](#) and also to the honey and honeycomb, agreeable to the frequent representations made of spiritual comforts in the Scripture. The spouse here is represented feasting with the bridegroom. [Chap. ii. 4.](#) and [v. 1.](#) So the church of God is represented as feasting with him in the sacrifices and feasts appointed by Moses, and in the prophecies. [Isa. xxv. 6. lv. at the beginning.](#) God’s saints are all spoken of as the priests of the Lord, [Isa. lxi. 6.](#) but the priests eat the bread of God. What the spouse entertains her lover with is called fruits, [chap. iv. 16. vii. 13. viii. 2.](#) as the good works of the saints abundantly are represented elsewhere as fruit which the church brings and offers to God. The spouse is here compared to fruitful trees, [chap. iv. 13.,](#) &c. [vii. 7,8.](#) The saints are compared to the same, [Ps. i. 3.](#) and [Jer. xvii. 8.](#) and [Isa. xxvii. 6.](#) and other places innumerable. The spouse is compared to a flourishing fruitful vine, [chap. ii. 13. vii. 8.](#) So is the church of God often compared to a vine. The spouse’s excellency is compared to the smell of Lebanon, [chap. iv. 11.](#) So is the excellency of the church, [Hos. xiv. 6, 7.](#) “His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return, they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.” The fruits of the spouse are often compared to pomegranates in this song. [Chap. iv. 3, 13. vi. 7. viii. 2.](#) So the spiritual fruits of the church of God are represented by pomegranates in the tabernacle and temple. The spouse is in this song said to be like the palm-tree. [Chap. vii. 7, 8.](#) So was the church of Israel, whose representation were the seventy elders, typified by seventy palm-trees. [Exod. xv. 27.](#) So the temple was every where covered with cherubims and palm-trees, representing saints and angels. [1 Kings vi. 29, 32, 35. vii. 36. 2 Chron. iii. 5.](#) So in Ezekiel’s temple. [Ezek. xl. 16.](#) The spouse in this song is compared to a garden and orchard, to a garden of spices, and of aloes, in particular, [ch. iv. 12, to the end.,](#) and [v. 1.](#) and [vi. 2.](#) which is agreeable to the representations made of the church. [Num. xxiv. 5, 6.](#) “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel. As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, as the cedar-trees beside the waters.” The spouse is compared to a fountain, [chap. iv. 12,13.](#) so is the church, [Deut. xxxiii. 28. Ps. lxxviii. 26.](#) The twelve tribes of Israel are represented by twelve fountains of water. [Exod. xv. 27.](#) The spouse is called a fountain of gardens, [chap. iv. 15.](#) So

the church of God is represented as a fountain in the midst of a land of corn and wine. [Deut. xxxiii. 28](#). And a stream among all trees of unfading leaves, and living fruit. And as a watered garden, [Isa. lviii. 11](#). [Jer. xxxi. 12](#). The spouse is called a well of living waters, [chap. iv. 15](#). The blessings granted to the church and by the church are represented by the same thing. [Zech. xiv. 8](#). “Living waters shall go out of Jerusalem.” So [Ezek. xlvi](#). where we read of waters going out of the temple and city of Jerusalem that gave life to every thing, and flowed in the midst of the trees of life. Another thing that is a very great evidence that this song is mystical, and that the spouse signifies not a person but a society, and the church of God in particular, is that she is compared to a city, and the city of Jerusalem in particular. [Chap. vi. 4](#). “Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem;” and that particular parts of the spouse are compared to buildings, and strong buildings, as towers and walls. [Chap. iv. 4](#). “Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory whereon they hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.” [Chap. vii. 4](#). “Thy neck is like a tower of ivory Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh towards Damascus.” [Chap. viii. 10](#). “I am a wall, and my breasts like towers.” We find elsewhere people and societies of men represented by buildings, houses, and cities, but never particular persons. And the church of God is a society or people often represented in Scripture by such similitudes, and particularly is often compared to a city with strong towers and bulwarks, and to the city Jerusalem especially, and that on the account of her many fortifications and strong bulwarks.

Again, it greatly confirms that the spouse is a people, and the church of God in particular, that she is compared to an army, an army terrible with banners. [Chap. vi. 4, 10](#). “And as a company of two armies, or the company of Mahanaim.” So the church of God when brought out of Egypt through the wilderness to Canaan, was by God’s direction in the form of an army with banners. So the psalms and prophecies often represent the church of God as going forth to battle, fighting under an ensign, and gloriously conquering their enemies, and conquering the nations of the world. And the company of Jacob, that was as it were the church of Israel, with the host of angels that met them and joined them, to assist them against Esau’s host, was the company of Mahanaim, or company of two armies, so called by Jacob on that account, [Gen. xxxii](#). at the beginning.

So it is a great evidence of the same thing, that the spouse is compared to war-horses, [chap. i. 9](#), &c. which it is not in the least likely would ever be a comparison used to represent the beauty of a bride in a common epithalamium or love song. But this is exactly agreeable to a representation elsewhere made of the church of God. [Zech. x. 3](#). “The Lord of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.” And [ver. 5](#). “And they shall be as mighty men which tread down their enemies, as the mire of the streets in the battle. And they shall fight because the Lord is with them.” And [ver. 7](#). “And they of Ephraim shall be like mighty men.”

These expressions show this song to be mystical. [Chap. i.](#) “My mother’s children were angry with me.” If it is supposed to be used of the church, they are easily accounted for; they are agreeable to accounts in Scripture history of Cain’s enmity against Abel, and Esau’s against Jacob; and their posterities’ enmity against Israel; and the prophecies that represent the future persecutions of the church, by false brethren.

Another thing that shows this to be no common love song, is that the spouse seeks company in her love to the bridegroom, endeavours to draw other women to join with her in loving him, and rejoices in their communion with her in the love and enjoyment of her beloved. [Chap. i. 3, 4.](#) “Therefore the VIRGINS love thee.” “Draw me; WE will run after thee.” “The king hath brought me into his chambers; WE will be glad and rejoice in thee.” “WE will remember thy love more than wine.” “THE UPRIGHT love thee.” [Chap. vi. 1,2.](#) “Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women; whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee? My beloved is gone down into his garden,” &c. [Chap. viii. 13.](#) “Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice.”

The bridegroom in this song speaks of his willing people, [chap. vi. 12.](#) which is agreeable to the language used concerning the people of the Messiah. [Ps. cx. 2.](#) (See [Psalm xlv.](#) No. 507.)

[86] [Cant. i.5.](#) “As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.” Kedar was a place where shepherds used to seat their tents and feed their flocks, a noted place for shepherds, as you may see, [Isa. lx. 7.](#) “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto thee.” And [Jer. xlix. 28, 29.](#) Concerning Kedar “Their tents and their flocks they shall take to themselves their curtains.” The people of Kedar it seems used to dwell in tents, in movable habitations, and lived by feeding of sheep; and therefore the church is very likely represented by these, and it is agreeable to many other representations in Scripture, where God’s people are called his sheep, his flock, and Christ and his ministers shepherds, and the church is also compared to a tabernacle or tents: it is fitly compared to movable tents, for here we are pilgrims and strangers, and have no abiding place; these are the shepherds’ tents referred to in the [8th verse.](#)

[458] [Cant. i. 5.](#) “As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.” That the spouse in this song is compared to a tent, and to the curtains of the tabernacle and temple, is an evidence that this song is no ordinary love song, and that by the spouse is not meant any particular woman, but a society, even that holy society, the church of God. It is common in the writings of the Old Testament to represent the church of God by a tent, or tents, and a house and temple, but never a particular person. See [Isa. liv. 2.](#) [Zech. xii. 7.](#) [Isa. xxxiii. 20.](#) [Lam. ii. 4, 6.](#) [Isa. i. 8.](#) And the tabernacle and temple were known types of the church, and the curtains of both had palm-trees embroidered on them, which are abundantly made use of to represent the church. The church of God is called a house, in places too many to be

mentioned. The church used to be called the temple of the Lord, as appears by [Jer. vii. 4.](#) The church is represented by the temple, as is evident by [Zech. iv. 2-9.](#)

[461] [Eccles. i. 9.](#) “The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun,” &c. It appears by the connexion of these words with what went before, that the design of the wise man is here to signify that the world, though it be so full of labour, mankind, from generation to generation, so constantly, laboriously, unweariedly pursuing after happiness and satisfaction, on some perfect good wherein they may rest; yet they never obtain it, nor make any progress towards it. Particular persons while they live, though they spend their whole lives in pursuit, do but go round and round, and never obtain that satisfying good they seek after. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing,” [ver. 8.](#) And as one generation passeth away, and another comes, ([v. 4.](#)) the successive generations constantly labouring and pursuing after some good wherein satisfaction and rest may be obtained, not being discouraged by the disappointment of former generations, yet they make no progress, they attain to nothing new beyond their forefathers, they only go round in the same circle, as the sun restlessly repeats the same course that it used to do in former ages, and as the wind and water after their running and flowing have got no further than they were formerly; for to the place from whence they came, they constantly return again; and as the sea is no fuller now than it used to be in former ages, though the rivers have all the while with constant and indefatigable labour and continual expense of their waters, been striving to fill it up. That which goes round in a link let it continue moving never so swiftly, and never so long, makes no progress, comes to nothing new.

[395] “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awake my love till he please.” In the [2d verse of this chapter.](#) is represented the church in her state of persecution; in the [3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th.](#) verses is represented the comforts and supports Christ gives her in this state of hers; in this verse is represented her duty in patience, meekness, and love to her enemies, and humble and patient waiting for Christ’s deliverance, in Christ’s trial while she is in this state of suffering. In the five following verses is represented Christ’s coming to her deliverance, to put an end to the suffering state of the church, and introduce its prosperous and glorious day. In this 7th verse, it is strictly charged upon all professing Christians, that they should not stir up nor awake Christ till he please, *i. e.* that they should not take any indirect courses for their own deliverance while the church is in her afflicted state, and Christ seems to neglect her, as though he were asleep, but that they should patiently wait on him till his time should come, when he would awake for the deliverance of his church. He that believeth, shall not make haste. They that take indirect courses to hasten their own deliverance, by rising up against authority, and resisting their persecutors, are guilty of tempting Christ, and not waiting till his time comes, but going about to stir him up, and force deliverance before his own time.



They are charged by the roes and hinds of the field, who are of a gentle and harmless nature, and not beasts of prey, do not devour one another do not fight with their enemies, but fly from them, and are of a pleasant loving nature, [Prov. v. 19](#). So Christians should flee when persecuted, and should not be of a fierce nature, to resist and fight, but should be of a gentle and loving nature, and wait for Christ's awaking.

The same thing is represented in the [3rd chap. ver. 5](#). There as that chap. in the 1st verse, is represented the fruitless seeking of the church in her slothful, slumbering, dark state that precedes the glorious day of the Christian church, and then is represented her seeking him more earnestly when more awakened, ver. 2. and then the introduction of her state of light and comfort by that extraordinary preaching of the word of God, which will be by the ministers of the gospel, and then, in the 5th verse, is the church to wait patiently for Christ's appearance, without using undue indirect means to obtain comfort before his time comes. And then in the following verses is more fully represented the happy state of the church after Christ has awaked and come out of the wilderness where he had hid himself. The like change we have again, [chap. viii. 4](#). which in a like sense also agrees well with the context.

[444] [Cant. ii. 14](#). "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." There is probably respect here to the rock of mount Zion, on which Solomon's house was built, or of the mountain of the temple, and to the stairs by which they ascended that high rock, to go up to Solomon's palace. See [Neh. iii. 15](#). and [xii. 37](#). or the stairs by which they ascended through the narrow courts into the temple; it comes much to the same thing, whether we suppose the rocks and stairs referred to, to be of the mountain of Solomon's palace or temple, for both were typical of the same thing, and both mountains seemed to have been called by the same name, *mount Zion*. The church, in her low state, before that glorious spring spoken of in the foregoing verses, is not admitted to such high privileges, and such nearness to God, and intimacy with him, as she shall be afterwards, is kept at a greater distance not only by God's providence, but through her own darkness and unbelief, and remains of a legal spirit, whereby she falls more under the terrors of God's majesty manifested at mount Sinai under that legal dispensation through which Moses, when God passed by, hid himself in the clefts of the rock. Her love to the spiritual Solomon causes her to remain near his house, about the mountain on which his palace stands, watching at his gates, and waiting at the posts of his doors, and by the stairs by which he ascends to his house, but yet hides herself as if ashamed, and afraid, and unworthy to appear before him, like the woman that came behind Christ to touch the hem of his garment. She has not yet obtained that glorious privilege spoken of, [Psal. xlv. 14, 15](#). and [Rev. six. 7, 8](#). which she shall be admitted to in the glorious day approaching, when she shall enter into the king's palace. She remains now waiting at the foot of the stairs that go up to the house, as Jacob lay at the foot of the ladder, at the place of which he said, This is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven, and there she hides herself in the secret places



of the stairs, but then she shall be made joyfully to ascend, and with boldness and open face to go to the king in his palace.

[486] [Cant. iv. 3.](#) “Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet.” There is probably a special respect to the speech of the saints in prayer, which is dyed in the blood of Christ, and by this means becomes pleasant and acceptable, and of an attractive influence, like a scarlet cord to draw down blessings. The prayers of saints are lovely and prevalent only through the incense of Christ’s merits.

[487] [Cant. iv. 3.](#) “Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.” This probably represents faith, for it is that by which the church is united to her head. For Christ is her head; or if we look at ministers as a subordinate head, yet they are so no otherwise than as they represent Christ, and act as his ministers, and the same that is the union of believers to Christ in their union to ministers, and in receiving them they receive him. It is by the same faith whereby they receive Christ, and obey his word, that they receive and obey the instructions of ministers, for their instructions are no other than the word of Christ by them. Faith is the church’s life, and strength, and constant support, and supply, as the neck is to the body. Faith is the church’s shield; [Eph. vi. 16.](#); it is the church’s armory furnishing her with shields, because it provides them out of Christ’s fulness which is contained in the promises.

[488] [Cant. iv. 5.](#) “Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.” Like two young roes, *i. e.* fair, loving, and pleasant. See [Prov. v. 19.](#) Roes which feed among the lilies, not in a wilderness, but in a good pasture, or a pleasant garden, fair and flourishing. And by their being the white unspotted lilies for their nourishment, may also represent her chastity and purity, that her breasts are not defiled by an impure love. By the church’s breasts are meant means of grace; see [Cant. viii. 1, 8.](#) [Isa. lxvi. 11. 1](#) [Peter ii. 2.](#) These two breasts may signify the same with the two olive-trees, with the golden pipes emptying the golden oil out of themselves, and the two anointed ones, [Zech. iv. 3, 11, 12, 14.](#) and the two witnesses in Revelation, the two testaments, and two sacraments; another thing meant is love, the two breasts are love to God and love to men.

[428] [Solomon’s Song, iv. 8.](#) “Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, come with me from Lebanon, look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions’ dens, from the mountains of the leopards.” This call and invitation of Jesus Christ may be looked upon as directed either to her that is already actually the spouse of Christ, or her that is called and invited to be his spouse, that is, already his spouse no otherwise than in his gracious election. So the Gentiles are called a sister in the last chapter of this song, even before they were in a church estate, before she had any breasts. So in the [43d of Isaiah.](#), where respect is had to the calling of the Gentiles, God calls those his sons and daughters, that were so as yet only in his decree of election. [Ver. 6.](#) “I will say to the north,

Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.”

Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, and Hermon, were certain noted mountains in the wilderness, in the confines of the land of Canaan, that were wild and uninhabited. Hence the wonderful work of God in turning barbarous and heathenish countries to Christianity, is compared to the turning such a wild forest as Lebanon into a fruitful field. [Isa. xxix. 17.](#) “Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?” They were mountains that were haunts of wild beasts, and probably some of them at least very much frequented by lions and leopards, those most fierce and terrible of wild beasts; they were places where lions had their dens, and either these or some other noted mountains in the wilderness, were so frequented by leopards, that they were called the mountains of the leopards. It is from such places as these that the spouse, or she that is invited to be the spouse, is invited to look to Jesus Christ, where she was without the limits of the pleasant land of Canaan, wandering and lost in a howling wilderness, where she was in continual danger of being devoured and falling a prey to those terrible creatures. Christ graciously calls and invites her to look to him from the tops of these desolate mountains towards the land of Canaan, and towards the holy city Jerusalem, where he dwelt, though far off; yea, to come with him; for Christ is come into this wilderness to seek and to save her that is lost, to come and leave those horrid places, and come and dwell with him in the pleasant land, yea, in the city Jerusalem, that is the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth. Yea, though the lions had actually seized her, and carried her into their dens, there to be a feast for them, yet Christ calls and encourages her to look to him from the lions’ dens.

David represents his praying to God in a state of exile and in distressing circumstances, by his remembering God from the land of the Hermonites. [Psal. xlii. 6.](#) Christ saves souls out of the dens of lions, as he did Daniel, and out of the mouths of wild beasts, as David did the lamb from the mouth of the lion and the bear. He invites sinners that are naturally under the dominion of Satan, that roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour; and invites saints under the greatest darkness, and distresses, and temptations, and buffetings of Satan, to look to him.

[435] [Cant. iv. 9.](#) “Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.” What that one chain of the spouse’s neck is, that does so peculiarly ravish the heart of Christ, we may learn by [Psal. xlv. 10, 11.](#) “Forget thine own people, and thy Father’s house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty.” The thing here recommended to the spouse, in order to the king’s greatly desiring or being ravished with her beauty, is poverty of spirit. That this peculiarly delights and attracts the heart of Christ, is agreeable to many scriptures. [1 Peter iii. 2, 3.](#) “Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the



heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” This is in a peculiar manner a sweet savour to God. [Psal. li. 17.](#) This in a peculiar manner draws the eye of God, [Isa. lx. 2.](#) and attracts his presence. [Isa. lvii. 15.](#) [Psal. xxxiv. 18.](#) Or perhaps it may be the eye of faith that includes poverty of spirit and love. These graces being exercised in faith, are peculiarly acceptable; faith derives beauty from Christ’s righteousness, by which all mixture of deformity is hid.

[489] [Cant. v. 14.](#) “His belly is as bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires.” The word is the same in the original, which in [ver. 4.](#) is rendered bowels, and wherever it is attributed to God, it denotes affection, and is rendered bowels, as [Isa. lxiii. 15.](#) [Jer. xxxi. 20.](#) his affection is said to be like bright ivory overlaid with sapphires, representing the justice and mercy which are both so perfectly exercised, and manifested in him, in the work of redemption. The bright or pure white ivory, represents his perfect justice. Solomon’s throne of justice was ivory, which substance was chosen to be the matter of his throne in all probability, because it fitly represented justice; as the throne of Christ at the day of judgment, [Rev. xx.](#) is represented as a great white throne. His belly was overlaid with sapphires, being a precious stone of a beautiful azure or sky blue, the softest of all the colours, to represent mercy. Thus the throne of God had the appearance of sapphire, [Ezek. i. 26.](#) to signify that he sat on a throne of grace.

[85] [Cant. vi. 13.](#) “What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies,” or, “the company of Mahanaim.” The two armies that are the company of Mahanaim are the church of God in earth and in heaven; the company of Jacob and the company of the angels, see [Gen. xxxii. 2.](#); or the church militant and the church triumphant, for both these armies make one spouse of Jesus Christ.

[490] [Cant. vii. 1.](#) “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter!” This is to signify the amiableness of her conversation, and that her conversation is not naturally amiable, but that this beauty of conversation is put upon her. And another thing implied is, that she was prepared for travel, as the people in Egypt were to have their shoes on their feet. [Exod. xii. 11.](#) So the apostle directs that Christians should have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, [Eph. vi. 15.](#) *i. e.* a preparation for travel according to the gospel, and by the gospel of peace.

To the same scope is what follows “The joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hand of a cunning workman.”<sup>543</sup> The joints, the knees, and hips, are especially the seat and means of motion in walking. When it is said, The joints of thy thighs are the work of a cunning workman, this may be explained by that of the apostle, [Eph. i. 10.](#) “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath fore-ordained that they should walk in them.” The whole body of the church is fitly joined together by joints

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543 [Cant. vii. 1.](#)

and bands; the joints are kept firm, and fit for their proper motion and operation by mutual charity, holy love and union, and communion of saints.

[491] [Cant. vii. 2.](#) “Thy navel is like a round goblet; which wanteth not liquor.” The navel, according to the ancient notions they had of things, was the seat of health. [Prov. iii. 8.](#) “It shall be health to thy navel.” [Job xl. 16.](#) “His force is in the navel of his belly.” So that the thing which is here most probably represented is the spiritual health of the church: her navel is compared to a goblet which wanteth not liquor, *i. e.* full of wine, that enlivening, invigorating liquor. The word signifies mixture or temperament, or wine mixed or tempered; that is, wine that is so prepared as to make it the most agreeable and wholesome; (see [Prov. xxiii. 30.](#) and [ix. 2.](#);) probably the same may be meant that is called spiced wine, in [chap. viii. 2.](#)

[492] [Cant. vii. 4.](#) “Thine eyes are like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim.” It seems there were two or more noted fish-pools near to the city of Heshbon, the chief city in the country of Moab, by one of the gates of that city, called the gate of Bath-rabbim, *i. e.* the gate of the house of the multitude, probably so called because at that gate was a house for the resort of the multitudes that resorted to these pools for the sake of the water of that pool, and fish which were caught there, and to wash themselves there; and perhaps these pools might be remarkable for the clearness of the water, and their fitness to exhibit a true and distinct image of the multitudes that resorted thither, wherein men might see themselves as they were, and might see the spots and filth which they would wash off, and wherein was a true representation of other things. So that the thing signified by the eyes of the spouse may be the spiritual knowledge and understanding of the church, by which she has a true knowledge of herself and her own pollutions, and also a true representation or idea of other things. And also hereby may be signified the benevolence and bountifulness of the eyes of a true saint, so that they as it were yield meat and drink to a multitude, as it is probable these fish-pools did. [Prov. xxii. 9.](#)

[493] [Cant. vii. 4.](#) “Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh towards Damascus.” The tower of Lebanon, looking towards Damascus, was probably some tower built in Lebanon, on the frontier next to the kingdom of Damascus, to watch over that country, and for the defence of Israel from its inhabitants. By the account which history gives of Damascus, it was a magnificent city, and an exceeding pleasant, delightful place, like a mere garden of pleasure, and therefore, it is called the city of praise and joy, [Jer. xl. 25.](#) and in [Amos i. 2.](#) is called Beth-Eden, or the house of Eden. Men of carnal minds would prefer the land to the land of Israel, that God calls the pleasant land, and the glory of all lands. Naaman, the Syrian, contemned the waters of Israel in comparison of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus. And it seems their religion and worship was exceedingly pompous, tending much to please a vain carnal mind that savours the things of men more than the things of God. King Ahaz was greatly taken up with the curious fashion and workmanship of the altar he saw there,

and he sent to Urijah the priest a pattern of it, that he might make one like it in the courts of God's house, and chose rather to offer his sacrifice on this new altar than on the altar of the Lord. [2 Kings xvi. 10.](#), &c.

The nose is the organ of smelling; therefore here the church is commended for her spiritual scent, which was a good defence to her from corrupt doctrine, and false ways of worship of men's invention, however specious and fair, and tending much more to please a carnal taste than the true religion of Jesus Christ.

Pomp and magnificence, and the curious inventions of men, and the things which men's wisdom teaches, please men of corrupt minds; but a true saint, through a spiritual taste or scent, nauseates those things, and is defended from them. This spiritual scent is the best defence from those things that would corrupt her mind from the simplicity that is in Christ.

[494] [Cant. vii. 5.](#) "Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, (or crimson, as it is in the margin,) and the hair of thine head like purple." If by head here be understood the eldership of the church; then her head is compared to Carmel, probably because Carmel was a very fruitful hill, and a high hill, whose fruits were seen at a distance, as Christ compares his disciples to a city set on a hill, whose works could not be hid. (See Note on [chap. iv. 1.](#)) The hair is the fruit of the head, and may represent both the doctrine and conversation of faithful ministers, who know nothing, and savour of nothing either in their doctrine or life, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and so their preaching and walk is, as it were, coloured with his blood. And this also may be signified by it, that the holy doctrine and conversation of ministers are a princely ornament to them, purple being the colour of the robes of princes.

But, perhaps, by the head of the spouse, here may be meant the doctrine which she holds, the doctrine of the gospel, which is represented as a glorious crown on her head in [Rev. xii. 1.](#) This may be compared to Carmel, that fruitful hill, because it is the doctrine that is according to godliness or to crimson, because Jesus Christ and him crucified, or Christ's shedding his blood, is the sum and substance of it.

[495] [Cant. vii. 7.](#) "And thy breasts to clusters of grapes." By her breasts here, most probably, is intended the grace of love, or spiritual complacency; affection to her husband and his children. The bosom is put for love; so Christ is said to be in the bosom of the Father. This agrees with that in [Prov. v. 19.](#) "Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her love." Christ's love is compared to wine, [chap. i.](#) And so is the love of the spouse, [chap. iv. 10.](#) "How much better is thy love than wine!" And here her breasts are compared to clusters of grapes. See No. 488.

[496] [Cant. vii. 8.](#) "And the smell of thy nose like apples." As by the roof of the mouth in the next verse, is not intended simply the roof of the mouth itself, as though that were exceedingly pleasant to the bridegroom, this being a part of the body that is hidden; but thereby is probably meant the speech which comes from the mouth: so here, by the nose, is not meant the nose itself, but the breath; so the bridegroom would hereby signify that the

smell of her breath was sweet, her vitals being sound, and pure, and sweet, being made so by the food she ate, *viz.* apples, the food she from time to time desires to be refreshed with, it being the fruit that he yields, who is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, whose fruit was sweet to her taste. Persons' breath commonly smells of the food which they eat; thus the breath of the spouse is represented as smelling like apples.

[497] *Cant. vii. 9.* "And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak." By the roof of the mouth is here probably meant his discourse, which is like excellent wine that goes sweetly down, and so refreshes and enlivens other saints whom here Christ calls his beloved, that it causes those of them that are asleep, and in the dullest frame, to speak; it enlivens their hearts and tongues in divine things.

[8] *Cant. viii. 1.* "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother I when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despised." Which wish of the church is now accomplished, by Christ's incarnation; the Son of God, who is infinitely higher than we, is come down unto us in our nature, and has familiarized himself to us.

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[242] [Isa. vii. 17.](#) “The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father’s house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, even the king of Assyria.” This seems not to be spoken of the king of Israel mentioned in the foregoing verse, but of Ahaz the king of Judah, to whom the prophet was then speaking. It could not be meant of Pekah, the king of Israel, because it speaks of bringing the king of Assyria in his father’s house, but the family of Pekah was not cut off by the king of Assyria, but by Hoshea the son of Elah, who conspired against him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. [2 Kings xv. 30.](#) God by the prophet had offered great encouragement to Ahaz under his present distress and fear of Pekah and Rezin, and gave him a glorious sign, which he would not give heed to, as appears by ver. 12. His confidence was not in God for help, but in the king of Assyria, whom he had hired by the treasures of both church and state, and by basely promising to be his servant. [2 Kings xvi. 7, 8.](#) Seeing he would not believe God’s promises, nor take encouragement from his signs, therefore he should not be established; and though God would do great things for his people by the Immanuel, that should be born in his family, yet he should have no benefit of it; and though it was true as the prophet had told him, that he should not be hurt by the kingdom of Syria, and kingdom of Ephraim, that was now plotting his ruin; yet seeing he would not believe, he should not be the better for it, for there should come a greater calamity upon him, than ever the kingdom of Judah suffered from the kingdom of Israel, and indeed greater than ever they suffered since the kingdoms were divided from them, and became unfriendly to them; and that from the king of Assyria himself, whom he trusted so much in for help, against the kingdom of Israel. The calamity came upon him in his life-time in a measure, as it is said in this verse [upon thee;] for when the king of Assyria came up he distressed him, and strengthened him not; [2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21.](#); and afterwards it came upon his father’s house, and on his people.

[293] [Isa. viii. 7, 8.](#) “Now, therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks; and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow, and go over.” The river Euphrates was the ancient boundary that God had set to the possession of the children of Israel, and to the dominion of their princes. This is from time to time mentioned as their eastern limits in the book of Moses, and over all on this side the river. The kings of Judah and Israel had formerly reigned, and their territories were overrun by the people that dwelt about that river: it is well represented as though the river Euphrates, their ancient boundary, broke its banks, and not only encroached upon them to the straitening their limits, but even overflowed all their possessions. They have no more their own by God’s grant, than is left them on this side the river Euphrates; and therefore, when those waters came to overflow all, they have none left. See Note on [Isa. xxviii. 17.](#)

[243] [Isa. ix. 9, 10.](#), &c. “And all the people shall know, even Ephraim, and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in their pride and stoutness of heart, the bricks are hewn down, but we

will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.” They disregarded those awful and repeated judgments God had lately exercised upon them, whereby he had already greatly diminished their numbers and their wealth, and the extent of their dominions, when Pul, the king of Assyria, came up against the land, and took a thousand talents out of the land, as [2 Kings xv. 19.](#) and when afterwards Tiglath-pileser, in the days of Pekah, he that was now king, came and destroyed so great a part of the land beyond Jordan, and in the northern parts, as [2 Kings xv. 29.](#) and [1 Chron. v. 26.](#) They were insensible and unhumiliated under these awful rebukes of heaven, as [ver. 13.](#) “For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them.” But when the hand of heaven was so evidently against them to diminish them, yet they were full of contrivances, and big with expectations of conquests, and enlarging their dominions, as appears in Pekah’s conspiring with Rezin, king of Syria, to go and conquer the kingdom of Judah, of which in the two foregoing chapters. Thus even in the midst of God’s awful judgments they were full of haughty, ambitious designs, and big with expectations of aggrandizing them, and making themselves bigger than they were before; though they had lost their western and northern countries, yet they hoped to obtain the kingdom of Judah that should more than make up their loss, and so said, Though the bricks are fallen down, we will build with hewn stone, &c.

[246] [Isa. x. 26.](#) “And the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him, according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock Oreb.” The prophet is speaking here of the destruction of Sennacherib’s army, and of himself afterwards. There was a remarkable agreement between this destruction of his army, and that of the vast army of the Midianites, which was without the children of Israel’s striking a blow. [Judg. vii. 20.,](#) &c. And as Oreb, one of their princes, was taken afterwards, and slain after the battle was over, as he was returning to his own land; so Sennacherib, after he had fled, was slain in the temple of his god, Nisroch. [Isa. xxxvii. 38.](#) So was that prayer against the enemies of the church, [Psal. lxxxiii. 11.](#) “Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb,” now fulfilled in Sennacherib.

[503] [Isa. xi. 10.](#) “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious;” or as the original is, “His rest shall be glory.” There is an evident allusion in these words to the things which came to pass pertaining to the affair of God’s redeeming the children of Israel out of Egypt, and leading them through the wilderness, and bringing them into Canaan. This is very manifest by the words immediately following, and by all the succeeding context to the end of the chapter. This is a prophecy of a second work, a greater work of salvation, wherein not only the Jews, but the Gentiles, and all nations, shall partake. When God redeemed his people out of Egypt to lead them to Canaan, which was God’s rest, they were gathered together under ensigns, they were the standards or ensigns of the four quarters of the army. That of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan, and then the ensign for the whole army placed in the middle of the congregation, was the tabernacle and ark where was Moses, the captain



and leader of the whole host, with his rod which was used from time to time as the banner or ensign of the congregation, as it was especially at the time when it was held up over Israel while they were fighting with Amalek, and obtained a signal victory under that ensign, on which occasion Moses built an altar and called it *Jehovah-Nissi, The Lord my Banner, or Ensign*, (the word is the same in the original as here in this place, in Isaiah,) and both the rod and altar were types of Christ, who is Jehovah, who then was the ensign of his church, and would more especially and gloriously be exhibited as such in the days of the gospel, as is here foretold in Isaiah; and then it was a rod that was held up as an ensign of the people; so here, in this [11th of Isaiah](#), Christ is spoken of as a rod, as in the first verse; And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:” so in this [10th verse](#), “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign;” *i. e.* plainly, a rod or plant from a root of Jesse (though something further may be aimed at in using the phrase, *Root of Jesse*).

As the rod of Moses was occasionally used as an ensign of the people, so more constantly the *tabernacle* and *ark*. These were placed in the midst of the congregation, and the whole was to pitch in exact order round about it, at due distance from it, all having equal respect to it. And the ark is represented as going before the people in their marches; [Numb. x. 33.](#); because that, however it was in the middle of the army, yet they had respect to it as their *guide*, their *banner*, that all whose motions they were to attend; and when they went through the Jordan into Canaan, their *rest*, the ark was remarkably made use of as the ensign of the people; it was to be carried before them at such a distance that it might be well seen by all the leaders of the people, and they were to take heed to its motions, with the greatest care and exactness, and to follow where that went. [Josh. iii. 3, 4.](#)

But more especially was the *pillar of cloud and fire*, the ensign of that congregation in their marches from Egypt to Canaan, their rest. A banner or ensign was lifted up on high that it might be seen by the whole company. The ark and tabernacle could not be seen by the whole congregation, but the pillar of cloud and fire which abode on the tabernacle, and departed not from it, were lifted up to open sight, and displayed to the view of every individual person. That was the banner the people were listed under, that they were always to cleave to most strictly, and diligently to observe, stedfastly to follow, and never to depart from, and were to be directed by it in every step they took. When that moved, they were to move; when that rested, they must rest: see [Numb. ix. 15.](#), to the end. This pillar of cloud and fire was the special symbol of Christ’s presence, and in that standing as an ensign, Christ stood as an ensign of the people. And it is moreover manifest that that pillar of cloud and fire was a remarkable type of Christ incarnate, or the Son of God in the human nature, concerning whom it is here prophesied that he should stand as an ensign of the people.

When it is said, “*his rest shall be glory*,” there is doubtless an allusion to Canaan, the promised rest to which the ark and pillar of cloud and fire led the children of Israel, and the

thing ultimately intended is heaven. It is said, [Numb. x. 33.](#) that the ark of the covenant of the Lord (over which was the pillar of cloud, as in the following verse) went before the people to search out a resting-place for them. That was the use of these ensigns under which that people were gathered together. They were to lead them to their rest. The rest spoken of in the text under consideration, is called Christ's rest, which is agreeable to the style used concerning the rest to which God was leading the congregation in the wilderness; [Psal. xcvi. 11.](#) "To whom he sware in his wrath that they should never enter into *my rest.*"

Here the rest to which Jesus Christ, God man, should bring the Gentiles, as well as Jews, after his incarnation, is spoken of as another rest, a different rest from that which God brought the Jews to of old, agreeable to the observation of the apostle, [Heb. iv. 8, 9, 10.](#) "For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day: there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God from his." Here it is remarkable, that take these words of the apostle with the foregoing context, he seems to signify that what is called God's rest, or Christ's rest, in the promises of the Old Testament, is so called, not only because it was a rest of God's providing and promising, but because it was *his, personally.* So here the rest which remains for the people of God, which Christ gives his people, is spoken of as Christ's *own* rest and happiness that he has entered into: and so the land of Canaan of old was represented as God's *own* dwelling-place, his inheritance, &c. his *mountain in the field,* &c. And therefore, when God brought the people out of Egypt to Canaan, he is represented as having brought them to himself. But especially was that particular part of Canaan which God chose to place his name there, represented as God's or Christ's rest, namely, Jerusalem, mount Zion, and the temple. [Psal. cxxxii. 8.](#) "Arise, O Lord, into *thy* rest, thou and the ark of thy strength." [Ver. 13, 14.](#) "The Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for *his* habitation. This is *my* rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." [1 Chron. xxviii. 2.](#) "It was in my heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord." The temple that Solomon built was the rest of the ark, and the rest of the cloud of glory that abode over the ark; which had before that wandered long in the wilderness, and had walked in a tent and in a tabernacle, [2 Sam. vii. 6.](#) But when the temple was built in the place which God chose, then the glory of the Lord had rest, and took up its settled abode there as the place it delighted in; and mount Zion and the temple are in Scripture often represented as the dwelling-place and quiet and delightful abode which they long after, and never can be at rest until they come to dwell in, and which shall be their settled dwelling-place. How often does the psalmist, speaking not only in his own name, but the name of the church, express his longings and pantings after God's courts, his amiable tabernacles, his altars, &c. and desire to make this place his rest, as the swallow and sparrow their nest! And how often do the prophets foretell a future redemption of God's people, and their coming from places of captivity and



bondage, and from under the hand of their enemies, to dwell in mount Zion, and in God's holy mountain! &c.

But yet sometimes the prophets speak of no temple built by men as God's true rest, but represent heaven as God's true rest. [Isa. lxvi. 1.](#) "Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?" And [chap. lvii. 15.](#) "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place," &c.

The rest of that Root of Jesse, that should stand for an ensign, is said to be glory; so the land of Canaan, Zion, and the temple are said to be the rest of him, who, as an ensign to the people, is represented in the pillar of cloud and fire. The land of Canaan is called the glory of all lands, [Ezek. xx. 5, 16.](#) and the glorious land, [Dan. xi. 16.](#) and the glorious holy mountain; [ver. 45.](#) mount Zion is said to be *beautiful* for situation, the joy of the whole earth; and in another place, to be the perfection of beauty. So concerning the temple, it is spoken of as exceedingly magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all lands, [1 Chron. xxii. 5.](#) So in [Psal. xxix. 2.](#) as the words might have been (and probably better) translated, it is said, "Worship the Lord in his glorious sanctuary." [Psal. xcvi. 6.](#) "Honour and majesty are before him, strength and beauty are in his sanctuary." [Jer. xvii. 12.](#) "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." The temple was truly glorious in Solomon's time, when the people first began fully to enjoy the promised rest in Canaan; David having fully subdued the inhabitants of the land and their enemies round about; and then indeed the land was happy and glorious.

All these things show plainly that here is an allusion to God's salvation of Israel of old, when they were brought out of Egypt, and led through the wilderness to Canaan under Christ as their ensign, manifested by these types and symbols of his presence, Moses's rod, the tabernacle, the ark, and especially the cloud of glory above them; and that the Rod of Jesse here spoken of is that person there exhibited in these types and symbols. And they also manifestly show that the Messiah was to work out another redemption far greater than that of Egypt, of both Jews and Gentiles, and gather them both into one great congregation, and lead them to another and far more glorious rest than that of Canaan, Jerusalem, and the temple, even in their greatest glory in Solomon's time; and a rest which should be his own land, and his own dwelling-place, and temple, where his people should partake with him in his rest, happiness, and glory. And so that, as the apostle says, there remaineth a rest to the people of God, besides that which Joshua brought Israel into; and that heaven is that rest. Some description is given of the comfort and happiness of the rest to which this Ensign guides God's people, in No. 504. on [Eph. ii. 7.](#)

[175] [Isa. xliii. 20, 21, 22.](#) "It shall never be inhabited. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses,

and dragons in their pleasant palaces.” Vide [chap. xxxiv. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15](#). Babylon represents the whole church or congregation of the wicked; by her being to be destroyed, never to be built or inhabited again, is represented the eternal destruction of the congregation of the wicked; by those doleful creatures here mentioned, as possessing of Babylon, are represented devils which the church of the wicked shall be left to the possession of for ever. Babylon, after its destruction, full of these creatures, represents the church of the wicked in its state of punishment; therefore the apostle John, when speaking of the destruction of mystical Babylon, and alluding to this that is said of old Babylon, says expressly, “She is become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” [Rev. xviii. 2](#).

[87] [Isa. xxv. 11](#). “And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim;” which was the posture in which Christ was crucified in.

[218] [Isa. xxx. 27.](#), to the end, and [xxxi. 9](#). Mr. Bedford supposes (*Scripture Chronology*, p. 671.) that what is here said respects the time when Rabshakeh came against Jerusalem, and God did so wonderfully appear for the defence of the city, and miraculously slew such a multitude of their enemies in one night. [Chap. xxx. 28](#). It is said that his breath as an overflowing stream should reach to the midst of the neck, *i. e.* should reduce them to the utmost extremity. “This is very agreeable to the manner in which Dr. Prideaux very probably supposes that Rabshakeh’s army was destroyed, *viz.* by God’s bringing on them a hot pestilential wind; vide *Connect*, p. 34, 35.; and where it is said here that there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err, this is agreeable to what is said concerning Rabshakeh and his army, [chap. xxxvii. 29](#). It is here said, verse 29. that they should have a song, as in the night, when an holy assembly is kept, and gladness of heart; as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel: and God wrought this great deliverance by slaying Sennacherib’s army in the night, as before he had done in Egypt, by slaying the first-born in the night, and thereby gave occasion to keep the night of the passover with joy, in a joyful manner, and with songs of praise, which probably was the holy solemnity that the prophet had a special respect to, as Bedford supposes what is said in the 30th verse, together with the 32d, of battles, of shaking, renders it probable that there was an earthquake accompanying that judgment, and also thunder, and lightning, and hail, as was common when God miraculously fought against the enemies of his people, as it was when he fought against Pharaoh and the Egyptians at the Red sea. [Ps. lxxvii.](#) at the latter end. “So God fought against the Amorites in Joshua’s time, not only with hail, but thunder and lightning.” [Hab. iii. 11](#). So God seems to have fought against Sisera and his host. (See Notes on [Judges v. 20](#).) So God fought against the Philistines in Samuel’s time. So God seems to have fought sometimes for David, against his enemies, and particularly at Baal-Perazim. Vide Note on [Psalm xviii. 7.](#), &c. So Hannah prophesied that God would appear

against the enemies of his people. [1 Sam. ii. 10.](#) Thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, is God's artillery, that he was wont to make use of when he appeared in battle. [Job xxxviii. 22, 23.](#) "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow; or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" It is probable that the greater part of them might be slain by such a sudden and extraordinary pestilence while asleep; and God might pursue the rest that awoke and escaped the pestilence with a tempest of thunder, lightning, and hail, until the greater part of them were destroyed. And what is said, [ver. 32.](#) seems to be much better translated in the margin, *viz.* "In every passing of the rod founded which the Lord shall cause to rest upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps;" this translation is word for word, as it is in the original, meaning the rod of God's anger on the Assyrian. In the foregoing verse with this, it is foretold that the Assyrian, that beat down others with his rod, should be beaten down in his turn with God's rod; and thus to speak of the wrath of God's anger is agreeable to the phraseology of Scripture: particularly, to call *a judgment that God had appointed, a rod that God had founded or established*, and to express *his subjecting them to the judgment*, by God's *causing the rod to rest upon them*, and to call *the smiting with the rod at each stripe, the passings of the rod.* We read of these passings of the rod, [chap. xxviii. 18, 19.](#) And when it is said it shall be with tabrets and harps, the meaning is, that when God's people shall behold the punishment which he shall bring upon them, it shall cause joy and songs in them, agreeable to [verse 29.](#) They shall, as it were, lift up the voice of music and joy, at every time, as they hear the voice or sound of God's avenging rod on their enemies, which is agreeable to what is said with respect to this very judgment on Kabshakeh's army, [chap. xxxvii. 22.](#) And what is said, [ver. 33.](#) seems well to agree with the place where this great destruction was, *viz.* Tophet, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, which was near Jerusalem, on the south side, whither Rabshakeh came from Lachish, Libnah, and Cush, and where he encamped before he could form the siege of the place, as Bedford observes.

The time when they were thus threatened by Sennacherib and Rabshakeh, was a time when they relied on Egypt for help, as appears by the words of Rabshakeh, [chap. xxxvi. 6-9.](#) which agrees with the beginning of [31st chap.;](#) and what is said in the [4th, 5th, and 8th verses.](#) of that chapter, exceedingly agrees with the way in which God did by himself, immediately, without making use of the sword of man, defend and fight for Jerusalem, and what is said in the 9th verse, of the Assyrian's passing over to his strong hold for fear, agrees with what is said, [chap. xxxvii. 7, 29, 34, 37.](#)

[378] [Isa. xxxi. 9.](#) "Saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem:" *i. e.* There he has his throne of judgment, where he sits to judge the nations of the world, to try men as in a refiner's fire, to prove the righteous and justify them, and to consume the wicked. God in judging is represented in Scripture as doing the part of a refiner of metals. [Mal. ii. 2, 3.](#) "But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he ap-

peareth; for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." The place where the refiner fines metals, is where he has his furnace; and so the place whence God judges the nations of the world, and executes judgment and justice on the earth, is where he has established his throne, which is in Zion. There God is represented as having his throne, and from thence all his judgments that are executed in the earth are represented as proceeding. So in the 1st chap. of Amos, God's judgments upon Syria, and upon the Philistines, Tyrus and Edom, and upon the Amorites, are represented as proceeding from God in Zion, and from Jerusalem, as [ver. 2](#). "The Lord will roar from Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem;" together with what follows in that chapter. So God is represented as judging all nations from thence in the last chapter of Joel, as [ver. 16, 17](#). "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake." "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain." And [ver. 21](#). "For the Lord dwelleth in Zion;" together with the rest of the chapter. So it is said, [Ps. lxxvi. 2, 3](#). "In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle." So God is represented as judging the nations of the world out of Zion. [Ps. 1. at the beginning](#). "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a *fire* shall devour before him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." So [Isa. ii. 3, 4](#). "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people." So here God is represented as judging the Assyrians from mount Zion. He that sits in Zion as a refiner, is represented as bringing their young valiant men to the furnace there, and melting them in the fire, as in the foregoing verse, his young men shall be for melting, as it is in the Hebrew. So in the 33rd chap. he is represented as destroying the enemies of Israel, as one that dwelleth on high, and fills Zion with judgment and righteousness. And as God's judgments on his enemies are represented as coming out of Zion, so is the salvation of his people, as [Psal. xiv. 7. liii. 6. xx. 2. cx. 2. cxxviii. 5. cxxxiv. 3](#). The Assyrians that besieged Jerusalem are represented as consumed by fire. [Chap. ix. 5](#). "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire."

[213] "As rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." There is an allusion here to the deserts of Arabia, which was an exceeding hot and dry place, one might travel many days going, and see no sign of a river, brook, or spring, nothing but a dry and parched wilderness, so that travellers there were ready to be consumed with thirst, as the children of Israel were when they were in this wilderness, when they were faint because there was no water. Now when a man finds Jesus Christ, he is like a man that has been travelling in these deserts, until he is ready to perish with thirst, and at last finds

a river of cool and clear water, it is exceeding refreshing. Christ was one actually typified by a river of water that was miraculously caused to flow in the dry deserts of Arabia, for the refreshing and satisfying God's people when they were almost consumed with thirst, even by that stream of water out of the rock, for as the apostle says, that rock was Christ. This stream of water issued out of the rock that was in Horeb, which word signifies a dry place. This was a river in a dry place. [Psal. cv. 41](#). He opened the rock and the waters gushed out, they ran in the dry places like a river. This is called a land of great drought. [Hosea xiii. 5](#). See also [Deut. viii. 15](#). Christ is as a river of water, because there is such a fulness in him for the satisfaction of the needy, thirsty soul, and enough not only for one, but for all the multitude of God's people, as the stream out of the rock was sufficient for the whole congregation, which was doubtless more than two million souls and their cattle.

And when Christ is said to be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, the allusion is still to the deserts of Arabia. It is not said as the shadow of a tree, because in those vast deserts there are no trees; nothing for shade to protect travellers, but here and there a great rock. Christ is to the weary soul as the cool shadow of a great rock, or a steep rocky mountain, in the scorched deserts of Arabia.

[261] [Isa. xxxii. 2](#). "And a man shall be an hiding-place," &c. Here Christ is compared to three things that correspond with several things in the congregation in the wilderness, that were typical of Christ.

*First*. Christ is called "An hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest," which corresponds with the tabernacle. Tabernacles are made to shelter travellers in a strange land, where they have no abiding place from the injuries of the weather; and a tabernacle is also a hiding-place; the secret of God's tabernacle is especially spoken of as such. [Psal. xxvii. 5](#). "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle;" and so in other places, there cited in the margin, and in the [4th chap. of Isaiah at the end](#). Christ is expressly compared to a tabernacle in both these respects, *viz.* as a shelter, and as a hiding-place, or refuge.

*Secondly*. Christ is compared to a river of water in a dry place, which answers to those rivers of water out of a rock, in that land of great drought. Vide No. 213. And,

*Thirdly*. Christ is compared to the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, which answers to the pillar of cloud, which shaded the children of Israel in that parched wilderness, to which Christ is compared, [chap. iv. 5](#). [Psal. cxxi. 5](#). [Isa. xxv. 4, 5](#). And though it was not the shade of a rock, yet it was a rock that refreshed them otherwise, *viz.* with its cooling, refreshing waters.

[214] [Isa. xxxiii. 17](#). "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." This verse speaks of two different sorts of people that dwell in Zion, *viz.* 1. The true citizens of Zion, described here in the two preceding verses, much as the true citizens of Zion are described in the [15th Psalm.](#), and [Psal. xxiv. 4, 5](#); and, 2. Sinners

in Zion, spoken of in the 14th verse. Of the former it is said, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty, *i. e.* those that are spoken of in the immediately foregoing words. They shall see the land that is very far off, *i. e.* they that were spoken of before. There is an evident antithesis in the words: as they are opposite kinds of persons that are spoken of, so they are opposite things that are predicated of them. The one should "see the land that is very far off," *i. e.* should be led away captive thither; as it was threatened to the children of Israel if they were not obedient, that they should be driven out of their own land, and carried captive into a very far country. [Deut. xxviii. 49.](#) "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth;" and [64th verse.](#) "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth, even unto the other; and this is a judgment often threatened by the prophets to the wicked Israelites, and is threatened by this prophet in particular. [Isa. v. 26. xiii. 5.](#) "They came from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land." But the other should "see the King in his beauty;" this is here spoken of as the opposite to a being carried away into a far country. The literal and next meaning seems to be this, that while the sinners in Zion are cast out of Zion, and out of their own land to the ends of the earth, and made slaves to a foreign prince, thou shalt dwell peaceably and quietly in the land of Israel, and in Zion, (the true citizens of Zion shall abide in Zion, [Psal. xv. 1.](#)) under the peaceable and happy government of thine own prince, the King of Zion, the King that sits in the throne of David, who had his palace in Zion. Thou shalt see the King that reigns in Zion in his beauty, reigning and governing his people in great glory and prosperity, and thou shalt enjoy the blessing of his prosperous and glorious reign. Beauty is often put for glory and prosperity, as [chap. xxviii. 1.](#) and [Ezek. xxvii. 3, 4, 11.](#) and [chap. xxviii. 12, 17.](#) as [ver. 20.](#) of this context, Thou shalt see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, *i. e.* thou shalt enjoy the blessings of its safe and quiet state, as [Psal. cxxviii. 5, 6.](#) Thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem and thou shalt see peace upon Israel. The blessing here promised to the righteous in Israel, seems to be the same with that which the queen of Sheba observed in Solomon's servants. [2 Chron. ix. 7.](#) "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee."

But although what the prophet here alludes to in the punishment threatened to the sinners in Zion, be the captivity into Babylon, and what he alludes to in the reward promised to the righteous, be the dwelling under the safe, and quiet, and prosperous government of their own king that sat on the throne of David, which was in Zion; yet the things chiefly meant, are spiritual things that are typified by these temporal things, for there never was literally any such distinction made between the wicked and righteous Israelites, as is here spoken of; for when the Jews were carried away into Babylon, there was no king left reigning in Zion in peace and prosperity, but it was a time of universal calamity throughout the whole land. Therefore, by being carried captive into a land very far off, seems to be intended chiefly





the eternal rejection and banishment of hypocrites, who though they for the present dwell in Zion in God's church amongst his people, yet the time will come when they shall be removed at the utmost distance from it, and shall be sent into eternal banishment; and by the King that is here spoken of, that the true citizens of Zion shall see in his beauty, is meant Jesus Christ, even David their King, as he is called, [Jer. xxx. 9.](#) and [Hos. iii. 5.](#) The King spoken of in the beginning of the foregoing chapter, and every where throughout this book. They shall behold him in his beauty, and shall enjoy the blessings of his kingdom of grace here; and hereafter shall for ever dwell in his presence, and see his face, and rejoice in his kingdom of glory.

[317] [Isa. xl. 1, 2.](#) "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." God often executes very severe judgments on his visible church for their sins, and though her punishment be never double to her deserts, or more than her deserts, yet she oftentimes suffers double in two respects.

1. Double to the sufferings which their sins, their violations of duties of the second table of the law, have brought on others, in which sense the false church is commanded to be punished. [Rev. xviii. 6.](#) "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double."

2. Double to all the pleasure or benefit, the wealth or worldly advancement, which she hath obtained or aimed at by her sins, as in the place in Revelations, it follows in the [next verse.](#), How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliriously, so much torment and sorrow give her." By double, is not meant precisely twice so much, but vastly more. Thus God does not only punish Babylon, or the false church, but his own visible church, when they corrupt themselves, and make themselves in a great measure a false church, like as Jerusalem and Israel of old did. God punished them with great severity; he punished them doubly. [Jer. xvi. 18.](#) "I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double, because they have defiled my land." God caused all the idolatrous nations to drink the wine cup of his fury, and especially Sheshack, or Babylon, but he in the first place gave it to Jerusalem. [Jer. xxv.](#) God takes notice of the great severity with which he had punished Jerusalem; for this is manifestly the language of compassion. A father, while in wrath he is correcting his child, makes light of its sufferings; but when his heart begins to relent, and bowels of compassion to yearn, his sufferings begin to look great in his eyes. God is often represented as thus exercising the bowels of a merciful father towards his people after severe correction. See [Judg. x. 6.](#) [Jer. xxxi. 20.](#) [Isa. xv. 16.](#) [Nahum ix. 32.](#)

[485] [Isa. xl. 15.](#) "He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." A very fine remark, and a solid correction of the common translation, is here made by that learned, sagacious, and devout expositor, Vitringa. He observes that the common translation is neither answerable

to the import of the original, nor consonant to the structure of the discourse. The prophet had no intention to inform mankind what the Almighty could do with regard to the islands, if he pleased to exert his power, but his design was to show how insignificant. or rather what mere nothings, they are in his esteem, and before his majesty. The islands, says he, though so spacious as to afford room for the erection of kingdoms and the abode of nations, though so strong as to withstand for many thousands of years the raging and reiterated assaults of the whole watery world, are yet before the adored Jehovah small as the minutest grain, which the eye can scarce discern, light as the feathered mote, which the least breath hurries away like a tempest, *SltS1 pT3 D*’S, *Insulæ sunt, ut levi quid, quod avolat*. “The deep-rooted islands are as the volatile atom, which, by the gentlest undulations of the air, is wafted to and fro in perpetual agitations.” Hervey’s Meditations, vol. 2. p. 130.

[437] [Isa. xli. 18, 19, 20](#). “I will make the wilderness pools of water I will plant in the wilderness the cedar That ye may see, and know, and consider, and understand together that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” God will cause waters to flow in the dry desert, and turn the barren wilderness into a pleasant garden, and bring forth these glorious things in such places that were most likely and most distant from any thing of this nature, and where was the least of any previous disposition, preparation, or foundation for any thing of this, that his hand might be the more visible, and his power and efficacy the more apparent and undeniable; as of old, when God furnished a table in the wilderness, and brought forth water out of the flinty rock. Therefore here it is said, “*The Holy One of Israel hath created it.*” *To create*, as the word is in Scripture, is either *to make out of nothing*, or, which is equivalent, *to make out of that which has in itself no natural fitness, disposition, or proportion, or foundation for such an effect*.

[438] [Isa. xli. 22](#). “Let them bring forth and show us what shall happen: let them show us former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them;

or declare us things for to come.” See also [verse 4](#). and [verses 23, 26](#). [chap. xlii. 9](#). [xliii. 9, 10, 11, 12](#). [xliv. 6, 7, 8](#). [xlv. 21, 22](#). [xlvi. 9, 10](#). [xlviii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16](#).

By *former things* in these passages of the prophet, is meant former predictions of future events, or former and ancient dispensations, or works that pointed at things future, either by representing and typifying them, or by preparing for them, and ordering things with an evident respect to future events; or more briefly, by former things is meant such words or works as so pointed at things future, as to show plainly that they, whose words or works they were, had the foreknowledge and ordination of those future events. It is evident that by former things are meant former signs of future events, by what is said here in [chap. xli. 22](#). “Let them show us former things, what they be, that we may consider them what they be, and know the latter end of them;” *i. e.* let them bring forth their ancient predictions or dispensations pointing at future events, that we may consider them, and compare them with



the event, and see how they prove in the latter end, see how they come out in the event of things. This is confirmed by [ver. 26](#). “Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and before time, that we may say, He is righteous?” *i. e.* that we may acknowledge that his cause is good, and that he is to be justified in his pretences; for here God is calling of them to come near together with him to judgment, that it may be tried who can best make out their pretences to divinity and claims of divine honours: see [ver. 1.](#) and [21](#). This is further manifest by [chap. xlii. 9](#). “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.” And [xliii. 9, 10](#). “Let all nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled, who among them can declare this and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses;” *i. e.* let them bring forth their witnesses, that such and such things they foretold, or by some dispensation of theirs showed their foreknowledge of such and such events; and that the events exactly agreed with the prediction. Producing witnesses, that they may be justified, is a form of speech still alluding to a coming together in judgment. See also [ver. 10, 11, 12.](#) and [chap. xlv. 6, 7, 8. xlv. 21, 22. xlv. 9, 10. xlviii. 3, 4.](#) &c.

[331] [Isa. xli. 25](#). “I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come; from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name; and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.” Probably some respect may be here had to Cyrus, who came from the north-east, being sent by the king of Media to destroy Babylon; and so this place seems parallel with [chap. xlv. 28. xlv. 1 and 13](#). But yet the Holy Ghost seems principally to have an eye here to some other prince, an antitype of Cyrus, that shall come from the north-east to destroy the spiritual Babylon, or antiChristian church, which shall be raised up at the time when that glory shall be accomplished for the church that is here prophesied of in this chapter, and the foregoing and following chapters. The chief of them that are called *the kings of the east*, that are represented as coming to destroy the spiritual Babylon on the drying up of the river Euphrates, in [Rev. xvi. 12](#). as Cyrus and other princes of the east had their way prepared to destroy the literal Babylon on the drying up of the literal river Euphrates, and probably the emperor of Muscovy. This better agrees with the context, which evidently speaks of the glorious times of the church of God, and it better agrees with the words themselves, that speak of the person that shall be raised up as one that shall call on God’s name, which was not fully accomplished in Cyrus, though he showed great respect to the true God; yet never properly became a worshipper of the true God, but lived and died an idolater: and it better agrees with the following words, which speak of the glory of God in foretelling this thing so long aforehand.

The princes that the emperors of Muscovy shall probably come upon as mortar, are those two great princes that the devil has set up in opposition to Christ, *viz.* the emperor of the Turks and the pope. The emperor of the Turks first, so drying up the river Euphrates; and then the pope, when his way is thus prepared. The princes of these very countries, whose

former princes overthrew the literal Babylon, will be joined with the princes of Muscovy, as they have of late been in war with the Turks.

[79] [Isa. xlii. 3.](#) “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.” The thing most directly intended in this verse seems to be the perseverance of the Christian church, and of particular saints; the church shall not be extinct, though it shall be greatly oppressed and persecuted, and shall be as a bruised reed, but it shall not be wholly broken; when once the fire is kindled it shall never be quenched; but though it do but just smoke at first, afterwards it shall flame out; it shall be as a grain of mustard-seed that by degrees shall become a great tree, or as the little leaven that was hidden in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened, or as the stone out of the mountain. Though the church sometimes be so oppressed that it is hardly visible, we can hardly see whether there be any fire or no, but only the smoke; yet it shall never be wholly destroyed. The same may be applied to particular saints, for he that has begun a good work in them shall carry it on to the day of Christ.

[479] [Isa. xlii. 8.](#) “I am the Lord Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” Concerning this text, these things may be remarked confirming the divinity of Christ.

1. The name *Jehovah* is a peculiar name of the true God. See also [Psalm lxxxiii. 18.](#) “That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth.”

2. That the name *Jehovah* here spoken of, is often undeniably given to Christ, as is not denied by Arians themselves. It is given in this very book; see [chap. vi. 1.](#), &c. compared with [John xii. 41.](#)

3. God says expressly concerning Christ, who is called the Angel of the Lord, “*My Name is in him,*” and therefore he requires the children of Israel to obey his voice.

4. He is often called “*the Name of God.*”

5. The glory of the Lord was given to him; so that glory with which the angel of the Lord was wont to appear, was in a peculiar manner called *the glory of the Lord.*

6. He is himself often called *the glory of the Lord.* The apostle expressly says, he is “the brightness of God’s glory.”

[255] [Isa. li. 9.](#) “Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon.” The word *Rahab* here is not the same with *Rahab* the harlot in Joshua: that is *Rachab* with n; this is with r. The word signifies pride, probably so called from the exceeding pride that the Egyptians manifested in the time here spoken, *viz.* when God cut or broke that land, and wounded the dragon; the task-masters of the Israelites and Pharaoh the dragon, here spoken of, manifested an exceeding haughtiness of spirit, in so standing it out with God, who appeared in such awful judgments against them. On this account Egypt is the more fit type of the antiChristian church, that is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt; and Pharaoh the dragon,

here spoken of, the fitter type of the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and the pope his image.

[108] [Isa. lii. 7.](#) “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!” Jerusalem was compassed round with mountains, and therefore he that brought tidings to Zion must come over the mountains, and as he was coming over might therefore be seen in the city. The like expression is in [Nahum i. 15.](#)

[78] [Isa. liii. 1, 2.](#) “To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? for he shall grow up before him as a tender plant,” &c. That *He* that the prophet speaks of, as it is most natural to understand, is the arm of the Lord, spoken of in the first verse, and in the two foregoing chapters, as in the [5th and 9th verses of the 51st chap.](#) and in the [10th verse of the 52d.](#) who is the same as his servant spoken of in the three last verses of that chapter. Hereby two things are evident:

1. That He that is the subject of this chapter, is no mere man, as the Jews suppose: this is evident by the [9th and 10th verses of the 51st chapter.](#); and,

2. By the same verse it is evident that it was Christ, the second person of the Trinity, that went before Israel when they came out of Egypt. God calls his son his arm, as Jacob calls his son his right hand. [Genesis xxxv. 18.](#)

[15] [Isa. liii. 12.](#) “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.” Intending at least partly that Christ’s portion should be the most perfect and glorious kingdom of the earth, the most wise, opulent, and learned nations of the world. [Ps. xlv. 12.](#) “And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.” [Isa. lx. 13.](#) “The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” [Ps. lxxii. 10.](#) “The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.”



[13] [Jer. i. 5.](#) “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” In the same manner as God is said to sanctify Jeremiah as a prophet before he was, whom he had elected to be such, for he said he foreknew the elect or saints, and children and heirs of life. [Exod. xxiii. 12, 17.](#)

[282] [Jer. ii. 2, 3.](#) “I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.” Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase. See [ver. 21.](#) “Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed.” [Ps. lxviii. 14.](#) This has not respect to that generation that went out of Egypt, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, that were a very corrupt generation, but the generation of their children spoken of [Numb. xiv. 31.](#) “But your little ones which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.” So [Deut. i. 39.](#) It has respect to those spoken of [Jer. xxxi. 2.](#) The people which were left to the sword found grace in the wilderness. The same generation that entered into the land of Canaan, with Joshua, and took possession of the good land, it was the generation that God planted in Canaan, as is evident by verse 21. And the going after God in the wilderness that is here spoken of, is not the going of the children of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai, but their following God through that dreadful wilderness in which the congregation long wandered after they went back from Kadesh-barnea, which is spoken of [Deut. viii. 15.](#) “Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint.” Although this generation had a much greater trial than the generation of their fathers had before they came to Kadesh-barnea, yet they never murmured against God in anywise as their fathers had done. But their trials had a contrary effect upon them, *viz.* to humble them, and fit them for great mercy. [Deut. viii. 2, 3.](#) “And thou shalt remember the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no. And he humbled thee,” &c. And [ver. 16.](#) “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, &c. that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good in thy latter end.” And therefore it is said, [Hosea xiii. 5.](#) “I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.”

This generation were eminent for piety, as appears by many things said of them in the book of Numbers, as especially Joshua. See [Josh. xxiii.8. xxii. 1, 2.](#) [Deut. iv. 3, 4.](#) See also Note on [Hos. xi. 1.](#) [Jer. xxxi. 2, 3.](#) [Hos. ix. 10.](#) [Jer. ii. 21.](#) [Ps. lxviii. 14.](#) [Josh. i.](#) and three last verses. [Judg. ii. 7, 17, 22.](#) And though there were some wicked men amongst them, they were not like their fathers, unbelieving generation; but believed God, and followed him, and by faith overcame Sihon and Og, and the giants and mighty nations of Canaan. They showed a laudable and fervent zeal for God on several occasions, on occasion of Achan’s sin, but

especially when they suspected the two tribes and half had set up an altar in opposition to the altar of burnt-offering before the tabernacle. Israel feared and served the Lord all the days that the men of that generation lived. See Notes on [Judg. ii. 7.](#)

[296] [Jer. ii. 2, 3.](#) "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth," &c. It is probable that all those open rebellions, which were in the congregation of Israel during the whole forty years that the congregation was in the wilderness, were what the men of that perverse generation, who were adults when they came out of Egypt, were principally active and leading in, as the rebellion of Korah and his company that we have an account of [Num. xvi.](#) evidently was, for it was managed by some of the principal men in the congregation, which were wont to be their elders, or elderly men, see ver. 2. Their contesting with Moses and Aaron, such aged persons as those that ought to be esteemed equal with them, and other circumstances of the story, show it. And so it is probable was the rebellion at the place where they set up the fiery serpent; [Num. xxi.](#); and the rebellion and wickedness in the matter of Peor.; [Num. xxv.](#) Those that remained of that wicked generation seem to have led in it; for the heads or chief of the people, which doubtless were some of their elders, had a chief hand in it, and consequently were hung up before the sun. [Num. xxv. 4.](#) That wicked generation continued their rebellions after that God for their rebelling had sworn in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest, as is implied in [Psal. lxxxii. 12.](#) "So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." This seems to refer to something in their history as delivered by Moses, as all other passages in the Psalms, concerning the church of Israel in Egypt, and the wilderness, do; but there is nothing else in that history they can refer to but those rebellions that have been spoken of. We may argue in like manner from [Acts vii. 41-43.](#) "And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the work of their own hands. Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch," &c.

Wherein God was grieved by the congregation during the whole forty years in the wilderness, it seems to have been chiefly by that generation, by [Psal. xcv. 10, 11.](#) "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation unto whom I sware in my wrath," &c. It was their carcasses, chiefly, that fell in the matter of Korah, and by the fiery serpents; and the destruction that was of them in the matter of Peor, seems to have accomplished the threatening, and to have purged the congregation of the remains of that wicked generation, [Jer. xxxi. 2.](#)

[478] That there was a time of remarkable influence of God's Holy Spirit in the younger generation during the forty years' travel, is confirmed by comparing [Neh. ix. 20, 21.](#) and [Deut. xxxii. 10.](#) and also [Deut. viii. 2 5.](#) and [v. 15.](#) See also [Num. xxxi. 48.](#), to the end, and [Deut. xxxiv. 9.](#) A considerable instance of the faith and obedience of that generation was their readily complying with God's command by Joshua in submitting to that painful rite

of circumcision, which had been disused for above thirty-eight years; and that, just as they were entering into the land of Canaan full of their strong enemies, being now shut in by the Jordan. It was not only a considerable thing for the whole congregation under forty years at once to submit to what was so painful and disagreeable, but so to expose themselves to their enemies; for, excepting the divine protection, they must in those circumstances have been an easy prey to their enemies, if they had immediately fallen upon them, as the Shechemites were to Simeon and Levi. Their having just entered the country of their gigantic and numerous enemies, of whom they had heard such formidable accounts, and their not knowing what preparation their enemies had made, nor how soon they would fall upon them, tended to make them the more fearful and cautious; but they obeyed God, and trusted in his protection without murmuring against God or Joshua, as Zipporah did against Moses, saying, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. <sup>544</sup> »

[500] *Concerning what the congregation of Israel were to do in order to the taking of Jericho.* It was to try the faith, and obedience, and patience of the people; to try whether they would obey, and believe a promise, which in human probability seemed impossible to be performed. They were also proved whether they could patiently bear the reproaches of their enemies, and patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord. Thus by faith the walls of Jericho fell down. (Heb. xi. 30.) They were commanded to be silent, not to speak a word nor make any noise, ver. 10. which intimates their reverent expectation of the event. Zech. ii. 13. "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord." Exod. xiv. 14. God shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." They were to go round the city blowing the trumpet for six days together; and they did so, and seven times the seventh day, ver. 14. God could have caused the walls of Jericho to fall upon the first surrounding them; but they must go round them thirteen times before they fall, that they may be kept waiting patiently for the Lord. Though they were newly come into Canaan, and their time was very precious, for they had a great deal of work before them, yet they must linger so many days about Jericho, seeming to do nothing, nor to make any progress in their business. He that believes does not make haste. Go yet seven times before any thing appears. 1 Kings xviii. 43. *Henry.*

Their faith was further tried in this, that one of the seven days must needs be the sabbath, on which they were commanded to rest. An unbelieving mind would have objected on this account, as the unbelieving Jews objected against Christ's healing, and commanding the man to carry his bed, on the sabbath-day. It is to be noted that it was the same person, even Jesus Christ, who now commanded the people to go round Jericho, and the priests all the while to blow the trumpets on the sabbath, which commanded the impotent man to carry his bed on the sabbath. John v. 11. Compare chap. v. 13-15. and vi. 2., &c.

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544 Exodus iv. 25.



A further trial of the people's faith was that all the men of war in going round the city were obliged to leave their camp and all their goods, and their wives and children, every day defenceless, as to any other guard but the divine protection.

This last observed is agreeable to God's proceedings in the course of his providence, in the revolutions of the natural world, and in the revolutions of the world of mankind. Things only seem to go round and round, and return where they were before, as though no progress was made, until God's time comes. But this is through the narrowness of our views. He that looks only on a wheel of a chariot, and sees nothing beyond it, will not see that it does any thing but go round, the same spoke rising and falling alternately to the same place. But he that looks beyond the wheel to the world around, may see the progress that is made continually to an appointed journey's end.

This generation failed not of their duty under such temptations as Saul failed under when he was sent to destroy Agag. They destroyed all the inhabitants, cattle, and goods of Jericho, the first city they took; when they were under the greatest temptations greedily to take them to themselves, being lately come out of the wilderness where they had been destitute of all such things for so long a time. None transgressed but Achan; and when he was found out, none stood in his defence, but all Israel stoned him with stones. See how Joshua commands the soldiers of the two tribes and a half, [Josh. xxii. 1-3](#).

[14] [Jer. ii. 32](#). "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number." For our holiness is all the righteousness of God, all the beauty of the soul is wholly and only divine light reflected; all grace is nothing but the Holy Spirit dwelling in us; and all these graces and spiritual beauties, which are to the mind as attire and ornament are to the body, are Christ in the soul, and nothing else; wherefore we are commanded to put on Christ.

[294] [Jer. v. 22](#). "Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?" The unreasonableness and folly of their not fearing God appears from the consideration of the greatness and majesty of God's appearing in his works. And this work of his ruling and restraining the raging waves of the sea, is mentioned in particular, because that wickedness of theirs, described in the foregoing part of the chapter, might fitly be compared to the raging waves of the sea in a storm. We are told, [Isa. lvii. 20](#). that the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. God puts a stop to the waves of the tempestuous sea; let them toss themselves never so proudly, and rage never so violently, as though they would carry all before them, and scorned any restraint. So the mighty God was able to put a stop to that rage and violence of theirs in wickedness, spoken of in [verses 3, 5, 7, 8, 12](#). However headstrong, obstinate, and violent they were in it, God could curb and tame them by his almighty hand. He that looks on every

one that is proud, and abases him, could bring down their pride, whereby they toss themselves up against the heavens like the waves of the sea. He could break their power, and subdue their spirits; he could bring them down with a strong hand, however set they were in their way. He could do it very easily by weak and despicable means; he could crush them before the moth; he could show them that his weakness was stronger than they, and could say concerning their wickedness, [Job xxxviii. 11](#). Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,” as the highest and most raging waves of the sea were brought down and broken, and brought to nothing, by such contemptible means as the sand. Thus God often pours contempt on wicked men, even on the greatest princes.

Such was the obstinacy and violence of the men of Judah and Jerusalem, that men and means could do nothing with them; no human power could stop them; the prophets had tried, and used their utmost endeavours, to counsel them; it was like preaching to the raging waves of the sea, as [verses 3, 4, 5, 12, 13](#). Therefore, God would take the work in hand himself. God’s subduing the rage of the sea, and the rage of men’s spirits, and the wickedness of his enemies, are spoken of as parallel works of God. [Psal. lxxv. 7](#). “Who stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people;” and [Psal. lxxxix. 9, 10](#). “Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them. Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.” However for a while, and sometimes, wicked men may seem to carry all before them, and their wickedness rages without restraint; yet there are certain limits set to it, that are unalterable as the sands on the sea-shore, which here are said to be placed for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree.

[174] [Jer. vii. 33](#). “And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth, and none shall fray them away.” As this Tophet here spoken of represents hell, so those fowls and wild beasts that feed upon the carcasses of those men, represent the devils who shall feed upon the souls of the wicked. The devils, we know, are compared to fowls of the air, in the parable of the sower and the seed, as Christ himself explains it. These fowls of the air that devoured these carcasses, were ravens and eagles, and other unclean and ravenous birds, that do fitly represent the impure spirits of the air, and those ravenous beasts do well represent him who is a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour.

[176] [Jer. x. 16](#). “Israel is the rod of his inheritance.” [Deut. xxxii. 9](#). called the cord of inheritance, which in our translation is rendered the lot of his inheritance, that is, he is the inheritance as it were measured by a cord, or by a rod. Sometimes they were wont to lay out and measure land by a cord, sometimes by a rod or pole.

[38] [Jer. xi. 20](#). “Let me see thy vengeance on them, for unto thee have I revealed my cause.” Also [Jer. xviii. 21](#). “Therefore deliver up their children to the famine,” &c. We hence learn that these imprecations that are to be found in Scripture, are not to be understood as

expressions of a private desire of ill to their enemies contrary to the precepts of the gospel, for it is evident that Jeremiah did not hate his country, or desire or rejoice in its overthrow.

[177] [Jer. xii. 3.](#) “But thou, O Lord, knowest me; thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee; pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.” The prophets pray for evil to their enemies. When we find passages of this kind in the Psalms, or the prophets, we are to look upon them as prophetic curses; they curse them in the name of the Lord, as Elisha did the children that mocked him, as Noah cursed Canaan. We have instances of this kind, even in the apostles, and the disciples of the Lamb of God; as Paul curses Alexander the coppersmith, [2 Tim. iv. 14.](#) and Peter says to Simon Magus, “Thy money perish with thee;” as also they wish them ill, not as personal but as public enemies, enemies to the church. Sometimes what they say is in the name of the church. [Jer. li. 34, 35.](#)

[19] [Jer. xiii. 11.](#) “For as a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah.” As the body of a man is incomplete and defective without his garment, so does Christ look on himself as incomplete without his church.

[178] [Jer. xiii. 12.](#) “Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine; and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine?” which’ denotes, bottles were made, prepared to be filled with wine; they are fitted for it; you tell us no news in saying so: but so are wicked men vessels fitted to be filled with the wine of God’s wrath, as bottles are fitted to be filled with wine: they are vessels of wrath filled to destruction.

[37] [Jer. xvi. 15.](#) “But, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.” This has not merely nor principally a respect unto the return of the captivity of the Israelites from Babylon, but unto the gathering of the gospel church, the gathering together the elect (the spiritual Israel) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, into the church their own land, from whence they were captivated by Satan. [Matt. xxiv. 31.](#) This is one sense of all those prophecies of the Old Testament, that speak of the recalling of the Jews.

[236] [Jer. xxx. 21.](#) “Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?” This, as Dr. Ridgley, in his *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. p. 366, 367. observes, seems to be a prophecy of Christ. The chapter is evidently a prophecy of the gospel times of the church, the times when the spiritual David was to be their Noble and Governor, as appears by [verse 9.](#) “They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them:” And what is in this verse translated *nobles*, is in the Hebrew in the singular number, their *noble*; it is the more probable

that this is to be understood of Christ, and not of Zerubbabel, or any other governor after the Babylonish captivity, because the supreme governor of Israel was very rarely of themselves after the captivity, even till after their destruction by the Romans." They scarcely ever had this privilege in this sense to so great a degree as before their captivity. But when we look on this chapter, we cannot think it is a prophecy of less prosperity to God's people than what they now enjoyed; and then what is said here of this governor or noble, agrees peculiarly with Christ, and particularly that clause, "For who is this that hath engaged his heart to approach unto me!" The word translated engaged is, *to become, or act, the surety for any one; to mingle himself with another, or unite himself to another, as a surety*; and so the word is commonly used in Scripture, as [Gen. xliii. 9.](#) and [xliv. 32.](#) [Prov. xi. 15.](#) [Job xvii. 3.](#) [2 Kings xviii. 23.](#) and elsewhere. See Buxtorf. So that the words might well have been translated, "Who is this that hath mingled or united his heart as a surety to approach unto me!" It is here inquired with a note of admiration, Who is this that hath engaged his heart in suretyship to approach unto me! probably for two reasons, *viz.* because of the wonderfulness of his person, and because of the greatness of the undertaking; and whether we understand by the Israel, whose prosperity is here prophesied of, the Israelitish nation, or God's spiritual Israel, yet Christ, their Governor, is of themselves; he has taken on him the human nature; he is of the human race, and is our brother, and he is a child of the church; he has sucked the breasts of our mother; he is one of the holy nation, the spiritual seed of Abraham, and he is also of the Israelitish nation, and he took on him the seed of Abraham in a literal sense. In the following verse is mentioned the consequence of Christ's approaching to God as his people's surety, *viz.* their covenant interest in God, "And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

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[179] [Jer. xxxi. 33.](#) “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” I think the difference here pointed out between these two covenants, lies plainly here, that in the old covenant God promised to be their God upon condition of hearty obedience; obedience was stipulated as a condition, but not promised. But in the new covenant, this hearty obedience is promised if a man be but of the house of Israel, as by faith he becomes so. God promises expressly in this new dispensation that he shall perform a hearty obedience, and so have God for his God. That old covenant they broke, as it is said in the foregoing verse. The house of Israel, these were called so under the Old Testament, could break that; but the new covenant is such as cannot be broken by the spiritual house of Israel, because obedience is one thing that God engages and promises; and therefore this is called an everlasting covenant upon this account, as is plain from [chap. xxxii. 40.](#) It is true the true *saints*, in the Old Testament, could not fall away any more than they can now, but they were not the Old-Testament Israel; and, though God had engaged in his covenant with Christ that they should not fall away, yet he had not expressly revealed that to them. God had not in those days so plainly revealed the primary and fundamental condition of the covenant of grace, *viz. faith*; but insisted more upon the secondary condition, *universal and persevering obedience*, the genuine and certain fruit of faith.

[389] [Ezekiel. chapter 1.](#) *Concerning Ezekiel’s wheels.* Divine Providence is most aptly represented by the revolution and course of these wheels: things in their series and course in providence do as it were go round like a wheel in its motion on the earth. That which goes round like a wheel, goes from a certain point or direction, until it gradually returns to it again; so is the course of things in providence.

God’s providence over the world consists partly in his governing the natural world according to the course and laws of nature. This consists wholly as it were in the revolution of wheels. So the annual changes that appear in the natural world are as it were by the revolution of a wheel, or the course of the sun through that great circle the ecliptic, or the ring of that great wheel the zodiac. And so the monthly changes are by the revolution of another lesser wheel within that greater annual wheel; which, being a lesser wheel, must go round oftener, to make the same progress. Ezekiel’s vision was of wheels within wheels, of lesser wheels within greater, which all went round, as though running upon several parallel plains, each touching the circumference of its respective wheel, and all making the same progress, keeping pace one with another; and therefore the lesser wheels must go round so much oftener, according as their circumference was less.

So again the diurnal changes in the natural world are by the revolution of a wheel still within the monthly wheel, and going round about thirty times in one revolution of the other. The system of *the universe* may exactly answer what is here said of these wheels, and

livelily represents God's providence in the government of the moral world. There is as it were a wheel within a wheel; the whole system is nothing else but wheels within wheels, lesser wheels within greater, revolving oftener. There is the sphere of the fixed stars, which is the greatest wheel, includes all the others, and is many thousand years in performing its revolution. This includes the circle of *Saturn's* course, which is a lesser wheel within the other, finishing its revolution in about thirty years. That includes the circle of *Jupiter*, a lesser wheel, revolving in about twelve years: that includes the circle of *Mars*, that the circle of *the Earth*, that of *Venus*, that of *Mercury*, that of *the Sun*, which revolves about its own axis. And some of the greater wheels include lesser and of various kinds, as the great *wheel of Saturn*, besides those of the inferior planets, has annexed to it those lesser wheels of his satellites one within another, and then its *ring*, and then its own body about its axis. So of *Jupiter*, and so of the earth and moon. So some of the grand revolutions of providence that are but parts of the grand system of providence, have a particular system as it were belonging to themselves, wherein the great revolution includes lesser revolutions that are not parallel with any like them, continued from the beginning to the end of time, but begin their various revolutions with that particular great wheel that they are fixed to, and end with it. So it is with that great wheel, the continuance of the Jewish state; so it is with the continuance of the Christian church; so it is with the state of some particular kingdoms and empires; so it is with the motion of the air in the winds, it goes and returns according to its circuits; and so it is with the motion of the water in the tides, and in their course out of the sea, and into the clouds, springs, and rivers, and into the sea again. So it is with the circulation of the blood in a man's body, and the bodies of other animals; so it is with the life of man; it is like the revolution of a wheel; he is from the earth and gradually rises, and then gradually falls and returns to the earth again. Dust we are, and unto dust we return; we came naked out of our mother's womb, and naked must we go and return. The dust returns to earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. So it is with the world of mankind; it is the whole of it like a wheel; it as it were sinks and goes down to the earth in one generation, and rises in another, as it is with a wheel, at the same time that one side is falling to the earth, another part of the wheel is rising from the earth. Solomon takes notice of these things. [Eccles. i. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8](#). "One generation passeth away, and another cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it."

So it is in the course of things in God's providence over the intelligent and moral world, all is the motion of wheels; they go round and come to the same again; and the whole series of divine providence, from the beginning to the end, is nothing else but the revolution of



certain wheels, greater and lesser, the lesser being contained within the greater: what comes to pass in the natural world, is in this respect typical of what comes to pass in the moral and intelligent world, and seems to be spoken of by the wise man in that forementioned place in Ecclesiastes, as the words that follow next after those that were mentioned respecting the natural world, do respect the intelligent world. [Ver. 9, 10.](#) “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun,” &c.

Things in their series and course in providence, do as it were return to the same point or place whence they began, as in the turning of a wheel, but yet not so, but that a further end is obtained than was at first, or the same end is obtained in a much further degree; so that in the general there is a progress towards a certain and final issue of things, and every revolution brings nearer to that issue, as it is in the motion of a wheel upon the earth, as in the motion of the wheels of a chariot, and not like the motion of a wheel by its axis, for if so, its motion would be in vain.

The entire series of events in the course of things through the age of the visible universe, may fitly be represented by one great wheel, exceeding high and terrible, performing one great revolution. In the beginning of this revolution all things come from God, and are formed out of a chaos; and in the end, all things shall return into a chaos again, and shall return to God, so that he that is the *Alpha* will be the *Omega*. This great wheel contains a lesser wheel that performs two revolutions, while that performs one. The first begins at the beginning of the world, and ends at the coming of Christ, and at the ending of the Old-Testament dispensation, which is often represented as the end of the world in Scripture. The first revolution began with the creation of the world, so the second revolution began with the creation of new heavens and a new earth.

The course of things from the beginning of the world to the coming of Christ, may be represented as one great wheel performing one revolution; all things in the beginning of this revolution were from Christ the Creator of man, and the whole motion henceforward until Christ came was to bring things about to Christ again, and so to prepare the way for his coming, and to introduce him as the Redeemer of man. This wheel contains a lesser wheel, that performs two revolutions, while the great one does one; the first revolution ending at the calling of Abraham, at which time God did as it were plant the tree of his church anew, which he had planted at first in his revealing the covenant of grace to Adam; the second ending at the coming of Christ, the promised seed of Abraham and his antitype, in whom all the families of the earth are blessed, and in whom the church was planted anew, and in a far more glorious manner.

The course of things from the beginning of the world to the flood may be looked upon as the revolution of a wheel. At the beginning of it, God created the world, and the face of the earth was covered with waters, and the world was all of one man and his posterity. At

the end of it, the world was destroyed and reduced to the same state again; the world was covered with waters, and the world of mankind was began anew with one man and his posterity. The course of things from the flood to Abraham, was as it were the revolution of another wheel, or another revolution of the same wheel, as at the beginning of it. The world was corrupt, and therefore one man and his family separated to be the father of the church; so it was again at the end of it. The space from Abraham to Moses was as it were another revolution of the same wheel; for, as God established his covenant with Abraham, and then separated his church from the heathen, in calling Abraham out of Chaldea and Syria, so in the end of it he again renewed his covenant, and again separated his church from the heathen world, by bringing them up out of Egypt. From Moses and Joshua, to Samuel, David, and Solomon, was another revolution of the same wheel: as in the beginning of it God gave the spirit of prophecy to Moses; so he renewed it in Samuel: as in the beginning of it God gloriously conquered the enemies of Israel, and settled them in Canaan in peace, by the hand of Moses and Joshua; so in the end of it God gloriously subdued the enemies of Israel, and subdued the remains of the inhabitants of Canaan, and the nations round about, and gave them the full and peaceable possession of the land of promise, in the full extent of it, from the river Euphrates to the river of Egypt. The space from David and Solomon, to the return out of the captivity, is another revolution of the same wheel: in the beginning of it, the temple was built; in the end it was built again, and the temple and worship, and the courses of the priests and Levites, again restored, which David and Solomon had established, and the church-state of the Jews, as it had been settled by David and Solomon, was again renewed. From the return out of the captivity, until Christ came and established the Christian dispensation, is another revolution of the same wheel: at the beginning of it God redeemed the church out of Babylon; at the end of it he redeemed his church from sin and Satan, and accomplished that great redemption, of which the redemption from the Babylonish captivity was a great type.

The course of things during the Jewish state was, as it were, the revolution of a great wheel. This course, as it respects the national state of that people, began with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of that nation. The national state of that people was then in its infancy; the wheel then began to rise from the ground, and it rose to the height in Solomon's time, when the temple was built, and Solomon's kingdom in its greatest prosperity, which was about the middle of the space between the birth and calling of Abraham and Christ, and the destruction of Jerusalem; thenceforward they declined in numbers, and wealth, and strength, until they came to the ground again, when Christ came, and Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. Their state, with respect to their ecclesiastical constitution, began in Moses, the first prophet, and came to the height in Isaiah's time, that most evangelical prophet, who lived about the middle of the space between Moses and Christ, and came to the ground again in Christ's time. It was with the Jewish state, in this respect, as it is with





the life of man, which I before showed was as the revolution of a wheel that began at the ground, and gradually rose to the height, and then gradually came to the ground again. So it is with kingdoms and empires; their state and course are very much like the revolution of a wheel, beginning at the ground, and rising to the height, and coming to the ground again. So it was with the four great monarchies of the world, and so it is with the reign of antichrist, and the continuance of the Mahometan empire, and other states and kingdoms; and when one nation or kingdom comes to the ground, another comes to the greatest height, that before was at the ground, as it is with the different parts of a wheel in motion. The space of time from Christ to the end of the world, is as the revolution of a great wheel. In the beginning of it Christ comes into the world, and the wicked Jews were judged at the destruction of Jerusalem, and after them the wicked heathen world, in Constantine's time, and the old world comes to an end, and the church's glory follows, and then things in the Christian church gradually sink, until they come to the ground in the darkest times of antichrist, and then gradually rise again until Christ comes again and judges the world, and destroys the church's enemies, and destroys the old heavens and earth, and then the church's glory follows.

The whole series of things through the age of the world may be represented as a wheel of various rings one within another, and some less than others: each one going round but once, the lesser ones finishing their revolution soonest, and each beginning at the creation of the old heavens and earth, which, in some respects, had different beginnings; one when Adam was created; another in Noah's time; the settling of the world after the building of Babel, and another at the establishment of the Jewish state. And the revolution of each wheel ends in an end of the world, and a day of judgment, and a creation of new heavens and a new earth; the last wheel finishes its revolution at the coming of Christ, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and overthrow of the heathen empires that followed, when the world, in a sense, came to an end, and there was a day of judgment. This began at the creation of the Jewish state in the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Joshua, and the total apostacy of the Gentile world to heathenism. The next wheel, which is larger, began its revolution at Noah's coming out of the ark, and the building of Babel, and the dispersing of the nations, and the settling the world from thence; which is, as it were, another beginning of the world, and ends at the destruction of Antichrist, or the spiritual Babylon, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth, (which began in the building of Babel,) and the commencing of the glorious times of the church. This is another end of the world, and day of judgment, and building of the new heavens and new earth. The third and greatest wheel begins its revolution at the creation, and finishes it at Christ's second coming to judge the world, and destroy heaven and earth, in a literal sense.

Every wheel, or every revolution, begins and proceeds from God, and returns to God; as in Ezekiel's vision God is represented as appearing above the wheels, so that to him they continually returned. God remarkably appears both in the beginning and ending of each of

these wheels that have been mentioned, especially in those that respect the state of the church of God. As to human things, however, such as human kingdoms, and empires, they rise from the earth, and return to the ground again; but spiritual things begin their revolution from God on high, and thither they return again.

The changes that are in the world with respect to the profession of the truth, and rise and fall of heresies, is very much like the motion of wheels, they rise and fall, and rise and fall again.

These wheels, in this vision, are represented as God's chariot wheels. The world is the chariot of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in which he makes his progress to that glory; that glorious marriage with his spouse, that eternal feast, that everlasting kingdom of rest, and love, and joy, which the Father hath designed him.

What Ezekiel there saw was designed to represent God's chariot, in which God rode, and those wheels are the wheels of his chariot, and God, who sat on his throne above the firmament, over these wheels and cherubim, is represented as on the seat in which he rides, and makes progress with the wheels and cherubim. God came to Ezekiel to speak to him, and gave him his mission on this chariot, and is so represented in his first chapter. In the second and third chapters we have an account of what he said to him from this seat. In the [12th and 13th verses of the 3rd chapter.](#), we have an account of his departure when he had done speaking with him, which was with a great rustling and noise of the wings of the cherubim, and the noise of the wheels. God rode on these cherubim as those that drew his chariot, as it is said, [Psal. xvii. 10.](#) "He rode on a cherub, and did fly." And [Psal. lxxviii. 17.](#) "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." And therefore God, in being in that chariot drawn by these cherubim, is said to be upon the cherub. [Ezek. ix. 3.](#) "And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house;" and God appeared about to leave the temple, and his glory departed from off the threshold into this same chariot. [Chap. x. 18.](#) with the foregoing verses; and then it is said the cherubim lift up their wings and mounted from the earth in his sight; and the wheels also went beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above; and after this, [chap. xi. 22, 23.](#) God is represented as departing in this manner up out of the midst of the city, ascending up to the top of mount Olivet, being about from thence to ascend into heaven, from whence this same person afterwards ascended after his resurrection. (See Note on that verse.) And when it was represented in vision to Ezekiel how God would afterwards return to the city and temple in those happy days that were to come, he is represented as returning in the same manner, [chap. xliii. 2, 3, 4.](#)

This chariot represents *the world*, which is confirmed by this, that one part of it is called *the firmament*, which was the upper part, but yet the pavement of it, above which was the seat of God, who sat and rode in that chariot, agreeably to [Deut. xxxiii. 26.](#) "Who rideth upon the heaven in thine help, and in his excellency on the sky;" and to [Psal. lxxviii. 4.](#) "Extol

him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old." God appeared here on the same pavement as he appeared to the seventy elders on mount Sinai. (See Notes on [Exod. xxiv. 10.](#)) What is signified by the wheels which were under the firmament, but above us upon the earth, is, God's providence in this visible world, especially representing mankind that dwell on the earth.

Christ was the person that appeared riding in this chariot, as is confirmed from that, that he appeared in the likeness of a man, [ver. 26.](#) and also from the description that is given of his appearance. (See Note on [ver. 27.](#))

This chariot is drawn on those wheels by the four animals, which denote God's power, wisdom, justice, and mercy, and all proceed on feet like a calf's foot, because the great work of providence, that is as it were the sum of all providences, is that work of mercy, the work of redemption.

*Corol.* Hence I would argue that the affairs of heaven have doubtless great respect to the affairs of this lower world, and God's providence here; and that the church in heaven, as to the progress it makes in its state of glory and blessedness, keeps pace with the church on earth; that the glory of both is advanced together. These great dispensations of providence, by which glorious things are brought to pass for the church on earth, are accompanied with like advances made at the same time in the church in heaven. And also that the affairs of the church in heaven, have some way or other a dependence on God's providence towards his church on earth, and that their progress is dependent on the progress of things in God's providence towards his church here. For heaven and earth are both framed together. It is the same chariot, one part has relation to another, and is connected with another, and is all moved together; the motion of one part depends on the motion of the other; the upper part moves on the wheels of the lower part, for heaven is the room and seat of the chariot that is above the firmament that moves on the wheels that are under the firmament, and that go upon the earth; when these wheels are moved by the cherubim, then the upper part moves; when they stop that stops, and wherever the wheels go that goes. It is on these wheels that Christ, the King of heaven, in his throne in heaven, makes progress to the final issue of all things. It is in the wheels of his providence that move on earth, that he in his throne in heaven makes progress towards the ultimate end of the creation of both heaven and earth, and the ultimate end of all the affairs of both; for this is the end of the journey of the whole chariot, both wheels and throne, for both are moving towards the same journey's end. And the motion of all is by the wheels on earth; and if so, doubtless it is on these wheels that all the inhabitants of heaven, both saints and angels, are carried towards their ultimate end; for all are Christ's family, they are either his servants and attendants in the affair of redemption, which is the grand movement of the wheels, and are the ministers that draw the wheels, or are his members and parts of his body.

This therefore confirms that the saints and angels in heaven do make progress in knowledge and happiness, by what they see of God's works on earth. We know that all the happiness of the saints in heaven is entirely dependent on those great things that Christ did on earth, in the work of redemption, as it was purchased by it; and there is reason to think that their knowledge and glory is in other respects, by what they see of these great works of providence which God carries on in the world in the prosecution of the grand design of redemption.

[393] [Ezek. i. 4.](#) "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, and a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire." This that was here seen by Ezekiel was the Shechinah, or the symbol and representation of the Deity.

Here is a cloud and fire as God appeared in the wilderness, as in a pillar of cloud and fire. [Psal. xviii. 11.](#) "His pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." And [Psal. xcvi.](#) "Clouds and darkness are round about him." And there was a whirlwind, which was an usual symbol of the divine presence, as [Job xxxviii. 1.](#) "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind;" so again [Job xl. 6.](#) and [Nahum i. 3.](#) "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and the storm."

The fire that appeared, which did in a special manner represent the divine essence, is said to be a fire infolding itself, or *catching* itself, as it is in the margin, or receiving or taking itself into its own bosom; which represents the action of the Deity towards itself, in the action of the persons of the *Trinity* towards each other. The Godhead is perceived only by perceiving the Son and the Spirit, for no man hath seen God at any time; he is seen by his image, the Son, and is felt by the Holy Spirit, as fire is perceived only by its light and heat, seen by one, and felt by the other. Fire, by its light, represents the Son of God, and by its heat the Holy Spirit. God is light, and he is love. This light, in the manner of the subsisting of the Father and the Son, shines on itself: it receives its own brightness into its own bosom. The Deity, in the generation of the Son, shines forth with infinite brightness towards itself, and in the manner of the proceeding of the Holy Ghost, it receives all its own heat into its own bosom, and burns with infinite heat towards itself. The flames of divine love are received and infolded into the bosom of the Deity.

It is the nature of all other fire to go out of itself, as it were to fly from itself, and hastily to dissipate. The flames are continually going forth from the midst of the fire towards the exterior air, but this fire receives itself into its own bosom. Ezekiel saw this cloud of glory and fire infolding, or taking in itself, before he saw the chariot of God, the cherubim, and wheels, and firmament, and throne, and the appearance of a man above upon it, which came out of that cloud of fire; and therefore this fire, infolding itself, does especially represent the Deity before the creation of the world, or before the beginning of the being of this chariot

with its wheels, when all God's acts were only towards himself, for then there was no other being but He.

This appeared coming out of the north, from whence usually came whirlwinds in that country, and possibly because in the north is the empty place. The chariot of the world came forth out of *nothing*.

[256] [Ezek. xxxvi. 5.](#) "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea;" and [verse 14th.](#) "And I will make thee like the top of a rock, and thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon." Mr. Maundrel, a minister of the church of England, who went there A. D. 1697, gives this account of New Tyre, that which was built on the island, as Dr. Wells, in his *Sac. Geog.* vol. iv. p. 96,97. relates. "On the north side it has an old Turkish ungarrisoned castle, besides which you see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. there being not so much as one entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches harbouring themselves in vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by Divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, *viz.* that it shall be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on." [Ezek. xxvi. 14.](#)

[433] [Ezek. xxxviii.](#) and [xxxix.](#) *Concerning Gog and Magog.* This prophecy concerning Gog and Magog, seems manifestly to have respect to two things foretold in the book of Revelations:

*First.* To that great company or multitude of the enemies of Christ and the church, that shall be gathered together to fight against them, after religion has begun wonderfully to revive and prevail in the world, just before the utter destruction of antichrist, and of the visible kingdom of Satan upon earth, that we read of [Rev. xvi. 13, to the end.](#), and [Rev. xix. 17, to the end.](#)

*Secondly.* To that vast multitude that shall be gathered against the church after the millennium, a little before the end of the world, that we read of in the [20th chapter of Revelations.](#), who are expressly called Gog and Magog.

That there is some respect to the former of these, though they are not expressly called Gog and Magog, is evident by the many things wherein there is an agreement. In [Revelations xvi. 14.](#) the kings of the earth and of the whole world are represented as gathered together to war against the church of God; so here the kings and nations of the world are represented as gathering together against God's Israel from the four quarters of the world, or the four winds of heaven: *Magog*, and *Meshech*, and *Tubal*, *Gomer* and *Togarmah* of the north quarters, [chap. xxxviii. 2, 6.](#) *Persia* from the east, [ver. 5.](#) *Ethiopia* or *Cush*, and *Libya* or *Phut*, *Sheba* and *Dedan* from the south-east, south, and south-west, [ver. 5, 13.](#) and the merchants and young lions (*i. e.* the princes) of *Tarshish*, and they that dwell in *the isles* from the west, [ver. 13.](#) and [chap. xxxix. 6.](#)

The great occasion of gathering that innumerable host, spoken of in the 16th and 19th chapters of Revelations, to war against the church, is evidently her late great prosperity in a great revival and restoration from her long-continued captivated, desolate state under antichrist. So here Gog and his multitude are represented as excited to come and war against Israel, on occasion of her being brought back from long-continued, and as it were perpetual, captivity and desolation. [Ver. 8,12.](#)

This long desolation and captivity of Israel in the latter days, which is expressed by her having been always waste, can agree to nothing but the lying waste either of Israel according to the flesh, or the Christian church, the spiritual Israel, which has been waste for many ages in these latter days, and both of them through the devastations of Rome, or the mystical Babylon.

[Rev. xvi. 18, 19, 20.](#) It is said there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great; and the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And in [Ezek. xxxviii. 19, 20.](#) it is said, "Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." There seems to be a reference to this very place, in the passage from Revelations.

[Rev. xix. 21.](#) "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse;" and [Ezek. xxxviii. 21.](#) "I will call for a sword against him, throughout all my mountains."

[Rev. xviii.](#) "And there were thunders and lightnings;" and [ver. 21.](#) "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent, and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great." And here, [Ezek. xxxviii. 22.](#) it is said, "I will rain upon him and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." There seems to be reference to this in the passage from [Revelations xviii.](#)

[Rev. xix. 17, 18.](#) "And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven," &c. [ver. 28.](#) "And all the fowls were filled with their flesh;" and here, [Ezek. xxxix. 4, 5.](#) "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee; I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured, thou shalt fall upon the open field, for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God;" and [verses 17, 18, 19, 20.](#) "And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord, Speak unto every feathered fowl," &c. very much in the same manner as there in the Revelation; so that there is a most plain reference in one place to the other.



In [Rev. xvi. 14.](#) the day of that battle there spoken of, is called "*the great day* of God Almighty;" and in [verse 17.](#) it is said, "there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, *It is done;*" so here, [chap. xxxix. 8.](#) it is said, "Behold, it is come; *it is done,* saith the Lord God; this is *the day* whereof I have spoken." Here also seems to be a like reference.

*Secondly.* This prophecy has also respect to that innumerable multitude that should be gathered against the church after the millennium, a little before the end of the world, spoken of in the 20th chapter of Revelations; which is evident, not only because they are expressly called *Gog and Magog* in Revelations, but there are many other things that argue it.

The church of God is represented as being in a state of peace and quietness, and great visible prosperity, at the time that they are thus invaded, as [verses 8, 11, 12, 13.](#) This better agrees with that invasion of the church of Christ in the [20th of Revelations.](#), than that in the [16th and 19th chapters.](#)

The multitude of Gog is represented as being gathered from the four quarters of the earth; so it is said expressly in [Rev. xx. 8.](#) "That the devil should go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog.

As it is said, [Rev. xx.](#) concerning the multitude there spoken of, that "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them;" so here, [chap. xxxix. 6.](#) it is said, "I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles."

In [Ezek. xxxviii. 16.](#) "Thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land." This agrees with [Rev. xx. 9.](#) "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city."

In [Ezek. v. 8.](#) "In the latter days thou shalt come into the land;" and [ver. 16.](#) "and thou shalt come up against my people as a cloud to cover the land, and it shall be in the latter days." This more eminently agrees with that in [Rev. xx.](#) which is just before the end of the world.

That invasion, [Rev. xx.](#) is spoken of as following the first resurrection; wherein the martyrs, or God's people that had been opposed and persecuted by their enemies, should live and reign with Christ, which is undoubtedly the same resurrection with that spoken of in the [37th chap. of Ezekiel.](#); where we have an account how that God's Israel, that had been captivated and killed by their oppressing enemies, are brought out of their graves, and God's servant David should be king over them, which is represented as preceding this invasion of *Gog and his multitude.*

In Revelations, the vision of the new Jerusalem follows, in [chap. xxi.](#) and [xx.](#) the account of the destruction of Gog and Magog; and it was represented to John from a great and high mountain, [chap. xi. 10.](#) "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." So a vision of the city Jerusalem in its renewed state, after its glorious restoration, follows

the prophecy of Gog in Ezekiel, and is represented to the prophet in like manner, [chap. xl. 1, 2](#). “The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.” There is doubtless a reference in that in Revelations, to this in Ezekiel; and that in [Rev. xxi. 3](#). “And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God,” is from [Ezek. chap. xxxvii. 26, 27](#). “Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant; and I will place them and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever more. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”



[100] [Dan. iii. 25.](#) “And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” Christ redeems from the furnace, by coming into it himself; so he redeems from wrath by enduring it himself.

[279] [Dan. vii. 13.](#) “I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and they brought him near before him.” Here both Christ’s humanity and divinity are signified: his humanity, in that it is said, “One like the Son of man; and his divinity, in that he came with the clouds of heaven. Appearing with bright clouds, or with the Shechinah, is a token of divinity, for this is often in Scripture called *the glory of the Lord*, and sometimes *the cloud of glory*.”

Another thing that may be observed of these words is, that it is not said that he *descended with* the clouds of heaven, or that he *ascended*, but he *came with* the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; which is equally applicable both to his ascension into heaven, when he went to receive his kingdom, and to be invested with his royal dominion and glory; and to his last coming at the day of judgment, which is called his coming in his kingdom; and doubtless includes both, for one is like the other, and both might very well be spoken of under one; for as the angel told the disciples at Christ’s ascension, “This same Jesus shall come in like manner as he was seen to go into heaven;” he shall descend in the same manner as he ascended; in both *he comes with the clouds of heaven*; [Acts i. 9.](#) in both he comes attended with hosts of angels, and probably in both with the whole multitude of the heavenly hosts; in both he is attended with risen saints, for it is probable that those saints that came out of their graves with him, also ascended with him. In both he comes to the Ancient of days, and is brought near before him. He is so in his ascension, for he ascended to his Father, to appear before him; and when he comes at the last day he will come to the Ancient of days in a more mystical sense, for all the glory that he will be invested with on that day will be by his Father, and all that he will do in the day of judgment will be as acting from his Father and in his name; he shall then in the most glorious manner of all receive a kingdom from his Father; he shall then be brought near to the Father, and sit down on the Father’s throne in the most eminent manner of all; he shall then most fully receive his church, the kingdom of his grace, that is made up of all peoples, nations, and languages, as in the next verse.

Both these are remarkable periods or epochs of the commencement of the kingdom of heaven, of which the Messiah is the King, and are so spoken of in the New Testament.

This prophecy doubtless has respect to Christ’s ascent into heaven, for to that it is much the most obviously and directly applicable. That is most plainly spoken of in the New Testament, as the time when he went to God, the Ancient of days, to receive his kingdom. It also doubtless has respect to his coming to judgment, for that coming to judgment seems often in the New Testament spoken of with reference to this very prophecy. With reference to this it is called *his coming in his kingdom*. The Jews seem to have taken that phrase of the Messiah’s coming in his kingdom from this prophecy; and with reference to that it seems



often to be spoken of in the New Testament, as the Son of man's coming in the clouds of heaven.

[81] [Dan. ix. 7.](#) "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day." By *confusion of faces*, he does not mean so much *shame* and *repentance*, as *punishment*. It is an acknowledgment that they were justly punished, and brought to such sorrow and ruin, as they were then the subjects of; that is often represented by being ashamed and confounded; therefore he says, "As it is this day:" he did not mean that they then were ashamed with the shame of repentance, but that they then were in a ruined condition.

[413] [Dan. ix. 27.](#) "And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate." It ought to have been translated, "by or with, the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate;" so the particle *Sy* sometimes is used. (See Buxtorf.) It is manifest that the *abomination* here mentioned, is spoken of as the efficient or instrument of the desolation, from other scriptures that have a manifest reference to this, as [Dan. xi. 31.](#) "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." [Dan. xii. 11.](#) "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

And the expression is very much like those concerning that which is spoken of, [Dan. viii. 11, 12, 13.](#) "Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under-foot?" And [Matt. xxiv. 15, 16.](#) "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains." And the same words in [Mark xiii. 14.](#) The great difficulty of understanding these places seems to lie in these two things:

I. That the abomination of desolation spoken of in all those places seems to be the same. There are these following things that argue them to be the same:

1. The manner of speaking of the abomination that maketh desolate in [Dan. xi. 31.](#) and [xii. 11.](#) seems to imply a reference to some such thing of which there had been a revelation made to Daniel, and which Daniel had already in his mind. And the passage in [Dan. ix. 27.](#) seems to have a reference to that transgression of desolation in [chap. viii. 11, 12.](#) It seems evidently to be the same thing spoken of several times: here is something spoken of over and over, called by the same or a like name, called by way of eminency the abomination, or the transgression described by the like property, that that maketh desolate.

All are spoken of with a special reference to the holy city and sanctuary; as appears by comparing the several places and contexts; all are spoken of, in each place in Daniel, as attended with the ceasing of the sacrifice.

2. Christ, when he refers to the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, seems to suppose but one abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

3. Some things that Christ says of this abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, seem to be especially taken from one place, others from another. He speaks of it as the abomination *that makes desolate*, that accompanies the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and this seems to be taken from [Dan. ix. 27](#). He speaks of it as *standing*, or *set up*, in the *holy place*. This seems rather to be taken from [Dan. xi. 31](#). where it is said they shall pollute the *sanctuary*, or *holy place*, and *place* the abomination that maketh desolate. And “And the abomination that maketh desolate shall be *set up*.” And that manner of expression of *desolation* seems to be taken from [Dan. viii. 13](#). And yet,

II. The prophecies of the abomination that maketh desolate, in different places in Daniel, seems evidently to have respect to different seasons and events; as those in [Dan. viii. 11, 12, 13](#). and [xi. 31](#). have an evident reference to what came to pass in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; and what is spoken of, [Dan. ix. 27](#). has an evident reference to what came to pass at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and that in [Dan. xii.](#) has a reference to what comes to pass in the days of antichrist, as is manifest from the preceding part of the chapter.

But the reconciliation of the difficulty is in this, that they are all, *mystically*, one and the same; for they are lively types one of another. What is ultimately respected, is that spoken of in the 12th of Daniel, which is accomplished in the days of antichrist, of which the preceding are lively images. That setting up of the abomination that makes desolate in the sanctuary, by Antiochus Epiphanes, is typical of what was done by antichrist; for he was a great type of antichrist. And so was that which came to pass at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, spoken of [Dan. ix. 27](#). and spoken of by Christ, [Matt. xxiv. 15](#). Luke explains “the abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place,” by Jerusalem being compassed with the Roman armies, [Luke xxi. 20, 21](#). Jerusalem was the holy city, and so many furlongs about it were accounted holy. Now when the Roman army approached within the limits of the holy ground, then the abomination of desolation might be said to stand in the holy place. But the word *abomination* seems particularly to refer to the Roman ensigns, upon which were the images of their emperors, which the Romans worshipped, as Suetonius expressly tells us, and Tacitus calls them their “*Bellorum Dei*,” their *gods of war*. Now it was an abomination to the Jews, to see those idols set up within the limits of the holy city; to which may be added what Josephus tells us afterwards, that the Romans, after they had conquered the city, set up these ensigns in the ruins of the temple and sacrificed to them.” (Thus, Abp. Tillotson, vol. ii. of his Works, Sermon 185. p. 533.) This setting up the

image of the emperor within the limits of the holy city, and afterwards in the ruins of the temple, and there sacrificing to it, is a lively representation of setting up the pope in the church of God, the spiritual Jerusalem, who is the emperor of the antiChristian Roman empire, and the image of the beast, an image of the heathen Roman emperors, who is set up as a god in the temple of God, where he exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, although it be in the temple in ruins. He first in effect destroys the temple of God, and then sets himself up there as God, to be worshipped and sacrificed to. Here see Bp. Kidder's Dem. part ii. p. 11, 12, 13.

[247] [Hosea i. 4.](#) “For yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Israel upon the house of Jehu.” This prophecy was given in the days of Jeroboam, a king of the house of Jehu, not long before the destruction of that house; for Zechariah, Jeroboam’s son and successor, was the last that reigned of that family, and he reigned but six months. Jehu’s killing all that were of the house of Ahab, was both rewarded and punished; it was rewarded, because as to the matter of it, it was agreeable to God’s command; (see [2 Kings x. 30.](#);) but it was done in a wicked manner. He did not do it so much from a spirit of obedience as from an aim at his own advancement; for he little regarded God’s honour in it, as afterwards plainly appeared by his idolatry, the very sin for which he was bid to kill Ahab and destroy his family. God saw that he did it with a murderous heart, and so punishes it by the overthrow of his family. As Jehu with a murderous heart slew Ahab and all his family, so shall the posterity of Jehu be slain, and his family be overthrown in their turn. So the house of Baasha was rooted out, because he did the like to Jeroboam, [1 Kings xvi. 7.](#) because Jehu performed the matter of God’s command, he was rewarded by continuing the crown of Israel in his family unto the fourth generation, but because he did it in a wicked manner, as his after-behaviour manifested, therefore it was continued no longer, but then taken away. His doing the matter of his duty was rewarded, but his doing it in a murderous manner was punished: which two things are not at all inconsistent.

[250] [Hosea vii. 14.](#) “And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds.” In their calamities which they suffered, they are compared to sick and wounded men, as [chap. v. 16.](#); and many of them were doubtless literally sick, wounded men, in grievous pain on their beds, by reason of the continual wars that they had of late been embroiled in. They howled in pain and distress on their beds, and cried that God would help them. When he slew them, then they sought him, but it was all in hypocrisy, and probably they cried in their prayers under distress with a loud voice, as they used to cry to Baal and other idols, as if they must be awakened, or could be prevailed upon by the loudness of the noise they made; but God, to show his abhorrence of it, calls it howling.

“They assembled themselves for corn and wine, and they rebelled against me.” They assembled themselves to fast and pray for these blessings, when they were by divine judgments cut short in them, but they sought in such a manner that God looked upon it as rebellion, as the prophet Isaiah says, [Isa. i. 17.](#) “The calling of assemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.”

[252] [Hosea x. 9, 10.](#) “O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah; there they stood, the battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them. It is my desire that I should chastise them,” &c. When the Benjamites committed such wickedness in Gibeah, they stood and defended themselves, and were victors in the first and second battle that was fought against them, and at last the battle did not overtake them all, but six hundred made their escape; that wicked tribe was not extirpated, and they have stood and



remained in their successors in their wickedness to this very day, until the generation of such wicked men in Israel has now at length so increased, that they have overspread not only one tribe, but all the tribes of Israel. That wicked tribe of Benjamin was not overtaken or rooted out by the battle in Gibeah. “But I have a design now that the battle shall overtake them, my desire is that I should chastise them,” as it follows in the next verse. When the Benjamites committed such wickedness in Gibeah, the other tribes had a desire to chastise them, by wholly rooting out that tribe; they seemed to be greatly engaged about it, but failed of it; there they stood and remained notwithstanding. “Now I have a desire to chastise them, I myself will take it in hand, and I will make more thorough work; I will root out all of them; none shall be able to stand against me.”

“And the people shall be gathered against them when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.” That is, when they shall fortify themselves in their two furrows, where they have ploughed wickedness and sowed iniquity, *ver. 13. i. e.* in Dan and Bethel, the places of their two calves, or in the service of their two gods. In this field they bind themselves; they are resolute not to depart from these two furrows that they have ploughed; they remain there as if they were bound there; they are obstinate in their wicked works, in their two furrows. Their two ways of wickedness, or two wicked works, *viz.* their worshipping the two calves, are here compared to two furrows that they have ploughed, in analogy to the rest of the allegory in the following verses. In these wicked works they persist, and think to stand it out as the Benjamites did, out they shall not be able to defend themselves as they did, but the people shall be gathered against them as the tribes of Israel were gathered against the wicked Benjamites, and to more effect.

[253] *Hosea x. 11.* “I will make Ephraim to ride, Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clods.” In the preceding words, God hath threatened that he would put a yoke on Ephraim’s fair neck, that she might be made to do harder work than treading out the corn, to wit, plough the field. Here the comparison is in part continued, and in part altered from the labour of the cattle in ploughing to that of the men that plough, wherein one man was wont to ride to guide the beast that drew the plough, another to hold the plough, and another to break the clods. God here says that he would cause Ephraim to ride, *i. e.* he should go foremost in this labour God had to call them to, and Judah should plough, *i. e.* Judah should follow in it as he that held the plough did him that rode, and then Jacob, *i. e.* the whole nation of Israel in all the tribes, should be in the same calamity, and reduced to the same slavery. As he that broke the clods in ploughing came last. See *chap. xii. 1, 2.*

[260] *Hosea xii. 12, 13.* “And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep. And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.”

1. Israel are here put in mind of their former meanness, in the same two instances that they were commanded every year to remember and confess anew, when they offered the

basket of first-fruits. [Deut. xxvi. 5.](#) “And thou shalt speak, and say, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few.” God puts them in mind from what small beginnings he raised them. Their father served and kept sheep for their mothers. He came to Syria a poor fugitive, and lived there a servant. He came to Syria with nothing; he had nothing to endow a wife with, and therefore was forced to serve for a wife; and again they were poor slaves in a strange land in Egypt.

[2] They are put in mind of God’s great mercies of old to their forefathers in twice bringing them out of banishment, and out of servitude, *vid.* [ver. 9.](#) And he brought them out of Egypt, and led and preserved them in the wilderness; it was by a prophet, which shows their ingratitude in their despising and rejecting the prophets, the successors of Moses. [Ver. 10.](#)

[221] [Amos i. 6 to 13.](#) The injuriousness and cruelty of the Philistines, Tyrians, and Edomites, towards the children of Israel, that is here spoken of, and for which God’s judgments are, by the prophet, denounced against them, seem to have been acted at the time that those things were done that we read of in [2 Chron. xxi. 8, 9, 10, 16, 17.](#); and [xxii. 1.](#) The judgments spoken of concerning the Philistines, seem in part to have been fulfilled before the prophecy of Amos, in what we have an account of, [2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7.](#) when Uzziah, king of Judah, went forth and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the walls of Gath, and the walls of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines, his God helped him, so that he was successful. Accordingly the words of the prophecy may be interpreted, “And I have sent a fire upon the wall of Gaza, and have cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod.” And as the prophets frequently speak of things to come in the same manner as if they were past or present; so it was further fulfilled in the time of Hezekiah, who smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof; from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced cities, [2 Kings xviii. 8.](#); or both in town and country, where they built little cottages; where they watched their flocks by night; and therefore the prophet Isaiah bids the Philistines not to rejoice, because the rod that smote them was broken, or Uzziah was dead, who had sorely afflicted them. [29, to the end.](#) For Hezekiah should come out of his root, or be descended from him, who should more grievously gall them. And it was more fully completed when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, marched against Egypt; and the better to open his way into that country, he sent Tartan, one of his generals, before him, who fought against Ashdod, and took it.

*Secondly.* The prophet Amos prophesieth also against Tyre, for this reason, that God would send a fire upon the walls of Tyrus, which should devour the palaces thereof. This was also fulfilled when Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria, made war upon Tyre, in the reign of Elulæus, their king, and having sent an army invaded the whole country of Phoenicia; and taking it very heinously to see the Tyrians to be the only people who disputed his authority, he sent a large fleet against them, which being beaten, the king of Assyria returns and sets



guards along the river, and upon all springs and aqueducts, to keep the Tyrians from water, which distress continued for five years, when they were forced to relieve themselves by pits of their own digging. After this Nebuchadnezzar, continuing a long and terrible siege of thirteen years, made himself master of it, who, finding but little spoil therein to reward his soldiers for their great pains, was so inflamed with anger, that he rased the whole town to the ground, and slew all that he found therein; from which time it never more recovered its glory, but the city on the island became the Tyre which was afterwards so famous, and this was ever after a village called by the name of Old Tyre.

*Lastly.* The prophet, for the same reasons, foretells the destruction of Edom, that God would send a fire upon Teman, their capital city, which should devour the palaces of Bozrah, a city in the confines of Moab. This seems first to have been fulfilled when Shalmanezar, king of Assyria, came against Samaria; and having conquered the country of Moab, ravaged and destroyed the country of Edom, the neighbouring kingdom, the better to secure himself from any disturbance on that side. And also when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, went with his forces into Egypt; for the same reason that induced him to send Tartan into Ashdod, would induce him to overrun all Idumea, which lay directly in his way, and would open a freer communication with his own country. And after this the army of Nebuchadnezzar ransacked the country when Tyre was taken, and when he marched into Egypt, and his soldiers were hungry for want of plunder, as it had been foretold by the prophets Obadiah (throughout his prophecy) and Jeremiah, ([chap. xlix. 7 to 23.](#)) when the accomplishment thereof was near at hand. (Bedford's Scripture Chronology, p. 633, 634.)

[97] [Jonah i. and ii.](#) As the ship and company were saved by Jonah's being cast into the waters, and his intended and supposed death, so was the church, which is several times typified by a ship saved by Christ, being cast into and overwhelmed by sorrows and troubles, which are represented by water, and by his death. Jonah being swallowed of a whale, or leviathan, represents Christ being as it were swallowed by him that hath the power of death, the devil, the spiritual leviathan; but however, it was but a means of Christ's being under better advantages to come at his heart, and to give him the more mortal wound. The whale thought to have made a sweet feast of Jonah, but he found him a dreadful medicine, he was sick of him at the heart and vomited him up again. Vide [Jer. li. 44.](#) So the devil thought Christ was his food, but he proved not his meat, but his poison. The devil has deeply regretted putting Christ to death, since he has seen what the effect of it is. As Jonah was three days and three nights buried in the sea, so was Christ in his grave three days and three nights.

It is said, when Jonah was cast into the sea, the sea ceased from her raging: so, when once Christ was swallowed up in God's wrath, his wrath ceased from raging towards the church. The words of Jonah's song, [chap. ii.](#) make the thing more apparent. He calls the belly of the fish, *the belly of hell, or the belly of the grave*, [2d and 4th verses.](#) "I cried by reason of mine affliction, then said I, I am cast out of thy sight." So Christ said, My God! my God!



why hast thou forsaken me? <sup>545</sup> ” Ver. 3. “The floods compassed me about, all thy waves and thy billows passed over me,” (the words of the psalmist, [Psal. xlii. 7.](#) also [Lam. iii. 4, 5.](#)) to signify the great sorrow and distress that God brought upon him. Ver. 5. “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul,” (the words of the psalmist, for great trouble and anguish, [Psal. lxix. 1.](#)) Ver. 6. “Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption,” agreeable to what is said of Christ, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. <sup>546</sup> ”

[274] [Jonah ii. 6.](#) “The earth with her bars was about me for ever.” It alludes to the bars of a prison, he speaks of himself as having as it were been in hell. Ver. 2. “Out of the belly of hell cried I;” which in Scripture is often spoken of as being in the bowels of the earth, and under the bottoms or foundations of the mountains. [Deut. xxxii. 22.](#) “A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest *hell*, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the *foundations of the mountains.*” So here, “I went down to the bottom of the mountains.” So hell is spoken of as being under the bottom of the sea. [Job xxvi. 5.](#) “Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.” (See Notes on this place.) *Hell* and *destruction* here seem to be synonymous terms. *Hell* is by a metonymy called destruction. So [Psalm lxxxviii. 11.](#) “Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction?” So [Prov. xv. 11.](#) “Hell and destruction are before the Lord;” and [xxvii. 20.](#) “Hell and destruction are never full;” and in other places. This prayer of Jonah was indited by the Spirit of God, and so is mystical; and the Holy Ghost in it has an eye to Christ, who, as it were, went to hell in our stead. Hell is here represented as a prison in the heart of the earth, that hath the earth with its rocks and other strong and immovable parts for its walls and bars; and therefore it is such a prison as cannot be broken through, but effectually for ever confines those that are prisoners there: and therefore it is said, “The earth with her bars were about me for ever;” *i. e.* it would have been so, were it not for the wonderful power of God’s delivering me, which was stronger than the walls and bars of this prison.

[501] [Micah v. 2.](#) “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He *come forth* unto me, who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Here it may be noted concerning these two expressions in the verse, *shall he come forth unto me*, and that other, *whose goings forth have been from of old*, &c. that the verb *come forth*, in the former, and *goings forth*, in the latter, are words of the same root in the Hebrew.

545 [Matt. xxvii. 46.](#)

546 [Acts ii. 27.](#)

Now in order to an understanding of this text, and a clear discovering of the great doctrine taught in it, it may be worth the while to observe particularly how these words, and words of that root, are used in the Hebrew Bible.

These words are often used to signify the *proceeding* or *flowing forth of water, as from a fountain*. Gen. ii. 10. "A river went out of Eden;" Deut. viii. 7. "Fountains that *spring out* of valleys;" Ezek. xlvi. 1. "Waters *issued out* from under the threshold;" ver. 8. "Waters *issue*;" so ver. 12.; Zech. xiv. 8. "Living waters shall *go out* of Jerusalem;" Num. xx. 11. "And the waters *came out* abundantly;" Judg. xv. 19. "And there *came water thereout*," *i. e.* out of the jaw-bone, or out of Lehi; Isa. lviii. 11. "Like a *spring* of water," in the Hebrew, "A *going forth* of waters;" so Psalm cvii. 33. "Water *springs*," in the Hebrew, "Going *forth* of water;" so ver. 35. "Water *springs*;" Isa. xli. 18. "The dry land, *springs* of water."

They are often used to signify the *rising of the sun* or the *rising of the light of the morning*, or the *proceeding of beams of light from a shining body, or luminary*. Gen. xix. 24. "The sun was *risen* on the earth;" Ezek. vii. 10. "The morning is *gone forth*;" Isa. xiii. 10. "The sun shall be darkened in his *going forth*;" Isa. lxii. 1. "Go *forth*, as brightness;" Hos. vi. 5. "Thy judgments are as the light that *goeth forth*;" Psal. xix. 6. "His *going forth* is from the end of heaven;" Psal. lxxv. 8. "The *out-goings* of the morning."

They are often used to denote the *springing* or *sprouting of plants*, or of something that grows like a plant. Job xiv. 2. "He *cometh forth* like a flower;" Isa. xi. 1. "And there *came forth* a Rod out of the stem of Jesse;" 1 Kings iv. 33. "The hyssop that *springeth out* of the wall;" Deut. xiv. 22. "All that the field *bringeth forth*;" Heb. "All that *goeth forth* out of the field;" Job viii. 16. "His branch *shooteth forth* in his garden;" Dan. viii. 8. "There *came forth* four notable horns;" Exod. xxv. 32. "Six branches shall *come out* of the sides of it;" so ver. 33, 35. and chap. xxxvii. 18, 21. Isa. xlii. 5. "He that *spreadeth forth* the earth, and that which cometh out of it."

They are often used to express the *proceeding of a word, or voice, from him, whose word or voice it is*: Gen. xxiv. 50. "The word *proceedeth* from the Lord;" Judg. xi. 36. "According to that which *proceedeth out* of thy mouth;" Esth. vii. 8. "As the word *went out* of the king's mouth;" Jer. xlv. 17. "Whatsoever thing *goeth forth* from my mouth;" Dan. ix. 23. "Came *forth* the word;" Isa. xlvi. 3. "They *went forth* out of my mouth;" Exod. xxx. 2. "Do according to all that *proceedeth out* of his mouth;" Ezek. xxxiii. 30. "What is the word that *cometh forth* from the Lord;" Num. xxxii. 24. "Do that which *proceedeth out* of your mouth;" Josh. vi. 10. "Neither shall my word *proceed* out of your mouth;" 1 Sam. ii. 3. "Let not arrogancy, or hard speech, *come out* of your mouth;" Job xxxvii. 2. "The sound that *goeth out* of his mouth;" Isa. lv. 11. "My word that *goeth out* of my mouth;" Lam. iii. 38. "Out of the mouth of the Most High *proceedeth* not evil and good;" Psal. lxxxix. 34. "Nor alter the thing which is gone out of my lips;" Heb. Alter the going forth of my lips.



They are very often used for proceeding by generation both from the father, and the mother.

They are very often used for proceeding from a father by generation: [2 Sam. xvi. 11.](#) "My son, my son, which *came forth* out of my bowels;" [Gen. xii. 14.](#) "Out of whom *came* Philistim;" so [1 Chron. i. 12.](#) [1 Chron. iii. 53.](#) "Of them *came* the Zarethites;" [Isa. xlvi. 1.](#) "Are *come forth* out of the waters of Judah;" [1 Kings viii. 19.](#) "Thy son that *cometh forth* out of thy loins;" so [2, 6, 9.](#) the same words; [Gen. xlvi. 26.](#) "That came out of his loins;" so [Exod. i. 5.](#) "That came out of the loins of Jacob;" [Judg. viii. 30.](#) "Threescore and ten sons;" so in the Hebrew; [Gen. xv. 4.](#) "He that shall *come forth* out of thy bowels;" [2 Sam. vii. 12.](#) "Thy seed which shall *proceed out of* thy bowels;" [2 Kings xx. 18.](#) "And of thy sons which shall *issue from* thee;" [Isa. xxxix. 7.](#) "Thy sons which shall *issue from* thee;" [Gen. xvii. 6.](#) "Kings shall *come out of* thee;" [Gen. xxxv. 11.](#) "Kings shall come out of thy loins;" [2 Chron. xxxii. 21.](#) "They that come forth out of his bowels;" [Jer. xxx. 21.](#) "Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall *proceed from* the midst of them;" so commonly the word, *offspring*, in our translation, is in the Hebrew a word of this root, that signifies as much as *goings forth*; [Isa. xxii. 24.](#) "all the glory of his father's house, the *offspring* and the issue;" [Isa. xlvi. 19.](#) "the *offspring* of thy bowels;" [Isa. xlv. 3.](#) "my blessing upon thine *offspring*;" so [Isa. lxi. 9.](#) [Isa. lxxv. 23.](#) [Job xxi. 8.](#) [Job xxvii. 14.](#) and [Job xxxi. 8.](#)

They are often used for that proceeding which there is in the birth, from the mother; [Gen. xxiv. 25, 26.](#) "his brother *came out*;" [Gen. xxxviii. 28.](#) "this came out first;" so [ver. 29.](#) and [ver. 30.](#) [Job xxxviii. 29.](#) "out of whose womb *came* the ice?" [Eccles. v. 15.](#) "as he *came forth* out of his mother's womb;" and [Job iii. 11.](#) [Job xx. 18.](#) [Job i. 21.](#) [Exod. xxi. 22.](#) "so that her fruit *depart* from her;" [Deut. xxviii. 57.](#) "her young one that *cometh out* from between her feet;" [Deut. xii. 12.](#) "when he *cometh forth* out of his mother's womb;" [Job xxxviii. 8.](#) "as if it had *issued out of* the womb."

Now concerning these things, I would make the following observations:

I. The generation of mankind, their proceeding from their fathers or ancestors, or of a particular stock and family, is often compared in the Old Testament to the issue of waters from a fountain: so [Isa. xlvi. 1.](#) [Psal. lxviii. 26.](#) [Gen. xxxiii. 28.](#) and other places

II. The generation of mankind is often compared to the springing and shooting forth of plants: [Isa. xlv. 3, 4.](#) "I will pour my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, and as willows by the watercourses. [Psalm lxxii. 15.](#) "They of the city shall flourish as the grass of the earth;" so [Job xiv. 2.](#) "He cometh forth as a flower," and many other places; and particularly is the birth of the Messiah often compared to the springing of a plant or branch; as in [Isa. xi. 1.](#) "There came forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse," and many other places.

III. The birth of a prince is compared to the rising of a luminary; the birth of Christ in particular, in that prophecy of Balaam, "A Star shall rise out of Jacob."

IV. It being thus, and the words used in this passage of [Micah v. 2.](#) which express the Messiah's *coming forth* out of Bethlehem, and also his *going forth* from everlasting, being the same or from the same root with those that are so often used to signify the issuing of waters from a fountain, and the sprouting forth of plants, and the going forth of a luminary; and not only so, but also abundantly used expressly to signify generation, or a being born: hence it is most reasonable and natural to understand the *coming forth* and *going forth* of the Messiah, here spoken of, concerning his GENERATION.

V. Considering these things, and the word used when it is said that the Messiah shall *come forth* out of Bethlehem, is so often used to signify a person's being born of his mother, and that to be *born unto* such a one, is a phrase used in the Scripture to signify that the person, to whom he is said to be born, is his father; hence when God says, "Out of Bethlehem shall the Messiah *come forth unto me*" it is most natural to interpret it thus: "In Bethlehem shall the Messiah be born of a woman, who shall be his mother, but not as begotten of a man, or having any man for his father; but I only will be his Father; she shall not bear this child to any earthly father, but to me only."

VI. And when these words are subjoined, "Whose *goings forth* were of old, from everlasting," and the words *goings forth* are so very frequently used for *generation of a father*; hence it is most natural to interpret the text thus: "In Bethlehem shall the Messiah be born of his mother, who is begotten not by any man, but by me only as his Father; and this generation of him, by which I am his Father, will not be then a new thing; it is an *eternal generation*, it has been already of old, from everlasting."

VII. It greatly confirms the supposition, that the *goings forth*, which are said to be of old, from everlasting, intend his eternal generation, or proceeding from the Father, that Christ, with respect to his proceeding from the Father, is represented as *the Father's* glory and brightness, as though he proceeded from him, as brightness from a luminary; and as the Father's *Word*: and that the original word used here, is so from time to time used to signify the going forth of light, or brightness, and abundantly for the proceeding of a word from him whose word it is.

[483] [Habak. iii. 2.](#) "Revive the work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known, and in wrath remember mercy." There was a certain number of years that were as it were the appointed day of the church's trouble and calamity, and the day of God's wrath, or anger. The prophet prays that though God's anger were not wholly removed till the number of years was finished, and the day of wrath passed, yet that God would remember mercy in wrath, and grant some revival in the midst of the years, and not hide himself wholly from his people for so long a time, but make himself known to them, in some measure, before the expiring of the dark season. The prophet here in his prayer, speaking of the appointed years, has respect to the same appointed time that he speaks of in the foregoing chapter, [ver. 2, 3.](#) "And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision and make it plain, &c. for

the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie,” &c. What he has a more immediate respect to, is the appointed time of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. This whole book seems to relate to that captivity and the deliverance from it; that was a time of sore trouble to the church, from the captivity until the restoration of Jerusalem. The appointed time was seventy years; but God remembered mercy, and gave some revival in the midst of the years, by Daniel’s advancement, which was doubtless greatly for the ease and relief of the Jews, and then the destruction of Babylon and Cyrus’s decree were before the end of seventy years from the destruction of Jerusalem, though the temple was not rebuilt until the seventy years was ended; and religion revived among the people in the younger generation in the midst of those years. So is God wont to remember mercy in the midst of the years, in the times of the church’s oppression, as in the times of its sore distress by Antiochus’s tyranny and cruelty. They were helped with a little help by the Maccabees before the appointed time expired. [Dan. xi. 32, 33, 34](#). So God remembered mercy to his church during the reign of antichrist, and granted a revival of his church before the time of his reign, and of the church’s captivity, was expired, and made himself known in the midst of the years, in the time of the reformation.

[208] [Habak. iii. 11](#). “The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, at the shining of thy glittering spear.” By this it is evident that there was not only a dreadful storm of hail, but thunder and lightning with it, on the day that the sun and moon stood still, as we commonly have thunder and lightning in storms of hail, in the summer time. That by *the light of God’s arrows*, is meant *the light of his lightning*, is evident by [Psal. cxliv. 6](#). “Cast forth lightning and scatter them, shoot out thine arrows and destroy them;” and especially [Psal. xviii. 13, 14](#). “The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice, hailstones and coals of fire: yea, he sent forth his arrows and scattered them, and he shot out lightnings and discomfited them.” These lightnings are called God’s *arrows*; and the instance that David has reference to was parallel with this, for it was an instance wherein God fought against David’s enemies in a storm of hail, as he did against the enemies of Israel, when the sun and moon stood still; and it was probably when God came forth upon David’s enemies, before him, like the breach of waters at Baal-Perazim, that we read of, [2 Sam. v. 20](#). And that which God did for David there, is particularly mentioned as parallel with what God did for Israel at Gibeon, when the sun and moon stood still, [Isa. xxviii. 21](#). If this needed any further confirmation it might be further confirmed by the last expression in that verse, “At the shining of thy glittering spear.” The radix of the word, that is translated *glittering*, which is **pia**, signifies *to lighten*; and the word itself, which is **p-3**, properly signifies *lightning*; so that the literal translation of the words is, “At the shining of the lightning of thy spear.” And besides, we read, [Josh. x. 10](#). that the Lord discomfited them before Israel; and Mr. Bedford observes that the word used in the original signifies *to strike a terror by the noise of thunder*. (Scripture Chronology, p. 510, margin.)

Wherever the same word in the original is used, and it is said that God discomfited these or those; this seems to have been the case that God fought against them *with thunder and lightning*. So when Sisera and his host were discomfited, [Judg. iv. 15.](#) (see Notes on [Judg. v. 20.](#)) and so [1 Sam. vii. 10.](#) [2 Sam. xxii. 15.](#) [Psal. xviii. 14.](#)

It is here said that the sun and moon stood still, but went or walked at the light of God's arrows, and at the shining of the lightnings of his spear; by which it seems that when the lightning began, the sun and moon began to move again, after they had stood still. The case seems to have been thus: as long as the sun and moon stood still, there was a serene air, that the children of Israel and their enemies might behold that great and wondrous miracle by which God then manifested his power, and glory, and wonderful mercy to his people. But then the storm began to arise, and appeared first at a distance with thunders and lightning, but approaching, and when the lightnings appeared, the sun and moon began to move, and then came the dreadful storm and destroyed the Amorites. The lightnings appearing and playing at a distance before the storm came, seems here to be compared to a man of war's brandishing his weapons when coming to battle. The sun and moon, God's creatures, had stood still to help Israel against their enemies; but when God himself appeared with brandished weapons coming to the battle, they withdrew, as conscious that now there was no further need of their help, seeing that God himself was coming, who needed not the help of his creatures, and did not need to have the sun and moon stand still to give him time: he could do his work in a short time. And though God's fighting against the Amorites by hail, is mentioned before the sun and moon's standing still, yet doubtless it was after: when the sun stood still, it was to give them opportunity to fight for themselves, but there would have been no need of that, if God was fighting for them. God did not appear thus to take the burden of the battle immediately on himself until they were weary. It is not God's manner to appear, until after others have done their part. And then it must be either *before* or *afterwards*, that God fought by the storm of hail, and not in the time of the sun and moon's standing still; for if so, the storm would have hid the miracle, and it is unreasonable to suppose that it was afterwards, or that there was any need of the sun's standing still twelve hours together, to give opportunity for the children of Israel after God had taken the work into his own hands, and had so terribly destroyed them with hailstones. God does not need men to finish the work after he has taken it in hand, when he begins he will also make an end.

In all probability when God began with thunder, lightning, and hail, the children of Israel stood still, and rested while God fought for them: see [Exod. xiv. 13, 14.](#); and also [2 Chron. xx. 17.](#) It could be no otherwise than that by that time the children of Israel needed rest, having been in battle and pursuit for above eighteen hours, and having travelled all the night before, [Josh. x. 9.](#) and the latter part of the time in the scorching heat of the sun, (vide No. 209. on [Josh. x. 12-14.](#)) it having stood still over their heads for twelve hours together. And besides, this destruction by hail was doubtless after the children of Israel had done, and not

when they were mixed with their enemies fighting with them; for, if so, they themselves would be exposed to the hail, and thunder, and lightning, as well as their enemies. (Vide Notes on [Psal. lxxviii. 8, 9.](#))

It is signified in the margin of our Bibles, that the words may be translated, “Thine arrows walked in the light, and thy glittering spear *on* the shining,” *i.e. in* the shining of the sun while it stood; but this is not so natural a translation, for by this way of rendering the words are thus, in the light thine arrows walked, and in the shining the glittering of thy spear. But this is not so natural a translation; for, 1. There seems to be an evident antithesis in the words between *standing still* and *walking*; and therefore they are to be attached to the same subject, *viz.* the sun and moon. 2. It is not a natural metaphor, to say, that a *spear* walked in the light; for a spear is not a weapon that is to do its execution flying through the air, though *arrows* are; and it is less natural speaking to say, that the *glittering* of the spear walks. 3. The shining spoken of seems evidently to relate to the word that next follows, *viz.* the glittering or lightning of the spear. 4. The prefix, that is translated *at*, is *Lamed*, and not *Beth*, and therefore is more properly rendered *at* than *in*. And besides this translation confutes itself, because without doubt the thing that respect is had to here, when mention is made of God’s appearing in battle himself, with his own weapons, on that day when the sun and moon stood still, is God’s fighting, as he did against the Amorites, and destroying them by the storm of hail. But then God’s arrows could not be said to walk in the light and shining of the sun, because the storm hid the shining of the sun; and besides that it is not probable that they did this execution, while the sun continued to stand still, because the storm would have hid the miracle.

[269] [Zech. i. 8.](#) “I saw in the night, and behold, a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled and white.” The grove of myrtle-trees signifies the church. It was a grove of myrtle-trees, down in a bottom, hid by the adjacent hills, so that you were not aware of it, until you were just upon it. This represents the low, dark, solitary, melancholy condition of the Jewish church at this time. They were overtopped by all their neighbours, buried in obscurity, as the woman in the wilderness, [Rev. xii. 6.](#) Being in a valley, is evidently used to signify being in mean, depressed, afflicted circumstances; [Isa. xxxiii. 19.](#) “And the city shall be low in a low place.” And being set on high, on a mountain, denotes a state of great honour and prosperity: [Isa. ii. 2.](#) “The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains.” Hence Babylon, though built on a plain, is called *a mountain*. [Jer. li. 25.](#) The man upon the red horse, in the midst of this myrtle grove, is no other than Jesus Christ, the same that appeared to Joshua with his sword drawn in his hand, as Captain of the hosts of the Lord, [Josh. v. 13, 14.](#); and to John, as captain of the armies of heaven, sitting on a white horse, clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, out of whose mouth went a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, who should rule them with a rod of iron, and who



treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, having the armies of heaven following on white horses, [Rev. xix.](#)

Though the church was in a low condition, yet Christ was present in the midst of it. He was riding as a man of war, as a man in haste, riding on the heavens for the help of his people, [Deut. xxxiii. 26.](#) He rode on a red horse, either naturally so, or dyed red with the blood of war, as this same victorious prince appears red in his apparel, by treading on his enemies, and besmearing his raiment with their blood, as in the forementioned place of [Rev.](#) and [Isa. lxiii. 3.](#) *Red* is a fiery colour, denoting what is said, [ver. 14, 15.](#) that he was jealous for Jerusalem, and for Zion, with great jealousy, and that he was very sore displeased with their enemies. Christ under the law appeared on a red horse, denoting the terror of that dispensation, and that he had yet his conflict before him, when he was to resist unto blood. But under the gospel he appears on a white horse, [Rev. xix.](#) denoting that he has now gained the victory, and rides in triumph, and hangs out the white, not the bloody, flag. Here also follows him an army on horseback, as in the 19th chapter of Revelation. Behind him were some on red horses, some speckled, some white, angels attending on the Lord Jesus Christ, ready to be employed by him, some in acts of judgment, others of mercy, others in mixed events. And probably they appeared in the order in which they are mentioned; the red first, and the speckled next, and the white last. The red that appeared first, noting God's indignation, and just judgments against the church of Israel in their captivity, mentioned [ver. 12.](#) "Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years." The speckled, that were partly red, partly white, noting God's present dealings with them since their captivity, that were mixed. God had exercised great mercy towards them, in restoring them out of captivity to their own land, as it was far otherwise with them than it had been. But yet it was a time of great adversity with them, which is signified by the myrtle-trees being in a low place, and which was the occasion of the earnest intercession of him that stood among the myrtle-trees for them. [Ver. 12.](#) The white horses that were last, denote that glorious prosperity which God now promises to his church, that shall be the conclusion and issue of all those troubles. [Ver. 13, 16, 17.](#) The colour, *white*, sometimes is made use of to signify holiness, or purity, and sometimes mercy and prosperity; sometimes freedom or purity from the evil of sin, and sometimes freedom from the evil of affliction. So it is evidently used, [Rev. vii. 14.](#) "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

[102] [Zech. xiv. 6, 7.](#) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear *nor* dark. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening-tide it shall be light." That is, there shall no more be the successions of light and darkness, day and night, but it shall be one continued day, and it shall be light in the time of the night, or evening.



[396] [Zech. xiv. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#) “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of TABERNACLES. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain: there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen, that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations, that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.” The feast of tabernacles here spoken of, is the glorious spiritual feast that God shall provide for all nations in the last ages of the world, and in the expected glorious state of the Christian church, which is spoken of, [Isa. xxv. 6.](#) This feast was on the seventh month of the year, which was a kind of a holy sabbatical month, as the seventh day of the week was a holy day, and the seventh year a holy year, and also the year of jubilee, at the end of seven times seven years. so this glorious state of the church is to be in the seventh age of the world, or seventh thousand years. The feast of tabernacles was the greatest feast in the month, it was to be kept on that month, after Israel were prepared for it by the feast of trumpets and the day of atonement, both in the same month. So way shall be made for the joy of the church of God in its glorious state on earth, by the preaching of the gospel, and deep repentance, and humiliation for its great sins and long-continued deadness and carnality.

The feast of tabernacles was the last feast they had in the whole year, before the face of the earth was destroyed by the winter. Presently after the feast of tabernacles was over, a tempestuous season began; see [Acts xxvii. 9.](#) “Sailing was now dangerous, because the feast was now already past.” So this feast of the church will be the last feast she shall have on earth; the last pouring out of the Spirit, before the lower world is destroyed. The feast of tabernacles was kept when they had gathered in the fruit of their land; [Lev. xxiii. 39.](#); and is called the feast of ingathering, at the end of the year. So this great spiritual feast of the church shall occur after God’s ingathering of both his harvest and vintage spoken of [Rev. xiv.](#) It will be the time of his gathering in all his good fruits before winter, as it were; that is, before the destruction of the world, a time wherein the saints of the earth will come to their full ripeness.

The feast of tabernacles was kept in commemoration of God’s setting up his tabernacle among the children of Israel in the wilderness, but in that glorious time God will above all other times set up his tabernacle among men, in the midst of his spiritual Israel, as is prophesied, [Ezek. xxxvii. 27.](#) and proclaimed in [Rev. xxi. 3.](#) The world was created about the time of the feast of tabernacles. See No. 204. on [Lev. xxiii. 34-36.](#) So this is the creation of the new heavens, and new earth. The temple of Solomon was dedicated at the time of the feast of tabernacles; then God descended in a pillar of cloud, and dwelt in the temple; so this is the time wherein the temple of God should be erected, and beautified, and dedicated, and God shall come down from heaven to dwell in his church. The church of God shall as

it were go up to the mountain of the hill of the Lord, as they did on that great occasion of Solomon's dedicating the temple.

Christ was born, and came to tabernacle in flesh on the feast of tabernacles; so then shall Christ be born. The woman in travail shall then bring forth her son that is to rule all nations, and then mankind above all other times shall enjoy the benefit of the birth of Christ; Christ shall then be born in the souls of men.

There seems to be greater tokens of rejoicing in this feast than any other. The people dwelt in booths of green boughs, which represent the flourishing, beautiful, pleasant state the church shall be in, rejoicing in God's grace and love (represented by the colour green). She shall yet dwell in tabernacles on this side heaven, her land of rest. Their branches of palm-trees represent the church's flourishing as the palm-tree, and the glorious victory the church shall then have obtained. The willows of the brook they shall make use of, represent the flourishing state of the souls of God's people, as a tree planted by the rivers of waters. [Lev. xxiii. 40.](#) [Neh. viii. 15.](#) The olive-branches represent the church's fulness of the Spirit, the antitype of the oil of the olive. At the feast of tabernacles God's people left their houses to dwell in booths, which represented two things that should be in the glorious times, *viz.* their great weanedness from the world, and their joy in God.

Thus the two great feasts of the Jews that followed the passover, represent the two great seasons consequent on the death of Christ, which was at the passover of the communication of the benefits of Christ's redemption to his church on earth; one that which was in primitive ages of the Christian church, which began in the day of Pentecost, on which the Holy Ghost was not only given in the ordinary sanctifying, saving influences, but also given in extraordinary gifts of inspiration for the revealing the mind and will of God, and establishing the standing rule of the faith, worship, and manners of the Christian church, which answered to the giving of the law at mount Sinai, which was on the feast of Pentecost: the other is that which shall follow the destruction of antichrist, which answers to the setting up the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the gifts, sacrificings, and rejoicings that were on that occasion, which was on the same day of the year that the feast of tabernacles was. These three great feasts. do prefigure those three grand events that are brought to pass for the church of God in the progress of the work of redemption, and the death of Christ to purchase salvation for the church, and those two great outpourings of the Spirit to apply it. See Note on [Ezek. xlv. 25.](#)

[106] [Mal. ii. 15.](#) "And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit." He made them one flesh, their bodies are each other's; but the rest, (or residue,) which is the Spirit, God reserves for himself. A man is one body with his wife, but one Spirit with Christ. [1 Cor. vi. 16, 17.](#) The phrase in this sense is not different from what is common, as [Deut. xxi. 8.](#) thy people of Israel; the city of London; the city of Jerusalem: and besides, it does not appear by the original but the words are in opposition and not in regimen. It might have been translated *the residue, the Spirit*; or if we interpret it as in the margin, *the excellency of*



*the Spirit*, then the meaning is, that though God needed them, and therefore they ought to be most nearly united in affection, yet he reserved to himself the soul's best love, the best of the heart.

[321] *Mal. iv. 1, 2.* "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." The day here spoken of is the day of the coming of Christ; the day spoken of in the first, second, and third verses of the foregoing chapter; "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts; but who may abide the *day* of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire,<sup>547</sup>" &c. This day shall burn as an oven, with respect to the wicked. Christ, who will then come, the Sun of righteousness, whose coming or rising will usher in that day, and who then will be as a refiner's fire, will search and burn up the wicked as stubble, and dry and dead plants, so that it shall leave them neither root nor branch; but with respect to those that fear God's name, his beams shall not be scorching, but healing, of a benign, healthful nature, as the warm, pleasant sun-beams are to living plants and animals, which make them to grow and flourish, so that they grow up as calves of the stall. He will be as a refiner's fire; will then only refine the sons of Levi, and others that fear God's name; they are as gold and silver that are not consumed, but refined, in the fire; but he will consume the wicked, that are as dross. Christ shall then prune and purge the faithful branches; but as for those that are dead, barren, dry branches, they shall be cut off, and cast into the fire, and burnt. The Sun of righteousness that shall come in that day, when he is risen, shall be as the pillar of cloud and fire was of old, which gave light to the Israelites, and was a defence unto them, was their sun and shield, but consumed and destroyed the Egyptians.

Thus it will be at Christ's last coming, the light and glory of his appearance will be intolerable to the wicked, it shall be like the fire of a furnace to their souls, and shall make the day like an oven to them, and his coming shall actually be attended with a dreadful conflagration of the fiercest glowing heat in which they shall be burnt. But the appearance of his glory shall be exceeding pleasant, and joyful, and healthful to the saints. The sight of this glory shall perfectly heal them; shall drive away all remains of sin, and make them perfectly holy; shall drive away all corruptibility and ill qualities of their bodies, and they shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye into a state of glorious health, strength, perfection, activity, and incorruptibility; it shall perfectly heal all trouble and sorrow, and shall for ever

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547 *Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3.*

banish all such things, however the church of God shall then be found in a very distressed state. So it was at Christ's first coming, that coming was infinitely for the benefit of the elect, but to the unspeakable misery of the wicked many ways, as might be shown. It brought on a glorious state of the church, but a most fearful destruction of unbelievers, as in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the whole land. So it was at Christ's coming in Constantine's time, and so it will be at his coming at the destruction of antichrist.

[133] [Mal. iv. 2.](#) "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings:" that is, in his beams; it is very much like other metaphors that were common amongst those eastern people. The sun rises to fly through the heavens, and the bright beams by which it is encompassed are the wings.

[68] [Mal. iv. 6.](#) "Turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." By fathers, are meant all sorts of fathers, parents, rulers, and teachers; the hearts of these shall be turned to the children, that is, they shall faithfully rule, and guide, and teach them, take care of them, and consult their true good; and the hearts of the children shall be turned to their fathers, that is, they shall be obedient, shall hearken to their teachers, &c.; so it is applicable, [Luke i. 17.](#) "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just."

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[11] [Matt. i. 3.](#) “And Judas begat Pharez and Zara of Thamar.” So it is remarked, in the 5th verse, that Salmon begat Booz of Rachab, and that Booz begat Obed of Ruth, and in the 6th verse, that David begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Uriah. All the mothers are not noted, but only those which were either harlots or Gentiles, except the wife of Uriah the Hittite, who was a wife of a Gentile. These are taken notice of, because Christ’s descending from several harlots and Gentiles intimates unto us that all that are saved by Christ were sinners. That the church of Christ is made up wholly of such as were once sinners, that is, spiritual harlots, or adulterers and idolaters, thereby also typifying the calling of the Gentiles.

[124] [Matt. i. 16.](#) “And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” This genealogy proves that the kingdom of Israel was Christ’s by right of inheritance. Christ, though he was not the real son of Joseph, yet was the legal son; with greater reason than, when a man took a wife, and died, and left no seed, his brother’s seed by her were to be looked upon as his, and had the right of inheritance.

[332] [Matt. iii. 2.](#) “Repent ye, for the *kingdom of heaven* is at hand.” The following are the places of the Old Testament from whence probably the Jews principally took their notion of the kingdom of heaven.

[Dan. ii. 44,45. vii. 9-15. xxvi. 27.:](#) [Ps. xcvi.](#) especially the four last verses; [Ps. i. 1-7.](#) compared with [Dan. vii. 9 to 15.;](#) [Ps. xcvii.](#) and [xcviii.](#) especially the last verse; [Isa. ii. 1 to 6.](#) and [15 to the end., ix. 6, 7. xi. xii. xxiv. 23.](#) and especially [verses 9, 10, 11. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. xxxii. 1 to 9. xxxv. xl. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11. xli. xlii. 1 to 22. xlix. lx. lxi. lxii. lxiii. 1 to 7. lxiv. 1, 2. lxv. 17 to the end., lxvi.;](#) [Jer. xxiii. 5 to 9. xxx. 9. xxxi. xxxiii.](#) especially [ver. 15, 16.;](#) [Ezek. xxi. 27.](#)

[xxxiv. 20 to the end., xxxvii. 20 to the end.;](#) [Hosea ii 16 to the end.;](#) [Joel ii. 28 to the end., iii.](#)

[9 to the end.;](#) [Amos ix. 11 to the end.;](#) [Micah iv. 1 to 9. v. vii. 8 to the end.;](#) [Obadiah. ver. 17 to the end., especially ver. 15, 16;](#) [Nahum i. 15.;](#) [Zeph. iii. 8 to the end.;](#) [Haggai ii. 1 to 10., and 21 to the end.;](#) [Zech. ii. 11, 12, 13. iii. 8, 9, 10. vi. 9 to the end., viii. 20 to the end., ix. 9 to the end., x. xii. xiii. xiv.;](#) [Mal. iii. 1 to 7., and 16 to the end., and chap. iv.](#)

[9] [Matt. iii. 7.](#) “Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” Having respect principally to that wrath that should come upon those of the Jews who should reject the Messiah and continue in impenitence, both in their rejection from being the people of God, and judicial hardening, and those many great calamities that nation suffered after Christ’s ascension, especially their dreadful overthrow by the Romans.

[36] [Matt. vi. 13.](#) “And lead us not into temptation.” This includes *trials* brought upon us by God’s providential hand, as well as the *temptation of lust*. God often leads his children into these, and always for their good; but yet we are to pray against it, with submission to God’s will, because, simply considered, it is an evil.



[12] [Matt. viii. 25](#). “And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us, we perish.” This ship shadows to us the Christian church, which indeed it contained in it, with its head. God commonly suffers his people to be just upon the very brink of destruction before he delivers them; as here the tempest arose so much, that the ship was covered with waves. God seems to be asleep, and so lets them alone, as Christ was, and must be awaked by the earnest prayers and cries of his people, before he will deliver them; and says, as in [Ps. xlv. 23](#). “Awake! why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise; cast us not off for ever!” [Ps. vii. 6. xxiii. lxxviii. 65](#). “Then will the Lord awake as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.”

[10] [Matt. ix. 10](#). “And it came to pass as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.” Jesus ordering or preferring it to be thus, intimating the nature of the gospel and the design of his kingdom; the gospel grace, the feast of fat things, being offered freely to all nations and kinds of men, having respect to the calling of the Gentiles.

[61] [Matt. ix. 24](#). When Christ said, She is not dead, but sleepeth, thereby is meant that her soul was not finally separated from her body, so as to enter into the spiritual and eternal world; nor had there that transformation passed upon her soul from a middle state to perfect holiness, or misery, and her soul was kept in a state of insensibility, as in a sound sleep, that her resurrection might not be inconvenient; therefore Christ also said, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.” His state was not changed, his soul not purified from sin, nor any way altered so as to prepare it for glory, but his state was only *intermitted*.

[355] [Matt. xi. 25, 26](#). “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Christ does not merely *praise* God, as God might be praised or glorified for his majesty and greatness, sovereignty, or justice, or any perfection or glorious work of his, but he *thanks* him as one interested, as though it were a work of God, whereby he had received a benefit. And so it was, these persons to whom his Father had revealed these things were his before God had revealed them to them, for they were given him from eternity, and he had set his love upon them before the foundation of the world, and for their sakes he came into the world, and he knew them all by name, their names were written on his heart, and he looked upon them as himself; and therefore he thanks the Father for revealing those things to those who were his, whom he so loved, and for whom he was so greatly concerned, though they were but poor, weak, helpless, and despicable creatures, when he had passed by others more noble, more wise, and prudent; as a loving father, if he had a number of poor children, in themselves very mean and contemptible, might well be the more affected with the goodness of God, and justly have his heart more enlarged with thankfulness, if God should look on his poor children, bestowing infinite blessings upon them, when he saw that the rich and noble, potent

and learned, were generally passed by. Persons themselves, that see themselves very weak, and distinguishingly contemptible, have the most cause to thank God for saving mercy to them, when they consider how they are distinguished from many far greater and more considerable than they; and so Christ looked upon it that he had like cause of thankfulness on this account, because they being from eternity given to him, he looked on them as himself, and on himself as they. Christ, the head of the elect church, here thanks the Father, with rejoicing in spirit, as Luke tells us, for that which will be the matter of the most exalted thanksgivings of the church itself to all eternity.

Christ thankfully acknowledges God's kindness herein, because he did it of his own will: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;" that is, without regard to their meanness, or others' greatness. Compare this text with [Rom. vi. 17](#).

[22] [Matt. xii. 32](#). "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." Some sins may not be forgiven in this world, that yet are forgiven in the world that is to come. God does not manifest his forgiveness in this world, but is provoked sometimes by the grievous fall of the godly, in a great measure to hide his face as long as they live. So that ever after they shall go hanging down their heads, even to their graves. God sometimes inflicts judgments that last as long as life, and their former joy and comfort is no more restored to its wonted degree until they die.

[2] [Matt. xiii. 38](#). [Luke xiii. 21](#). "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened." By three measures is meant the whole world: the progeny of the three sons of Noah, who settled the three parts of the world, Shem Asia, and Ham Africa, and Japhet Europe.

[136] [Matt. xiv. 13, 14, 15](#). "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. And when one of them that sat at meat heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Christ had told his host that he should not invite his rich friends and neighbours, expecting to be invited to a feast again by them, but should invite those that could not invite him again; and he tells him he shall be blessed, and should be recompensed at the resurrection of the just, intimating that he should be rewarded by feasting them. Now the Jews thought that the resurrection would be when the Messiah came. By *the kingdom of God*, they understood *the kingdom of the Messiah*; and that is the reason that when Christ told the Pharisee he should be blessed, for he should feast at *the resurrection*, that he makes this reply consenting to it, "They shall be blessed indeed, that shall eat bread in *the kingdom of God*."

[39] [Matt. xv. 21, 22](#). "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out," &c. The casting out of the devil out of the daughter of this woman, in my opinion, figures forth the casting the devil out of the

Gentile and antiChristian world; Tyre frequently representing in the Scripture Sodom's idolatrous kingdom.

[197] [Matt. xvi. 28.](#) "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." The disciples saw sufficient to answer this promise. Some of them immediately after, as we have an account in the beginning of the following chapter, saw Christ in his glory, in his transfiguration, in the like glory with that in which he will come to judgment, as far as it could well be seen by them in their frail state, and by their feeble eyes.

Again: They saw him coming in a glorious manner in the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, for that was a coming of Christ, wherein they saw him, agreeably to [John xiv. 18, 19.](#) "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me." And this was a coming in his kingdom, for he came then to set up the Christian church, to introduce the gospel-dispensation, which seems to be called the kingdom of heaven. And respect is doubtless had to this by John the Baptist, and by Christ after him, when they preached, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Again: Some of them saw him coming in his kingdom at the destruction of Jerusalem, and an eye seems chiefly to be had to this event; for then was there a total end put to the Jewish church, and the Jewish dispensation, which is compared to the end of the world. The world that then was, the old state of things in the world with respect to religion that had subsisted so long a time, was then utterly and finally done away, and the kingdom of heaven succeeded the gospel-dispensation, or the kingdom was then fully established, the state of things thenceforward in the church was really evangelical. Christ did then in a very awful manner, and with a signal manifestation of his hand, destroy the enemies of his kingdom, and remarkably deliver his people; he then came to judgment; he judged his adversaries, and delivered his chosen people; there was a remarkable rewarding of men according to their works then. It is most apparent that Christ did call his appearing in that great event of the destruction of Jerusalem, and other events that attended it, *his coming*, [Matt. xxiv. 2, 3.](#) There Christ tells his disciples, when showing him the building of the temple, that not one stone shall be left on another; whereupon the disciples ask him, When these things shall be, and what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world? And in his answer, he has respect still to the destruction of Jerusalem, as is evident by the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th verses. It is expressly said to be the desolation of Jerusalem. Compare these texts in Matt. with [Luke xxi. 20.](#) "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." And [ver. 23.](#) "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon that people;" and, in the 27th and 28th verses, he particularly gives his disciples a sign, whereby they might know the time and place of his coming; for Christ is there expressly speaking of his coming: he says, "So shall *the coming* of the Son of man be, for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together;" denoting





it to be at Jerusalem, and at the time of its destruction by the Romans. See my Notes on these verses. There is no need of supposing that Christ here meant his coming in any other than a spiritual sense; for so Christ was wont to speak of things to come, when it is plain that he intended a spiritual fulfilment. So he speaks of the resurrection. "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Here he speaks of the resurrection of bodies at the end of the world, and the spiritual resurrection of souls together, including both in one and the same words, *viz.* "the dead shall hear the voice," &c. He speaks as if it were but one event that he had respect to; but yet when he says, "it is coming," he means one thing, even the resurrection of bodies, especially at the end of the world. When he says, "It now is," he means another thing, *viz.* the resurrection of souls, by the preaching of the gospel; and the manner of speaking there, is very parallel to that in this and the foregoing verse. In the foregoing verse Christ says, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his works." There he has a respect principally to his coming at the end of the world; but then in this verse, says he, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, that shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom;" and now he has chiefly a respect to another event, *viz.* his appearing in the work that he will do at the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore it can be no just objection against this explication, that Christ evidently meant the same coming in this as he did in the foregoing verse, for we ought not to dispute against plain facts. I cannot see that, if we explain the words as I have done, the case is any more than exactly parallel to that in those other words, [John v. 25.](#) and it is plain and evident that it is a common thing in Scripture that things are said to be fulfilled that have been spoken of in the same context, when they are only fulfilled *in their type*, and not in that which is ultimately intended. So Christ, speaking of his coming and the end of the world, says, "This generation shall not pass till all those things shall be fulfilled." So the apostle John, speaking of the predictions there had been of the coming of antichrist, mentions the prophecies as being fulfilled in the false teachers there were then, "Even now," says he, "there are many antichrists." [1 John ii. 18.](#)

But perhaps we are not sufficiently accurate, when we distinguish several events, as so many distinct accomplishments of the prediction so often given of Christ's coming in his kingdom, to be understood in different senses; and so to look upon Christ's coming at the effusion of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, as one coming of Christ in his kingdom; and his appearing in the events that were at the destruction of Jerusalem, as another coming of Christ in his kingdom; and his appearing in Constantine's time as another, and at the destruction of antichrist as another, and at the end of the world as another. They seem rather to be spoken of in Scripture as several *parts*, or rather as several *degrees*, of the fulfilment of one event. That great event spoken of in [Dan. vii. 13, 14.](#) "And I saw in the night vision, and beheld one like the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient

of days, and they brought him near before him: and there was given to him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed:” which was what the Jews expected, and called *the kingdom of heaven*; and which John the Baptist and Christ had reference to, when they said, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand,” and which Christ has respect to in this place; also in the [24th Matt.](#) I say, this great event is gradually accomplished; it is accomplished by several steps and degrees, and the great events that were at the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and at the destruction of Jerusalem, and in Constantine’s time, and the destruction of anti-christ, and the end of the world, are all so many *steps* of the fulfilment of the same great event. When the Holy Ghost descended at Pentecost, it was fulfilled in a degree: then the Son of man came, and then was his kingdom set up in the world in a glorious manner. When Jerusalem was destroyed, it was fulfilled in another greater step: then did he remarkably exercise his royal authority in judging his enemies, and putting an end to the old state of things in the church, and beginning a new world, establishing the Gentile church. When Constantine was destroyed it was fulfilled in a yet higher degree; and in a still far more glorious manner at the destruction of antichrist; but it is fulfilled in its most complete and perfect degree at the end of the world.

So that Christ has indeed respect to the same great events here as he spake of in the foregoing verse, and promises that some there should see the accomplishment of that event *before they tasted of death*; *i. e.* they should see that, which indeed should be an accomplishment of it in the beginning of it, in a glorious degree, though not in its most glorious degree.

Hence, also, it cannot be said, that Christ referred to the destruction of Jerusalem only, when he speaks of his coming in his kingdom, or merely to that and what went before it; or to the pouring out of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost: but it was this great event in general which was to be accomplished in several degrees; though when he said they should see it *before they tasted of death*, he did not mean that they should see it in *all* its degrees.

The forementioned prophecy of Daniel, without doubt, had a respect not only to Christ’s coming at the end of the world, but also an important respect to his coming, as he did, in those events that occurred before some of them tasted of death: vid. No. 279. This prophecy of Daniel Christ doubtless had in his eye when he spake this; and doubtless the disciples understood him as meaning that; for the event foretold in this was what they and the Jews were big with expectation of, and had their eye upon, and always understood one another as referring to, when they spake of the coming of Christ in his kingdom; and therefore all that they would understand Christ as referring to, was, that some of them should see that prophecy accomplished before they died.

It need be no difficulty that Christ’s manner of expressing himself would lead them to expect that it should be accomplished in another manner; for the disciples knew that Christ

was wont to speak to them in mystical language; and besides Christ, in expressing himself thus, does it but as referring to the prophecy or vision of Daniel. The expressions are taken out of that prophecy, and no wonder that events in visions and prophecies are represented mystically. And the disciples were not cheated in it; for there was as much accomplished as answered their expectation, while some of them lived, though not in the same manner; for they had poor mistaken notions what the kingdom of Christ was, yet they saw it accomplished in a more glorious sense than they expected.

[414] There is this that argues that Christ did not suppose that the end of the world would be in that generation, that when he is discoursing of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, [Matt. xxiv.](#) and [Luke xxi.](#) and says to his disciples, [Luke xxi. 32.](#) “Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled;” yet he says in the same discourse, [ver. 24.](#) speaking of the terrible destruction of that land, “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;” from whence it seems evident, that Christ did not expect that the end of the world would be before many ages, for first all these things must be accomplished that had been spoken of by Christ as forerunners of the destruction of Jerusalem; wars, and rumours of wars, and earthquakes, and famines; and yet the destruction of Jerusalem not very near, and the gospel must be preached to all nations, which must be a work of time. And many other things are mentioned, as the rising of false Christs, and false prophets, and persecutions, &c.; all which denote that considerable time was to pass before the destruction of Jerusalem; and then the whole land was to be destroyed by war and great distress, and the people were to be dispersed into all nations, which also must be a work of time; and then Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, which at least intimates that Jerusalem was to lie a long time in ruins. Christ refers to the “time, times, and half a time,” in the 12th of Daniel, which is there exceeding plainly spoken of as a long time; and then it is supposed, in the words, that Jerusalem is to be again rebuilt after this, and rebuilt to some purpose, (not just rebuilt, and then immediately and eternally destroyed again,) before the end of so great a work as the rebuilding could be answered, so as to answer the designs of the restoration of the state, the peace and prosperity of the people in their own land. For the words imply a restoration of the people from their miserable state, as trodden down; and the times of the Gentiles in Daniel, to which Christ refers, are spoken of by that prophet, very plainly and abundantly, as ending in a comfortable restoration of God’s people from a miserable ruined state. But to be rebuilt in a few years, in order to be eternally destroyed, is not worth the name of a restoration or end to their long-continued ruin. Besides, the mere rebuilding Jerusalem and restoring the state of the land, after such a total and long-continued destruction, must be the work of a great deal of time: it was a work of considerable time when the people returned from their Babylonish captivity.

[464] Christ's kingdom comes by various steps and degrees, and so the end of the world is brought to pass in like manner by various steps; one step was the abolishing the Jewish state and their ecclesiastical economy, the peculiarities of which the apostle calls *the rudiments of the world*. Again, Christ's kingdom was set up, and the world came to an end, in another step or degree, by the conversion of the Roman empire; and so again at the destruction of antichrist. In each of these is a degree of the accomplishment of Christ's kingdom, the resurrection, the judgment of the righteous and the wicked, and the end of the world. (See Note on [Rev. xxi. 22.](#) No. 73.)

[75] [Matt. xvii. 21.](#) "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting;" this kind as to the manner of possession and influence. There were dumb devils, and unclean devils, and a spirit of infirmity. Some only took the advantage of bodily distemper and disorder of the brain; others possessed them in a more extraordinary manner, so as to have their bodies more absolutely under their influence, using of them as they pleased, sometimes casting them into the fire, and sometimes into the water, as that spoken of in this place, and sometimes using their tongues as if they were their own, as did the man possessed with the legion.

[326] [Matt. xvii. 27.](#) "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." Which signifies that ministers of the gospel should receive of the temporal things of those that they preach the gospel to, whose souls they catch for Christ, for they are the fish of which gospel ministers are the fishers. Peter was a fisherman by trade, and Christ had commanded him to leave his net, and to follow him, and he would make him a fisher of men.

[45] [Matt. xviii. 16.](#) "And if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established." It is evident from the next verse, that the end of bringing these others, is that he may hear them and be convinced of the evil of what he has done, and not to entrap him in his words. They are come indeed as witnesses, that is, as witnesses of the evil of what he has done (for witnesses in scripture phrase are not only of facts). It is this only that is wanted; they are come because he will not hear the first, that he may hear when the voice of two or three concur in the matter; it is this that wants to be established, it is the main and the joint voice of several, has the same tendency to establish such wishing, when they jointly bear testimony of the evil of a thing, as in bearing testimony to a fact; the end of their joining together therefore is, that every word of their admonition may be heard; this is evidently the meaning of the place.

[324] [Matt. xxi.](#) "And when he drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and was come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, go into the village over-against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them,

and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.”

Christ’s solemn entry into Jerusalem, that we have an account of in this place, seems to represent his ascension into heaven; that which had before been very remarkably represented by the carrying of the ark into Jerusalem, and its ascending into mount Zion, into the sanctuary. This is here again represented by the entering of Christ himself, the antitype of the ark, into the same city Jerusalem, and his ascending up into the mountain of the temple, into the sanctuary there. As in the Roman triumph, the triumphing general entered Rome, and went first to the capitol, the chief temple in all the city. So that there was a literal ascension of Christ at this time into the mountain of the temple, the greatest type of heaven upon earth. And Jerusalem itself, the city he then entered into, was the next greatest type of heaven to the temple, for heaven is called “the Jerusalem which is above.”

In this his solemn entry into Jerusalem, he passed from the mount of Olives, the same mount from which he ascended into the heavenly Jerusalem. He ascended from the mount of Olives, the mount of peace; olive-branches were used as a symbol of peace among the Gentiles, and so was the olive-branch brought by Noah’s dove. Christ ascended after he had made peace, or finished the work of reconciliation; without his reconciliation he could not have ascended. He entered into the holiest of all by his own blood. God was as it were reconciled to him by his blood, who was before as it were the object and mark of God’s wrath for our sins, which he had taken upon him. It was the mountain where he had his agony, and sweat that blood by which he obtained peace, and where he was betrayed to endure the cross. The ascension and glory of Christ, and the glory of the saints, is consequent on, and procured by, Christ’s sufferings, by which he wrought out reconciliation. The place on mount Olivet that he ascended from, was *Bethany*, (Luke xxiv. 50.) *the house of affliction*, signifying that his exaltation was consequent on his sufferings. So he ascended into Jerusalem from Bethany and Bethphage; (Mark xi. 1. Matt. xxi. 1. Luke xix. 29.) which latter signifies *the house of first-ripe figs*, signifying that Christ entered into heaven as the first-fruits: Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming.

He entered Jerusalem, as a king sitting on an ass, for kings formerly were wont to ride on asses. So he ascended into heaven as the King of glory. His riding an ass betokened two things, viz. kingly glory, and great humility and meekness, agreeably to the passage in *Zechariah. chap. ix. 9.* cited on this occasion. Christ ascended in great glory, so he also ascended in unparalleled humility and meekness; a most admirable conjunction of diverse qualifications appearing in him, which may perhaps be signified by the colt’s being found at a place where two ways meet, denoting that two things that seem very diverse, and seem to have a very diverse relation and tendency, meet here: as two men that go diverse ways, meet together at the meeting of two paths. The path of humility seems to lead him that walks in it a diverse way from the path of honour; one seems to tend downward, and the other

upwards; yet indeed they both meet and become the same, both carry a man to the same place: as the ass was a token both of kingly honour and great humility. The ass, the symbol of humility, carries a king on his back, and on an ass does the King of glory ascend into the city and temple of the great King, as by humiliation Christ ascended into heaven.

The ass on which Christ rode, was a colt, on which never man sat. So Christ's humiliation was now such as there never had been a parallel of, nor any thing like it, and it carried him into glory as unparalleled.

Zion is called upon to rejoice on this occasion: so heaven rejoiced on occasion of Christ's ascension. They cut down branches of palm-trees, the symbol of victory, and spread them in the way; so Christ's ascension to heaven was a triumphant ascension, he having obtained the victory in his sore conflict with his enemies. A great multitude attended Christ; so a vast multitude attended him in his ascension into heaven a multitude of saints and angels. They spread their garments under his feet; which is like the angels and elders casting down their crowns at his feet: they consecrate all their honours to Christ's honour. He sat on their garments, and went on them. He is attended with great and joyful acclamations and praises, all the way as he went up into the mountain of the temple, the children crying hosanna there in the temple. As the multitude attended the ark in all its ascent into Jerusalem and mount Zion, (which was then the mount of the house of the Lord,) all the way with most joyful acclamations and songs; so the saints and angels attended Christ all the way as he went from the uppermost regions of our air, with most joyful praises and acclamations, to heaven.

As he came into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" so on occasion of Christ's ascension, the inhabitants of heaven say once and again, "Who is this King of Glory?" [Psal. xxiv](#). See Notes on the place.

It is very remarkable that one thing that the multitude cry in their acclamations, is, "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!" ([Luke xix. 38.](#)) being wonderfully directed thus to express the joy and glory there would be in heaven, the highest heaven, at the ascension of Christ.

God was pleased thus to give Christ such a representation and earnest of the ascension and glory that should be the reward of his sufferings, a little before those sufferings, to encourage him to go through them, as he had before done another way in his transfiguration.

[330] [Matt. xxi. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16](#). *Concerning making Christ's house a den of thieves, &c.* The apostate Jewish church that was in Christ's time, was in many things an image of the apostate Christian church, or rather the antichristian church; and among other things the Jews making Christ's Father's house a house of merchandise, and a den of thieves, was typical of what the clergy of the church of Rome do. And Christ's overthrowing them, and driving them out of the temple, is typical of what Christ hath done, and will further do, with respect to that church. It shows how displeasing and provoking to Christ their so doing is, how Christ abominates such practices. They sold doves in the temple, so the merchants of

the church of Rome pretend to sell those things that are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the heavenly dove. These gifts are called *spirits* in Paul's epistles, and so in the Revelations. The Spirit of God, with respect to his various gifts and operations, is called, "*Seven spirits*." They do as Simon the sorcerer, who desired to buy a power to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost on whomsoever he would, to that end that he might make merchandise of them. So the clergy of the church of Rome sell baptism, regeneration, and salvation; they sell forgiveness of sins, the eucharist and ordination, consecration and extreme unction, &c. The Holy Spirit is the great commodity that their merchandise consists in.

Christ cast the Jewish merchants out of his temple; so Christ cast such merchants out of his church. When Christ came into his temple at Jerusalem, this was the effect; so when Christ returns into his church, after its great apostacy, this is the consequence. At the same time, the blind and the lame come to Christ, and he heals them; so when Christ comes to drive out the antiChristian merchants out of his house, there will be a great flocking of poor miserable souls to Christ to be healed. At the same time also the children cry hosanna in the temple, and the priests and scribes are sore displeased, which are all typical of what will be when Christ comes to revive religion, and execute judgment on the Romish church. Then will the mouths of God's people be filled with praises to Christ, and there will be a remarkable fulfilment of that saying, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise; <sup>548</sup> " which will greatly displease and provoke the chief priests and scribes of the church of Rome.

Because this was typical of something very remarkable that should surely come to pass in the church, therefore it was repeated, as Pharaoh's dream was, concerning the years of famine and plenty, for Christ drove out the merchants out of his temple once before. [John ii. 13.](#)

[4] [Matt. xxi. 40, 41.](#) "When the lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh." It is manifest here that the destruction of Jerusalem is called the coming of the Lord. This is called the end of the world: it is the end of the old world, and from this time began the new heavens and new earth, spoken of in Isaiah; and the time when the heavens and the earth are shaken: this was the end put to the Jewish church, and polity, and nation, and law, country, city, sanctuary, and all the Jewish world; and from this time began the Gentile church to be the chosen people of God; for as soon as these husbandmen were destroyed, then the vineyard was let out to others, according to this place, and this coming of Christ. It was that which was spoken of as being very near by the apostles; and said by Christ to be within the lifetime of some there present. This city was begun anew and finished in Constantine's time, when the heathen world was overthrown, as now the Jewish. The calling of the Gentiles is

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548 [Matt. xxi. 16.](#)

what is called, ([Matt. xxiv. 3.](#)) “The gathering together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

[379] [Matt. xxii. 31, 32.](#) “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” The argument is very strong for the immortality of the soul, considering how often God manifested his great favours to those patriarchs in their life-time, time after time entering into covenant with them, and professing himself to be their God, declaring to them that he was God, all-sufficient, and that he was their shield and their exceeding great reward, promising that he would be with them and would bless them, and considering what great and manifold afflictions they met with while they lived, especially Abraham and Jacob, and how little good they ever saw of those promises that God had made in this life. God promised them the land of Canaan, but they were pilgrims and strangers in it; they had no settled habitation in it, but dwelt in tents, removing to and fro. Other people had the possession of the land, and oftentimes molested them, as Abimelech did in particular. They were driven out of the land by famines: all three of them were so. Abraham came from a far country; left his own kindred and his father’s house, and went out, not knowing whither he went, for the sake of this land; but yet <sup>549</sup> “God gave him none inheritance in it; no, not so much as to set his foot on.” Jacob had the promise of this land; but yet he was still driven out of the land by Esau, that had no promise of it, and lived an exile from it twenty years, for fear of him, in a state of servitude, and in abundance of trouble; and in the latter part of his life he was forced to leave it to go down into Egypt with all his family, and posterity, and flocks and herds, and there he died. Though Canaan was the promised land, yet the principal quietness Jacob had in this world, was in Egypt, that seventeen years he lived there with Joseph his son, and not in Canaan. Another thing that was chiefly insisted on in God’s covenant with them, was their being blessed in their posterity, that should be numerous and happy; but how little did they see of this while they lived! How long did Abraham wait before he had any child! and after he had one, he was obliged to cast out his first child, greatly to his grief; and he was a hundred years old before he saw one child in whom his seed should be called; and then God gave him but one, so that he saw nothing like a numerous posterity while he lived. And Isaac never had but two sons; and concerning his eldest and best beloved, it was revealed that his seed was not to be called in him, and he was obliged to disinherit him; and he had a great deal of grief in him and his wives: and his other son, that was to be his heir, he was obliged to part with into a strange land, and saw not for twenty years together. And Jacob, though he had a numerous family, yet he had abundance of sorrow and trouble in them. His eldest son committed incest with his own concubine; his two next sons were guilty of barbarous




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549 [Acts vii. 5.](#)



murders. Judah, in whose posterity chiefly it was that Jacob's posterity were to be blessed, behaved himself very sinfully, and so as, doubtless, was greatly to his father's grief. Joseph, his best beloved son, he went long mourning for as lost, and having come to an untimely and sorrowful end. The sons of the handmaid seem to be none of the best beloved.

Esau's posterity seems to have come to greater prosperity than Jacob's, as Esau himself seems to have been vastly richer and more potent than his brother. Considering these things, how can it be that God's so often speaking of it as so great, inestimable, and distinguishing a happiness that he had admitted them to, that he was their God, and insisting on these covenant promises that he made to them, as so exceeding great and precious? I say, how can it be imagined but that God, in thus saying and promising, had respect to something that they should see and enjoy further than they ever enjoyed in this life?

[381] The same may be argued, and in some respects were strongly, from God's still revealing himself as "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, after they were dead." It was respect to the promises that had been made to them while living, of which it was known that they never saw the fulfilment, and never had received the promises, but had received a great deal of the contrary affliction; and therefore if their being was now finally extinct, and they no more capable of seeing and enjoying the fulfilment of any promise, why should God mention and insist on his friendship and love, and promises to them, as what still moved him to do great things for their sakes? and why should God still delight to characterize himself by his being their covenant God and friend, when there appeared so little foundation for it in any benefit that ever they had received by it, or were ever like to receive? It was because they were still capable of receiving the benefits of his favours and friendship, that he was not ashamed to be called their God. [Heb. xi. 16.](#) "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." If it had not been for this, God's being their God, spoken of so much, and as so great a thing, would come to a very small matter, hardly worth the mentioning.

From these things we may not only argue that the patriarchs continued *to be*, and did enjoy something after they were dead, but also that they lived to see and enjoy the fulfilment of those promises that were made to them, with respect to which it is that God calls himself their God, both before and after their death; and that their happiness in great part consisted in seeing the fulfilment of these promises in the course of his providence to their seed, and in the dispensation of providence towards the church. And so I would argue that the happiness of departed souls in heaven, in a most important degree, consists in beholding and contemplating God's glorious dispensations towards the church in this world, and in seeing his wonderful wisdom, and infinite grace, and other perfections, therein manifested. The principal employment of one great part of the heavenly world, *viz.* the holy angels, is about these things; that in which the angels do chiefly behold the manifold wisdom and other

perfections of God, is in these things, and the same is that wherein chiefly the souls of departed saints do chiefly behold God's glory.

The fulfilment of the promises God made to him concerning what should be accomplished in and for his seed, and for the church of God after his death, he said was "all his salvation and all his desire;" and therefore doubtless great part of the happiness he enjoyed after his death, consisted in fulfilling that desire of his.

[219] [Matt. xxiii. 34, 35.](#) "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." The learned Bedford, in his Scripture Chronology, speaking of Zechariah son of Jehoiada, whose murder in the court of the temple we have account of, [2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, 22.](#) says, there are some of good authority who look upon this Zechariah to be the person of whom our Saviour spake in this place; but says, as our Saviour begins with Abel, the first instance, so we may suppose that he concluded with the last; and as he here speaks of future things, so this may be one instance among the rest, and the naming the name of both father and son is such an instance of his knowledge, the like whereof was never given by any other; we may therefore conclude, that the *Zachariah*, whom our Saviour speaks of, was one whom Josephus mentions in the time of the Jewish wars, and of whom he gives us this account, that he was the son of *Baruch*, a man of the first rank, a friend to all good men, and an enemy to the wicked. This Zachariah the zealots looked upon as a man so very popular, that they themselves could not be safe without taking away his life. For this purpose they bring him before a court of their own setting up, and falsely accuse him of a conspiracy to betray Jerusalem to the Romans, and treating with Vespasian about it. When the court, contrary to their own expectation, had declared him innocent, two of the greatest ruffians of the company fell outrageously upon Zachariah, and murdered him in the middle of the temple, with this insolent raillery in their mouths, "Now we have given you your discharge too, and you are much surer of this than you were of the other;" and so they cast his body down the precipice of the mountain.

[292] [Matt. xxiv. 21, 22, 23, 24.](#) &c. "For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect," &c. By these days of great tribulation that Christ here speaks of, is not to be understood only the tribulation

that accompanied the taking and destroying the city of Jerusalem by Titus, but it is a day of tribulation to the spiritual Jerusalem, as well as the literal. It is a day of tribulation wherein the elect or true Christians should be concerned, as seems to appear from [verses 22 and 23](#). For it seems to be partly for this reason that Christ warns his church to beware, that under such a day of extraordinary temptation they should not be over-forward to believe any that appeared in his name, pretending to be Christ, appearing in his second coming to deliver them from their suffering; for that was all the primitive Christians expected, that when Christ came the second time he would deliver his church from its sufferings and tribulations. And Christ speaks of his second coming at this time as the day of their redemption out of their tribulation. [Luke xxi. 28](#). “Then lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh;” therefore knowing that through their great tribulation they would be earnestly waiting for his coming, and so under temptation to listen to any that pretend in his name to set up for their deliverers, and appear to lead them to war against their enemies, Christ warns them not to listen or follow such impostors. The Christian church was especially under this temptation, under the persecutions of heathen Rome, for in those days especially there prevailed an opinion in the church that Christ would soon appear for their deliverance.

§ 2. When Christ says, “Except those days should he shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the elect’s sake these days shall be shortened; <sup>550</sup>” Christ seems to have respect to those days of tribulation that he had been speaking of in the former part of the chapter, not only in the 21st verse, but in the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th verses. That those earthquakes, famines, &c. [Mark xiii. 8](#). are said to be the beginning of what were not only sorrows to the Jews, but Christians, as is evident by what immediately follows: “Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake; and then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. <sup>551</sup>”

§ 3. Therefore, the time of tribulation here spoken of is, as the prophet Jeremy expresses it, the time of Jacob’s tribulation. [Jer. xxx. 7](#). “Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.” It is the time of the trouble both of the literal and spiritual Jacob; the literal Jacob shall be saved out of it, when the time comes that the apostle speaks of in the [11th of Romans](#)., when all Israel shall be saved. And the spiritual Jacob shall be saved out of it, as appears by the words of [Daniel. chap. xii](#). where there seems to be reference to these words of Jeremiah; “And at that time shall Michael stand up, that great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time. And at that time thy people shall be delivered every one that are found written in the

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550 [Matt. xxiv. 22](#)

551 [Matt. xxiv. 9](#)

book.<sup>552</sup>” And that the spiritual Jacob, or the elect, shall be delivered out of it, appears by the words of Christ in this place, where Christ seems to have reference to what had been before said by both these other prophets.

The prophecies of the Old Testament that speak of Israel, Jacob, Jerusalem, Zion, commonly have respect both to the Christian church and also the nation of the Jews, in things that are to be fulfilled to both in the latter days; and so it is here in the [24th of Matt.](#) See Note on [Num. xxiv. 23, 24.](#)

§ 4. More particularly by the time of tribulation here spoken of, is meant the whole time of the tribulation and suffering both of the literal and spiritual Israel from the Roman empire, or the whole time wherein both the literal and spiritual Jerusalem shall be trodden down under-foot by Rome, or the spiritual Babylon. Beginning with the troubles that both Jews and Christians suffered under Nero, about which time was that beginning of sorrows spoken of in the 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, and ending with *the time, and times, and half a time* of the reign of antichrist. That this tribulation should be suffered from Rome, or in the spiritual Babylon, is signified by Christ, in [ver. 28.](#) “Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together:” the tribulation is by the eagles, *i. e.* the Roman powers preying on the carcasses of Israel.

§ 5. The tribulation of the literal and spiritual Jews from Rome both began about the same time, and therefore both the sufferings of the Jews, and the persecution of Christians from the Romans, are mentioned together in the preceding part of this chapter, and called the beginning of sorrows, about the same time that the troubles of the Jews from the Romans began under Nero, who persecuted both Jews and Christians together; and both *will end together; viz.* when the power of Rome, the city that has brought this tribulation upon them, ends; much as of old the captivity of the Jews ceased, when Babylon, that carried them captive, was destroyed. So when the spiritual Babylon falls, the Christian church shall be delivered, and the Jews shall be called.

§ 6. The tribulation of the literal Jerusalem and the Jewish nation spoken of by Christ, at the time that we have an account of in this chapter, was not any short tribulation, or something that should soon be over, but is expressly spoken of by Christ as that which shall be continued for many ages, and even till the commencement of the glorious times of the Christian church, in the latter ages of the world. [Luke xxi. 23, 24.](#) “There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” The calamity or judgment upon the Jews here spoken of, is manifestly the same with the tribulation spoken of in Matthew, so far as that nation were the subjects of it; but this calamity or judgment here spoken of is the great and

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552 [Dan. xii. 1.](#)

sore judgment of God on the Jewish nation, that has now continued for many ages, begun in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans: their state of captivity and dispersion into all nations, and being trodden down of all nations. But this calamity yet continues, and is spoken of in these words as what shall be continued till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This tribulation was but begun when Jerusalem was destroyed, the calamity was not ended when the destruction was finished; it is not ended till they are delivered from that destruction, or till the state of destruction they were then brought into ceases. The calamity of being killed, or brought into a state of death, is not ended as soon as a man is killed; it is then but brought to perfection; it is not ended till the resurrection comes. The tribulation on the Jews cannot be said to be ended as long as the ruin of the city and dispersion of the nation brought by it remains; these are the great judgments spoken of as included in this tribulation, and as long as the judgments remain the tribulation is not ended.

§ 7. And as the calamity brought on the Jewish nation by Rome continues all this time, so is the Christian church throughout this time kept in a state of tribulation and oppression. There was indeed a short intermission of their trouble after Constantine came to the throne, but this was no proper end to their day of tribulation, but only a short breathing spell; it is represented by John, as *silence for half an hour*; but soon after this the church of Christ began again to be persecuted by the power of the Roman empire, first by the emperors, and afterwards by the power of Rome antiChristian, and is to be persecuted to the end of anti-christ's reign, or *that time, times, and a half*, that the holy city is to be trodden under-foot, and that forty and two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, wherein the woman is to remain in the wilderness, and the witnesses are to prophesy in sackcloth. This whole space of time may be called *the time of Jacob's trouble*, or the time of the tribulation of the church of God; a time of far greater outward affliction than ever the church of God saw from the beginning of the world till that time, and greater than ever it should see again. This long period of suffering of his church Christ had respect to, when he said he did not come to send peace on the earth, but a sword. This whole time is what is called *the time of the mystery of God*, as it is called, [Rev. x. 7.](#) and *the time of these wonders*, as it is called, [Dan. xii. 6.](#) *i.e.* the time of God's mysterious and wonderful dealings with his own people in their great sufferings. See Note on [Rev. x. 7.](#) This is properly the time of the church's travail; for from Nero's time till now, the church has been in travail to bring forth the glory of the approaching millennium, or the establishment of Christ's kingdom through the earth. When the millennium begins, then will the church, which God has redeemed from being an accursed Jericho by the blood of his first-born, have gates set up; but from the time of the laying of the foundation in the blood of the first-born till this time, even all the while this Jericho is in building, it has been by the shedding the blood of God's younger children. This long space of time is the time of the slaying of those children, being the time of the building of

the city, until it is finished in setting up the gates of it. And all this tribulation has been from one enemy, *viz.* the spiritual Babylon, or the idolatrous empire of Rome.

The church in all ages in this world, may be said to be in a degree in a *militant* state, and the *triumphant* state to be reserved for heaven. But of the different states of the church in this world, compared one with another, one may be called the *militant*, and another the *triumphant*, state of the church; and the state of the church from Christ's time, till the downfall of the spiritual Babylon, may be called its militant state, and after that, during the millennium, it is in its triumphant state. This is properly *the time of Jacob's trouble*, beyond all that went before it, or shall follow it. The church's sufferings properly follow Christ's sufferings, as the church's glory follows his; the church bears the cross after Christ, and so follows him to the crown; it is made conformable to his death that it may be conformable to his resurrection. The travails of the church come after Christ's, to fill up, as the apostle expresses it, *what is behind of the sufferings of Christ*, The sufferings of the Head are in some respects a forerunner of the sufferings of the members, as the glory of the Head is of the glory of the members.

This whole time is the time of the captivity of God's people in the spiritual Babylon.

§ 8. Christ, in these words, probably has an eye to what is said by the prophet Jeremiah, in the place forementioned, [chap. xxx.](#) of his prophecy, 6th and 7th verses., where he speaks of the church's travail, and says, "Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it. It is even *the time of Jacob's trouble*; but he shall be delivered out of it." Here the prophet seems indeed to have some respect to Jacob's trouble from the literal Babylon, and the deliverance of the Jews out of their captivity, into that Babylon: but it is manifest that it is something else he has a main respect to under that time, *viz.* the time of Jacob's trouble under Rome, the spiritual Babylon, and that deliverance out of this trouble that he speaks of, is not what the Jews had on their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor at any time before the calling of that nation at the beginning of the glorious times of the church; for it is said, [verse 8.](#) that at that day strangers shall no more serve themselves of them, and that Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest and in quiet, and none shall make him afraid; and their nobles shall be of themselves, and their government shall proceed from the midst of them, as [ver. 8, 10, 21.](#) But these things have never yet been accomplished to that nation; and there it is mentioned as the peculiar glory that shall attend their deliverance, that they should serve David, their King, whom the Lord would raise up unto them, which was not accomplished on the Jews' return out of Babylon; for this King did not appear until many hundred years after, and when he did appear, they did not serve him, but crucified him, and his rising again was followed with the destruction of that land, and of Jerusalem, instead of building it on her own heap, as [ver. 18.](#); so that this has never yet been accomplished.

§ 9. But that this great tribulation that Christ speaks of, is no short tribulation, finished when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, but that which is not ended till the reign of antichrist is ended, and respects not only the sufferings of the outward, but also the spiritual, Jerusalem, is more fully manifest from what the prophet Daniel says of it, [Dan. xii. 1.](#) “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that is found written in the book.” Concerning these words in Daniel, several things are manifest.

1. It is manifest that that is a time of trouble and great trial to the church and people of God, and that it is the same people that is first in this trouble, that, through Michael’s standing up for and appearing for them in their distress, shall be delivered out of trouble; as it is often spoken of in Scripture as God’s manner of dealing with his people, first to bring them into great distress, and then to appear or stand up for them in their extremity, and deliver them. Probably here is an eye to the forementioned prophecy of Jeremiah, where this time of trouble is said to be the time of Jacob’s trouble, and the same Jacob shall be delivered out of it. Daniel made use of these prophecies of Jeremiah, at the time that he had those revelations, as appears by [chap. ix. 2.](#), And it is further manifest by the Seventy, where speaking of the time when this time of trouble should be ended, it is said to be “when he should have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people. <sup>553</sup>”

2. It is manifest that this is a time of trouble that was to be in the Christian church, after the Messiah had appeared in the world; for after the prophet in the foregoing chapter had been giving an account of many successive events that lie between the time that then was, and the coming of the Messiah, he now in the beginning of this chapter proceeds to give an account of the Messiah’s coming, and what should befall God’s church after that. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people,” &c.

3. It is manifest that this time of trouble here spoken of is not to be ended until the time, arid times, and half a time of antichrist is ended; for when the angels, being tenderly and greatly concerned for the church under such great trouble, say to Jesus Christ, “How long shall it be to the end of those wonders?” Christ for the comfort of them and his church, lest his people should faint under such tribulation, holds up his right hand and his left to heaven, and swears by him that liveth for ever and ever, that it shall continue no longer than *for a time, and times, and a half*, [ver. 6, 7.](#)

4. It is manifest that the time of great tribulation, spoken of by Christ in the 24th of Matthew, is the same with that spoken of by Daniel in this place. It can scarcely be doubted whether Christ has reference to these words of Daniel, in what he says here, his words being

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553 [Dan. xii. 7.](#)

so much like them, and he having just before expressly cited Daniel's prophecy, [ver. 15](#). and refers to it from time to time in the chapters, and particularly has reference to Daniel's words in this chapter, in what he says of the continuance of those days of tribulation. But this may be more particularly considered under the next head.

§ 10. All this he more abundantly manifests, and it will be put beyond dispute, by comparing three scriptures together, *viz.* what Christ says of the continuance of those days of tribulation in that forementioned place, [Luke xxi. 24](#). "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," with what Daniel says in this [12th chapter](#). of his prophecy, of the continuance of this time of great trouble, till *a time, times, and a half*, and what is said in [Revelation xi. 2](#). "But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under-foot forty and two months." Concerning these three scriptures, I would observe,

1. That nobody doubts whether these forty-two months of which John speaks, in which the holy city should be trodden under-foot of the Gentiles, be the same with the time, times, and a half, that Daniel speaks of, till the end of which the time of great tribulation was to last.

2. Both Christ in the 21st of Luke, and John in the Revelations, speak of treading down Jerusalem; for by *the holy city* is meant *Jerusalem*, that was commonly called the holy city; and both speak of treading down Jerusalem *by the Gentiles*; and probably in that place in Revelation, reference is had to those words of Christ.

3. Hence we may infer, that when Christ says, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," by *the times of the Gentiles*, he means the same with *that forty-two months* of the prevailing of the Gentiles against Jerusalem, or the Jews, of which John speaks; and the same with *the time, times, and half*, that Daniel speaks of; and probably in the phrase he uses, *viz.* "times of the Gentiles," he has reference to the "time, times," &c. of Daniel, whose prophecy he had reference to. The times of the Gentiles Christ here speaks of, are the same with that *time* that the angel swears *shall be no longer*, [Rev. x. 6](#). compared with [Dan. xii. 7](#).

4. That the Jerusalem that Christ speaks of, is especially the literal Jerusalem, and that by the Jerusalem or holy city that John speaks of, is that spiritual Jerusalem; from all which it is greatly confirmed that the time of tribulation that Christ speaks of is the same that Daniel speaks of, and that it respects the continuance of the tribulation, or treading down both of the literal and spiritual Jerusalem, and that it shall last till the fall of antichrist.

§ 11. It seems to be intimated that the time in itself was very long, by the [22nd verse](#)., "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." The days are shortened by taking out many days out of the long period of time, for times of respite and rest. Then the proper time appointed





for Jacob's trouble, is from Nero's time till the fall of antichrist, which is a great many ages, but for the elect's sake the tribulation is not constantly continued through this whole time, for if it should be so it would wear out the saints, and would wholly root out and destroy the church; therefore for the elect's sake God will take out many of those days for respite; so that the days of actual tribulation shall be much fewer than this whole period. Thus there was respite between the ten heathen persecutions; and there was a remarkable time of rest after the tenth and hottest of them upon Constantine's coming to the throne. And towards the end of the anti-Christian persecutions, many of the days should be taken out, and many parts of the church should have rest, after the reformation, being out of the reach of the persecuting power of Rome; which is possibly what is signified by the witnesses rising and standing on their feet, and being caught up to heaven, out of the reach of their enemies.

It is further evident that the tribulation Christ speaks of is not merely a calamity that was brought on Judea and Jerusalem, or limited to that people or land, from those things that Christ says are the beginning of this tribulation, [7th and 8th verses](#). "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places; all these are the beginning of sorrows." Now it cannot be supposed that wars between other nations, and earthquakes and pestilences in other countries, can be signs and forerunners merely of a calamity upon the nation of the Jews, and troubles in their land.

§ 12. What has been said, is further confirmed by the [29th verse of the 24th of Matt.](#) "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken;" *i. e.* immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall those great events be accomplished which are signified by those places in the prophets, that speak of the sun's being darkened, &c. which you have often read and heard discourses of. It is observable that, almost throughout this whole discourse of Christ with his disciples, he refers to things that had been said by ancient prophets; and what Christ says, does not imply that what the prophets have said in those things, is to be understood literally, but he seems to intimate the contrary, *viz.* that their meaning is mysterious, in that expression, [verse 15](#). "Whoso readeth, let him understand." The places in the prophets that speak of those things, have reference to the great events, and the wonderful changes in the face of things, that shall be brought to pass at the beginning of the glorious times of the church; and particularly the utter overthrow of the kingdom of Satan, and casting down all powers and authorities by which false religion has been maintained, and the putting out all their glory, as in [Joel iii. 15](#). "The sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining;" and then the prophet goes on to speak of the glorious times of the church in the following verses, "Jerusalem shall be holy, and the mountains shall drop down new wine,<sup>554</sup>" &c.; and [chap.](#)

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554 [Joel iii. 18.](#)

ii. 30, 31. speaking of the time when God shall pour out his Spirit on all flesh, it is said, “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come; <sup>555</sup>” and [Isa. xiii. 10, 11](#). “For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light, the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity, and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible; and [verse 13](#). “Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place;” agreeably to what Christ says, “The powers of the heavens shall be shaken. <sup>556</sup>” This had its first fulfilment in the destruction of Babylon, but has a further and more full accomplishment in the destruction of the spiritual Babylon, of which that was a type. Again, in [Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8](#). it is said of Pharaoh and Egypt, “And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heavens, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light; all the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord.” This will have a further accomplishment in the destruction of the city, of which it is said, in Revelation that it is spiritually called *Egypt*; and again, [Isa. xxiv. 23](#). “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before his ancients gloriously.” Possibly there may also appear some strange phenomena in the heavens, just before that time; by which there may be something of a literal accomplishment, as in the events signified by the pouring out of the fourth vial on the sun, there was both a figurative and literal accomplishment of it. See *Lowman* on the Revelations.

§13. Now if we understand these days of tribulation, in the sense in which I have explained them, these great events do immediately follow them. If we understand them in a more limited and restrained sense, for the days of the church’s suffering under Rome heathen, which was much the greatest under the last of the ten persecutions; then immediately after the tribulation of those days, there was a remarkable accomplishment of this, then was the sun and moon darkened, and the stars fell from heaven, and the powers of heaven were shaken, in the sense of scripture prophecy, as appears by [Rev. vi. 12, 13, 14](#). which speaks of these times, “And I beheld, when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their place.” But if we understand it in its greatest and full extent, it is to be understood for the whole, time of Jerusalem’s lying waste, and the church’s suffering under the idolatrous persecuting Roman power. Then also

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555 [Joel ii. 31](#).

556 [Matt. xxiv. 29](#).

those great events shall immediately follow, which are a yet much greater accomplishment of these things. These events seem plainly to be here spoken of.

§ 14. Thus the sun is darkened, and the moon turned into blood, and the stars fall, and the heavens are shaken, immediately after the captivity of God's people in the spiritual Babylon, just as these things came to pass with respect to the Babylonish empire, that the prophet Isaiah signifies by the very same expressions, [Isa. xiii. 11, 12, 13.](#) as soon as ever the seventy years of the Jewish captivity were ended.

§ 15. But if we understand Christ, by *this time of tribulation*, to mean only the time of the besieging and taking of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans, those things did not come to pass in any sense, so far as we have any account, immediately after those days. The overthrow of the heathen empire, the nearest event after this, signified by those expressions, was about two hundred and fifty years after this.

§ 16. When Christ had said that "immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened,<sup>557</sup>" &c. he then adds in the next verse, ([ver. 30.](#)) "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." *Then shall appear, i. e.* after these things are accomplished, not signifying that it should be immediately after, but that it should not be till all those things are first accomplished, as the apostle says, [2 Thes. ii. 2.](#) "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first," &c. So Christ is here telling his disciples what great events are to be accomplished before his last coming, how that there should be a time of great tribulation, and then after that, there should be great signs in the heavens, in the sun, and in the moon and stars, and in the earth distress of nations: that is, there should be very great, extraordinary, and wonderful things brought to pass, such as never were before, causing great and universal changes in the state of things in the world, such as never were seen before this; and then the next sign or wonder that shall be seen to this, shall be the sign of the Son of man, *i. e.* this shall be the last great revolution, of change of the state of things in the world, before the last judgment. This darkening of the sun and moon, &c. shall be the last great step of providence towards finishing the state of things in this world, and setting up Christ's heavenly kingdom, excepting the personal appearing of the Son of God to judgment. The manner of expression, *then shall such or such an event be*, does not, in the manner in which the prophets use it, signify that it shall be *immediately* upon it. The prophets often express themselves after that manner, when the event is to be many ages after. Thus, when the prophets are foretelling the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, they often speak of the coming of Christ as what shall be (as they express themselves) *at that time*, or *in that day*. So here, when Christ is speaking of the return of his



people, from their captivity in the spiritual Babylon, he speaks of the second coming of the Messiah as what shall be at that time. For it shall be at the conclusion of the state of things that he introduced by that dispensation of providence, though much degenerated by an apostasy at the latter end of the period; as the first coming of Christ was at the conclusion of that state of the Jewish church into which it was brought after the return from the literal Babylon.

*Carol.* 1. Hence, when Christ, ver. 24. speaks of false prophets and false Christs, that shall arise in this time of tribulation, that should show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect, it is probable that Christ has respect not only to those false Christs, and false prophets, that arose at, or near, the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but that he has especial respect to the great antichrist, to the pope and his clergy, that are from time to time stigmatized in the Revelations by the name of *the false prophet*; and by the character of *the false prophet that works miracles*, [Rev. xvi. 13, 14](#). “And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the *false prophet*; for they are the spirits of devils, *working miracles*;” and by that of *the false prophet, that works miracles, by which he deceives the world*, as in [chap. xix. 20](#). “And the beast was taken, and with him the *false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them* which had received the mark of the beast,” &c.; and in [chap. xiii. 13, 14](#). “And he doeth great *wonders*, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and *deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles*, which he had power to do in the sight of the beast;” and so, [2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, 11](#). “Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness for this cause God shall send them strong delusions.” And again this great false prophet is a false *Christ*; for the false Christs here spoken of, are those that personate Jesus, the true Christ, that was crucified. This false prophet pretends to be Christ’s *vicar*; and therein is antichrist. He claims that he is vested with all the power and authority of Christ, as if he were Christ, or God on earth, and challenges the glory and worship due to Christ alone. Thus he has horns like a lamb, [Rev. xiii. 11](#). “And he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” In that, he showeth himself that he is Christ, and therein exalteth himself above Christ. [2 Thess. ii. 4](#). Christ no where foretells the coming of antichrist, if not here. It is not probable that Christ would omit so great an event as the coming of antichrist, which is the principal subject of the New-Testament prophecy, next to those events signified by the coming of Christ himself. I say, it is not probable that Christ would omit so great an event in those predictions, which he is giving his disciples, of the great events that should come to pass in his church till his second coming, when he was about to leave the world after his first coming. Indeed all that Christ has respect to, in this prediction, of false prophets, and false Christs, is, either the great antichrist and false prophet, or those lesser

false prophets and antichrists that were his types and forerunners; compare [1 John iv. 1.](#) “Many “false prophets are gone out into the world,” with [chap. ii. 18.](#) “As ye have heard that antichrist should come, even so now are there many antichrists.”

*Carol. 2.* This leads us to interpret those things in the Old Testament that speak of the glory of the Christian church, of the state of the church in the millennium; for that is the time of her glory on earth. The time preceding, excepting some intermissions by which God has graciously shortened those days, is the time, not of her prosperity, but of her great tribulation.

[55] [Matt. xxiv. 22.](#) “But for the elect’s sake those days shall be *shortened*.” Inquiry What is meant here by being shortened? We in the Scriptures read of God’s hastening the deliverance of his people; avenging them speedily; helping his church right early; and the like; though God suffers them for many ages to be persecuted. By it is intended that he will manifest his wisdom in swiftly turning the wheel of his providence, and with wondrous expedition bringing things about that were necessary to be done before they could be delivered.

[105] [Matt. xxvii. 14.](#) “And he answered him to never a word.” The reason why he did not speak, or answer his accusers and those that sought his life from falsehood, malice, unreasonableness, and cruelty, was his wonderful meekness in the midst of all the affronts and injuries, afflictions and vexations, that he was surrounded with. He chose that there should not be the least appearance of a disquieted, ruffled temper; and he did not speak as vindicating himself, because he knew it would signify nothing, and that there might be no appearance as if he flinched and gave back, and was not willing to suffer, or endeavoured to avoid that which was his errand into the world, or repented, when it came to that, that he had undertaken so great a task for his people.

[21] [Matt. xxvi.](#) These things seem to be intended to be shadowed by what is related in this chapter: 1. That Christ is betrayed by pretended disciples. These are those that deliver him up to his open enemies. So it has been all along; antichrist is another Judas, who pretending to be the follower of Christ, is his worst enemy in the world, as Judas more incensed God’s anger than his murderers. So hypocrites in all ages are the betrayers of Christ; who, by a seeming embracing of religion, expose Christ to shame and mockery, as Judas with a kiss. And, 2. What should afterwards come to pass, that the clergy would be the chief persecutors of Christ, as the priests of the Jews were.

[339] [Matt. xxvii. 45.](#) “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.” This darkness seems to be a presage of the approaching destruction of that land, for that sin of crucifying Christ. This darkness begins *at noon*, whereby the sun, as it were, went down at noon. The prophet Amos, in the 8th chapter of his prophecy, foretelling the destruction of the land, when the end shall come upon the people of Israel, and God will not pass by them any more, and the songs of the temple shall be turned into

howlings, and there shall be many dead bodies in every place, says in the [9th verse](#). “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.

This also seems to be a fulfilment of [Jer. ii. 12, 13](#). “Be ye astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid; be ye very desolate, saith the Lord, for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters.”

[340] [Matt. xxvii. 51](#). “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” This was the veil that hindered our access to the throne of grace, or the mercy-seat in the holy of holies.

That hiding of the mercy-seat, and hindering of our access to the mercy-seat, figured a twofold hinderance of access to God.

1. The hinderance by which all men are kept off while they remain under the first covenant of works; they are hindered by their guilt, God’s law and justice.

2. That hinderance of free access that was under the first testament while the church was in a legal state, and in its minority, and under carnal, ordinances, so that access was rare and difficult, only allowed to the high priest, and that but once a year: so that the veil signifies two things, *viz.* 1. The sin of man, both guilt and corruption of heart; which both in diverse respects are a veil to hide the mercy-seat, and hinder our access. Both these were typified by the flesh of Christ. The sin of God’s people, or elect church, was typified by Christ’s flesh; for sin is called flesh in Scripture, and the elect church is Christ mystical; so that Christ, in taking flesh upon him, took their sin upon him: he became sin for us, and when his flesh was crucified, when his human nature died, then this veil was removed, for that abolished the sin of the elect church. So likewise Christ in the flesh, in his infirm, weak state, signified the church, or Christ mystical, in its Old-Testament minority, when it was in its weak, infirm, and carnal state, under carnal ordinances, under the elements of the world; and those carnal ordinances, and carnal dispensations, that Christ mystical was under, was as it were the flesh of Christ. When Christ died, then there was an end to those types and shadows, because they were then all fulfilled.

Christ’s human nature was a temple; it was the antitype of the temple; and his flesh, or the infirmity of his human nature, was the veil that hid the glory of God, or the divinity that dwells in him, and was in his person. So that the veil of the temple, in the 3d place, typified the literal flesh of Christ, that had veiled his glory; which it ceased to do when his state of humiliation was at an end. Christ himself, our great High Priest, entered into the holy of holies through the veil of his own flesh. That day that Christ died, was the great day of atonement, typified by the day of atonement of old, when the high priest entered into the holy of holies. Christ, as God man, could enter into heaven no other way than by rending this veil. Christ offered his sacrifice in the outward court, in this world, and then in the conclusion of it rent the veil, that his blood might be sprinkled within the veil.



[98] [Matt. xxvii. 60.](#) “And laid it in his own new tomb.” Christ was laid in a disciple’s grave; he suffered that death which belonged to us, and he was laid in our grave. He entered into the shade of death in our stead; he went down into that deep pit where we were to have gone. He had no sin of his own, so he had no death of his own: it was our sin, and our grave: it was a tomb hewed out of a rock. Our state of death and misery was such, that it would have been impossible for us to escape; for our prison that we are going to is strong as a solid rock.

[220] [Matt. xxviii.](#) The accounts of the four evangelists, concerning the resurrection of Christ, reconciled.

In the first place, there was a great earthquake; an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. [Matt. xxviii. 2, 3, 4.](#) And presently, as soon as their extraordinary surprise would allow them, they ran away into the city; and then, soon after they were gone, Mary Magdalene, from her extraordinary affection, comes to the sepulchre before the other woman, while it was yet dark, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre, and finds not the body there, and then runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them,<sup>558</sup> “They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him;” then Peter and John came running to the sepulchre; and Mary returns with them or comes after them as fast as she could. Peter and John went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes lying, but found not the body of Christ, and not knowing what to make of things, went away again. Mr. Prince supposed that Luke speaks of this coming of Peter to the sepulchre in the [24th chapter of his Gospel, 12th verse.](#), and supposes the word should have been rendered thus, “Now Peter also had risen, and ran to the sepulchre, and stooping down, saw the linen clothes lying by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at what was done;” but when they were gone, Mary staid behind, and would not go away. She probably staid waiting for the company of women that she expected would presently come with spices to anoint the body; but as she stood there weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and saw two angels in white, sitting one at the head, and the other at the foot, where the body of Jesus had lain; they speak to her, and ask her why she wept; she answers, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him; and when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.<sup>559</sup>” (Probably because the twilight was yet dim.) Jesus asked her why she wept. She, supposing him to be the gardener, says to him, “Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him,

558 [John xx 2.](#)

559 [John xx. 13.](#)

and I will take him away. Jesus saith to her, Mary;<sup>560</sup>” and she then knew him, and worships him. Christ bids her go and inform his disciples, &c. On which Mary went away in haste to tell his disciples, and did not wait till the women came with the spices as she intended; [Mark xvi.9, 10, 11.](#) [John xx. 1-19.](#)

The other women, that were concerned in the design of anointing the body of Jesus, went together in order to go to the sepulchre about break of day, and came to the sepulchre about sun-rise, after Mary Magdalene was gone, whom they had not seen, nor she them; and they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? and when they came, they found that the stone was rolled away. [Mark xvi. 2, 3, 4.](#) and [Luke xxiv. 1, 2.](#) “And they entered in, (the angel now not appearing on the stone,) and found not the body of Jesus there; and while they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments,” and one of them of a distinguished brightness and glorious appearance, being the same, the glory and majesty of whose appearance had so terrified the keepers. He sat on the right side, clothed in a long white garment. [Matt. xxviii. 4, 5.](#) [Luke xxiv. 3, 4.](#) [Mark xvi. 5.](#) This angel on the right side is he that speaks to them, saying, “Fear ye not; I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here, for he is risen, as he said; come, see the place where the Lord lay; and remember how he spake unto you while he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. But go your way quickly; tell his disciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him as he said unto you. Lo, I have told you.<sup>561</sup>” [Matt. xxviii. 5, 6, 7.](#) [Mark xvi. 6, 7.](#) [Luke xxiv. 5, 6, 7.](#) “And they remembered his words, and they came out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre, for they trembled and were amazed, nor said they any thing to any one, for they were affrighted, they came out with fear and great joy, as they ran to bring his disciples word. [Matt. xxviii. 8.](#) [Mark xvi. 8.](#) [Luke xxiv. 8.](#) [Matt. xxviii. 9.](#) “And as they went to bring his disciples word, lo, Jesus met them, saying, All hail; and they came to him, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid; go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. [Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.](#) And they returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.”

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560 [John xx. 15.](#)

561 [Luke xxiv. 5.](#)





[76] [Mark i. 24.](#) “Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.” The devils were exceedingly jealous of Christ; they understood of old that the Son of God was to come into the world to destroy them, and they dreaded that destruction. It is probable that Christ came in a manner very unexpected to them, as well as to the Jews; but yet they were sensible who he was, they seemed to think that Christ appeared in so low and obscure a manner, out of some secret design against them; that he came in disguise that they might not know of it, that he might some way or other be under better advantage to overthrow them; they therefore are willing to let him know that they knew who he was.

[23] [Mark iv. 5.](#) “And immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth.” The weakest minds, and persons of the least solidity, soonest receive a thing that is new and externally plausible, and at first receive it with most lively emotions of their spirits, being guided by fancy only; but the more solid and substantial mind is more slow and deliberate, and weighs matters in an even balance, and comes to it by degrees; but when once it is fixed, it is lasting and immovable, and grows stronger and stronger, and brings forth substantial fruit.

[24] [Mark iv. 25.](#) “For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.” Spiritual and heavenly gifts are not given merely in proportion to a person’s improvement of what he has, in such a manner that he that has but little, if he improves it as well in proportion to what he has, shall receive as great a reward as he that has a great deal; for then the additional talent should with equal reason be given to him who at first received the two talents, as to him who received five; [Matt. xxv. 28.](#); but it was not; and the reason is given in the [29th verse.](#) “For to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.” It is so with respect to advantages and privileges: he that improves great advantages well shall receive a greater reward than he that improves small ones; otherwise they could be no advantages; therefore glory, honour, and peace is given to every man that worketh good, but “to *the Jew* first.” [Rom. ii. 10.](#)

[25] [Mark iv. 26, 27, 28.](#) “And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” So the kingdom of God comes without observation, without noise and tumult, but goes silently and calmly, but irresistibly, on. So it increased gradually from Christ’s disciples, till, in about three hundred years, it filled the world, and yet grew nobody knew how, being promoted by an invisible hand, without war, noise, and clamour; by operating on men’s understandings and wills. So the kingdom of God often in the same manner grows in men’s hearts, being at first only as an invisible seed, but afterwards as the blade, then the ear, then the full corn.

[26] [Mark vi. 44.](#) “And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men;” not that the multitude that was about him now was more numerous than very frequently at other times; whereby we know how publicly Christ’s miracles were wrought.

[27] [Mark vi. 52.](#) “For they considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were hardened.” By hardness of heart here, and in other places, is intended so largely as to take in blindness of mind, and the depravation of the faculties of the mind in general, and the prevention of their exercises.

[29] [Mark ix. 29.](#) This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.” Wherefore *fasting*, that which is here so called, is acceptable to God, now, under the New Testament.

[30] [Mark ix. 38, 39.](#) “And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followed not us, and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not.” Hereby is the justice of many in these days condemned, who will not suffer others to do good, and use their endeavours to save men’s souls and dispossess Satan, because they follow not them.

[31] [Mark ix. 42.](#) “Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believeth in me,” &c. Christians are but babes and infants in this world, especially were Christ’s disciples so at that time; and the primitive church was an infant, they are called by the apostle John, *little children*. Christians must become as little children in humility, innocency, tender-heartedness, &c. By *offend*, in Scripture, is intended *to cause to offend*. We hereby learn how dangerous and dreadful a sin it is to endeavour to make weak Christians go against their consciences.

[148] [Mark x. 29, 30.](#) “There is no man that hath left house or brethren, &c. but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life.” We may be helped to understand this place by Matthew’s account of the same thing, [Matt. xix. 27.](#), &c. where we have an account that Christ told his disciples upon John’s asking this question at the same time, that they should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, *i. e.* they should be the means of the conversion of the world, the world should be given into their hands, should be brought to embrace their doctrine, and their word should be the standard of their faith, and rule of their worship and practice, and thus they had houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, an hundred-fold. They had the houses of all the Christians to receive them, and at their service; they had brethren and sisters, for all Christians were such in Christ; they had mothers, for so were the churches of Christ. We may observe in the foregoing verse, their forsaking fathers is mentioned, the fathers are not put in here as being restored an hundred-fold, but only mothers, but one Father, even their heavenly Father; they were to have children, for so were those they converted, and lands,

for most regions of the earth were to be given to them. The meek shall then inherit the earth. This is especially fulfilled in the glorious times of the church, after the fall of antichrist.

[226] [Mark xi. 13.](#) “And seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves, *for the time of figs was not yet.*” By the time of figs here, seems to be meant the fig-harvest, or the time of the ingathering of figs; as the author of the Reply to Woolston with great probability supposes, agreeably to the manner of expression in [Matt. xxi. 34.](#) “When the time of the fruit drew nigh,” Greek or Hebrew, and [Ps. i. 4.](#) “Yields its fruit in its season.” This is given as a reason why Christ came seeking and expecting figs on the tree. The time of ingathering of them was not yet come, and therefore he might well expect to find them hanging. The particle (for) has reference not separately to the last words, *viz. and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves,* but it has reference to the whole sentence taken together, signifying that he came seeking and expecting fruit, and was disappointed. Those words, *for the time of figs was not yet,* contain a reason both why he came, and why it was a disappointment to him to find none, both which are understood and necessarily implied in the words preceding.

If we suppose the particle (for) here has no reference at all to the last words, *viz. when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves,* but look on the words as a parenthesis, this is no difficulty; for we have an instance fully parallel in [Luke xix. 24, 25, 26.](#) “And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds: *for* I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.” Whence it is most evident that the consecutive particle *for* has no reference to the words immediately preceding, *viz.* “And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds;” but to those before. See also a parallel instance, [Mark xvi. 3, 4.](#)

And though the fig-harvest was not yet come, or the time of general ingathering of figs, yet it was a time of year, as the fore-mentioned author observes, wherein Christ might expect to find some ripe figs fit for eating on the tree; for, as he observes, the more common sort of fig-trees in those parts brings two crops in a year; (see [Hosea ix. 10.](#);) and that the first ripe fruits of the first crop might be expected then; and that Josephus says, that at the time of the passover some Jewish robbers made an excursion from the castle of Mastada, and carried off the ripe fruits belonging to the town of Engaddi; and that he, describing the fruitfulness of the country of Gennesareth, says, “It affords figs and grapes for ten months without intermission;” and that Pliny says, these two crops of figs kept pace with the harvest and vintage; and that, if so, the first crop will be ripe at about the time of the passover; and that the end. of the winter and beginning of spring in Judea was, at latest, about the middle of February, and then the fig-tree began to put forth green figs, agreeably to [Cant. ii. 13.](#); and therefore, that in the words, “the time of fruit is not yet,” is signified, that the barrenness of the tree, and not merely that the fact that the proper time wherein figs used to be ripe



was not yet come, was the reason why Christ did not find eatable figs on the tree, since, in the latter case, it never would have been expressed, as it is here, that he found *nothing but leaves*, but rather that he found *nothing but green figs*; for, undoubtedly, by what has been observed, there must be green figs on all fig-trees that were not barren long before this time.

[32] [Mark xii. 7.](#) “But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.” This was really the case with the Pharisees; they were the teachers of this people, and they saw, if Christ was followed, they should be neglected; this greatly startled them; they feared losing their credit, so that they should be unable to rule that nation any longer; but if they could any way prevail to kill him, they doubted not but they should have quiet possession still.

[33] [Mark xii. 29.](#) “And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scripture, neither the power of God; for when they shall rise from the dead they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven.” We may conclude, therefore, that these doctrine of a future state and the resurrection are taught, and may be heard in the Old Testament, yea, and in general the manner of it may be known by it.

[34] [Mark xiii. 22.](#) “For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.” Let us explain election which way we will, and one of these two doctrine is established. If the election spoken of precedes their calling, the doctrine of predestination is established; if it follows, and they are chosen for their Christianity, then the doctrine of perseverance is established; for it is impossible to seduce such, as is implied.

[Mark xvi.](#) See No. 220. [Matt. xxviii.](#)

[314] [Luke i. 35](#). “And the angel answered, and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.”

The Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, was a type of two things: she was a type of the church, that is often in Scripture represented as Christ’s mother that travails in pain with him, and brings him forth; she brings him forth in the hearts of believers, and especially those that are ministers in the church, who (as the apostle said he did) do travail in birth with souls; and he, being brought forth, appears and lives in their lives. The church is also represented as a chaste, pure virgin, and she is often called his undefiled in the Canticles. She nourishes Christ, or grace, in the hearts of the saints by the ordinances of religion, and those means of grace that are maintained in the church. She affords the sincere milk of the word, by which believers, as new-born babes, are nourished, and do grow. And the blessed Virgin, in conceiving and bringing forth Christ, is an eminent type of every believing soul, who is Christ’s brother, and sister, and mother. As Christ was formed in her, so is he in every true convert; he was formed in her by the Holy Ghost’s coming upon, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her; which is a lively representation of the manner in which the new creature is formed in the saints. The mother of Christ was a pure virgin; so are believers represented in Scripture; they are represented as chaste virgins to Christ, they are those that are not defiled with women, for they are virgins, as is said in Revelations. The blessed Virgin brought forth Christ with pain; so is Christ commonly brought forth in the hearts of believers with that contrition, and repentance, and sorrow for sin, that self-denial and mortification, that may fitly be compared to the pains of a woman in travail. As the blessed Virgin nourished her babe with nourishment from her breast, so Christ in the heart is refreshed with the exercises of graces in the saints, and their good works, which are often represented in Scripture as food to Christ in the heart, or the principle of grace there, which is as a new-born child, and causes it to grow; and the exercises and fruits of grace that come from the hearts of the saints, do as it were nourish Christ’s interest in the world, and cause Christ’s mystical body, which is small as in infancy, to be strengthened and increased. The mother of Christ was very careful of Christ when he was an infant, tended him with great care, watched over him lest he should be hurt, and was careful to feed and nourish him, when he was wounded to heal him, to please and gratify him, and by all means to promote his health and growth, as tender mothers are wont to do their little children. So should the believer do with respect to Christ in the heart. The care that a tender mother has of her infant, is a very lively image of the love that a Christian ought to have of grace in the heart. It is a very constant care; the child must be continually looked after; it must be taken care of both day and night. When the mother wakes up in the night she has her child to look after and nourish at her breast, and it sleeps in her bosom, and it must be continually in the mother’s bosom, or arms, there to be upheld and cherished; it needs its food and nourishment much

oftener than adult persons; it must be fed both day and night; it must in every thing be gratified and pleased; the mother must bear the burden of it as she goes to and fro. This is also a lively image of the care that the church, especially the ministers of the gospel, should have of the interests of Christ, committed to their care; [1 Thess. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9](#). “We might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ; but we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail; for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.” That when the church is spoken of under the character of a mother, the ministers are especially meant, see Note on [Cantic. ii. 11](#). at the latter end.

[137] [Luke viii. 28, 30](#). The legion of devils besought Christ that he would not torment them, and that he would command them to go out into the deep. This shows that the devils had a very trembling expectation of having their punishment completed, and of being dreadfully destroyed some time or other, by the Messiah.

[28] [Luke xi. 44](#). “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,” &c. The Jewish church was now in its apostatized state, being become a hypocritical, superstitious, corrupt, haughty, persecuting church, very much as the apostatized Christian church under antichrist, only in a far less degree, but their crimes were exactly of the same nature. It is called a generation of vipers; like as the church of Rome is called the dragon, the beast. Here it was that our Lord was crucified; and the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world, was required of this generation, [verse 50](#). So the church of Rome is said to be the city where our Lord was crucified, [Rev. xi. 8](#). “And that in her was found the blood of prophets, of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth;” and in innumerable things did this apostatized church agree with the church of Rome. Now the scribes and Pharisees were the teachers of the nation, and as their clergy, and were the haughtiest, most hypocritical, most covetous, deceitful, and malicious, persecuting sort of men in the whole nation; their enormities that are mentioned here and elsewhere, exactly to a wonder corresponding with those of the Romish clergy, and the high church; their temper and behaviour was just as this is.

[295] [Luke x. 38](#),. to the end. *Concerning Mary’s and Martha’s different ways of showing their respect to Christ*. Martha and Mary seem to be types of different churches, or rather different parts of the Christian church: the one showing their respect to Christ by much external service and ceremony, as Martha was cumbered about much serving; the other that part of the church that is more pure and spiritual in their worship, as Mary sat at his feet, and heard his word. Particularly Martha represents the Jewish Christian church in the apostles’ days, made up of Jews and judaizing Christians, who were fond of the ceremonies of the Jewish worship. Mary represents the Gentile church; they were more spiritual in their

worship. What is signified in this type is also exemplified in the church of England, that is cumbered about much serving; their worship consisting much in external form and ceremony: and the church of Scotland, and the dissenters in England, are like Mary, who worship Christ according to his own institutions, without the pomp and cumbrance of outward forms. Martha was the elder sister, so the Jewish church was the elder sister with respect to the Gentiles; so the church of England is the elder sister, and has the ascendant over the other, and has the chief government of the house, as the house that Christ was in is called Martha's house, [ver. 38](#). Martha complains of Mary that she did not join with her in her external service, and would have Christ oblige her to help her; so those churches that are ceremonious in their worship, are commonly impatient of others, who dissent from them, and are of an imposing spirit, and are desirous of having others being obliged to conformity. So was it with the Jewish-Christian church in the primitive times with respect to the Gentile church, and so it is with the church of England. Christ declares that Mary's way of showing respect to him was far the most necessary and most acceptable; so is that worship that is pure and spiritual.

[3] [Luke xiv. 22, 23](#). In this parable is represented, 1st, The rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, 22d verse. But in the 23rd there is manifestly another general calling of the Gentiles spoken of; the first is that which is called *the calling of the Gentiles*; the next, that which is called in Scripture, *the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles*. It is manifest, therefore, by this text, that there remains yet another calling of the Gentiles than hath yet been.

[40] [Luke xv. 21, 22](#). "And the father said to the servant, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf," &c. As Christ's eating with the publicans and sinners, was figurative of the calling of the Gentiles, so are the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son, especially the last, agreeing in all circumstances.

[41] [Luke xvii. 20](#). "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." This clears up any difficulties that might be raised from any speeches of Christ, or the apostles, that seem to speak of a *bodily descent* of Christ from heaven, to receive his kingdom, in a very short time.

[42] [Luke xvii. 30, to the end](#). "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed;" and the following verses, especially the last, may convince us that the coming or revealing of Christ, so often spoken of by Christ and his apostles that was to be so suddenly, was at the destruction of Jerusalem.

[233] [Luke xviii. 35](#). "And it came to pass that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging." Here this is said to be as *he came nigh unto* the city, in the original it is said, &lt;v™ enifeiv, *in his approaching* to the city. And we have an account

afterwards in the first verse of the next chapter of Jesus's entering and passing through Jericho. And yet it is said in [Matt. xx. 29.](#) that it was as they *departed from* Jericho, or as it is in the original, *exvopfuontm\* ouron-*, *they going out of* Jericho; and in Mark, the same is said, and there we have an account before of his coming to Jericho, [Mark x. 46.](#) "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho, with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus," &c. It seems to me the difficulty and seeming inconsistency is thus to be solved, *viz.* That Jesus passed near the Jordan the day before from the other side, where he had been, [John x. 40, 41, 42.](#) [Matt. xix. 1, 2.](#) [Mark x. 1.](#) and came to the suburbs of Jericho that night, and that this is what is meant by Mark, when it is said *they came to* Jericho, in the first words of [chap. x. 46.](#) now mentioned; and that Christ did not go into the main city that night, but lodged in the suburbs for the comfort of lodging, and to avoid the crowd and throng of people, for it is evident that the people were now in a great disposition to flock after him and throng him, by the whole context of these places. If he had gone into the midst of so populous a city as Jericho that evening, the multitude would necessarily have greatly distressed him that night; and that Christ did lodge somewhere after he came over the Jordan into Judea, before he entered the main city of Jericho, seems evident by this, that otherwise we shall not find room for the four days that Lazarus had been dead before he came to Bethany, if we suppose the day that he was raised to be the fourth day; for we are told that, when Christ heard he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was, even beyond the Jordan, [John xi.6.](#) compared with the next verse, and the 40th verse of the foregoing chapter. Lazarus died before Christ heard this news, as is evident by what Christ said, [verse 11.](#) It was when Christ was going out of that place into Judea, that he said to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep;" by this we cannot rationally suppose that he died sooner than the day before he went over the Jordan, which may be reckoned one day of his being dead, and when he came over the Jordan and lodged in the suburbs of it, there was two days, and the next day he passed through Jericho and lodged at the house of Zaccheus, [Luke xix. 5.](#), &c. and the next day he came to Bethany, which is four days. There is a necessity of supposing that Christ lodged somewhere on this side of the Jordan before he came to the house of Zaccheus; but it seems evident that he did not lodge at all in the old city of Jericho, but passed directly through it, and came to Zaccheus's house the same day that he entered and passed through the city, by [Luke xix. 1,2.](#) "And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho, and behold, there was a man named Zaccheus," &c.

Another thing further strengthens the probability that Christ had lodged a night on this side of the Jordan before that day that he passed through the city and came to the house of Zaccheus, *viz.* that if he went through the city to his house, the same day that he came near the Jordan, it is not at all likely there would have been gathered such a multitude to him, there would not have been time for it. The multitude was exceedingly great, as appears from



the blind man's taking so much notice of the noise they made as they passed, [Luke xviii. 36.](#) and by Zaccheus's being forced to climb a sycamore-tree to see him; and therefore thus the seeming inconsistency between the evangelists is solved.

Jesus's coming from beyond the Jordan to the suburbs of Jericho, and lodging there, Mark calls his coming to Jericho, [chap. x. 46.](#); and when Christ set out on his journey the next morning to go from Jericho further towards Jerusalem, Mark calls his setting out from Jericho as his going forth from that city, though the main city was in his way, and he passed through it in his journey, which is not disagreeable to our customary way of speaking. If a man that belongs to a certain town, suppose the town of Northampton, then living in the outskirts of it on the north side, sets out to go a journey to another town south of Northampton, supposing Hartford, and any one at his journey's end should ask him at what time it was that he set out from Northampton, such a question would be understood to mean at what time he began his journey from his own home at Northampton, though he after that passed through the main body of the town; or if he was on a journey before, and lodged at Northampton for a night, at a house in the utmost northern skirts of it, and so went forward on his journey to Hartford the next morning, this does not alter the case. The case seems to have been thus, that Jesus lodging in the eastern suburbs of Jericho, the people flocked to him in the morning before he set out on his journey, and when he set forth on his journey forwards to leave that town, on the borders of which he then was, Mark and Matthew speaking of him as then going out of Jericho, but between the place where he lodged and the walls of the main city, which he must pass through in his way; the blind man cried for mercy, and therefore Luke says it was as he was entering into the city.

Note, that the supposition of his coming over the Jordan is not agreeable to Doddridge's Harmony.

[338] [Luke xxii. 31.](#) "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." The true meaning of these words seems to be this. It is ordered in providence that Satan should at this time extraordinarily seek and hope to have you, and it is so ordered to that end, that by his temptations he might sift you as wheat; that is, that there might be a separation made between you and your corruptions, your pride and self-confidence, as wheat is separated from chaff by sifting; which proved to be the effect of those trials that Peter and the rest of the disciples had at that time; they were sifted and purified, and came forth abundantly brighter than before, as gold that is tried in the fire. It is not Satan's end in desiring to have them that is here spoken of, but God's end in so ordering it that Satan should desire to have them. Satan's end in desiring to have the saints, is not to sift them and purify the wheat from the chaff, but to destroy them.

[225] [Luke xxii. 44.](#) "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly." This was in his second prayer. He prayed more earnestly than in his first; but we cannot justly suppose that it is meant that he prayed more than before that his cup might pass from him, for this was



after the angel appeared to him from heaven, strengthening him, as in the foregoing verse. This angel came from heaven on that errand, to strengthen him with the more cheerfulness to take the cup and drink, and to go through with the sufferings that were before him, that were so dreadful to him; and therefore we must suppose, that in consequence of it, Christ was more strengthened in it. And though Christ seems to have had a greater sight of his sufferings given him after this strengthening than before, that caused such an agony, yet he was strengthened in order to fit him for a greater sight of them, and he had greater strength and courage to conflict and grapple with those awful apprehensions than before; his strength to bear sufferings is increased with his suffering. And then, seeing this angel came to strengthen him with courage to go through his sufferings, and Christ knew it, we must suppose that Christ now, in answer to what he said to God in his former prayer, herein had it signified that it was the will of God that he should drink that cup; and so it is not to be supposed that, immediately upon it, he prayed more earnestly than before that the cup might pass from him; that he should so do is utterly inconsistent with Matthew's account of this second prayer. The account we have of this second prayer of Christ in the other evangelists, together with [John xii. 27, 28.](#) and [Heb. v. 7.](#) serve well to lead us into an understanding of the matter of this prayer. Indeed, when the evangelist Mark gives us an account of this second prayer, he says that "he spake the same words that he did before." [Mark xiv. 39.](#) But, by what the evangelist Matthew says of it, we are not to understand this, as though he spake all the same words, but the same words with the last part of his former, *viz.* "Not what I will, but what thou wilt." The account Matthew gives of it, is this; [Matt. xxvi. 42.](#) "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father! if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." By Matthew's account, he prays the second time, as if he had received a signification from God, since he prayed before, that it was his will that the cup should not pass from him; and the evangelist Luke tells us how, *viz.* by the angel that came from God to strengthen him; and therefore, though he prays now more earnestly than before, yet he only prays that God's will may be done, *i. e.* not only in his sufferings, but in the effects and fruits of them; that God would so order it, that his end and will may be obtained by them, in that glory to his name, particularly the glory of his grace and mercy in the salvation and happiness of his chosen ones, which he intended by them. Christ's second request after it was signified and determined that it was the will of God that he should drink the cup, corresponds with his second request that was made on the same account that we have in [John xii. 27, 28.](#) The first request was the same as here, and in like trouble; "Now is my soul troubled, and what shalt I say? Father, save me from this hour." And then after this he was determined within himself as now, that the will of God must be done, otherwise that he should not be saved from that hour. "But for this cause came I to this hour;" and then his second request after this is, "Father, glorify thy name" So this was the purport of this second request, as Matthew gives us an account of it, saying the same also the third time,

ver. 44. wherein the evangelist Luke says, “He being in an agony, prayed more earnestly,” which seems to be the strong crying and tears that the apostle has respect to, [Heb. v. 7, 8](#). “As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek: who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered.” The thing that he feared, and the thing that he prayed to be delivered from, in those prayers and supplications, that he offered up with such earnestness and agonies, to him that was able to save him from death, that so the Father’s will might be done, and his glory attained in his sufferings, was that he might be *saved from death* that though he must drink the cup and pass through death, yet *that he might not be swallowed up; that he might not fail and sink in so great a trial, but might overcome*. As Christ is represented praying, [Psal. lxxix. 14, 15](#). He prayed that his heart might not utterly fail in his last passion, and that it might be effectual for the obtaining of God’s will and the glorious ends proposed. If he had failed, all would have failed, and the whole affair would have been entirely frustrated. The man Christ Jesus, in such an extraordinary and terrible sight of the cup he had to drink, did not trust in his own feeble human nature to support him, but looked to God for support. If he had not overcome in that sore trial and dreadful conflict, he would never have been *saved from death*; (for *his resurrection was our release* from the grave, was *our token* that he had vanquished, and fulfilled and satisfied God’s will;) and then all would have failed, and we should never have been redeemed. Our faith would have been vain, and we should have remained yet in our sins. The things which Christ prayed for, and the things in which he was heard, were those two things mentioned in [Isa. xlix. 8](#). When Christ prayed to be delivered from death, it was not as a private person, but as a common Head. His deliverance from death is virtually the deliverance of all the elect. Thus this High Priest (for he is spoken of as such in that place in Hebrews, see verse foregoing) offered up prayers and supplications with his sacrifice, as the Jews were wont to do. He mixed strong cryings and tears with his blood that was shed out, and fell down to the ground in his agony, praying that the effect and end of that blood might be obtained. Such earnest agonizing prayers were offered with his blood, and his infinitely precious and meritorious blood was offered with his prayers. How effectual must such prayers be! And how sure may those be of salvation that have an interest in those supplications!

[311] Christ, in these strong cries and tears, wherein he wrestled with God in a bloody sweat for the success of his sufferings in the salvation of the elect, hath given us example how we should seek our own salvation, and the salvation of others, whose souls are committed to our care; *viz.* as striving, wrestling, and agonizing with God. See [Prov. ii.](#) at the beginning. When Christ says, [Luke xiii. 24.](#) “*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate,” the word in the original for *strive* is &lt;n«».i?»&lt;rt)«, *agonize*.

[122] “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace;” that is, he has a fulness of grace, and we receive grace from him, answerable to his grace *for* grace, that is grace *answerable* to grace. The word *uv*<sup>m</sup>, translated *for*, signifies so. Christ has many gifts from the Father, and we have gift for gift.



[446] [John i. 31](#). “And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel,” &c. This may seem strange that John did not know Jesus, seeing the families were so related; Elisabeth, his mother, being cousin to the Virgin Mary, and they were intimately acquainted one with another, and at the very time of their pregnancy, when the child of each had been already conceived, and both were thoroughly acquainted with the miraculous circumstances of each other’s conception, and what the children were that they had conceived, and to what end they were to come into the world; and conversed together of these things. Soon after Christ’s birth, he was conveyed away privately by his parents into Egypt, for fear of Herod, and probably nobody knew where they were gone, or what was become of them. There it is supposed that he remained in Egypt until the death of Herod; and Archelaus his son, reigning in his stead in the province of Judea, and manifesting by some bloody acts in the beginning of his reign, the like tyrannical disposition with his father, Joseph and Mary returned from Egypt, we may suppose, as privately as they could, into Nazareth, an obscure city in Galilee the province of Herod Antipas. And as to John the Baptist, when Herod massacred the infants at Bethlehem, his malice proceeded as far as the hill-country; for having heard great things of John, the son of Zechariah, he sent one of his messengers of death to despatch him. The care of his mother prevented the design, by flying with him into the wilderness, or unfrequented parts of the country, on the south side of the river Jordan. It is recorded by Nicephorus, lib. i. cap. 14. that he was about eighteen months old when he was conveyed into this sanctuary, that forty days after his mother died, and near the same time his father Zechariah was killed in the court of the temple. [There is an account of these things in *Reading’s* Evangelical History of Christ, chap. vii. viii ix. x.] However, thus much seems manifest from the Scripture, that John’s parents were both old when he was born, and therefore we may well suppose that they did not live long after, so that he could not be led by them into personal acquaintance with Jesus; and it is also manifest that John was from his infancy in the desert, in a hidden, secret state of life, even unto the day when he began his public ministry; ([Luke i. 80](#).) and that there he lived so much separated from the rest of the Jews, and from the society of mankind, that he lived on the spontaneous productions of the uncultivated desert, his meat being locusts and wild honey, and his garment nothing but camels’ hair, girt about him with a girdle of skin, [Matt. iii. 4](#). [Mark i. 6](#). And so when he began to preach it was in the borders of the wilderness, where he had lived all his days, [Matt. iii. 1, 3](#). [Mark i. 4](#). [Luke iii. 2, 4](#). Therefore Christ says to the multitudes concerning John, “What went ye out into *the wilderness* for to see?” [Matt. xi 7](#). [Luke vii. 24](#).

Things being thus, it is not to be wondered at that John had never seen Jesus, who lived obscurely so remote from him, and that he knew not where he was, or how to find him, till God showed him to him.

[368] [John ii. 1, 2](#). *Concerning the marriage at Cana of Galilee*. The company here at this wedding may represent the church of Christ, who are often represented as the guests

called together to a marriage feast. Jesus, and his mother, and his disciples were there; thus it is in the church. The former circumstances of the marriage, wherein they wanted wine, represent the state of the church before Christ came, or rather before the evangelical dispensation was established. The latter state of the wedding, wherein they had plenty of wine, represents the latter state of the church after the glorious pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and especially after the fall of antichrist. The wine represents the spiritual supplies of his church, the grace and comforts of the Holy Spirit, which are often represented by wine in Scripture. Their wine ran low and was just out; so formerly the Old-Testament church had a supply of wine; but when Christ came into the world it was just out, they had in a manner no wine. But when Christ came and ascended up to heaven, he soon gave his church plenty of wine, and much better wine than ever the Jewish church had enjoyed, as it is said, "Thou hast kept the best wine until now." So again, before the glorious times of the church commence, the church's wine runs very low, and is almost out; what they allay with is *water*; human learning, sapless speculations and disputations, and dead morality. Formerly the Christian church had wine, as in the times of the primitive church, and in the times of the reformation, but now their wine is just gone. But after the beginning of these glorious times their water shall be turned into wine, and much better wine than ever they had before. The mother of Jesus may represent the more eminent ministers of the gospel, or the public ecclesiastical authority as exercised in synods, public schools, &c. They in a dark and dead time of the church complain to Christ of their unsuccessfulness, of the want of wine in the church, and look to him for a supply, but must not expect an answer till Christ's time is come; their prayers are not answered till then, and then they shall be fully answered; their prayers are not rejected, they are offered up with incense, the cries of the souls under the altar that cry, "How long, Lord, holy and true!" are not rejected; but yet it is said to them that they should wait till God's time comes. The servants represent gospel ministers, they have a command from Jesus's mother, *i. e.* from the church in her public authority, to do whatsoever Jesus commands. Whence we may note that the way to have a plentiful effusion of the Spirit with his word and ordinances, is to be faithful in their work. They are to fill up the water-pots of purification with water; that is all that they can do. They can in the use of the ordinances of God's house, and the appointed means of grace and purification, be instant in season and out of season; they can fill the water-pots up to the brim; they can be abundant in preaching the word, which as it comes only from them is but water, a dead letter, a sapless, tasteless, spiritless thing, but this is what Christ will bless for the supplying of his church with wine.

[47] [John ii. 21](#). "But he spake of the temple of his body." And it seems to me here that he should speak of his body in two senses: in one sense, of the church, which is called his body, and is also called the temple of God, of which the temple of Jerusalem was a type. The

temple of Jerusalem may signify the Jewish church Christ put an end to by his coming, and in three ages after erected his spiritual temple, the Christian church.

[26] [John v. 45. viii. 15. xii. 47.](#) “I judge him not, for I am not come to judge the world, but to save the world.” Men are not properly judged and condemned by the covenant of grace, but by the law, a covenant of works, that is the eternal rule of judgment. The covenant of grace is a deliverance from this judgment: those who are Christ’s are delivered from the law and escape the condemnation of it; the law has its force upon Christ, and can go no further; but the law has its full force upon unbelievers.

[263] [John vii. 38, 39.](#) “Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit.” The Spirit of God in the saints is called living water upon three accounts.

1. And chiefly it is meant that the water had life in it; common water is mere passive dead matter. But this water is alive, it is a living divine person. So Christ is called a living stone, [1 Peter ii. 4.](#) This water is not only something *living*, but it is *life* itself; it is that spirit that is the very life of God, and so is divine and infinitely perfect life, and act, and energy; for which cause partly the Spirit of God is called water of life, [Rev. xxii.](#) at the beginning. Because divine life is the very matter of this water.

2. He is living water, as he is life-giving water, as Christ is called the living bread, [John vi.](#) and as the Spirit of God is called living bread there in that chap. [ver. 63.](#) vid. No. 262. He is living bread, as he is life-giving bread; for so Christ explains himself in that [chap. iii.](#) It is living water in those in whom it is, as it is like a spring that never fails; as it gives life, so it will infallibly maintain life for ever. So it seems to be explained by Christ, [John iv. 10, 11, 13, 14.](#) and especially the 14th. So Christ is called *bread of life*, because they that eat of him shall never die, but live for ever, [John vi.](#) So the hope of Christians to which they are begotten by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is said to be, [1 Peter i. 3.](#) a living hope, *i. e.* a never-dying, never-failing hope; vid. Notes in loc. But yet it is not probable that this water would on account of its perpetuity be called living water, if there was no life in the water, and life was not the thing that was perpetual; for it does not appear that springs of water that were never dry were, on that account, called *living* springs then, as now, but it seems to be a metaphor invented since.

[234] [John x. 34, 35, 36.](#) “Jesus answered them, It is written in your law, I said, Ye are gods. If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him,” &c. The rulers of God’s people were called gods, because unto them the word of God came, *i. e.* his law was come to them, was committed to them, and trusted with them for them to enforce and execute: they were herein instead of God to the people. Because they held forth the law, or word of God, the law of God was in a sense their law. They were judges or executors of the law for God, for the judgment was God’s, [Deut. i. 17. 2 Chron. xix. 6.](#) Herein they were types of Christ, to whom the Father hath committed all judgment. Thus it was a ceremony in Israel, in inaugurating a king, to bring the law and



commit it to him; as [2 Kings xi. 12.](#) “And he brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, *and gave him the testimony*, and they made him king, and anointed him, and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.” Thus the word of God came to him. This interpretation of this exposition of Christ is confirmed by what God says to Moses, [Exod. iv. 16.](#) “And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people, and he shall be, even he shall be unto thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him *instead of God;*” *i. e.* by speaking the word of God to him, he was instead of God, because *the word of God came to him*, and was committed to him to speak in God’s name, and so in the [7th chap. verse 1.](#) “And the Lord said unto Moses, See I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet:” he represented God before Pharaoh, by the word of God in his mouth, as he spake in his name, and by his word wrought miracles before him.

These earthly rulers were called *gods*, because the *external word* of God came thus to them; whereby they were rendered types and images of the Son of God, the *internal word* of God; hence they are not only called *gods*, but the *sons of God*. [Psal. lxxxii. 6.](#) “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High;” and if they were called gods, only for thus resembling God’s Son, how much is Christ to be justified, who was himself the Son of God, when he called himself God!

[482] [John x. 34, 35, 36.](#) “Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I have said, Ye are gods,” &c. In the [82nd Psalm.](#), to which this refers, we see, ver. 6. those who are called *sons of the Highest* by the word of God that came to them, are by that same word called *gods*. So that in that passage, *son of the Highest*, is the same with God. Jesus takes notice that they are called *gods*, and he says the scripture cannot be broken, *i. e.* it must be verified; but verified it could not be in them who died like men, and fell thereby like other princes, (who were not called gods,) from that eminent station wherein they were called gods. It is not every prince or potentate among men that is called god in this psalm. Those called gods, are plainly the princes of Israel, the judges in God’s land, who stood and judged among them in that theocracy; and they are manifestly distinguished from other princes on the very same account on which they are called gods. For in their office as rulers and judges of Israel, they prefigured him who was to rule the house of Jacob for ever, and they stood in that office as his types, even as the priests prefigured him in his priesthood; therefore they are called gods; and the scripture calling them so is not broken, because what is said of these types holds fully true in their antitype; who is plainly enough pointed at in that same psalm, [ver. 8.](#), “Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.” They shall *die* like men, and fall like one of the princes: but he arises from the *dead* to judge and inherit the church of all nations. His resurrection manifests him to be truly God; the same God that stood in the congregation of these mighty, and judged among them, to whom the word of God came, “Ye are gods, and sons of the highest.” Vid. Glass’s Notes on Scripture Texts, No. 1. pp. 11, 12.



They are called gods, as the manna is called the bread from heaven, and angels' food, and as Cyrus is called God's Christ and his beloved, [Isa. xlv. 1. xlviii. 14.](#); and as Saul (whom the psalmist has a special respect to in [Psal. lxxxii.](#)) is called the Lord's Christ, (he fell like one of the other princes who were not called gods,) and as the rock in the wilderness is said to be Christ, and as many things are said of Solomon in the [72nd Psalm.](#), that are verified only in Christ That passage, [1 Kings xviii. 31.](#) may serve to explain these words, *To whom the word of God came*; "According to the number of the tribes of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel (*i. e.* the Prince of God) shall be thy name. The word of God came to Jacob in his prevailing with God, two ways.

1. God said to him, I have called you ISRAEL, *Prince of God*; as here, [Psal. lxxxii.](#) he says to the princes of Israel, "I have called you gods;" and that word of God came to them in [Exod. xxii. 28.](#)

2. God, by a special designation, made Jacob, in what he ordered concerning him, to be a type. Now, types are a sort of words; they are a language, or signs of things which God would reveal, point forth, and teach, as well as vocal or written words, and they are called *the word of the Lord*, in [Zech. iv. 6.](#) and [xi. 11.](#) "And thus also the word of the Lord came to the princes of Israel," *i. e.* that state and those circumstances came to them, and were ordered to them, that were typical of the Son of God, and were as it were God's word, signifying the dignity and office of the Messiah. Such divine significations, when persons were made the inherent subjects of them, were generally of the Son of God, the eternal personal Word; and therefore when such a typification happened, or was ordered to a person, or any person became the inherent subject of such a divine signification, the word of God was said to come to him. It was the signification or typification (if I may so speak) of the word of God, both as it was God's signification, and also as the thing signified was the personal word of God.

[33] [John xi. 51.](#) "And this spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation." By this it appears that things are ordered by God to be acted and spoken, after such a particular manner, with a design to indicate and represent heavenly things, without the least thought of the actors or speakers. See Note on [Gen. xxii. 8.](#)

[134] [John xvi. 8.](#), &c. "And when the Comforter is come he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." He shall convince the world of sin, as men must be convinced of their guilt, in order of their receiving of Christ. That is, the reason that sin and guilt lies upon them, is, because they believe not in Christ; and their rejecting Christ above all things enhances their guilt. Of his righteousness, that is, he will convince them of the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, of the way of removing guilt by him. Christ finished his work as priest, what he did for the removal of guilt, by his ascending into heaven, his entering into the holiest of all with his own blood to make intercession for us, and thereby gave evidence to the world, that what he had done was enough. [Ver. 10.](#) "Of righteousness,

because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;” that is, he shall convince the world of Christ’s sufficiency and excellency as a king and head of influence and government, as the sanctifier and deliverer of his people from their enemies, and he that brings them to eternal life. He delivers from the influence and power of the devil, redeems his captives, and in spite of him sanctifies and glorifies. In thus redeeming men by power, Satan is judged. [John xii. 31, 32. Verse 11.](#) “Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” The conviction here spoken of righteousness and judgment is to the same purpose with that, [Isa. xlv. 24.](#) “In the Lord Jehovah have I righteousness and strength,” and in the next verse, “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

[498] [John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.](#) “And when he is come he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” In these words of our Saviour is a great manifestation of his divine knowledge and wisdom.

The greatest SIN that is in the world, is sin against the gospel, contempt of, and opposition to, Jesus Christ; and the greatest evidence of the sin and wickedness of man, is the world’s ill treatment of Christ, and the gospel, and the followers of Christ. In this does most clearly appear the malignant nature of sin, and the true nature of it is fully manifest; and particularly that violent opposition that appears on occasion of the pouring out of the Spirit of God. As the coming of the Spirit is the occasion of this; so his coming eventually holds forth matter of conviction to the world of its wickedness. And those that are savingly taught by the Spirit, are in the first place convinced of sin, especially as appearing in their sinning against Christ, or against God, as revealing himself in the gospel. Thus we find that immediately after the pouring out of the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost, the Jews that were awakened, were reprov’d for this sin, of rejecting and crucifying Christ, and for this they were pricked in their hearts, and said, “Men and brethren, what shall we do,” [Acts ii.](#); see also [chap. iii. 13, 14.](#), &c. [iv. 11.](#), &c. [v. 30.](#), &c. [vii. 51.](#), &c. And when Saul was converted, this especially was the sin which he was reprov’d for, and convinced of. [Acts ix. 4, 5.](#) In most places where the apostles preached, there first arose great opposition, and the gospel finally prevailed against their opposition, and opposers were converted; and in this case we may suppose the thing wherein chiefly they were convinced of their sinfulness, was their opposition to Christ. This seems to have been the case with the gaoler; and so in all ages, they that are truly humbled by the Spirit of God, and brought to repentance, are wont to be convinced of their sins against the gospel.

The greatest and most glorious *righteousness* that ever was in the world, is the righteousness of Christ. Indeed it was infinitely the most excellent righteousness that ever was wrought out by any servant of God in heaven or earth. It was the only righteousness properly so called, (*i. e.* agreeable to that grand and eternal rule of righteousness, the law of God,) that



ever was among mankind, and the only righteousness by which any of mankind are accepted as righteous. And the greatest, strongest, and most convincing evidence of the reality, excellency, sufficiency, and completeness of this righteousness, was Christ's going to the Father, and his being seen here no more in such a state as he was in when the disciples saw him here. God's raising Christ from the dead, was a great testimony of God to the sufficiency and completeness of Christ's righteousness; but his bestowing upon him so glorious a reward in heaven; God's exalting him at his own right hand, far above all principalities, &c. and there admitting this high priest into that holy of holies, with his own blood, not merely to bow down before the throne in humble posture as the high priests of old, but to sit down on the throne, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and so to be a priest on the throne, was a far more striking evidence of it. And it was a great evidence of the transcendent excellency of this righteousness, its acceptableness to the Father, and his exceeding delight in it. And it greatly heightens the strength and brightness of the evidence, that Christ did not only go to the Father, but that he went thither to return no more to be seen on earth in a state of humiliation. He needed to suffer no more, to go through no more labours and self-denials, in order to complete his righteousness; he offered up himself; by one offering, he perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Having by his righteousness completed our redemption, he sat down for ever on the right hand of God. He entered into the holiest of all, not as the high priest of old, to be there a little while, and then to return and go there again once a year, but he there enters to abide there. He is set down for ever on the right hand of God. He ever lives there to make continual intercession for us. See [Heb. x. 12, 13.](#) and [ix. 11, 13, 24, 25, 26.](#)

Christ's ascension into heaven, everlastingly to live and reign there, was the greatest evidence of righteousness in all senses and respects. It was the greatest evidence of Christ's innocency, and that he suffered wrongfully. It was the greatest evidence of the righteousness and veracity in the words which he spake, the doctrine that he taught concerning God and himself, and his design in coming into the world, and concerning life and immortality, and a future state, and the greatest evidence and confirmation of the truth of his promises made to his disciples of eternal life, and heavenly glory, and indeed of all his promises, especially taken with that consequence of his ascension, the coming of the Spirit, whereby his people are sealed to the day of redemption. The great promise of Christ, the sum of all his promises, fulfilled in the earnest of it in their hearts. And this ascension taken as the completing and crowning of the grand affair of redemption, and so taken with its antecedents and the things manifested by it, particularly the divinity and infinite dignity of the person of Christ; I say, taken with these, shows it was the greatest evidence of the righteousness and holiness of God in saving sinners, of his faithfulness in fulfilling the promises of the Old Testament, and in general by far the greatest manifestation, and the brightest effulgence, of the moral perfection and glory of the Divine Being that ever was.

The greatest instance of *judgment* that ever was, or ever will be in the world, is in Christ's judging Satan, the prince of this world. God hath set Christ as King on his holy hill of Zion, having put all things under his feet, made him the Head of all authority and power, and has committed all judgment to the Son, and this is the greatest instance of Christ's power of ruling and judging. Satan is the greatest and highest of all the enemies of God, and Christ, and his people; he probably originally was the highest and strongest of all creatures. He has usurped the throne; as he is called the prince of this world, he set up himself as god of this world. It is the greatest evidence of Christ's kingly power and his might, as the Captain of the salvation of his people, to overcome this enemy, dispossess him of his throne, cast him like lightning from heaven; and make him his footstool, and bruise his head under his feet; and it is the greatest manifestation of his high judicial authority to judge and condemn this great rebel, and head and leader of all the rebellion in the universe, and to execute vengeance upon him.

By *judgment*, as the word is used in the New Testament, as appears by the Greek Concordance, is most commonly meant *the exercise of judicial authority, or the manifestation and effect of it*; sometimes *the exercise of rule and authority in general*, because judging is a chief exercise of it; and sometimes particularly *a righteous exercise of such authority*; and when the fruit or effect of judgment is meant, in sentence or execution, commonly a sentence of condemnation, or the execution of such a sentence, is meant. Sometimes, though rarely, the word is used to signify a judgment passed in the mind concerning moral matters, or the expression of it in words, and sometimes it means one's right in judgment. So that the use of the word in the New Testament will clearly justify the interpretation that has been given of it in this place.

Gospel light and knowledge consist in these three things, and the things implied in them.

A conviction of these three things, is the sum of that conviction which is implied in saving faith. By the knowledge of these things, God's people say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

In the knowledge of these things consists the true knowledge of ourselves, and the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ, or the light of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. The knowledge of these things is the foundation of all true compliance with the gospel in the heart, of repentance, faith, hope, charity, obedience, and joy.

God permitted the fall, that his elect people might know good and evil. The saving knowledge of good and evil consists in the spirit's conviction of these three things.

These three things are the most important objects of knowledge in the world, in order to sanctification and comfort, holiness and happiness.

[66] [John xvi. 16](#). "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." A little while, and ye shall not see me, *i. e.* when

I ascend into heaven; and a little while, and ye shall see me, that is, spiritually, when I shall send the Holy Ghost, who would not come if I did not go to the Father. Seeing of Christ is so understood, [chap. xiv. 19.](#)

[445] [John xix. 14.](#) “And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour.” Mark says ([Mark xv. 25.](#)) it was the third hour, and they crucified him, which seems by the context, to be manifestly the time of his being nailed to the cross at Golgotha, with which this place in John is reconciled thus. John is here as it were beginning a new paragraph, containing an account of that grand event of the last passion of our Saviour, which he proceeds to do from hence to the [38th verse.](#) John had before been giving a large account of those things that went before this his last passion, and made way for it; but now he being about to proceed directly to this event itself, the greatest and most astonishing of all events, he as it were makes a pause, and begins an account of it as a distinct story, worthy to be peculiarly taken notice of. Those words in the [14th verse.](#) are the introduction to the story of this event, giving an account at what time it came to pass, *viz.* on the day of the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour, that is, in the middle of the day, so that the words, *it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour,* do not relate especially to the words immediately following, *And he said unto the Jews, Behold your King,* but rather to the whole story, beginning with these words and ending with the [37th verse,](#) or the grand event related in the story, *viz.* Christ’s last passion; for the words are an introduction to the story of this event, and not to that particular fact of Pilate’s saying, “Behold your King;” and this is very manifest by John’s interrupting the thread of his narrative, and standing to tell us that it was the preparation of the passover; if he only meant it was the preparation of the passover, when Pilate said, “Behold your King;” for, if so, why should he stand in this place to tell us it was the preparation of the passover, and to tell us that this fact happened on this day, any more than any of the other many facts as important as this, that he had been giving an account of before, from the 28th verse of the preceding chapter, which all were on the same day? so that John’s design is not to give us an account of the precise time when Pilate said those words, but of the time in general of that great event of Christ’s last passion, the story of which he immediately introduces in this verse, and goes on with to the end of the [37th verse.](#) He says it was about the sixth hour, *i. e.* at the middle part of the day, it beginning at the third hour, or middle of the forenoon, and ending at the ninth hour, or middle of the afternoon; and if the time of this grand event be signified by mentioning any hour about which it was, it is most properly said to be about the sixth hour, for that was the very centre or middle of the time about which it was, it beginning three hours before it, and continuing three hours after it. The three preceding evangelists all agree that the darkness by the sun’s withdrawing his light, began at the sixth hour, and as they all relate the story of the crucifixion, it seems manifest that some considerable time passed after he was nailed to the cross before this darkness began. So that it seems on the whole beyond doubt that Christ was

nailed to the cross about the third hour, and hung about six hours on the cross before he expired.

[313] [John xxi. 25](#). “And there are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” If here, by the things that Jesus did, be not only meant the actions of Christ, but the things done or accomplished by those actions, we may suppose it to be literally true, that if they were written every one, the world itself is not large enough to contain the books that should be written. There are other things that belong to what Christ did, besides merely the external action, that was immediately visible to the eye, or the words that might be heard by the ear, which we must suppose are included in what the evangelist means by the things that he did. There was the internal manner of doing, the design with which it was done, what moved and influenced Christ in doing; the ends and events brought to pass by doing, the evangelist does not mention; some of Christ’s ends, and motives, &c. in acting. The apostle John in this history mentions some of them, but to mention all, would be to write a declaration of all the glorious, wise purposes and designs of God’s wisdom and grace, and the love of Christ, and all that belongs to that manifold wisdom of God, and those unsearchable riches of wisdom and knowledge, in the work of redemption, that we read of in the Scripture, which, if they should be all written, it is probable the universe would not contain the books; for here are the multitudes of God’s mercies that we read of in [Psal. v. 7](#). and [li. 1](#). and [lxix. 13, 16](#). and [cvi. 7](#). and [cxix. 156](#). These works that the evangelist speaks of that Christ wrought, are the same with those spoken of, “Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts, which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation;” and [Psal. lxxi. 15](#). “My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day: for I know not the numbers thereof;” and [Psal. cxxxix. 17](#). “How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.” The wonderful things designed and virtually accomplished in what Christ did when on the earth, are so manifold as to be sufficient to employ the contemplation of saints and angels to all eternity, who will discover more and more of the manifold wisdom of God therein, and yet never will discover all.

[70] Acts i. 15. "The number of the names together were about one hundred and twenty." Great respect seems to be shown to the number twelve in things pertaining to the church, as may be seen in the account of the new Jerusalem in Revelation, and the number of the sealed of every tribe were twelve thousand, and here the number of the church, when the Holy Ghost was poured out upon it, is one hundred and twenty; there were twenty-four elders round about the throne.

[333] Acts iv. 32., &c. The reasons why the primitive Christians of the church of Jerusalem had *all things common*, seem to be these:

1. Great part of the members of this church were strangers or Hellenists, or Grecians, as here called. The first Christian church was set up in Jerusalem, the centre of the resort of the Jews from all nations, when they came up to their three great feasts; and therefore the christian church of Jerusalem, as it was the only christian church then in the world, was, as it were, the house for the reception and entertainment of the people of Christ, that came from all parts of the world, as we read that this church was constituted of Jews from every nation under heaven. But these strangers did not bring their estates with them, and yet it was very needful that they should mostly keep together in their new and infant state, and not disperse by returning into their several countries; it was fit therefore that the Hebrew Christians should entertain them, and give them of what they had; they all lived upon the estates of the Christians that properly belonged to Judea, and therefore it came to pass that there soon arose a complaint that the Grecians were neglected in the daily ministration; for the estates being originally the Hebrews', they some of them began to grudge to bestow so freely of it on them as on themselves. The circumstances of this church being such, it was thought meet that the church of Jerusalem, which was the first church, and then the only Christian church, and a long time after as a mother to all other churches, should be as a common father's house, where all the children from the utmost ends of the earth might be freely entertained, without money and without price: representing the manner of their spiritual entertainment in their Father's house.

2. Many of them were to be continually employed as teachers, as the apostles, and the whole number of that first one hundred and twenty, on every one of whom the Holy Ghost was poured out in his extraordinary gifts, sitting on each of them in the appearance of cloven tongues of fire, to fit them and mark them out for teachers; and accordingly they all began to exercise their gifts in teaching, as appears by the beginning of the second chapter of Acts. And after this the same miraculous gifts were given to great numbers of others among them, to fit them also to be teachers, for it was agreeable to the circumstances the church was then in, a little flock in the midst of a dark, blind world, and agreeable to that design of God, of a swift propagation and dispersion of the gospel over great part of the world, that great numbers of the first Christians should be teachers; but those being constantly employed in this work, it was necessary that they should be maintained by the substance of others; and



there being so many of them was another thing that made it needful that they should have all things common.

3. The state that this church was in, in the midst of an enemy's country, liable to be sorely persecuted, and driven to and fro, made this requisite, on several accounts:

*First.* It was needful that their possessions should be turned into that which was portable, so that when persecuted in one city they might fly to another.

*Secondly.* Their being subject to such great and continual persecutions, made it needful that they should not be entangled in the world, or encumbered with worldly cares about their estates. This made it needful that they should do as a man that is going a journey, about to remove to some other country, sell what he has, and carry the effects with him. A man in his journey has no care but only to use what he carries with him, to lay out his money to support him from hand to mouth; or as a man that goes into the wars, he has no care about any thing but fighting, and receiving his food daily from a common stock.

*Thirdly.* This made them less liable to the rage of their persecutors. A people that are supported one by another, by what they have among them in common, are not so liable to be deprived of all support, as he that has nothing but a possession of his own to depend on; for when things are in common, if they took one, and took from him what he had about him, yet there remained others to help him. A portable estate, consisting in money, is also more easily concealed, and kept out of the way of persecutors, than a real estate.

[387] [Acts xvii. 26, 27.](#) "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him:" *i. e.* God hath so ordered the state of the world of mankind, though scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, that provision should be made in providence at all times, that the nations of the world, if their heart had been well disposed to seek after the truth, might have had some means to have led them in their sincere and diligent inquiries to the knowledge of the true God, and his ways; partly by making them all of one blood, and partly by an adjustment of the particular places and limits of the habitation of the people that had the knowledge of the true religion, and might hold forth light to others, and to the Gentiles that had it not; and the different times, changes, and circumstances of the world of mankind, that the bounds of their habitations, and the state of the times, might be so adapted one with the other, that the Gentile world might always be under a capacity of receiving light from the Jews. The world had great advantage to obtain the knowledge of the true God, by their being all made of one blood; by this means the knowledge of the true religion was for some time kept up in the world by tradition, and there were soon great corruptions and apostacies crept in, and much darkness overwhelmed great part of the world; yet there was so much light remained till Moses's time, that tradition, and the memory of things past, would have afforded means sufficient to an honest, sincere, and faithful inquirer to have come to the



knowledge of the true religion; at least that, together with what there was here and there of revelation among those that still held the true religion, the bounds and limits of whose habitation was appointed and fixed to that end. And afterwards, even till Christ's time, there remained by tradition many scraps of truth among the heathen, that would greatly have served with well-disposed inquirers, as a clue in their search after truth.

About Moses's time, when truth, that had been upheld by tradition, was very much lost, and former things became much out of sight by being far off, and the professors of the true religion, except in the posterity of Jacob, very much ceased in the world, God took care that there might be something new, which should be very public, and of great fame, and much taken notice of abroad in the world, that might be sufficient to lead sincere inquirers to the true God; and those were the great things God wrought in Egypt, and at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, for the children of Israel.

These things were very publicly wrought. Egypt, where many of them were wrought, was one of the most noted heathen nations in the world; and we often read how that those great miracles that God wrought were actually taken notice of by the heathen nations round about; and probably most, if not all the heathen nations, heard of them. See [Exod. ix. 16](#). "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." For then the bounds of their habitations were so appointed that they did not live near so much dispersed abroad as afterwards they did; see [Gen. xli. 56, 57](#). They were probably almost all within hearing of these great things, which it is likely became yet more public, and were carried further abroad in the world, together with other great things that God did in Canaan when the sun stood still, (which was a miracle done in the presence of the whole world,) and Joshua had conquered that land, and multitudes of the inhabitants were driven out, and went some to Africa, to Carthage, and other parts of Africa, and to the isles of the sea, to many parts of Europe as well as Asia, to carry the tidings of those things, and to interpret the miracle of the sun's standing still. So that, in a manner, the whole world heard of these great things. See [Deut. ii. 25](#). "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of thee." And the memory of these things was kept up a great while among the nations, as appears by the accounts we have of the occasional mention which the neighbouring nations from time to time make of them, till about David's time, when the memory of those things began to be lost among them. And then God did new things to make his people Israel, who had the true religion, taken notice of among the heathen, *viz.* his subduing all the nations from the Euphrates to Egypt under David, and setting Israel at the head of the greatest empire in the world, in his days, and the days of his son Solomon. This there is respect to in many such passages in the Psalms, as that [Psal. xcvi. 2](#). though there be also a prophetic respect to what should be in gospel days: and the great wisdom

and prosperity of Solomon, and the great things that were done by him, the fame of which filled the world to the utmost bounds of it, though by that time God had enlarged the bounds of their habitation. That one design of Providence in these things was, that the heathen nations might hear the fame of the God of Israel, and so have opportunity to come to the knowledge of him, is confirmed by [1 Kings viii. 41, 42, 43](#). The memory of these things kept up the fame of that nation and of their God for several hundred years. They were remembered until the Jews were carried captive into Babylon, as appears by the mention that the enemies of the Jews make of them in their letter to Artaxerxes, and by Artaxerxes's answer, in the [4th chapter of Ezra](#). But then when the memory of these things was decaying, and the bounds of the habitation of the heathen nations was enlarged, God altered the place of the habitation of his people, and carried them to Babylon, the mistress of the world, where some of them, especially Daniel and his three companions, raised the fame of the true God, and caused it to go from thence through the world by the great things he wrought by and for them, and also by what he wrought for Daniel in Persia. After this, the appointed bounds of the Jews' habitation were not the limits of any one land, but they were dispersed all over the world, as they were very much in Esther's time, when they were a people very famous through the world by what was done respecting them in her time, and afterwards were much more dispersed abroad in the world, and so remained till Christ's time; so that the heathen world had opportunity by them to have come to the knowledge of the true God.

God appointed the particular place of the habitation of the Jews to be as it were *in the midst of the earth*, between Asia, Africa, and Europe; and in the great contests there were between the great empires of the world, they were always in the way; and before the days of the gospel, the bounds of the world of mankind seem not to have been near so extensive as since; and particularly it is probable that America has been wholly peopled since. See [Isa. xlv. 19](#). [Ezek. v. 5](#).



[318] [Romans i. 16, 17, 18.](#) *Justification Christ's righteousness.* "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," &c. "For herein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." In these verses I would note two things:

*First.* That here, in the beginning of this discourse of his of the wickedness of the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles, which is continued from this place to the [19th, 20th, and 21st verses of chap. iii.](#) as well as in the conclusion in that part of the 3rd chapter, he manifests his design in it all to be to show that all are guilty, and in a state of condemnation, and therefore cannot be saved by their own righteousness; that it must be by the righteousness of God through Christ received by faith alone. He here in the [17th verse.](#) asserts that it is thus only that men have justification, and then in the [18th verse.](#) enters on the reason why, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;" and so goes on setting forth the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men through most of those three first chapters, and then at the end concludes his argument as he began it; that, seeing all are under sin, "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified in his sight;" but that it is by the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Christ.

*Secondly.* I observe that, by *the righteousness of God*, in this place, cannot be meant merely *God's way of justifying sinners*, but that hereby is meant *the moral, legal righteousness which God had provided for sinners*, is evident by two things.

1. It is the righteousness or justice which those that are justified have, by which they are righteous or just; as is evident from the apostle's selecting that passage of the Old Testament to cite on this occasion, "The *just* shall live by faith."

2. It is evident from the antithesis; for here it is most manifest that *the righteousness of God*, by which God's people are just, in one verse, is opposed to the *unrighteousness of men*, by which they in themselves are unjust, as is evident from the argument of the apostle in those verses. It is a righteousness that believers are vested with, as is evident from [chap. iii. 22, 23.](#) The same is also manifest from the antithesis in that place. The same is manifest both those ways from [Philip. iii. 9.](#) The same is very manifest from [Rom. x. 3, 4.](#) "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The antithesis here makes it evident that by *God's righteousness*, is meant a righteousness, in having which we are righteous. And the 4th verse shows that this righteousness was procured for every believer by Christ, as he was subject to the law; "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness;" the natural meaning of which is, that as to what concerns the elect, or them that believe, the Lawgiver, in making the law and establishing it as a rule for them, had respect to Christ only for its being answered. The law

that requires righteousness looks to Christ only to produce that righteousness that it requires; “who, of God, is made to be righteousness,” and who is “the Lord our righteousness.” I can find no instance in the New Testament where the word Greek or Hebrew, here translated *end*, is any where used in Scripture for *final cause*, but it seems properly to signify the *final term, finishing, or accomplishing*; so that the words might be rendered, *Christ is the finishing and completing of the law, as to the righteousness it requires, as it respects all them that believe.*

There is one place where the same word in the original is used as here, and also speaking of the end of the law, or commandment, that exceedingly confirms this interpretation, *viz. 1 Tim. i. 5.* “Now the end of the commandment is love;” *i. e.* the accomplishment or fulfilment of the law; as the same apostle says, “Love is the fulfilling of the law,” in this epistle of [Romans xiii. 8, 10](#). So that it is manifest from this place that that righteousness, which this apostle calls *the righteousness of God*, consists in Christ’s fulfilling or answering the law; and therefore that it is the same thing with what we call *the righteousness of Christ*.

This righteousness of God, which the apostle so often speaks of in the matter of our justification, is *in Christ. 1 Cor. v. 21.* “He was made sin for us, that we might be the righteousness of God *in him*.” “He was made sin,” *i. e.* sin was imputed to him; and what sin was it? Why that sin that was *in us*. So we are made the righteousness of God. But what righteousness of God is it that we are made? Why that which was *in Christ* our Mediator.

It is not called by the apostle *Christ’s righteousness*; because the righteousness, by which a believer stands just before God, does but in part consist in that which can properly be called Christ’s righteousness, for it is only the *obedience* of Christ that is properly his righteousness. But this is not all that by which we stand just before God; for, beside this, his sufferings as our atonement were necessary. Without this we are not righteous, but must appear sinful before God, because our old sins would remain. Those sufferings, abating the obedience that was in them, were not in themselves Christ’s *righteousness*, and therefore the Scripture does not ordinarily call them so; but calls the whole of the provision made of God as in Christ, for our appearing just, consisting both in his obedience and atonement, *God’s righteousness*, and *the righteousness of God*, which is by the faith of Christ. [Chap. iii. 22](#). See Note on [chap. x. 3](#).

[365] [Rom. ii. 29, 30](#). “But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter, *whose praise is not of men, but of God*.” That by this last expression, “Whose praise is not of men, but of God,” the apostle has respect to the insufficiency of man, to judge concerning him, whether he be inwardly a Jew or no, and would signify that it belongs to God alone to give a voice in that matter; is confirmed by the same apostle’s use of the like phrase, in [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, *and then shall every man have praise of God*.” The apostle in the two foregoing verses says, “But with me it is a very small thing that I

should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self, yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord." And again, it is further confirmed, because the apostle in this [2d chapter to the Romans.](#), directs himself especially to those that had a high conceit of their own holiness, that made their boast of God, and were confident of their own discerning, and that they knew God's will, and approved the things that were more excellent, *or tried the things that differ*, as it is in the margin, [verse 18.](#), and were confident that they were guides of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes; and so took upon them to judge others See [verse 1, and 17, 18, 19, 20.](#) These things show that for any to take upon themselves, by only a little occasional conversation with others, that are professors of godliness, to judge them as hypocrites, unexperienced and unconverted men, is a great error. The same is confirmed by [1 Cor. ii. 15.](#) "But he that is spiritual judgeth [*discerneth*] all things, but he himself is judged of no man," or (as it is in the margin) is *discerned* of no man.

Every thing in the Christian, that belongs to the spiritual and divine life, is spoken of in Scripture as being *hidden, known only to God and to himself*. His life is said to be hid with Christ in God, but to appear, and to be made manifest at the day of judgment, when Christ shall appear. [Col. iii. 3, 4.](#) Their joy is said to be what others intermeddle not with. Their spiritual food is said to be hidden. [Rev. ii. 17.](#) "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna." So Christ told his disciples that he had meat to eat that they knew not of. And their new name, which is the name they have as new creatures, as born again, is said to be what no man knows but he that receives it. [Rev. ii. 17.](#) The heart, which is the thing that God looks at, and in which are those spiritual ornaments and graces, by which persons are sincere Christians, is called *the hidden man*. [1 Peter iii. 4.](#) "But let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible," &c.

Again: The same is confirmed from that in the parable of the good seed, and the tares, in the [13th chap. of Matt. 28, 29, 30th verses.](#) "The servants said unto him, Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together, first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." The servants of the householder can be interpreted of nothing better than ministers, who were represented by Abraham's servant; and by the servants of the householder in the parable of the king, that made a wedding for his son, and sent forth his *servants* to call guests; and by the servant of the man that made a great supper in the 14th of Luke; and by the servants of the householder, to whom he committed the care of his family when travelling into a far country; and by the servants of the householder that waited for the coming of their lord, in the [12th chapter of Luke.](#); and by the servant or steward in the same chapter, that gives to every one his portion of meat in due season; and by the servant that beat his fellow-servant; and by the servants of the householder, that



dressed, and adorned, and fed the returning prodigal; and by the servants that were sent to receive the fruit of the vineyard, [Luke xx](#). The same that were there to take care of the fruit of the vineyard, are those that in this parable have the care of the fruit of the field. The servants of the householder are oftentimes very apt to conceit themselves sufficient to separate between the wheat and the tares; but the householder says, Stop. He is aware of more danger of their rooting up the wheat with the tares, than they are, and therefore commands that they should let both grow together until the harvest, and signifies that that is the proper time of doing it. This parable shows plainly, that the proper time of judgment in this respect, *viz.* of judging who of professors are sincere, and who not, is the day of judgment; and that therefore, if any take it upon them to do this now, they do it out of its proper season. And therefore, judging men in this sense, comes under that prohibition forementioned, [1 Cor. iv. 5](#). “Therefore judge nothing before the time.”

When we are so often forbidden to judge, that we be not judged; without doubt it refers to a judging of men’s state, of their sincerity and hypocrisy, of their good and evil principles, of their hearts in general, as well as of particular actions. For what is meant by that prohibition is doubtless, that men should not take God’s work out of his hands, and anticipate the proper business of the day of judgment. In the place just now mentioned, we are forbidden to judge; in [1 Cor.](#) we are forbidden to judge others upon that account, because it is before the time; and in the [14th of Rom. at the 4th verse.](#), we are forbidden to judge others upon the other account, because we therein go out of our place, and take God’s work into our hands. [Rom. xiv. 4](#). “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth;” and [James iv. 12](#). “There is one lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?”

These two reasons are given as good reasons in Scripture against judging others, but they are as strong against judging the state of men’s hearts in general, as against judging the state of their hearts with regard to particular actions:

For, 1. It is as much the proper work of God, and his prerogative, to judge the state of men’s hearts *in general*, to determine what hearts are good, and what not, what hearts are sincere, and what not, as to judge the state of the heart *with regard to particular actions*. When knowing the hearts of men is so often ascribed to God as his great prerogative, one thing principally intended is his knowing the state of their hearts, whether they are sincerely godly or no, as is evident by what Peter says concerning the conversion of the Gentiles before the council of Jerusalem, [Acts xv. 7, 8](#). “God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe: and God which knoweth the hearts bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us.” It is often challenged by God as one of the most glorious prerogatives to search the heart and try the reins of the children of men. And this is challenged as God’s prerogative, especially as it relates to the trial of the general state of the hearts of professors, in [Rev. ii. 22, 23](#). There

Christ threatens to destroy, and finally condemn, certain professors, except they repent; and adds, “And all the churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.” And again, [1 Chron. xxviii. 9](#). this divine prerogative is asserted, with respect to the judging of the state of the heart in general, and in order to that salvation, or destruction and casting off for ever, that depends on it, “And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever.” So [Ps. vii. 9, 10, 11](#). “O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but do thou establish the just. For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins. My defence is of God which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” So, trying the hearts is spoken of as God’s prerogative, as the furnace tries what is gold, and what is dross or base metal. [Prov. xvii. 3](#). “The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, but the Lord trieth the hearts.” So the psalmist prays in the 26th Psalm, that God would judge him with respect to his integrity and trusting in God, and that he would examine him, and prove him, and try his reins and his heart, and not gather his soul with sinners, nor his life with bloody men, verse 9. So it was part of Christ’s prerogative to know which of his followers, and professed believers on him, were to be depended on, and which not, [John ii. 23, 24, 25](#). “Many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of men, for he knew what was in man.” It is God’s prerogative to weigh the spirits and ponder the hearts of men, [Prov. xvi. 2](#). and [xxi. 2](#). It belongs to him to weigh men in the balance, and say who is found wanting, [Dan. v. 27](#). This certainly is as much and much more claimed in Scripture, as God’s prerogative, than taking vengeance is; and therefore for any one to take upon him to decide what professors are sincere, and what insincere, and to draw a dividing line between them, is as much and much more invading the divine prerogative, than private revenge is.

2. If that reason why we should not judge men be a good one, that in so doing we shall judge men before the time, because the proper time for this is the day of judgment; then there is a good reason why we should not take upon us to judge professors with respect to their state; for this is one great and principal part of the work of the last judgment, and one special end of the day of judgment, to make an open distinction between the sincere and hypocrites, to separate between sheep and goats, between wheat and tares, between good grain and chaff, between gold and dross, as is manifest by [Mal. iii. 2](#). “But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap;” and [Matt. iii. 12](#). “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with un-

quenchable fire.” Yea, in most of the descriptions we have in Scripture, this is all the work that is mentioned. This is all that is mentioned in the description we have of the day of judgment, in the explication of the parable of the good seed and tares in the [13th chapter of Matthew.](#); and this is all the business that is mentioned in that famous description that Christ gives of the day of judgment in the [25th chap. of Matthew.](#); and this is all the business mentioned in that description we have in the [20th chap. of Revelations.](#), which is the most famous of any we have in the Bible, excepting that in the [25th of Matthew.](#)

Yea, judging of persons’ state, and sentencing or damning them, is chiefly intended by Christ when he forbids us to judge them; for this is most properly judging them, or judging and condemning their persons. We may blame a man for many things he does, yet not condemn or sentence the man in doing the part of the Great Judge of men that is chiefly forbidden, which is either to justify them or condemn them as wicked or righteous.

As to that text, [Judges xii. 6.](#) “Then said they unto him. Say now *Shibboleth*; and he said, *Sibboleth*; for he could not frame to pronounce it right; then they took him and slew him at the passages of Jordan;” though that be an undoubted truth, that want of experience has a tendency to cause men to lisp, and greatly to fail and blunder in talking of experimental religion, which may very fitly be compared to the failing of the Ephraimite in pronouncing *Shibboleth*, yet we cannot infer from it that we are warranted to go as far in judging men’s state by what we think of their rightly expressing themselves in spiritual and experimental language, any more than we can infer that it is committed to us to proceed upon it as far as they did in the wrong pronunciation of *Shibboleth*. We cannot carry the inference so far, because the thing here principally typified is not the language of false professors, as it sounds in the ears of fellow-professors in this world, but in the ears of their Judge, and of the saints or assessors with him at the passage of the Jordan, *i. e.* in their passage out of this world into the next, or when they are attempting to pass out of this world into the heavenly Canaan. In Christ’s ears, no man can learn the language of the Canaanites but those that are indeed Canaanites, even as no man can learn the song of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, but only those that are redeemed from the earth. What is wanting, is the heart and the practice, which are the essential part of the song; and it is the language of the heart and practice that are the essential part of the language of a Christian. And these are the things by which we are often told professors of religion shall hereafter be judged, by him that searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and renders to every man according to his works.

When Christ and his apostles so much warned against judging others, they doubtless had especially respect to judging their hearts. And Christians in those days understood this to be the thing so strictly prohibited, and a practice marked out as so presumptuous; as is confirmed by the manner of the apostle James, introducing what he says in the [2d chap.](#) of his epistle, at the [4th verse.](#); speaking of their preferring of a man of gay appearance to the



man in mean apparel, he says, Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become *judges of evil thoughts?*"

The eleven disciples, though they were all true converts, did not know but that Judas was also converted, and always supposed him to be so, though they had such abundant opportunity of conversation with him, and Christ all along treated him as if he had been a true disciple, and even sent him forth to preach the gospel, because he therein acted as minister of the visible church. He did not take it upon him to act as an Omniscient Judge at that time, but as setting an example for his disciples and ministers how to behave themselves in the visible church. The psalmist, though so wise a man, and a man so greatly acquainted with the word of God, and a man of such great experience, did not find out that Achitophel was not a convert, though he had so long been so intimately acquainted with him, but always looked upon him as a saint, and an eminent saint, and delighted in him as such. [Psal. lv. 13, 14.](#) "But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together; we went to the house of God in company."

And besides, we are nowhere directed to judge of men chiefly by the account they give of their experiences, but chiefly by their works; and it is evident it was not the manner of the apostles to judge of Christians' sincerity chiefly by the account they gave of the manner of the work in their hearts, but by their behaviour.

And the signification of the word *Shibboleth* seems to intimate the same thing, which is *an ear of corn*. This seems to intimate that it is the *fruit*, or *ear*, that is the grand characteristic by which the true friends of Jephthah may be known from hypocrites, or the *wheat* known from *tares*. It is the fruit that we shall be judged by at last; our fruits shall be weighed in the balance, and, if they are found wanting, we shall be slain in this Jordan, and never suffered to go over into Canaan. It is probable that, according to the dialect of Ephraim, *an ear of corn* was called *Sibboleth*, and so that was the name of the fruit of Jephthah's enemies; but *Shibboleth* was the name of the fruit of Jephthah's friends, according to the dialect of Gilead. This, therefore, signifies that if at last our fruit be found to be not the fruit of the friends of Christ, but that of his enemies, we shall be slain.

It seems very probable that the devil, though he sees and hears a great deal more what men do and say than we, and has incomparably more experience, yet *does not know who are converted, and who not*. Thus he did not know that Peter was converted, and therefore hoped to overthrow him. So he did not know that Job was, as God told him, a perfect and an upright man; he questioned it, though he was so eminent a saint, he doubted whether he would not fail in the trial (unless we may suppose that the devil seeks to overthrow particular Christians, only as he seeks to overthrow the church of God, which he does what he can to destroy, though God has promised that it shall never be destroyed).

[141] [Rom. iv. 3, 4.](#) "What saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." The apostle lays stress upon the word *counted*, or

*imputed*. If he had had a righteousness, that is, of his own, upon the account of which the reward was of proper debt, it would not have been expressed in this manner, as he evidently argues in the following verses. Abraham's believing God was not righteousness, but was only *imputed* for it. It was of God's mere grace looked upon as supplying the room of righteousness.

[426] [Rom. iv. 12.](#) "And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham," &c. In the foregoing verse it is set forth how Abraham is the father of those that are *uncircumcised*, if they have the faith of Abraham. In this verse the apostle declares that he also is the father of the *circumcised*, who have not only or barely circumcision, but also walk in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham. So that, put both verses together, this is what the apostle declares, that Abraham received circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised; whereby God sealed to him the promise he made to him, that he should be the father of all such as should believe as he had done, and only to such, whether they were circumcised or not, that he should be the father of the uncircumcised Gentiles, that should believe as he had done, and the father of no more of the circumcised Jews than should believe as he had done.

[83] [Rom. v. 18.](#) "Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life." Seeing the words *judgment*, and *the free gift*, are not in the original, I do not see why it would not have been better construing to have translated it thus, "Therefore as by the offence of one, *the offence* came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, righteousness came upon all men to justification of life;" and so the word that is understood would have been the same with that that is expressed. The placing of the same word in the 16th verse, gives considerable colour for this translation.

[99] [Rom. vi. 8, 9.](#) "Now if we be dead with Christ," &c. These two verses, with the context, seem irrefragably to prove perseverance.

[244] [Rom. vi. 14.](#) "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace." The law, or covenant of works, is not a proper means to bring the fallen creature to the service of God. It was a very proper means to be used with men in a state of innocency, but it has no tendency to answer this end in our present weak and sinful state; on the contrary, to have been kept under the law would have had a tendency to hinder it, and would have been a bar in the way of it, and that upon two accounts.

1. It would have tended to discourage persons from any attempts to serve God, because under such a constitution it must necessarily have been looked upon as impossible to please him and serve him to his acceptance; and one in despair of this would have been in no capacity to yield a cheerful service to God, but would rather have been far from any manner of endeavours to serve him at all. But to have abandoned himself to wickedness by such a



despair, the dominion of sin would have been dreadfully established, and all yielded up to it, as in the damned in hell.

2. God must necessarily have been looked on as an enemy; which would have tended to drive from him and stir up enmity against him. A fallen creature held under the covenant of works cannot look on God as a father and friend, but must necessarily look on him as an enemy; for the least failure of obedience by that constitution, whether past or future, renders him so. But this would greatly establish the dominion of sin or enmity against God in the heart, and indeed it is the law only that makes wicked men hate God. They hate him no otherwise than as they look upon him as acting, either as the giver or judge of the law, and so by the law opposing their sins, and the law tending to establish the hatred of God. Hence it is necessary to be brought from under the dominion of it, in order to a willing serving of God.

*Corol.* Hence men, when they are convinced of the law, under awakenings, and have God represented to them as a strict lawgiver and judge, before they are convinced of the gospel, have sometimes such sensible exercises of enmity of heart stirred up against God.

But those that are redeemed from the bondage of the law, they have,

1. Great encouragement to serve God, in that their poor and imperfect obedience may be accepted.

2. They have a great deal to incline them to an ingenuous obedience; for God now represents himself as a merciful God, a God ready to pardon past transgressions and future infirmities, and he promises that if we will yield ourselves willingly to serve him as we are able, he will be our friend, and will treat us as a merciful and gracious father.

If a man does perform an external service while under the bondage of the law, it is no real service, it is merely forced by threats and terrors, it is not performed freely and heartily, but is a dead, lifeless obedience. But a being delivered from the law and brought under grace, tends to win men to serve God from love, and with the whole heart; [Rom. vii. 6](#). “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

[84] [Rom. viii. 15](#). “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” That is, ye have not the spirit of slaves and bond-servants, that work by slavish fear, but the spirit of children, so that you are not afraid, but dare cry, Abba, Father; dare, as children, approach God with a holy boldness. The spirits are different; one is the spirit of God, the other is not.

[268] **1 Cor. i. 1.** “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, *through the will of God.*” St. Paul, when he calls himself an apostle, does commonly add some such clause as this, “through the will of God;” so **2 Cor. i. 1.** “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, *by the will of God;*” and the very same words, **Eph. i. 1.** and **Col. i. 1.** and **2 Tim. i. 1.** and **1 Tim. i. 1.** “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, *by the commandment of God our Saviour,* and Lord Jesus Christ;” and **Rom. i. 1.** “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.” **Ver. 5.** “By whom we have received grace and apostleship;” which was because he continually carried a deep sense of his unworthiness to be an apostle, who before was so great a sinner. And how it was not owing to any thing in him that he was promoted to such dignity, but only to the sovereign will and pleasure and free grace of God, which, of a persecutor of the church, made him an apostle in the church. Therefore, when he takes the honour of the name of an apostle, he ascribes it to God’s sovereign pleasure and grace. The cause of it is a sense of what he expresses in **1 Cor. xv. 9, 10.** “For I am the least of the apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But, by the grace of God, I am what I am;” and **Eph. iii. 8.** “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

[155] **1 Cor. i. 24.** “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The power of God answers to a sign or miracle, which the Jews sought after; and the wisdom of God, to the wisdom which the Greeks sought after, mentioned in the last verse but one preceding.

[156] **1 Cor. ii. 15, 16.** “For he that is spiritual judgeth all things; but he himself is judged of no man.” He that has the Spirit of God to teach him truth, he is not in those things subject to the judgment or correction of any of the wise men of this world. The instruction, and judgment, and correction of a human master, of what he understands or believes by the Spirit of God, is what he needs not. In this case it does not take place, it will not alter him, for, says the apostle, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? for we have the mind of Christ.” A man that has the mind of Christ, is taught by his Spirit; if he should be subject to the judgment and correction of men, that would argue that the mind of the Lord itself was subject to human correction.

[157] **1 Cor. iv. 6.** “And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos, for your sakes, that ye might learn not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.” It seems that it was not Paul and Apollos particularly that the Corinthians were divided about; but what the apostle means, when he says, “some say they are of Paul, and others of Apollos,” is, that some were for one teacher, others for another; they over-valued their teachers, and built their faith upon them. He mentions his own name, and that of Apollos, personating any human teachers whatsoever; he transferred it in a figure to himself and Apollos, that they might

not be apt to suspect that he reproved them for being for this and that man, out of respect to himself; he would not have them set too much by men, though it were himself.

[152] 1 Cor. ix. 16. “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of.” That is, In case I had a dependence upon preaching the gospel for a livelihood, then might it be said that *necessity is laid upon me. Yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.* That this is what the apostle means, I think is evident by the context.

[49] 1 Corinth. xi. 14. “Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?” Having the head covered by long custom, had been used to denote subjection; and as a mark of subjection in man, it was plainly against nature itself. The plain light of nature had taught all nations the superiority of man to woman, and his rights to rule over her. The apostle had been pleading against man’s wearing long hair, or his covering the head, only on this score, that it was a debasing of man below the place that God had put him in, that it was unnatural and a shame, a debasing of man, and confusion of the order of nature, and in this sense against nature. In this nature teaches the contrary, it is a disgrace to him, Greek or Hebrew, to appear below the woman, a debasing of him below his nature, and therefore nature teaches the contrary; not but that, if having the head uncovered were a sign of subjection, it would have been as much against nature for the man to have his head uncovered. And that which is against nature in this sense, is against it in a proper sense. It is against nature in a proper sense, to bow down before an idol, because it is against nature to adore an idol; and bowing down, by universal custom, is used to denote adoration; but if bowing down by universal custom were used to denote *contempt*, it would not be against nature.

[305] 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, Now we see through a glass darkly,” &c. There is a twofold failing or ceasing of those miraculous and other common gifts of the Spirit, both of which the apostle has doubtless respect to: one is their failing at the end of the present state of probation, or the present imperfect state of God’s people in time, with respect to particular persons that have common gifts, at death, and with respect to the church of God collectively considered, at the end of the world; and the other is the failing of miraculous gifts in the church of Christ, even while yet remaining in its temporary and militant state, as they failed at or about the end of the apostolic age, that first and more imperfect, and less settled and established state of the Christian church, before it was wholly brought out from under the Mosaic dispensation, wherein it was under tutors and governors, and before the canon of the Scripture was fully completed, and all parts of it thoroughly collected and established. Miraculous, and other common gifts of the Spirit, cease at the end of the imperfect state of the church: wherein the church knows in part, and is in a state of childhood in comparison of the more perfect state that follows. So



there is a twofold perfect state of the church to answer them, wherein the church may be said to be in a state of manhood, with respect to that more imperfect state that they succeed. The first state of the church, in its first age on earth, before the canon of the Scripture was completed, &c. is its imperfect state, wherein the church knows in part, and is as a child, and speaks, and understands, and thinks as a child, and sees through a glass darkly, in comparison of the state of the church in its latter ages, wherein it will be in a state of manhood, in a perfect state, and will see face to face in comparison of what it did in its first infant state; and so the gift of prophecy and tongues, &c. ceased at the end of the church's age of childhood, but charity remains when the elder age of the church comes, and when it shall put away childish things. That age shall be an age of love, but there shall be no miraculous gifts of the Spirit, as being needless, and more proper helps for the church in a state of infancy, than in that state of manhood.

Again, the church, all the while it remains in a militant state, is in an imperfect state, a state of childhood, sees through a glass darkly, thinks, speaks, and understands as a child, in comparison of what it will be in its heavenly and eternal state, when it shall be come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; when it shall see face to face, and know as it is known, then it shall put away such childish things, as the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, but love shall gloriously prevail. The world shall be a world of love. If we thus understand the apostle, it fully proves that the gifts of tongues, and miracles, &c. are not to be upheld in the church in the millennium.

[304] 1 Cor. xiii. 13. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity; these three, but the greatest of these is charity." The apostle in this place is not comparing these together as three distinct graces, but gifts of the Spirit of God. They cannot be properly three distributively distinct graces, or saving virtues, because charity or love is the sum of all saving virtue, as abundantly appears from the foregoing part of the chapter, and from innumerable other places of Scripture. Love is an ingredient in saving faith, and is the most essential thing in it, is its life and soul, and so it is in hope. The apostle is here comparing *gifts* of the Spirit, and not *graces*, as is manifest from the last verse of the foregoing chapter, and the former verses of this and the beginning of the next; what is in faith and hope, which is distinct from love, which are principles or exercises of mind that are called also by those names of faith and hope, though they are not Christian and saving faith and hope, yet they are principles that are gifts of God. And in those three gifts of the mind, Faith, Hope, and Love, are the three gifts into which all Christianity, as a principle in the mind, is to be resolved.

The first, *viz.* Faith, as distinct from love, hath its seat purely in the understanding, and consists in the understanding of divine things, and an apprehension of their reality. Hope, if we mean that hope that is distinct from love, has its seat both in the understanding and natural will, or inclination, and apprehends not only the reality of divine things, but our interest in them.

Love has its seat in the spiritual will, and apprehends divine things as amiable. And in these three consists the whole of that respect that the mind of man has to divine things wherein the Christianity of the mind consists; and those three, when joined together and united in one, constitute saving faith, or the soul's savingly embracing Christ, and Christianity. But of these three constituents of justifying faith, love is the greatest; the other two are the body, that is, the soul.

[158] [1 Cor. xv. 28.](#) "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Christ as Mediator has now the kingdom and government of the world so committed to him, that he is to all intents and purposes in the room of his Father. He is to be respected as God himself is, as supreme, and absolute, and sovereign Ruler. God has left the government in his hands wholly, now since his exaltation, that he may himself have the accomplishment and finishing of those great things for which he died. He is made head over all things to the church until the consummation; and he is now king of the church, and of the world, in his present state of exaltation. He is not properly a subordinate ruler, because God hath entirely left the government with him, to his wisdom, and to his power. But after Christ has obtained all the ends of his labours and death, there will be no farther occasion for the government's being after that manner in his hands. He will have obtained by his government, all the ends he desired; and so then God the Father will resume the government, and Christ and his church will spend eternity in mutual enjoyment, and in the joint enjoyment of God; not but that Christ will still be the king and head of his church, he will be as much their head of influence and source of good and happiness as ever. But with respect to government, God will be respected as supreme orderer, and Christ with his church united to him, and dependent on him, shall together receive of the benefit of his government.

[120] [1 Cor. xvi. 21, 22, 23.](#), &c. "The salutation of me, Paul, &c. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you." The apostle concludes his epistle with a curse and a blessing; he curses all that do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, but yet he blesses all that are of the church of Corinth; by which it is evident that those that are regularly of the communion of the Christian church are visible lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, they are so looked upon in public charity, and treated as if they were really such.

[67] [2 Cor. i. 24.](#) "Not for that we have dominion over your faith," &c.; this verse is to be joined to the 14th verse.

[363] [2 Cor. ii. 14, 15, 16.](#) "Maketh manifest the favour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other we are the savour of life unto life." This last verse might more literally, and more properly, have been translated thus: "To those indeed we are a savour of death unto death, but to these a savour

of life unto life,” which makes the sense much less perplexed. Ministers are, as it were, the vessels that carry the sweet ointment of the name of Christ, whose name is said to be as ointment poured forth. Christ is the fragrant rose. That knowledge of Christ that is diffused by his ministers is the savour of this rose, and this is the savour that the apostle speaks of, which in the [14th verse](#). he calls the savour of his knowledge. This is always a sweet savour to God. The name of Christ is ever delightful to God, and the preaching of Christ in the world, whether to elect or reprobates, is acceptable to God, as he delights in having the name of his Son glorified; for Christ’s being made known to those that perish, shall be greatly to the glory of Christ. God loves to have the name of his Son made known to all men for his Son’s glory, so that the knowledge that reprobates receive of Christ, by the preaching of the gospel, is a sweet savour to God; for wherever the name of Christ is found, it is acceptable to God. But yet it is not always a sweet savour to them to whom the gospel is preached, though it be to God. Indeed to the elect, to those that are saved, it is a sweet savour as well as to God; it is a savour of life; we are to them a savour of a living Redeemer; they believe him to be a risen and glorified Redeemer. He is a savour of life unto life, *i. e.* not only a sweet savour as of a living Redeemer, but a refreshing, renewing, life-giving savour.

But to them that perish he is a savour of death unto death; the preaching of Christ crucified is not a sweet savour unto them, but an odious savour, as of a slain dead carcass; they do not believe his resurrection; they look upon him dead still; and the doctrine of Christ crucified is nauseous to them; it is a savour of death unto death.

[96] [2 Cor. iii. 17](#). “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” It seems to refer to that place, [51st Psalm, 12th verse](#)., where the Spirit of God is called the free Spirit.

[89] [2 Cor. iii. 17, 18](#). “Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty,” that is, freedom of looking; and behold our sight is not hindered as the children of Israel’s was, but we have liberty to see. “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord;” with open face, not covered with a veil, as Moses’s face was, as in the 7th and 13th verses; [*are changed into the same image*;] as Moses was by beholding God’s brightness, his own face shone; [*from glory to glory*;] that is, changed from the glory of God, from a sight of *his glory*, to a glory to, and glory in, ourselves like it.

[335] [2 Cor. iii. 18](#). “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.” The word in the original, Greek or Hebrewi, signifies *beholding, as in a reflecting glass*, or looking-glass. Had the meaning been, *beholding through a transmitting glass*, the word Greek or Hebrew would rather have been used, which signifies *to see through* or *to look through*.

We behold the glory of God, as in a glass, in two respects, both which seem to be intended in these words.

1. We behold the glory of God, as in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of God’s light or glory, as it were reflected; and is the express image of the Deity; the perfect





image of God, as the image in a plain and clear looking-glass is the express image of the person that looks in it; and this is the only way that the glory of God is seen by his church, he is seen no other way but in this perfect, and as it were reflected, image; for no one hath seen God *immediately*, at any time; the only-begotten Son of God that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. He is “the image of the invisible God;” and “he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father;” and the Father is seen no other way but by the Son; and it is only by this image in Christ, that God is seen in heaven by the saints and angels there; yea, it is by this image only that God sees himself, for he sees himself in his own perfect substantial idea. And that one thing here meant by the image in the glass, is the image of Christ, that is to be seen in Christ’s face, may be argued from two things.

(1.) The apostle is here comparing the glory of God that we see in Christ to the reflected glory of God which the children of Israel beheld in Moses, where Moses’s face was instead of a glass to them, in which they beheld the glory of God reflected to their view; though with this difference, that a veil was put over the glass then, or there was a veil between their eyes and Moses’s face, which was the glass that reflected God’s glory, because the children of Israel could not bear to look upon the glass immediately; but now we all with open face behold the image in the glass.

(2.) Another thing that argues this, is what follows here in the continuance of the apostle’s discourse on this subject, in the [4th verse of the next chapter](#); where the apostle, speaking of the same glory, mentions it as the light of God’s glory, which we see in Christ as the image of God; (*i. e.* as the image in the glass is the image of the man it represents;) and in the 6th verse he speaks of this same glory as that which is seen in the *face* of Christ; alluding to the children of Israel seeing the reflected light of God’s glory in the face of Moses.

2. We behold the glory of God as in a looking-glass in another respect, and that is as we behold it by the intermediation of the outward means of our illumination and knowledge of God, *viz.* Christ’s ministers, and the gospel which they preach, and his ordinances which they administer; which serve instead of a looking-glass, to reflect the glory of the Lord. When men read the Holy Scriptures, they there may see Christ’s glory, as men see images of things by looking in a glass, so we see Christ’s glory in ordinances. Ministers are burning and shining lights; but then they do not shine by their own light, but only reflect the light of Christ. They are called *stars*, that are held in the right hand of Christ, and shine by reflecting Christ’s light, as the stars shine by reflecting the light of the sun; and so they are as mirrors that bring the light of Christ’s glory to the view of the church. They are lights set up in golden candlesticks; by looking on these lights, they see light, they see the light of Christ reflected. It is evident the apostle is here speaking of the light of Christ’s glory as ministered and communicated by ministers of the gospel, and ministers of the Spirit, which is that light and glory, as we shall show presently. [Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.](#) So in the words next following in the beginning of the next chapter, [ver. 1, 2, 5.](#) and which is strongly to the purpose in the

6th verse., he expressly speaks of the light of this glory as communicated to men by ministers in this way, *viz.* by first shining upon them or into their hearts, and then being communicated, or given from them to others, which is just as light is communicated from a reflecting glass. “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” And in the next verse they are spoken of as the vessel that conveys the treasure: now a vessel is to the treasure that it conveys, as a glass is to the light that that conveys. And, it further argues that the apostle has respect to ministers and to the means of grace, as a glass in which we see the glory of the Lord, by that to which he here alludes, *viz.* the children of Israel’s seeing the glory of the Lord in Moses’s face; but Moses is here by the apostle spoken of, as in this representing both Christ and gospel ministers. That he speaks of him as in this thing representing Christ, is most evident by the 6th verse of the next chapter; and that he also speaks of him as herein like gospel ministers the apostles and others is also evident, because the apostle does expressly compare Moses’s holding forth the glory of God in his face to ministers’ holding forth the glory of Christ, as in the 12th and 13th verses.

And herein the sight, that the saints have of the glory of Christ in this world, differs from that sight that the saints have in heaven; for there they see immediately face to face, but here by a medium, by an intervening looking-glass, in which the glory is but obscure in comparison of the immediate glory seen in heaven. [1 Corinth. xiii. 12.](#) “Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face.” But it is a very plain and clear sight in comparison of that which was under the law; it is beholding with open face in comparison of that, though the face that is seen be in a glass; the sight we have now is by a medium as well as then, though the medium made use of now excels that made use of under the law, as much as an open glass, for discerning, exceeds a glass covered with a veil.

“Are changed into the same image.” In this there is an agreement between our looking in this glass, and a person’s looking in a material glass, that there is an exact resemblance between the image in the glass, and the person that beholds it, in both cases. But in this there is a difference, that, whereas when a person looks in a glass, the image in the glass is conformed to him, as being derived from him as his image; he impresses his image upon the glass; but, when a person looks in this spiritual glass, the image that he beholds there conforms him to it. It is not his image, but the image of God, and reflects and impresses its likeness on the beholder.

[341] [2 Cor. iii. 18.](#) “Behold as in a glass.” What seems especially to be meant by the looking-glass here spoken of, is the figurative representation of gospel things in the Old Testament, especially the law of Moses; which, to the Jews, who did not know the meaning of them, nor see the image of Christ, or gospel things, in them, was as a veil; but to us, to whom the image plainly appears as unveiled by the gospel, those types and other figurative representations are as a glass, in which we see the image of Christ’s face.

[57] [2 Cor. v.](#) beginning. The house from heaven means the body of Christ's resurrection; as appears by the last clause of the 4th verse.

[60] [2 Cor. v. 1.](#) It is a confirmation that the apostle meant the body of the resurrection by a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, that Christ said, Destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will raise another, made without hands; as the false witnesses testified, probably, so far truly.

[62] [2 Cor. viii. 10.](#) "Who have begun before not only to do, but also to be forward, a year ago." It may seem strange that the apostle says, not only *to do*, but also *to be willing*. Doing is more than merely being willing, but it is as if he had said, Ye have not only begun to do before now, but you have been ready to do for a long time, even a year ago: to be forward so long ago, was something that might well be mentioned, in addition to their having now begun to do.

[164] [2 Cor. xi. 4.](#) It ought to have been translated, Ye have well borne, or ye might well have borne with me. In the beginning of the chapter he desires them to bear with him because he was jealous over them, having betrothed them to Christ, that he might present them a chaste virgin to Christ. He was jealous lest they should yield their supreme affections to other objects, and be denied; and he tells them in this verse that, seeing they were solicited to forsake Christ, seeing that he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, he might well be jealous, and they might well bear with him in his boasting to set himself off, or rather to set off Christ, appearing, speaking, and working in him, to their affections, that so they might not like his rivals better.

[Verse 5.](#) "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chief," &c.; and so accordingly now he begins to boast.

[165] [2 Cor. xii. 13.](#) "Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell." When the apostle said, *absent from the body and present with the Lord*, he doubtless meant by *absent from the body*, the same that he here means by *out of the body*, which is a proper separation of the soul from the body.

[425] [2 Cor. xiii. 1.](#) "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." These words seem to be quoted from the law of our Saviour, [Matt. xviii. 16.](#) and not from the law of Moses in Deuteronomy; not only because the words are the same with those in Matthew, but from the likeness of the case. In Deuteronomy, the law given concerns only judicial trials; in Matthew, it is a rule given for the management of persuasion used to reclaim offenders by fair means, before coming to the utmost extremity; which is the case of Paul here. The witnesses, which he means that he made use of to persuade them, being his two epistles. That, by witnesses, he means his two epistles, is plain from his way of expressing himself here, where he carefully sets down his telling them twice, *viz.* before in his former epistle, [chap. iv. 19.](#); and now a second time, in his second epistle, and also by these words,

*as if I were present with you a second time.* By our Saviour's rule, the offended person was to go twice to the offender; which the apostle refers to. Mr. Locke's exposition.

[272] Gal. i. 17. “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus.” It is probable that this was *Arabia Deserta*, which was that part of Arabia that lay nearest to Damascus, lying east of the land of Canaan, and reached up to the very neighbourhood of Damascus. By the apostle’s going from Damascus into Arabia, and returning from thence into Damascus again, it looks as if the Arabia that he went into, was that which was neighbouring to this city. As Christ after his baptism withdrew into the wilderness, before he actually began to preach; so it is no improbable conjecture that Paul, after his conversion and baptism, withdrew into the deserts of Arabia, there to receive the knowledge of the gospel, by immediate revelation from Christ; and that this being done, he returned to Damascus, and after this his return that way preached Christ in their synagogues, as Acts ix. 20. See Wells’s Sacred Geography, part ii. p. 22, 23. This very well agrees with this context, in which the scope of the apostle is to show that he had his gospel not from men, but by revelation of Jesus Christ, as verse 12. “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ;” and verse 15, 16. “But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.”

Then follow the words of this verse that we are upon, to show how he did not confer with flesh and blood, but was taught immediately of Christ; “neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.”<sup>562</sup> This is a desert, uninhabited country; and therefore it is the more probable that the apostle went thither for this end, and not to preach the gospel to any that dwelt there. And the inhabitants that were in Arabia Felix, under whose king, Aretas, Damascus then was, they were chiefly heathens; but preaching to the heathens was not yet begun, though there were then some Jews, that were then inhabitants of Arabia, of whom we read in the 2nd chapter of Acts; “Cretes and Arabians.”

[421] Gal. iii. 16. “Now to Abraham and his seed was the promise made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” This Mr. Locke paraphrases thus: “God doth not say, ‘And to *seeds*,’ as if he spake of more seeds than one that were entitled to the promise on different accounts, but only of one sort of men, who upon one sole account, were that seed of Abraham which was alone meant and concerned in the promise, so that *unto thy seed*, designed Christ, and his mystical body, *i. e.* those that became members of him by faith.” And Mr. Locke adds in his notes, “By *seeds*, Paul here visibly means the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~, *those of faith*; and the *°i if fmu*», *those of the works of the law*, spoken of above, ver. 9, 10. as two distinct seeds or descendants claiming from Abraham. Paul’s argument to convince the Galatians that they ought not to be circumcised, or submit

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562 Gal. i. 16.

to the law from their having received the Spirit from him, upon their having received the gospel which he preached to them, [ver. 2, and 5](#). stands thus, The blessing promised to Abraham and to his seed, was wholly upon the account of faith, [ver. 7](#). There were not different seeds who should inherit the promise, the one by the works, of the law, and the other by faith: for there was but one seed, which was Christ, [ver. 16](#). and those who should claim in and under him by faith. Among those there was no distinction of Jew and Gentile. They, and they only who believed, were all one and the same true seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, [ver. 28, 29](#). and therefore the promise made to the people of God of giving them the Spirit under the gospel, was performed only to those who believed in Christ: a clear evidence that it was not by putting themselves under the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, that they were the people of God, and heirs of the promise.”

[422] [Gal. iii. 17, 18](#). “And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect; for if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.” Mr. Locke paraphrases it thus, “This therefore I say, that the law, which was not till four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul the covenant that was long before made and ratified to Christ by God, so as to set aside the promise. For if the right to the inheritance be from the works of the law, it is plain it is not founded in the promise to Abraham, as certainly it is. For the inheritance was a donation and free gift of God settled on Abraham and his seed by promise.”

[423] [Gal. iii. 19,20](#). “It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. And it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.” The apostle’s design in mentioning the law’s being ordained in the hand of a mediator, is to show the contrary of what the Jews and judaizing teachers supposed concerning that transaction of mount Sinai, between God and the people. When the law was ordained, they supposed it to be a merely legal transaction, that God acted therein merely as a sovereign righteous lawgiver in that affair, prescribing to the people legal terms of life and death; this is implied in their doctrine of justification by the works of the law. The apostle in what he here mentions of the transaction’s being by a *mediator*, would show the contrary, *viz.* that it was not a mere legal transaction, but a transaction of grace; for a mere legal transaction of God with men does not admit of any *mediator*, but a transaction of grace does. Indeed, in a mere legal transaction, a *middle person* may be improved to act in the name of God, and appear for God to them, but such a middle person does not answer the notion of a *mediator*, as the apostle would signify. A mediator acts for both parties: he not only appears for God to man, and to act for God, but he also appears for man to God, and acts for man; for a mediator is not of one, he is not a middle person to act only for one of the parties. *But God is one, i. e. God is but one of the parties transacting.* If he acts as a middle person only on one side, he does not act as *mediator*; but

a mediator appears for both parties, he acts for each to the other. A legal transaction would have admitted of a middle person to act for one side, *viz.* for God to man, but not for man to God, to intercede and plead for him. So was Moses. Moses was the mediator here spoken of, as is confirmed by [Deut. v. 5](#). God condescended, because the people could not bear the terrors of the law, to admit Moses as a mediator for them to stand before him, and hear and bear those terrors for them, as well as to act as his messenger to them. This shows plainly that it was a transaction of grace, wherein God was willing to admit a method to screen and save the poor fearful people, to screen them from the dreadful things apprehended, as well as from the terrible apprehension they had by hearing the dreadful voice, and seeing the raging fire. Therefore this is an evidence of what the apostle is arguing for, *viz.* that God in this transaction was not disannulling the transaction of grace, or that gracious covenant that had before been established with Abraham; he was now only building on that foundation that was then laid, and not setting it aside by this transaction that seemed to have an appearance of a legal transaction. This inference is made very much after the same manner with many others from transactions and passages of the Old Testament in the epistle to the Hebrews, and here and there in other epistles. And this reasoning is not so far fetched, and the arguments so much out of sight, as some may imagine. The words might be paraphrased thus: “In that transaction of mount Sinai, when the law was given, a mediator was made use of, and the notion of a mediator is, one that appears and pleads for both parties, one with the other. This mediator therefore that was admitted, did not only transact for God, who in the transaction was but one party, but also appeared and pleaded for the other party also with God, which shows that it was not a merely authoritative and legal, but a gracious, transaction.” The [20th verse](#). comes in as a kind of parenthesis, or a short exegetical digression, just to explain the meaning of the word *mediator*, which the apostle had used, because the argument he intended his readers should conceive from it, depended on their understanding what a mediator was; and therefore he was willing to let them know that, by a mediator, he did not only mean a middle person to act for God towards the people, but also one to act and plead for the people towards God. The apostle’s words therefore may be otherwise paraphrased thus: “The law was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator, *i. e.* in the hands of a middle person who appeared and pleaded for each party with the other, and not merely for God, who was but one party.”

[196] [Gal. v. 18](#). “But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” Here inquire, 1. In what sense they are not under the law; and, 2. Why it is said, Ye are not under the law, if ye are led by the Spirit; or wherein is the connexion between being led by the Spirit, and not being under the law.

*Inq.* I. In what sense Christians are not under the law?

*Ans.* In one word, They are not under the law *as servants*; for this is what the apostle insisted on, in the 4th chapter, and latter end of the 3rd, that Christians are not under a

schoolmaster, but a father, [chap. iii. 25, 26.](#) and [iv. 2.](#); that they are not servants, but children, [chap. iv. the seven first verses, especially the 7th verse.](#); that they are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free, and so are not in a state of bondage, but in a state of liberty, as [chap. iv. from the 9th verse to the end.](#); and it is the argument the apostle is still upon in this chapter, as verse 1, &c.

And it is evident, that, by being under the law in this verse, the apostle means, being under the law as a servant; or as being under the law, is opposite to a state of liberty; by the immediate context, and by the manner in which this and the intermediate verses are introduced, by [verse 13.](#) “Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,” &c. which may be seen. So the apostle opposes *being under the law* to *liberty*, in the beginning of this chapter, and so in the latter part of the foregoing chapter: see the [21st verse.](#), compared with the allegory that follows; also the apostle’s explanation of that allegory, [ver. 25.](#) He tells us that Agar the bond-woman represents mount Sinai, the mount where the law was given. So *being under the law*, is called *being under a schoolmaster*, and under tutors and governors; which is opposed to *being children*, [chap. iii. 24, 25, 26.](#) and [chap. iv. 2.](#) with context. Yea, a being under the law is expressly opposed to being children, [chap. iv. 5.](#) and is called being servants, [ver. 7.](#)

By these things it is most evident that the apostle here, when he says Christians are not under the law, means only that they were not under the law *as servants or bondmen*, or in any sense wherein a being under the law is opposite to liberty, or the state of children.

I. They were not under the *ceremonial law* at all; which was a yoke of bondage, a law adapted to a servile state of the church, or the state of the church’s minority, wherein it differs nothing from a servant, as [chap. iv. 1, 2, 3.](#); where it is evident the ceremonial law is especially intended, by the expression of *the elements of the world* there used. It is evident that, by being under the law, the apostle has a special respect to the ceremonial law, from [chap. iv. 9, 10, 11.](#) and [chap. v. 3, 6, 11.](#) and from the occasion and drift of the whole epistle.

II. They are not under the moral law, *as servants*. Not only the ceremonial but the moral law is intended in the words; as is evident from the context, as particularly the 14th and 23rd verses. Children in a family, where things are in their regular order, *i. e.* where the father has the proper qualifications and spirit of a father, and the children, of children, are not so properly under law, as the servants. The commands of a father in such a family to his children, especially if the children be not in their minority, is not called *law*, in the same sense, as the edicts of an absolute monarch to his subjects. Laws are not made for children, and for intimate and dear friends, but for servants. A being under the law, in the more ordinary use of the expression among the apostles, was inconsistent with liberty; a being under the law, and enjoying liberty, were opposites; and therefore the phrase, *the law of liberty*, is used by the apostle James as paradoxical. To be under law, is to be under the declaration of the will of another, not only as an instruction or doctrine for our direction in acting, but to



be under it as a rule of judgment, or a being under the justifying or condemning power of it. A being under the law in this sense is the apostle's meaning as is evident by the 4th verse of this chapter, and by chap. iii. *per totum*: vid. Rom. viii. 1. For what is said in that 3rd chapter, introduces what follows in these two succeeding chapters. They cannot be said to be under the law where the breaches of the law are not imputed to them; sin is not imputed where there is no law; and, *vice versa*, (in a sense,) there is no law, or persons are not under the law, where sin is not imputed.

The doctrine of the holy will of God, as revealed, and directed to those that are in Christ, is improperly called *giving law*: where we find it so called, that word is used out of its strictly proper sense. The giving law to another is the exacting conformity to the declared will of the lawgiver. There may be a command without a law: a declaration of another's will, without an exaction, is not a giving law: a being under the law, is being under such an exaction. God may be said to exact obedience of men to the commands of the law, when he signifies, or makes known to them, that they are by his power held bound either to obedience or the penalty of the law. And they that receive a declaration of another's will, but at the same time have it not exacted of them, have it not as a law, but only as an instruction or doctrine. A declaration of a superior's will without its being signified or supposed that it will be exacted by power, may be called *a doctrine, a rule, a precept, or command*, but not *a law*, unless improperly, as God's declaration of his will to his saints is called *the law of liberty*: the expression shows that the word is not designed to be used in this strictly proper sense.

*Object.* But is not sincere obedience exacted of believers, though perfect obedience be not? The Scripture often gives us to understand that no man can be saved, and that every one shall perish, without sincere obedience.

*Ans.* I. If sincere obedience be exacted of them, yet it is not by the law by which it is exacted of them.

The thing that the law exacts is *perfect*, and not *sincere*, obedience. It is a contradiction to suppose that any law requires and exacts any other than conformity to itself, or, which is the same thing, perfectly as much, or full as much, as it requires or exacts. Sincere obedience, or sincerely aiming at obedience, is not required or exacted by the law, in any other way than as we consider it as a part of perfect obedience, or a part of that conformity to the law, and so it is no more exacted by the law than the perfect obedience is. If the whole is not exacted, a part is no more exacted than the whole; a part of the conformity to the law cannot be exacted by the law any more than conformity, because it is not exacted at all only because it is a part of conformity and included in it; and therefore if conformity is not exacted of believers by the law, or which is the same thing, perfect obedience, no more is a part of conformity. So that no obedience at all is exacted of believers of the law. They are not under the law in whole nor in part, for conformity is by the law exacted of all that are under it; Christ has freed them from the whole law, by fulfilling the law for them. So that if any



obedience at all be exacted of believers, it is not by the law, but it must be by some other constitution, or superadded law. But,

II. It is not properly by any other constitution made since the law. There is indeed nothing properly exacted of any man whatsoever by any other constitution than the law. Indeed faith, and so sincere obedience, which is virtually implied in it, are by a new constitution made the conditions of salvation. Salvation is promised to them, and they are declared to be the only conditions of salvation, so that without them we still lie under condemnation, and must perish. Yet it will not hence follow that any new constitution or law does exact faith and sincere obedience, or require them upon pain of perishing, or suffering any punishment at all of any man whatsoever; because it is not by virtue of the new constitution, which was only an offer or promise, that he perishes or suffers in unbelief, but by virtue of the law only that he was under before. If a criminal is to be put to death for his breach of the law, and his prince offers him a pardon if he will accept of it at his hands, acknowledging his grace in it; if he refuses the king's offer, he is not pardoned but suffers, and the law is executed upon him. But the prince cannot be properly said by a new law or edict to exact it of him, that he should thankfully accept of pardon; for his execution is by virtue of a law made before that he had broke, and not by any new law, nor by that new act of his prince, his offering him pardon. It is not by virtue of any threatening contained in that new act, but the threatening of the law that he had before broke, that he suffers. Yea, though besides his suffering for all that breach of law, the pardon of which he refused, he may also suffer for his refusal, he may receive an additional punishment from his affronting the king in his contemptuous rejecting his gracious offer. Yet it will not follow that acceptance of pardon was properly exacted of him as by law, for that additional suffering for his affront may also be by virtue of the law that he was under before, and the threatening of that, and not any threatening implied in the king's offer: that may be contained in the law, that whoever by his behaviour affronts or casts contempt upon the king, shall be punished according to the degree of the affront: and he may be punished for his rejecting of the king's offer, by virtue of this, and not by virtue of any threatening contained in that new act of the king in offering pardon. Accepting the offer, indeed, is exacted of him; but it is exacted by the law and not by the offer.

So faith and repentance, and sincere obedience, are indeed exacted of sinners, upon pain of eternal damnation, but not by the gospel. Eternal life is offered upon these terms by the gospel, and eternal damnation is threatened for the want of them by the law.

Unbelief in the present state of things is a great immorality, and as such forbidden by the law, and faith is strictly commanded, and as a duty of the law is exacted of all that are under the law. It is not by the gospel, but by the law, that unbelief is a sin that exposes to eternal damnation, as is evident, because we have the pardon of the sin of unbelief by the death of Christ, which shows that Christ died to satisfy for the sin of unbelief, as well as

other sins, but Christ was to answer the law, and satisfy that: he in his death endured the curse of the law. [Gal. iii. 10, 11, 12, 13.](#) [Rom. viii. 3, 4.](#) It is absurd to say that Christ died to satisfy the gospel, or to hear the punishment of that.

*Inq.* II. Why is it said, “If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law?” or what is the connexion between being led by the Spirit, and not being under the law?

*Ans.* The connexion consists in two things: 1. As this evidences their not being under the law. 2. It renders them not the proper subjects of law.

I. Their being led by the Spirit, is an evidence of their being in Christ, who has fulfilled the law, and delivered them from it. The Spirit is given in Scripture as the proper evidence of being in Christ, [1 Cor. i. 22. v. 5.](#) [Eph. i. 13, 14.](#) and [iv. 30.](#) [Rom. viii. 9.](#) [1 John iii. 24.](#) and [iv. 13.](#) It is the proper evidence of their being children, for it is the Spirit of the Son, [Gal. iv. 6.](#) “As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, because it is the Spirit of adoption.” [Rom. viii. 14.](#) “But children are not under the law as servants.”

II. A being led by the Spirit is a thing that causes that alteration with respect to them, that renders them unapt to be the subjects of law.

1. By their having the Spirit given them, they are advanced to that state that does not agree with a state of subjection to the law. [2 Cor. iii. 17.](#) “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;” see Note on that verse. For hereby they are regenerated, are born of God, and do become the sons of God; they are hereby assimilated to the Son of God in nature and state. Being sons, it is suitable that they should be dealt with alter another manner: to hold them under the law, is to treat them as servants, as in the [6th and 7th verses.](#) of the preceding chapter, And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son.”

2. The Spirit of Christ in Christians, or Spirit of adoption actuating and leading, is a principle that supersedes the law, and sets them above law, upon two accounts: (1.) By their having this principle, so far as it prevails, they are above the need of the exaction of the law, and therefore are such as the law was not given for, and are not aimed at in the law. They have a spirit of love and truth that fulfils the law, [1 Tim. i. 9.](#) the thing that is aimed at by the law, as in the [14th and 16th verses.](#) of the context. They do not need the exaction of the law to drive them to their duty; for, so far as they are led by the Spirit, they are of themselves naturally inclined to the same things that the law requires, and derive strength from God according to his promises to fulfil them. The fruits of the Spirit are such, as they by the Spirit without the law are inclined and enabled to, such as love, joy, peace, &c.; are such as the law is not against, as in the [22d and 23d verses of the context.](#) “Against such there is no law.”

The filial Spirit, or Spirit of love and truth, fulfils the law; that is, the law obliges to no other things but what this Spirit inclines to, and is sufficient for. The law was not made for those that are already sufficiently disposed to all things contained it. [1 Tim. 9.](#) “The law is

not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient,” &c. A filial spirit is law enough. It is a superior sort of law, the law of the Spirit of life is the best law, and makes free from any other law. The spirit is better than the letter. They, that have the Spirit of Christ in them, have the law written in their hearts, according to God’s promise by his prophets.

The Spirit of Christ is superior to the law, and sets a person above a subjection to the law, because it is a principle that is superior to a legal principle, or that principle which is the proper subject of the force and influence of the exaction of a law, *viz.* fear; so far as the Spirit of the Son, or the Spirit of adoption, prevails, so far he is above the need of that principle, and consequently above the need of being under the law.

II. The filial Spirit, or Spirit of the son, or Spirit of adoption, is a principle that, so far as it prevails, excludes and renders the saints incapable of fear, or a legal principle, or spirit of bondage. [1 John iv. 18.](#) “Perfect love casteth out fear.” It casts it out as Sarah and Isaac cast out the bond-woman and her son, that we read of in the chapter preceding the text that we are upon. It is in Christians a principle of love, of childlike confidence and hope, as in the 6th verse of the foregoing chapter, it cries, “Abba, Father.” It evidences to them their being the children of God, and begets that trust and assurance that renders them incapable of a legal principle. [Rom. viii. 15, 16.](#) “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.” If a person has not that legal principle, or principle of fear, he has not that principle which the law, or that constitution which exacts obedience, was made to influence and work upon; and therefore is not a proper subject of law, because, being destitute of that principle, the law takes no hold of him, for it finds no principle in him to take hold by.

A being led by the Spirit of the Son of God, as a Spirit of adoption, is inconsistent with a state of bondage, as son-ship is inconsistent with servitude. [2 Cor. iii. 17.](#) “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

[235] [Eph. i. 22, 23.](#) “And gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” By *fulness*, according to the apostle’s use of the phrase, is signified *the good* of any being; *all that by which* any being *is excellent and happy*; including its *perfection, beauty, riches, joy, and pleasure.* [Rom. xi. 12.](#) “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them be the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their *fulness!*” The word *fulness*, in the former part of this verse, is doubtless to be understood in like manner as the word *filleth* in the latter part. By Christ’s filling all in all, seems evidently to be intended that he supplies all the creatures in heaven and on earth, angels, and blessed spirits, and men, with all good; as in [chap. iv. 10.](#) “He that descended, is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that he might *fill* all things, *viz.* that he might *supply* all intelligent creatures in heaven and earth *with good.* So when it is said, [chap. ii. 19.](#) “That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God,” the meaning seems

to be, that ye might have your souls satisfied with a participation of God's own good, his bounty and joy; "for our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." 1 [John i. 3](#). So when the apostle says Christ, the 4«ev»i« iaunt, "emptied himself," as [Philip. ii. 7](#). he means that he appeared in the world *without his former glory and joy*; see [John xvii. 5](#). So that here the apostle teaches that Christ, who fills all things, all elect creatures in heaven and earth, is himself filled by the church; he, who supplies angels and men with all that good in which they are perfect and happy, receives the church as that in which he himself is happy; he, from whom and in whom all angels and saints are adorned and made perfect in beauty, himself receives the church as his glorious and beautiful ornament, as the virtuous wife is a crown to her husband. The church is the garment of Christ, and was typified by that coat of his that was without seam, which signified the union of the various members of the church, and was typified by those garments of the high priest that were made for glory and for beauty, [Exod. xxviii. 2](#). as seems evident by the 2d verse of the 133d Psalm, and by the precious stones of his breastplate, in a particular manner, on which were engraven the names of the children of Israel. [Isa. lxii. 3](#). "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," *i. e.* in the possession of God. So [Zech. ix. 16, 17](#). "And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown lifted up, as an ensign upon his land." As it is from and in Christ that all are supplied with joy and happiness, so Christ receives the church as that in which he has exceeding and satisfying delight and joy. [Isa. lxii. 5](#). "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." This seems to be the good that Christ sought in the creation of the world, who is the beginning of the creation of God; when all things were created by him and for him, *viz.* that he might obtain the church, who is "the bride, the Lamb's wife," to whom, and for whom, he might give himself, on whom he might pour forth his love, and in whom his soul might eternally be delighted. Until he had attained this, he was pleased not to look on himself as complete, but as wanting something, as the first Adam was not complete before the creation of Eve. [Gen. ii. 20](#).

[481] [Eph. i. 23](#). "The fulness of him that filleth all in all." The church is not only represented as Christ's *ornament*, but God's people are often spoken of in the Old Testament as God's *portion* and *inheritance*, his *treasure*, his *jewels*, his *garden of pleasant fruits*, his *pleasant plant*, [Isa. v. 7](#). the *plant of his pleasures*, his *pleasant food*, as the *first ripe figs*. [Jer. xxiv. 2](#). [Hosea ix. 10](#). the *first-fruits of all his increase*, [Jer. ii. 3](#). A *garden and orchard of spices*, and *his bed, or field, of lilies, among which he feeds*, his *fountain of gardens, or refreshing streams from Lebanon*, a *garden where he gathers his myrrh and his spice, and where he eats his honeycomb with his honey and drinks his wine with his milk*.

So the saints in the New Testament are spoken of as God's *wheat*, and *good grain*, that he gathereth into his garner.



and if both cannot stand together, I had rather cast it to exclude the other and take this. To confirm this interpretation to you, I shall lead you along through these several reasons.

I will begin with the phrase, *In the ages to come*, in opposition to this present world, as the apostle calleth this in [Gal. i. 4](#). You have the very phrase in the first chap. of this epistle, [to the Ephesians,] [ver. 21](#). “Far above all principalities, &c. not only in this world but that which is to come,” *ivraiiHw*; the word translated there *world to come*, is the word which is used here for *ages*. And in [Heb. vi. 5](#). they are said to have tasted of the powers of *the world to come*. It is the word that is here used for *ages*.

But it will be objected, are *ages*, in the plural, taken for the times after the day of judgment to eternity, where there is no flux of time? For that, my brethren, the Scripture often expresseth it in the plural. Also, you read of the phrase *for ever and ever*, you have it in Revelations again and again: “We shall reign with Christ *for ever and ever*“ it is *for ages and ages*. You have the same in [Romans xvi. 27.](#); and in the 3rd chap. of this epistle, [to the Ephesians,] [ver. 22](#). you shall find it in the plural as well as here. “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout *all ages*, world without end.” He means not only *this world*, but *the world that is to come* too; and why? because that to come is *the age of ages*, it is *the secula seculorum*.

And then it is to be considered that in these words, “That in *the ages to come* he might show the exceeding riches of his grace,” is held forth God’s ultimate and highest end that he hath in the salvation of man. He mentions it as the close of all, in the language of a final event. But this is accomplished in heaven, and nowhere else. The gospel revealeth infinite grace to us, but the exceeding riches of grace shall be broken up in the world to come. There is a reserve of it for eternity, such as we cannot now comprehend. Therefore here is now intended the actual enjoyment that those saints which God hath now quickened, and set in heaven in Christ, shall have in ages to come of these exceeding riches of grace, which Christ hath taken possession of for them in heaven.

And then is to be observed the apostle’s order in discoursing of our salvation in this place. He sets out salvation in all the gradual accomplishments of it, until it is made fully perfect and complete. First he shows what is begun in our own persons in quickening of us. He tells us, secondly, how heaven and the resurrection is made sure to us, though we do not enjoy it; [ver. 6](#). “He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Now then, here, in the [7th verse.](#), as the close of all, he shows how that God will spend to eternity the exceeding, the utmost riches of that grace; there he will show it, and then he will bring it forth. In the world to come he will bring forth all his rich treasure, and then shall salvation be complete, and there shall be the utmost demonstration of it.

It answers the parallel that the apostle did intend to make between Christ and us. He tells us in the first chapter, that the same power works in us that believe, that wrought in Christ when God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places; and here you see in the [6th verse of this 2nd chapter.](#), the verse next before the text,

he brings in the parallel. “He hath quickened us, saith he, and raised us up, and made us sit in heaven in him.<sup>563</sup>” There it is said of Christ, that in heaven he sits far above all principality, &c. not only in this world, but that which is to come. To make up the parallel now on our parts, he tells us in this chapter, You have worlds to come, (for it is the same word, only in the plural number,) in which to sit with Christ, and you shall have all the riches of God’s free grace, bringing in joy and happiness to you to feast you with unto eternity.

Then again the phrase *show forth*, will exceedingly fit this interpretation. For we do not see now otherwise than by faith the riches of the glory that Christ hath taken possession of for us in heaven. But, saith he, After the resurrection in the world, or ages, to come, he will show them forth; and so it is a parallel place with that [Col. iii. 3, 4.](#), where he had said, [ver. 2.](#) “Ye are risen with Christ,” as here he addeth, “Your life is hid with Christ in God, but when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

That in [Rom. ix. 23.](#) is a clear parallel to this in the text. The apostle there, in [ver. 22.](#) says, “What if God, willing to show his wrath, (it is the same word,) and to make his power known, and that he might make known the riches of his grace, which he there calls the riches of his glory, on the vessels of mercy before prepared unto glory.”

The word likewise *exceeding riches*, agrees well with this sense. The apostle uses the phrase, *the exceeding riches of his grace*, nowhere that I know of but here; and why? Because he speaks of the utmost manifestation and accomplishment of the height of the riches of grace, which shall not be till then.

And here is another confirmation also of this interpretation. We have here a continued discourse of the apostle, which agrees with the 18th verse of the foregoing chapter, which ends with this verse of the second chapter. There he begins this discourse by praying that they might know what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and then concludes his discourse in this verse, by signifying that there is a world to come wherein God will show forth the exceeding riches of his grace towards them. The apostle begins and ends his discourse with these riches of grace and glory; in this glorious circle involving all things concerning our salvation.

[502] [Eph. ii. 19, 20, 21, 22.](#) “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, &c. According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ Jesus, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, &c. And hath put all things under his feet,” &c. In the work that was wrought, and the alteration made in exalting Christ from the depth of his humiliation to his height of glory, two things are to be considered, *viz*, the relative change, or change of Christ’s circumstances; and the real change made in the human nature, which was not only greatly exalting it from that low state of sorrow, weakness of body and mind,

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563 [Eph. ii. 5.](#)



and comparative meanness of nature, and narrow capacity, to that high, and as it were infinite, degree of knowledge, power, holiness, joy, and real inherent glory; (here is to be considered the change made both in body and in soul. Christ, in his exaltation, not only received power, riches, honour, and blessing, wherein the change of circumstances consisted, but also wisdom and strength, as in [Rev. v. 12.](#);) but exalting it to this from a far lower state, from a state of death under which he descended into the lower parts of the earth, and as it were into hell; in raising him from which, we may conceive greater difficulty than in raising another from the dead, as we may suppose all the powers of hell engaged to their utmost to hinder his resurrection. This real change made in Christ in his resurrection and exaltation, is an unspeakably greater power than the work of creation, not only considering the *term from*, which was a state of death, and so a creation as it were from nothing; but as overcoming the greatest created power; but especially if we consider *the term to which*, or the thing finally extant as the fruit of this work, which is as it were infinitely higher, greater, and more excellent than any thing accomplished in the old creation.

But then Christ in this affair is not to be considered by the apostle singly and personally; but all his church are considered as thus raised and exalted with him, and in him: he as the head, and they as partaking members. This power is manifested in raising them, in raising their dead souls from an infinite depth, infinitely lower than a state of nonentity, and from under as it were infinitely strong chains, to hold them in that state, and the most mighty opposition to their restoration; and also raising their bodies from the dead, and from a state of corruption, and exalting them with Christ, making their bodies like his glorious body, and their souls like his glorious soul; giving them a participation of his elevation of nature, his exalted knowledge, strength, holiness, beauty, glory, and joy, according to their capacity and station.

Herein, in this whole work of the restoration and exaltation of Christ mystical, is above all things manifested the power of God and the new creation.

[169] [Eph. iii. 10.](#) “That now unto the principalities and powers might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God; that is, by the things done in the church, by what they see concerning the church.

[50] [Eph. iv. 13.](#) “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of God, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;” that is, till we all come to agree in the same faith, which is fully conformed to Christ, and therein are come to his rule and measure in faith, and perhaps in other graces, the body of Christ becomes complete, being completely conformed to Christ. The church is the completeness of Christ, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. But this body is not complete, and perfect, till it is perfectly conformed to his mind in faith, and to his image in other graces. Christ and his church, as here, so elsewhere, being as body and soul, are called one man, it is as if he had said, till Christ’s body is complete in stature. The church, the body of Christ, is called a man. [Eph. ii. 15.](#)



[232] [Ephes. v. 30, 31, 32](#). “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Christ did as it were leave his Father in order to obtain and be joined to the church; he came down from heaven, and did as it were leave the bosom of his Father, he left the sweet and joyful manifestations of his Father’s love, and became subject to the hidings of his Father’s face, and even to the expressions of his wrath, and gave himself to his church that he might be joined to his church, and that he might present it to himself a glorious church, &c. as [ver. 25, 26, 27](#). So he also left his mother, which was the church of the Jews, to cleave to the New-Testament church. Christ was born of the Jews, and the ordinances, and legal observances of the Jewish church. Christ was hid as the infant is hid in its mother’s womb. All God’s dispensations towards that church, his calling of them by Moses, his giving them such ordinances, and his so ordering their state from age to age, was in order to bring forth Christ into the world. This Old-Testament church is represented by Sarah, Isaac’s mother, and the New-Testament church by Rebekah, whom Isaac loved, and in whom he was comforted after his mother’s death. (Vide [Gen. xxiv. 67](#). Notes.)

The Old-Testament church was as Christ’s mother, but the New-Testament church is as his wife, whom he treats with far greater affection and intimacy. He forsook his mother also in this respect, *viz.* as he made a sacrifice of that flesh and blood, and laid down that mortal life, which he had from his mother, the Virgin Mary; that which is born of the flesh is flesh; though he did not derive flesh from his mother in the sense in which it is spoken of, [John iii. 6](#). *viz.* corrupt, sinful nature; and therefore, did not forsake his mother for the church, in the same sense wherein the church is advised to forsake her father’s house for Christ’s sake, *viz.* to forsake sin, and lusts derived from parents, by crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts. Yet Christ derived flesh from his mother, *viz.* the animal nature, and human nature, with that frailty and mortality that is the fruit of sin; this Christ forsook, and yielded to be crucified for the sake of the church.

[1461] [Philip. ii. 11](#). And every tongue should confess. In the place of the Old-Testament, that is here quoted, it is, every tongue shall swear, which confirms, that by swearing by God’s name, so often spoken of in the Old-Testament, as a great duty of God’s people, is meant publicly professing the true God, and entering into covenant with him.

[69] [Colos. ii. 11](#). “In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.” If this means the outward circumcision, with which Christ was circumcised, our sins are put off by Christ’s circumcision, after the same manner as by our own baptism; that is, Christ’s circumcision signified the putting off our sins, as much as our own baptism, for our body of sin was imputed to him, he bore it, and put it off in outward sign by his circumcision. Christ represented us; he came into the world without any original sin, and he was circumcised to signify the putting off our corruption of nature.

[329] [2 Thess. ii. 7.](#) “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” As *Christianity*, or the scheme for setting up the kingdom of God, and advancing his glory, and the salvation of men, by *Christ*, is called *the mystery of godliness*; so *antiChristianism*, or the scheme for setting up the kingdom of the devil, and accomplishing the destruction of men by *antichrist*, is called *the mystery of iniquity*. The Christian scheme is called the mystery of godliness very much on that account, that all the ancient mysteries, types, shadows, and prophecies, relating to the kingdom and interest of godliness, have their fulfilment in it. So antichristianism is called the mystery of iniquity, because in this the types and prophecies that relate to the kingdom and interest of iniquity have their principal fulfilment. Here is fulfilled what was shadowed forth of old, by the murder of Cain, and his city in the land of Nod, and by the building of the tower of Babel, and by the city of Babylon, and by the mighty Nimrod, and Belus, or Bel, and by the city of Sodom, by Egypt, and Pharaoh; and the great things that were done in Egypt, in the time of Moses and Aaron, are types of what is done by and to the church of Rome. Here is the antitype of Jabez and Sisera, Oreb and Zeeb, Zeba and Zalmunna, the Moabites and the Ammonites, the Philistines, and especially the Edomites. Here is the antitype of proud Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar, and Haman. Here is the antitype of the city and king of Tyrus, and of Antiochus Epiphanes, and here is the chief fulfilment of the ancient prophecies of Daniel and other prophets that relate to the kingdom of iniquity, and also of most of such prophecies in the New Testament. On the same account the antiChristian church is called “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT.”

[137] [2 Timothy ii. 18.](#) “Who concerning the truth have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.” The Jews before Christ, had a general belief that there would be a resurrection, and they thought it would be when the Messiah came. When he comes, they thought the saints that were of old, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and David, &c. would rise again, and there was a number of them did rise when Christ rose, as Matthew informs us, and therefore there were some that the apostle here speaks of that thought we were to expect no other resurrection.

[339] [Heb. iii. 6, 7, 8.](#) to chap. [iv. 11.](#) “Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost says, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation,” &c. The apostle here supposes that when the psalmist here says, “*To-day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;” it is as much as if he had said, “Although that was a long time ago, and though *their* day was long since past, yet hear his voice, and do not harden your hearts now in this *your* day, and see that you never harden your hearts while your day lasts; for if ye do not harden your hearts, there is a rest of God, that you may enter into as well as they; but if you continue to harden your hearts, your day in a little time will be past as well as theirs.” The former part of this sense, *viz.* that by the expression, “*To-day*,” the psalmist means, In this day that you now have so long after their day is past, is evident by chapter [iv. 7.](#) and the latter part of it, *viz.* that he means. Take heed that your heart be at no time hardened during your day, is evident, because in that [8th verse.](#) the words are brought in as a motive to perseverance. It is still more evident by the manner of the apostle’s bringing in the words in the [11th and 12th, as also in the 14th and 15th verses.](#), and by the apostle’s paraphrase of the words, or gloss he puts upon them there, while it is called To-day, [verse 13.](#) and while it is said Today, [ver. 15.](#) which is the same thing as during the continuance of the day.

From the psalmist exhorting us to hear God’s voice today, so long a time after the carcasses of the children of Israel fell in the wilderness, and so they failed of entering into God’s rest, and so long a time after others that believed entered into that temporal rest that Joshua brought them into; the apostle would argue that there remains still another rest for the people of God, to be entered into, as God spake concerning the children of Israel in the wilderness, as if there was a rest of God still to be entered into, though there had been a rest of God many ages before that, *viz.* that rest, or sabbatism of God, which God enjoyed on the seventh day of the creation, resting from the works of creation, which had been distinguished as God’s rest, or his sabbatism; but yet there then remained another rest of God to those that believed, *viz.* Christ’s rest in Canaan after the Egyptian bondage, and his redemption of his people out of Egypt, as is implied in his swearing in his wrath that those that did not believe should not enter into rest. So there still remains another rest also besides God’s rest from that redemption, as is implied in the psalmist, when speaking so long after of the unbelievers in the wilderness failing of entering into that rest, he still exhorts and says, “To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as they did;” implying that it will not be in vain for us even now to hearken, but we shall enter into God’s rest still if we hearken, even that rest that Christ entered into in heaven, after his great bondage here on earth, and his finishing the work of redemption. By which may be understood the force of the apostle’s reasoning in [ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.](#) of the next chapter.

[142] [Heb. v. 9](#). “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” By obeying, here, is not meant believing, but obedience to the law and commands of God, as it is understood in the foregoing verse.

[74] [Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6](#). “For it is impossible for those that were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift,” &c. What is meant by those things here mentioned, may be gathered from the foregoing verses. The apostle exhorts us, when we have begun in Christianity, to go on, and make progress to higher attainments, and not to have all to begin again; that whenever we had laid the foundation, we should go on and build the superstructure, and not to keep always laying the foundation, or have occasion to lay it the second time, which foundation, or beginning, or first setting out in Christianity, consists in these things, in repentance from dead works, and in faith towards God; which foundation was laid when they first turned from their erroneous and wicked ways, and embraced Christianity, and believed the gospel. And nextly, in *the doctrine of baptisms*, and of *laying on of hands*, because when they first entered upon a profession of the gospel, they were baptized, and had hands laid on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. By *the doctrine of baptisms* and *laying on of hands*, the apostle means those plain instructions that were given them, to prepare them for baptism, and laying on hands; and lastly, as to the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, the doctrine of the resurrection and the future state, or world to come, were the first principles of religion, that they first began with.

Now, by those who were once enlightened, the apostle means those that were once indoctrinated in Christianity, and brought so far to understand and believe it, as to make them forsake their former errors and vicious courses in their unbelief, as is evidently understood, [chap. x. 32](#). Tasting of the heavenly gifts, and being made partakers of the Holy Ghost, are the same, and mean their receiving the Holy Ghost, as they did by the laying on of hands; and lastly, in tasting of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, though it is probable those were everywhere made partakers of the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, that were true saints; yet I believe that when it was not accompanied with gracious exercises, it was always accompanied with great common illuminations and affections. It is not probable that they should have the Holy Ghost dwelling in them with respect to his miraculous influences, and not feel any thing of the power of it in their souls. When the Holy Ghost was given them, they felt his influence, not only outwardly, but inwardly; not only in their understandings, but affections. I believe never any had the Holy Ghost, with respect to his extraordinary operations, (see [Numb. xxiii. 10. xxiv. 5, 6. 1 Sam. x. 6.](#)) more than Balaam and Saul. They were unconverted men, but yet they felt his influence in this way. Thus they tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come. They tasted of the good word of God as the stony-ground hearers, who anon with joy receive the word, and as the Galatians did who thought it such a blessedness to hear the word of God, and would have plucked out their eyes, and given them to the apostle. They experienced

in themselves the power of the world to come, that is, of the invisible world; see [Ephes i. 21.](#) and [Heb. ii. 5.](#) and felt the powers of the invisible agent of that world upon their minds. It is certain none exercised miraculous gifts without extraordinary influence of the Spirit of God to convince the judgment. [1 Cor. xiii. 2.](#) “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing;” and doubtless there was commonly an answerable or proportional effect on the affections, as there was on the judgment. As that faith there mentioned is there distinguished from true grace or charity, and therefore differed in kind from saving faith, so do these things here mentioned from saving grace.

[299] [Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.](#) If any think that the apostle here used expressions too high to denote any gifts of the Spirit common to good and bad men, though miraculous gifts, I answer, that the drift of the apostle, and his argument in those words, led him to set forth the greatness of the privilege that such persons had received, that he might the better show the exceeding aggravations of their apostacy, whence what the apostle says might be the more easily believed, *viz.* that it was impossible to renew them again to repentance. For it is certain that he intends the aggravatedness of their crime, as a reason of it, because he himself gives it as a reason of it, [ver. 6.](#) in those words, “Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

[107] [Heb. xi. 1.](#) “Faith is the evidence of things not seen:” that is, it is *their being evident.* This verse is as much as if he had said, Faith is *the being present* of things that are to come, and *the being clearly seen* of things that are not seen. *The substance of things hoped for,* might have been translated *the subsistence,* that is, *their now subsisting.*

[227] [Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.](#) “For it is impossible,” &c. Those that the apostle here has respect to, must be such as were guilty of the unpardonable sin. The falling away that he speaks of is an apostacy from Christianity. It could not be otherwise but that those who in those days had been Christians, and then openly renounced Christianity, must openly reproach that spirit that Christians were then so generally endued with in his miraculous gifts, which was so notorious, and was so great a thing, and the principal thing in them that drew the eyes of the world upon them, and was the greatest seal that God gave them to evidence in the sight of the world that they were his people, and which was the argument that was principally effectual for the gaining others to them. When they openly renounced Christianity, that they once had appeared to embrace, their renunciation contained a great and open reproach, for it was an avowed casting away and rejecting a thing that has been received, as having found it naught and vile. He that admits and receives another in the capacity of a wife, or husband, or lord, or other relation, and then afterwards on trial rejects them and turns them out of doors, casts a vastly greater reproach on them than those that never received them: much more those that received any one for their God. So these apostates here spoken of, in renouncing Christianity, did openly cast the greatest reproach on Christianity; and therefore the apostle says, [ver. 6.](#) they put him to an open shame. And indeed an open, declared renun-

ciation of Christianity after it had been embraced, is itself an open reproaching, and blaspheming of it in words; and they that apostatized and openly renounced Christianity in those days, and the church being in those circumstances that have already been mentioned, must openly renounce and reproach that Spirit that the Christians were endued with, and confirmed by; for that Spirit was the principal and most obvious thing in that Christianity that they renounced and reproached. And especially must it be so, when those openly renounced Christianity that had themselves been endued with the Holy Ghost, as those here spoken of had been. In renouncing Christianity, they must renounce the Spirit, that great seal of Christianity that they had had. And those that had such experience of the evidences of the truth of Christianity that those had, as has been explained, No. 165. must do it against light and the conviction of their own consciences, and so what they did amounts to the sin against the Holy Ghost. And those that apostatized from Christianity under these circumstances, would naturally be abundant in their reproaches of the religion they had renounced, and the Spirit that confirmed it, that they might justify themselves, and that they might not appear inconsistent with themselves in the eye of the world. The same apostates are evidently spoken of in chap. x. 25., &c. where the apostle speaks of their forsaking the assemblies of Christians, and sinning wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the truth, and treading under-foot the Son of God, and renouncing the blood of the covenant, wherewith they had been sanctified, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace.

[501] *Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. Concerning those who were once enlightened, &c.* It is an argument, that those here spoken of are such as were never regenerated, that they are compared to the thorny ground, which, however it may seem to receive the seed and to nourish it, so that it may spring up, and appear flourishing awhile, yet never brings forth any good fruit, but the fruit finally produced always is briars and thorns, because the ground is thorny, full of seeds and roots of thorns, which were never purged out to prepare the ground for the good seed; so that whatsoever showers descend upon it, how benign soever they are, yet they only go to nourish the thorns, and make them grow the faster, ver. 8. which representation certainly implies that the ground is nought, it was never so changed as to prepare it to bring forth good fruit. It is a good rule in our endeavours to understand the mind of the Spirit of God, to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and to interpret scripture by scripture. Now it is manifest that Christ represents the thorny ground as different from the good ground. The ground itself is naught, and not fitted so to receive and nourish the seed, as to bring good fruit to perfection; and they that are represented by the thorny ground are, in Christ's explanation of the parable, distinguished from those that have good and honest hearts. The fault of the way-side, of the stony ground, and of the thorny ground, was, in each, the nature of the ground; and the good fruit in the good ground is ascribed to the better nature of the ground; and therefore, they that are here represented as ground, which, though often receiving refreshing benign showers, always brings forth briars and thorns, are ground that never

has been purged, and changed, and made good, but is inveterately evil, and therefore fit for nothing but to be burnt. It is not impossible that thorny ground may be brought to bring forth good fruit, but then it must be changed, the very roots of the thorns must be killed or rooted up. If this is not done, let good seed be sown in it, and good and kindly showers of rain descend upon it never so often, it will bring forth briers and thorns. This killing or rooting up of the lusts of the heart, compared to thorns, is done by a work of regeneration, or circumcising the heart, as is represented, [Jer. iv. 4, 5](#). “Break up your fallow ground, sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, lest my fury come forth like fire and burn that none can quench it.” There the end of the ground that bears briers and thorns, is represented as being to be burned, as here in the [6th chapter of Hebrews](#). This is the end of those whose hearts do as it were bring forth briers and thorns, and that because their hearts were never circumcised, *i. e.* never regenerated.

In [Luke viii. 18](#). when Christ had ended the parable of the sower, he concludes, Take heed how you hear; (*i. e.* that you in hearing the word are not like the way-side, or the stony or thorny ground, on which the good seed fell;) for says Christ, “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have;” referring still to the parable, and the taking away, or the withering and perishing, of the seed from the evil sorts of ground; implying that such have no true spiritual life, no real goodness, and that the seeming good they have, they shall lose.

[284] [Heb. vi. 19](#). “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” That which is here called *hope*, is the same with the grace of *faith*, but only with respect to one kind of its exercises, *viz.* those that respect God’s *promises*, or *our own future promised good*. It is no other than *trust in God*, (or rather *faith in God*,) *through Christ, for salvation*. This agrees with the context, beginning with the 12th verse, and with the description given of hope in the words themselves; for it is faith in Christ that is the stability of the soul, faith is that by which we are built on that strong rock, so that we cannot be overthrown, and the same is the anchor by which we are held fast, and cannot be driven to and fro of winds and storms, and shipwrecked and lost. That which is here called hope is the very same that is elsewhere called faith; and saving and justifying faith is often in the New Testament called by the name of hope; as in [Rom. viii. 24, 25](#). “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” How are we saved by hope, but as we are saved or justified by faith? It further appears that by hope here is meant faith, by the following words, “But hope that is seen is not hope,” &c. compared with the words of the same apostle, [Heb. xi. 1](#). “Faith is the evidence of things not seen;” and by the [next verse](#)., “But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it,” compared with the [12th verse of the context in this 6th of Hebrews](#)., “That ye be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” And it may be



further confirmed by comparing this last place with the [foregoing verse](#). And we desire every one of you to show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end;” and also comparing both with the [19th verse](#), the text we are upon. That faith with the apostle sometimes signifies the same with hope, is manifest from his description of it in the 1st verse of [11th of Heb.](#) “Faith is the substance of things hoped for;” and [Gal. v. 5.](#) “We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness, through faith;” and [Colos. i. 23.](#) “If ye continue in faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel:” continuing grounded and settled in faith, and unmoved in the hope of the gospel, are expressions evidently used as exegetical one of another; and [Heb. iii. 6.](#) “If we hold fast our confidence, and rejoicing of hope firm unto the end:” our confidence and our hope seem to be synonymous; so, [Rom. iv. 18.](#) “Who against *hope believed in hope.*” [1 Tim. i. 1.](#) “Jesus Christ which is our hope.” So the apostle Peter seems to use the term hope. [1 Peter i. 21.](#) “Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.” So [chap. iii. 15.](#) “Be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear;” that is, to give a reason, or declare the grounds, of your faith. So hope seems to be used for faith by the apostle John. [1 John iii. 3.](#) “Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

Hope, in the New Testament, is often spoken of as a great Christian grace and virtue, and one of the main things that distinguishes a true Christian, which would be difficult to understand or account for, if by hope is meant no more than what we commonly understand by the word, *viz.* his thinking well of his own state, or hoping well of his future state. That is not hard to do; it is what nature is prone to; but by hope they doubtless meant something more, *viz.* an embracing the promises of God and fiducial relying on them through Christ for salvation. This is the great Christian grace that the apostle speaks of in the [13th chap. of 1 Cor.](#) where he speaks of faith, hope, charity; and by faith there, and also where it is distinguished from hope, is meant faith in a larger sense, *viz.* acquiescing in the truth in whatever he testifies or reveals, without any special regard to our own concern and future interest in what he reveals. Hope is our acquiescing and relying on God’s truth and sufficiency as to what concerns our own future happiness.

[310] [Heb. viii. 1.](#) “We have such an high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.” This is often taken notice of in this epistle, as [chap. i. 3. x. 12. xii. 2.](#) This high priest, when he enters into the holy of holies with his own blood, does not only appear there standing before the throne, or mercy-seat, as the high priests of old were wont to do when they entered into the holy of holies once a year with the blood of others, but sits down on the throne in the holy of holies, on the right hand of God; which shows the exceeding dignity of the priest, his nearness and dearness to God, and the absolute sufficiency of the sacrifice that he had offered, the blood of which he entered in there with, and the dignity and honourableness of the manner of his interceding there; which was not

merely by supplicating, as one in humble posture before the throne, but by representing his will to the Father, as one sitting in glory with him on the throne, as [John xvii. 24.](#) “Father, I will that they that thou hast given me, be with me,” &c. His thus being admitted and invited of God to sit with him on the throne, denotes God’s full, and perfect, and great satisfaction, and well-pleasèdness in, and rest on, this high priest when he had offered his sacrifice, and entered into the holy of holies with the blood of it to obtain of God that for which he shed his blood. God immediately receives him, and accepts him and his plea, and says to him, “Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool.” And it is a note of Christ’s perfect assurance of the Father’s acceptance of him as priest, and his rest in him, as having virtually obtained what he intercedes for, having all things put into his hands, being made head over all things to the church, that he does not merely stand before the throne supplicating, hoping, and waiting, as the legal high priests did, but sits down in perfect rest, as being satisfied in his full acceptance and virtual possession of all he seeks. He sits on the throne as a royal priest, as a priest on the throne agreeably to the prophecy in [Zech. vi. 13.:](#) being made to reign to accomplish the ends of the priesthood, according to his own will; for God has given all power in heaven and on earth, that Christ may give eternal life to as many as God hath given him.

[312] [Heb. ix. 28.](#) “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto those that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” The first time that Christ appeared, he in one sense did not appear without sin; for he bare the sins of many, he appeared in that form, in those circumstances, and with those labours and sufferings, that were tokens of *imputed* sin, or guilt, that lay upon him; but then he perfectly freed himself from this imputed sin, he perfectly abolished this guilt, by those sufferings he underwent, as the apostle is here arguing in the preceding part of the chapter; and therefore when he appears the second time, it shall be without sin, without any of those tokens of imputed guilt which he had in his state of humiliation. He shall be exceedingly far from them, the state in which he will appear will be immensely different from the state of one under the tokens and fruits of guilt and wrath, for he will appear in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels, as the Supreme Head and Judge of the universe, with ineffable and inconceivable glory and magnificence. Had not Christ perfectly satisfied for the sins of men, and so done away all his imputed guilt, he could not have appeared a second time without sin, but must always have remained under the tokens of God’s curse for sin. But at the day of judgment he will appear infinitely far from that. The glory he will appear in at the day of judgment, will be the greatest and brightest evidence of all, of his having fully satisfied for sin. His resurrection is a glorious evidence of it, and therefore is called his justification. His ascension into heaven, and sitting on the right hand of God, is a still brighter evidence, as it is a higher degree of his exaltation; but the glory that he will appear in at the day of judgment, will be the brightest evidence of all, as herein appears the glory of his exaltation in its highest degree

of all, and is the highest reward which the Father bestows on him for it, and so is the highest token of his acceptance of it as sufficient and perfect. Beside the glory of the special affair of that day which Christ shall bear, then will be the beginning of the consummate glory and reward of both Christ and his church, to last throughout eternity. And not only the glory that Christ will then appear in, but the nature of the business that he will come upon, will show him perfectly to have done away all the sins of his elect, of which he will be the judge, and will save those that have believed in him. God would not have committed this affair to one that had undertaken for them, unless he had satisfied for them.

He will appear without sin to salvation. The first time he appeared, it was with sin to procure salvation; the second he will appear to bestow salvation, which will in the event show that salvation is fully procured.

[288] [Heb. x. 1.](#) “The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things.” Here a shadow is distinguished from images, or pictures, as having a more imperfect representation of the things represented by it. The types of the Old Testament are compared to this kind of representation of things, not only here, but [chap. viii. 5.](#) and [Colos. ii. 17.](#) which fitly resemble them on several accounts. The shadow of a thing is an exceedingly imperfect representation of it, and yet has such a resemblance, that it has a most evident relation to the thing of which it is the shadow. Again, shadows are a kind of dark resemblances. Though there be a resemblance, yet the image is accompanied with darkness, or hiding of the light: the light is beyond the substance, so that it is hid. So was it with the types of the Old Testament; they were obscure and dark; the light was beyond the substance. The light that was plainly to reveal gospel things came after Christ, the substance of all the ancient types. The shadow was accompanied with darkness and obscurity; gospel things were then hid under a veil.

[230] [Heb. x. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.](#) That the sin against the Holy Ghost is here intended, is confirmed from the place in the Old Testament that seems to be referred to in the [28th and 29th verses.](#); for the place that seems especially to be referred to is that in [Numb. xv. 30, 31., &c.](#); where God having been speaking of the sins of ignorance, that should be atoned for with sacrifice, tells what sins should not be atoned for with sacrifice in these words, “But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people; because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment; that soul shall be utterly cut off:” and then in the words next following, there is an instance given of such a man so sinning presumptuously, *viz.* the sabbath-breaker, that gathered sticks on the sabbath, and how no sacrifice was accepted for him, but he perished without mercy by all the congregation’s stoning him with stones. See margin of the Hebrew Bible. That the apostle here refers to this passage, seems evident by these things. The apostle is here speaking of a sin, for which there remains no more sacrifice, and in that in Numbers shows what sins

were not to be atoned for by legal sacrifice. He speaks here of him that *despised Moses's law*, which agrees with those words in that place in Numbers, "*Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken the commandment:*" the reason given in that place why no sacrifice was to be accepted for him, so here the reason given why no more sacrifice remains, is that he sins wilfully. In that place another reason why he should perish without accepting a sacrifice was, that he *reproached the Lord*; so here the reason given why there remained no sacrifice for this was, that he had insolently and maliciously *reproached the Spirit of grace*, for so the words in the original signify which are translated *hath done despite to the Spirit of grace*. (Vide Van Maestricht, p. 363. col. 1.) Another reason there given is, that he had despised *the word of the Lord*; a reason here given is, that he had trampled on the Son of God, who is *the Word of God*. The man gathering sticks perished by the hand of all the congregation; the whole congregation were commanded to stone him with stones, to bear testimony that none had mercy on him, agreeably to God's direction in such a case, [Deut. xiii. 8, 9, 10](#). "Neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare him, but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people, and thou shalt stone him with stones that he die." Thus the sabbath-breaker perished *without mercy*. And he died under the hand of *two or three witnesses*, as the apostle concluded from the law in such a case.

Hence we may gather the meaning of the word *wilfully* in that place, That the apostle means by it in the same sense as the man in Numbers is said to sin presumptuously; the phrase in the original is *with an high hand*, or rather, *a lifted up hand*, as of one that is going to strike another. The same word is used of Jeroboam, [1 Kings xii. 26](#). "He lift his hand against the king."

[135] [Heb. xii. 21](#). "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." The place referred to seems to me to be, [Deut. ix. 18,19](#). "I fell down, for I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure," &c. God at that time manifested his displeasure by the extraordinary burning in the mount. See [verse 15](#).

[289] [Heb. xiii. 12, 13, 14](#). "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Christ suffered as one that was not fit to live among men, nor to die in a place where men dwelt; and therefore was carried forth as execrable without the gate to suffer there: such *reproach* did Christ suffer, and such were the circumstances of the Christian church in those days, that those that would be the faithful followers of Christ must suffer like reproach: they were cast off by the generality of men; they were looked upon as not fit for human society, worthy to be shut out from dwelling with men. [Matt. x. 22](#). "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." If they would cleave to Christ, they must even go forth with him without the camp, and be reputed as unclean as he was: they must be shut without the gates

of the city as execrable too, and must bear his reproach, or the same reproach that he bore. So the apostle advises them to be willing to go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

But by going forth to Christ without the camp, or the gate of the city, the apostle here seems especially to mean exposing themselves to be shut out as unclean, from the congregation of the Jews, and from the temple and city of Jerusalem, and from the religious society of the Jews in their synagogues, by their forsaking the ancient legal sacrifices and other legal observances for Christ, ver. 9.

[52] [James ii. 19.](#) “The devils also believe and tremble.” They believe that Jesus is the Christ, &c. And tremble at the thoughts of the overthrow he will give them.

[264] [1 Pet. i. 3.](#) with the context The apostle directing his epistle to the Christians in Pontus, &c. takes notice, in the foregoing verse, of the hand that each of the persons of the Trinity had in their being so distinguished from the rest of the world, as to be Christians, or saints, “elect according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of *the Spirit* unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*.” And having mentioned the blood of Christ and referred to his death; which is, in itself considered, without what followed, a melancholy subject, as Christ says, [Matt. ix. 15.](#) “The days come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast; he therefore in this verse leads their thoughts to the resurrection, a more joyful subject. The death of Christ, without a resurrection following, might justly have damped and killed the hope of all his disciples; but his resurrection revives their hearts, and renews and everlastingly establishes their hopes, no more to be thus damped. It is probable that the apostle, when he wrote this, remembered how it was with him and the rest of the apostles, when Christ was dead. Before they were full of hope of being advanced with Christ in his kingdom; but when he was dead, their hopes seemed to be quashed, and dead as it were with him; but when Christ was raised to life again, so were their hopes renewed, and abundantly established, and their hearts were filled with joy. Christ, by his resurrection, is said to be begotten, [Acts xiii. 33.](#) “God hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” When the Father raised Christ from the dead, he was, as it were, begotten again of the Father; and so his disciples were with him begotten again to a *lively hope*, or as it probably might have been better rendered, a *living hope*. The expression, *a living hope*, seems to denote three things:

1. That as Christ since his death is alive again, so their hope was alive, and not dead, as the hope of the disciples was, while Christ was dead, though Christians suffered persecution, [verses 6, 7.](#)

2. That their hope by Christ’s resurrection is exceedingly established, and made strong and lively; so that they greatly rejoiced, ([verse 6.](#)) yea, rejoiced with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

3. Which seems more especially to be intended, their hope that is begotten and established by Christ's resurrection, is an immortal and never dying hope, as the Spirit of grace in the saints is called living water, because it springs up into everlasting life. [John iv.](#) And Christ is called the bread of life, because he that eateth thereof shall not die, but live for ever. [John vi.](#) The hope that the disciples had before Christ's death, was in a great measure dead when he was dead. But now Christ is risen, and is alive for evermore; [Rev. i. 18.](#) so the hope that is begotten and established by the resurrection of Christ, is a living, never dying hope. It is now too much established by that glorious resurrection of Christ, ever to die again, to that degree, that the hope of the disciples died, when Christ died. God the Father raised Christ incorruptible, never to die more, and thereby begot *them* to an inheritance incorruptible. A rich father begets a child to an inheritance; so God, the Father of their Lord Jesus Christ, and their Father here spoken of, has begotten them to an inheritance, and this inheritance is incorruptible, and that fadeth not away. And as their inheritance that they are begotten to, is immortal and unfading, so is their hope a living and unfading hope. [Verse 4.](#) The same power of God, that raised Christ immortal, will keep their faith alive, that it shall never die; as verse 5. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." So that their faith and hope live still, though they be subject to great trials; even as refined pure gold will bear the fire, [verses 6, 7.](#); and therefore the apostle exhorts them to hope to the end, verse 13. or to hope with a living and never-dying hope.

[480] [1 Peter ii. 7, 8.](#) "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence," &c. There are several ways and respects, that stones or rocks are valuable and of benefit to men, in each of which Christ in Scripture is compared to a stone or rock with regard to believers.

1. Some stones are highly valued for the preciousness of their nature and substance, and beauty of their form, and so are valued as a great treasure, and that which is prized because it enriches and adorns. So Christ is said to be a stone that is precious to believers. He is spoken of as a pearl of great price. So he was typified by the precious or costly stones that were brought for the foundation of the temple.

2. Stones or rocks are a great benefit to mankind, as a sure foundation of a building; so is Christ to believers.

3. Rocks were commonly made use of for defence from enemies; their fortresses were ordinarily built on high rocks, or rocky mountains; so is Christ often spoken of in Scripture as the strong rock, high tower, refuge, and sure defence of believers.

4. Rocks were of great benefit to travellers in the hot parched deserts of Arabia, near to Canaan, by their cool shadows. The benefit believers have by Christ, is compared to this, [Isa. xxxii.](#) at the beginning.



5. In a time of inundation, mountains or rocks would be the places to resort to for safety, to keep from being overwhelmed. The benefit believers have by Christ is compared to this, [Ps. lxi. 2](#). “When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

On the contrary, there are several ways that stones, or rocks, are disesteemed among men, and hurtful to them; wherein Christ is compared to a stone or rock with regard to unbelievers:

1. Nothing is ordinarily looked upon and treated by men as more worthless than common stones; so is Christ disesteemed and rejected by unbelievers: as builders throw away misshapen stones as not for their purpose, and of no value.

2. Stones are offensive to travellers, and an occasion of their stumbling and falling; so is Christ to unbelievers, “a stone of stumbling.”

3. Rocks are very often fatal to sailors, and the occasion of their suffering shipwreck; so those that enjoy the gospel, and have the means of grace, but fail through unbelief, are in Scripture compared to them who suffer shipwreck at sea; [1 Tim. i. 19](#). “Concerning faith have made shipwreck.”

4. Those high rocks that were most fit for places of defence, had dreadful precipices, which if men fell over, they would be broken in pieces: [Isa. viii. 14](#). “And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, &c. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and taken.”

[150] [1 Peter iv. 6](#). “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, and live according to God in the spirit; that is, that they might be judged according to what they did when they were alive amongst men in the flesh, as other mortal men, *and live according to God in the spirit*; that is, that their spirit might live, might continue to exist before God, and as God doth separate from fleshly bodies, and according as God pleases, to fix their state.

[140] [2 Peter i. 10](#). “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for he that doeth these things shall never fall.” The apostle had exhorted to give diligence to add to our faith, virtue, &c. and tells us that if we do these things we shall not be barren and unfruitful in the knowledge, &c. Now he offers another argument; he tells us that to neglect those things, is the way to doubtfulness about our condition, “He that lacketh those things has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins;” therefore the meaning of this verse is, the rather give diligence *in those things*, that you may make your calling and election sure; as is evident by the following clause, “for he that doeth these things shall never fall;” “Wherefore the rather,” is as much as to say, *the rather for this, viz.* “that you may make your,” &c.

[265] [2 Peter i. 11.](#), to the end. Ver. 11. “*So an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*” By *the kingdom* seems to have been intended by the apostle, and to be understood by the Christians in those days,

the kingdom that Christ would set up and establish at his second coming, spoken of in the 16th verse. That was the principal accomplishment of that prophecy of the kingdom of the Son of God in the 2nd and 7th chapters of Daniel, and was the greatest thing intended by Christ when he spake of his coming in his kingdom.

**Ver. 12.** "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." By the present truth seems to be intended the doctrine of Christ's second coming, because there were some apostates and false teachers among them lately risen up, spoken of, [chap. ii. 3.](#) that denied it, and opposed it. They denied the Lord that bought them, [chap. ii. 1.](#); and of consequence denied the second coming of Christ, as appears by [chap. iii.](#) They were scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming, for the apostle in that chapter does not only speak of such a sort of men as future, but as what was then present, as having been foretold by the apostles of the Lord Jesus, [ver. 2.](#) The apostles had foretold of scoffers that should come before the coming of Christ, as they knew, and the apostle speaks of that sort of men he had described in the second chapter as being in part a fulfilment of their prediction, as the apostle John says, [1 John ii. 18.](#) "Little children, it is the *last time*; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the *last time*." So here, [chap. ii. 3.](#) the apostle Peter puts them in mind, how the apostles of the Lord Jesus had told them, and they knew by their word, that *in the last days* scoffers should come. Therefore the apostle would not have them shocked by them, now they were come. It is evident that the apostle speaks of them as present, and not merely future, by the following part of that chapter, particularly [verses 5, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17.](#) So that it is the doctrine of the second coming of Christ that was the doctrine that was especially opposed by apostates among them at that day, and therefore that doctrine is what the apostle calls the present truth. The apostle, in this verse, signifies to them that he writes this epistle to establish them, and put them in remembrance in what he calls the present truth; but it is that truth of Christ's second coming that he writes this epistle to establish them in, as appears by the beginning of the 3rd chapter, where he uses the same expression of putting them in remembrance. This second epistle I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour;" and that word and commandment was what they told them of Christ's second coming, as appears by what there follows.

**Verse 16.** "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." We, *i. e.* the apostles, have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we taught you this *present truth* of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he speaks of this as a doctrine that the apostles had taught them before, [chap. iii. 2.](#) These apostates gave out that what Jesus had said about his second



coming, was only a fable cunningly devised by him, perhaps to maintain the credit of his former pretences of being the Messiah prophesied of, that was to set up the kingdom of heaven, when otherwise he would have lost it all by his sufferings and disgrace that he met with while he lived, and to keep up the zeal of his followers, and so his name and honour, after his death.

Verses 16, 17, 18. “But were eye-witnesses of his majesty,” &c. They, the apostles, had not only *heard* him say, that he would come in his kingdom in power and great glory, but they were in a sort eye-witnesses of it, in that they were eye-witnesses of something in Christ that was a remarkable and wonderful earnest and prelibation of it, *viz.* the glory of his transfiguration. The glory of the transfiguration was manifested to Peter, that wrote this epistle, and two other disciples, to that very end, that it might be an earnest of what he had been telling them of his coming in his kingdom, and a specimen of the glory of his second coming. For in each of the three evangelists the account of Christ’s transfiguration follows next after Christ’s foretelling them of his coming in his kingdom. What they saw of the glory of Christ’s transfiguration was an evidence of two things that were dependent one on another, both which these apostates denied.

*First,* It was an evidence that he was the Son of God, the same that was declared by the voice which said, “This is my beloved Son.” This these apostates denied, [chap ii. ver. 1.](#) “denying the Lord that bought them.” This was evident by that glory they saw: as,

1. The glory that Christ there appeared in was so divine and admirably excellent, and had such a bright and evident appearance of divinity, such an admirable and ineffable semblance of the infinitely glorious perfection of God, his awful majesty, his purity, and infinitely sweet grace and love, as evidently denoted him to be a divine person. The apostle says, “He received from the Father, honour and glory:” the term is doubled and varied thus to signify the exceeding excellency of the glory.

There was doubtless an inward sight, or lively sense of heart, of Christ’s spiritual glory that accompanied Peter’s sight of the visible glory of Christ. There was an ineffable beauty, majesty, and brightness in his countenance, that held forth and naturally represented the excellencies of his mind, his holiness, his heavenly meekness, and grace, and love, and that majesty that spake his union with the Deity, and by the influence of the Spirit of God accompanying, excited in Peter, and the other two that were with him, a great sense of those perfections, and their immense excellency, adorableness, and sweetness. And the Spirit of God doubtless accompanied the word of God, that Peter and the other then heard, so that that word was spiritually understood, and believed; so that Christ’s glory then was manifested to the disciples three ways: by the rays of light, it was exhibited to their eyes; by the voice, it was declared to their ears; and by the Spirit, to their souls. The last was the most convincing and certain evidence to them of Christ’s divinity.



This glory of Christ, that the apostles then saw, both the outward glory and the spiritual glory, that the outward glory had a semblance of, did most remarkably appear to be such as exceedingly became the only-begotten, dearly beloved, and infinitely lovely Son of God. Therefore, the apostle John, who was another eye-witness of it, speaking probably with special reference to this, [John i. 14.](#) says, “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” It exhibited not only the divine greatness in the majesty of which the apostle Peter in this place especially speaks, but the divine grace and love in the sweetness of it.

2. This glory that appeared in the person of Christ, did exactly resemble that excellent glory that the apostle speaks of, out of which the voice came, [ver. 17.](#) For there was there in the mount an external glory, as a visible symbol of the presence of God the Father, and by which he was represented; as well as an external glory in God the Son, *viz.* that bright cloud that overshadowed them. There was a glory in that cloud that the apostle calls an excellent glory. When it is said in the evangelists that a bright cloud overshadowed them, it is not meant such a light or white cloud as shines by a cast of light upon it from some shining body, such as are some clouds by the bright reflection of the sun’s light; but a cloud bright by an internal light shining out of it, which light the apostle calls an excellent glory. It probably was an ineffably sweet, excellent sort of light, perfectly differing from and far exceeding the light of the sun. All light is sweet, but this seems to have been immensely more sweet than any other that ever they had; impressing some idea which we cannot conceive, having never seen it, as we can conceive of nothing of light more than we have seen; we could have conceived of no such light as the light of the sun, had not we seen it, nor of any colour, blue, red, green, purple, nor any other. God doubtless can excite other ideas of light in our minds besides any of those that we have had, and far exceeding them; a light affording sweetness and pleasure to the sight, far exceeding all pleasure of the grosser and inferior senses. Therefore, Peter the apostle, that writes this epistle, was exceedingly delighted with it in the time of it, which made him say, “It is good for us to be here;” and made him talk of building tabernacles, and thinking of spending the rest of his days there; and he still (though now old and near his end, [verses 13, 14.](#)) retains a lively sense of the exquisite gloriousness and pleasantness of that light, when he expresses himself as he does here, calling it *the excellent glory*. And there probably was an exact resemblance between the glory that the disciples saw in Christ’s face, and that which they saw in this cloud, which declared him to be the Son of God; for they saw him to be his express image.

The apostle John, who saw this, probably afterwards in his visions, saw the very same sort of light and glory as an emanation of the glory of God, filling the new Jerusalem, which he now saw filling the mount of transfiguration, the type of that which he gives an account of in “Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal.” The light he then saw seems to be perfectly differing in

nature from any that is to be seen in this world, and immensely more sweet and excellent. He evidently wants words and similitudes to convey his own impression of it to our minds; he wants something excellent, and sweet, and precious enough to set it forth. He says, "It was like a stone most precious;" he knew none precious, or bright, or excellent enough to the sight; but he says it was "like a jasper-stone," more resembling that than any other; but that is not sufficient, and therefore he adds, "clear as crystal;" and from the whole we may gather, it was something he could not express, and that there was nothing like it. (Vide Note on the verse.) So it was the same kind of light that this beloved disciple had the glory of God represented by, [Rev. iv. 3](#). "He that sat on it was like a jasper and a sardine stone;" a jasper and a sardine stone were of different colours, one green and the other red. How then could the light appear like both? By this it is plain, that indeed it was like neither, and that the apostle could find nothing to represent it by; there was all that was excellent in both. This is something like his seeing that the street of the new Jerusalem was like *pure gold*, and yet like *transparent glass*, [Rev. xxi. 18](#).

3. This glory that they saw in Christ, appeared to them as communicated from that glory in the cloud, for the apostle says he received from the Father honour and glory. The light in Christ's person appeared to them to be as it were lighted up, or begotten, as it were, by that in the cloud; or the glory in the cloud appeared shining on Christ, and so communicating the same excellent brightness. This again declared him to be the Son of God, for it showed him to be the express image of the Father, and to be from the Father, as begotten of him. Thus the glory of Christ's transfiguration was an evidence that he was the Son of God.

*Secondly*. It was also a special and direct evidence that what he had said a little before of his second coming, was true. By it was given a specimen of that glory that he should then appear in, and showed that this was the person that the prophet Daniel foretold would come in so glorious a kingdom, that the Jews called it the kingdom of heaven, by the agreement there was between this glory they saw in Christ, and that which Daniel describes to be in that person that should set up that kingdom, whose garment is said to be white as snow. [Dan. vii. 9](#). As Christ's garments were said to be white as the light, and so as no fuller on earth can white them.

*And nextly*, besides the visible glory, the apostle mentions the voice that issued from the excellent glory in the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him" (though the last clause, "Hear him," is not here mentioned). It is observable that it is the very same, which the glory that was in *the cloud* declared to the *eyes* of the apostles, which the voice in *the cloud* declared to their *ears*. The visible communication from this glory to Christ, one glory as it were begetting another, and the exact resemblance of the glory begotten, declared him to be God's Son; and the sweet and exact agreement between one and the other, and the union that appeared by communication, denoted the love between the Father and Son, as that he was well pleased in him. And this glory, being given as a

specimen of the glory of his second coming, declared the truth of what he had so lately told them of his second coming: the same that the voice implicitly declared, when it bid them *hear him*, or believe what he said, which the disciples that heard it, must especially apply to the things he had most lately told them, and instructed them in.

**Verse 19.** *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."* By the word of prophecy is here meant, the standing written revelation that God had given to his church, as appears by the two next verses. This is spoken of as surer than a voice from heaven. But the apostle has a special respect to the prophetic part of this written revelation, and most of all those parts that speak of the glory of Christ's kingdom, which is the principal subject of scripture prophecy, particularly that prophecy in the 7th chap. of Daniel, that speaks of the kingdom of heaven. This word of prophecy is *as a light that shines in a dark place*. The time of Christ's coming is here spoken of as the morning, when Christ, who is the Sun, shall arise and appear; and his happy kingdom that he shall then set up, is represented as the day time. But the time that goes before that, is here represented as night time, or a time of darkness, and we that live in that time, as being in a dark place. The word of prophecy is as a light shining in a dark place, or as the light of a bright star in this night, a light preceding the day of Christ's coming, like the morning-star that is a forerunner of the day. The prophecies of that day foretell it, as the day-star foretells the approaching day. The prophets were harbingers of that blessed season, as the morning-star is the harbinger of the day. By the prophecies of that day that go before it, something of the light of that day is manifested beforehand, and so is reflected to it, so that some of the light of the fire is anticipated, as by the day-star while it is yet night. If we give heed to those prophecies, we shall enjoy this foregoing light in our hearts, and so this day-star will arise; then our faith in these prophecies will be the evidence of that glorious Sun that is now not seen, and will render his light that is hoped for in some measure present in this dark world, and in our dark hearts. We snail in a measure have the joy of the morning of Christ's coming beforehand; we shall have a light in our hearts that will be an earnest and forerunner of the glorious light of that day, as the dawning of the day before sun-rise.

This world is a dark place without Christ, and therefore is dark till he comes, and until his kingdom of glory is set up. It appeared to be so now, especially in the circumstances of the Christians that the apostle now writes to, a world of heresies, grand delusions, and dreadful wickedness. They were in a dark place; they were not only surrounded with heathens, and subject to persecution, as appears by Peter's first epistle, that was written to the same Christians, as is evident by [chap. iii. 1.](#) but were in the midst of vile heretics and apostacies, as has been said already, and Christ delayed his coming, and they had many temptations to deny the present truth, and lose their hopes of the sun's rising. When a man is in a dark place, and is in danger of stumbling and falling, and being lost, and has a light held forth to



him, to guide him in, it behoves him to take heed to it, and keep his eye upon it, lest he get out of the way and fall into mischief.

[484] [1 John ii. 18.](#) “Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrists shall come, even now there are many antichrists, whereby we know it is the last time.” It is not reasonable to think that the apostle supposed, that this time was the latter part of the space that should be from Christ’s ascension to his second coming to the general judgment. For it is evident by what he here says, that he knew that the great antichrist should come before that. And if he supposed that this great antichrist now appeared, it is not likely that he would have expressed himself as he does, *even now are there many antichrists*. He would rather have said, “Even now antichrist is come;” and would have deciphered him, and pointed him forth. We must therefore understand the apostle thus: “It is now long since the apostles foretold the coming of antichrist, of which they told you in the first age of the Christian church, which reached from Christ’s ascension to the destruction of Jerusalem; and now, since Jerusalem’s destruction, has commenced the last state of things, the last age of the world, which is to continue from the destruction of Jerusalem, and the perfect abolishing of the Old-Testament dispensation to the end of the world, which the apostles had been wont to call the *latter days*, and *last times*; during which last age they foretold that antichrist should appear, [2 Thess. ii. 3.](#), &c. [1 Tim. iv. 1.](#), &c. [2 Tim. iii. 1.](#), &c.; and now the spirit of antichrist doth very visibly appear; and there are many apostates and corrupters, that we may look upon as the forerunners of antichrist, and are therefore an evidence that we are now come to that last age in which it has been foretold that antichrist should arise; which should make you behave yourselves more circumspectly, for the apostles often told you that those last times wherein antichrist should appear would be perilous times.”

[287] [John iii. 9.](#) “Whosoever is born of God, doth not *commit sin*,” *i. e.* he does not *re-lapse*, or *fall away from righteousness into sin again*; [“for his seed remaineth in him,”] *i. e.* the seed of which he is born of God, the same seed by which he is begotten of God, remaineth in him, and therefore he does not fall away to a state and trade of sin again, out of which he was begotten, and born by that seed.

[104] [Jude ver. 9.](#) “He disputed about the body of Moses.” The thing referred to is that mentioned [Zech. iii. 2.](#) The church of the Jews is called *the body of Moses*, as the Christian church is called *the body of Christ*. Moses was herein a type of Christ.

[188] [Jude ver. 14, 15.](#) “Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment,” &c. It is probable that this prophecy of Enoch had the more direct respect to the destruction of the ungodly of the old world by the flood. Those sinners of whom Jude speaks were like them, and their destruction should be like theirs. [2 Pet. ii. 5.](#) It looks very probable that God would reveal his designs to Enoch, of overthrowing the world, seeing that he was so intimately conversant with him, and the world was so much corrupted in his days; which was probably

one reason why God took him out of the world, he would not suffer one so dear to him to live in the midst of such a wicked, abominable crew, to have his soul continually vexed by them. Enoch's son Methuselah lived till the very year that the flood came; and, if so, it is exceedingly probable that God would reveal something to him of his intended destruction of them. This prophecy is applied to those heretics and their destruction, very much after the same manner as many prophecies of the Old Testament are applied in the New to other things, than what they most directly signified. Many of the prophecies of Scripture are applicable to *many things*; as Christ's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, is applicable to the destruction of heathenism in the Roman empire, and to the end of the world: *the all-knowing Spirit has an eye to many things in what he saith*. Where the apostle says, "Enoch prophesied of those," he may be understood to mean of those that were of this sort, *i. e.* of this lascivious kind of persons.

[200] That Enoch prophesied of the flood, is yet more probable from the name that he gave his son, *Methuselah*, for the first part of it *Methu*, signifies *he is dead*, and *shelah* signifies *sending*; so that what is implied in the name seems to be *when he is dead, God. shall send*; and probably there is a prophecy couched in it, that when Methuselah was dead God should send that great catastrophe that Enoch had foretold which came to pass accordingly, for the flood came that very year that Methuselah died.

[357] "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints." It is observable that Enoch, *the first of all the prophets*, prophesied of *the last event that is the subject of prophecy*; and that event which is the greatest subject of the prophecies of Scripture, and in which the most of the prophecies of Scripture terminate. Though this is not the most wonderful event that is the subject of prophecy, for that was the death of Christ; yet this is the greatest event that is the fruit of that event. In this is completed the end of Christ's death; and this last coming of Christ, together with what is accomplished by it, is in many respects the greatest of all events; and it is so in this respect, that it is what all that God has made, and all that Christ has done and suffered, and all the events of providence from the beginning of the world, and all that he has foretold, ultimately terminate in. Therefore, with this does scripture prophecy both begin and end; it begins in Enoch's prophecy, which is the first prophecy we have an account of in Scripture; and it ends with this in the last words of the last of the prophets, even John, in the conclusion of the Revelations.

[270] **Rev. iv. 3.** "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." The rainbow we know was appointed of God as a token of his gracious covenant with mankind. God is encompassed with a rainbow, which signifies that as he sits and reigns, and manifests himself in his church, he appears as encompassed with mercy. As of old, the throne of God in the holy of holies, where God manifested himself in the church of Israel, was called the *mercy-seat*, so here there is a rainbow, the sign of God's gracious covenant,

round about the throne that he sits on. This rainbow was in sight like unto *emerald*, which is a precious stone of an exceedingly lovely *green* colour; so green, that this colour appears in nothing else so lively and lovely. This colour is a most fit emblem of divine grace; it is a very lively colour; not so dull as blue or purple, and yet most easy to the sight, more easy than the more fiery colours of yellow and red. It is the colour of the grass, herbs, and trees, and all the growth of the earth, and therefore fitly denotes life, flourishing, prosperity, and happiness, which are often in Scripture compared to the green, flourishing growth of the earth. As the benign influence of the sun on the face of the earth is shown by this colour above all others, so is the grace and benign influence and communication of God fitly represented by this colour. This colour is the colour of joy and gladness. The fields are said to shout for joy, and also to sing, by their appearing in a cheerful green: as the colour red is made use of to signify God's revenging justice, in [Zech. i. 8.](#) and elsewhere; so is *green* the emblem of divine grace, as Dr. Doddridge observes: this does not imply that the rainbow had no other colour, but that the proportion of green was greater than ordinary.

[109] [Rev. iii. 4.](#) "They shall walk with me in white, for they are *worthy*:" that is, they are *fit*, as we often use the word.

[271] The moon is a type of the revelation God made, and of the ordinances he instituted, under the Old Testament, or the Old-Testament constitution and administration, and is so used, [Rev. xii. 1.](#) vid. Notes in loc.; and it is made use of in Scripture also as a type of the church; it is so in the festival of the new moon; vid. Notes on [Numb. x. 10.](#) The church, under the Old Testament, in the institution of that festival, must be supposed to be represented under the type of the moon before its conjunction with the sun, *i. e.* Christ, the sun from whom the church borrows her light. The gospel light granted to the Old-Testament church in its different successive ages, was very much like the light of the moon in the several parts of the revolution it performs, which ends in its conjunction with the sun. The first calling of Abraham, the father of the nation and founder of their church, as separated from the rest of the world by God's revealing, and establishing, and sealing his covenant to him, and his seed, and bestowing the privileges of it upon them; and also the first institution of the administration of the old church of Israel by Moses; may each of them be looked upon as the beginning of the moon's course in this revolution, wherein it sets out in the beginning of its month for a conjunction with Christ, its sun, at the conclusion of it. Christ's coming, and so mercifully and remarkably appearing to Abraham from time to time, as his friend, and sometimes in the form of a man, as if incarnate, eating and drinking with him, and doing such great things for him, and by him; and particularly his entering into covenant with him, as the father and founder of this church; may be looked upon as this moon's first conjunction with the sun, or with Christ, from whence in her revolution she set out for the other conjunction at Christ's coming by his incarnation and resurrection. Abraham was not only the natural, but in some sense the spiritual, father of the church, (as he is called in

the New Testament the father of believers,) and therein is a type of Christ, and was in some respect a father instead of Christ, till Christ came. After this, that nation and church at first was very small and weak, but they gradually grew greater, and more and more flourishing, till Solomon's time, which was *about the middle of the space between Abraham and Christ*, or the middle of the revolution from one conjunction to another; and then it was full moon. Then both the nation and church were in their greatest glory; but from that time they were gradually diminished and dwindled, first by the nation's dividing into two kingdoms, and then by the captivity of the ten tribes, and then by the captivity of the kingdom of Judah, and then after that by various calamities they suffered after the captivity, under the Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies; until at last the sceptre departed from Judah, and they were put under a Roman governor, and their light was as it were put out; as the moon, when she is just come to her conjunction with the sun.

But as the calling of Abraham, the father of the church and nation, may be looked upon as the beginning of the revolution with respect to the being and prosperity of the nation or church itself, so Christ's revealing himself to that people by Moses, the teacher of the church, and the father of the prophets, by whom the administration they were under was first instituted, and who gave the first written revelation to it, may be looked upon as the beginning of the revolution with respect to the light that church had by prophecy and revelation by God's word, as written in the Old Testament; which Old-Testament revelation is, as has been already observed, compared in Scripture to the reflected light of the moon in the night, to serve in the absence of the sun. Christ's coming as he did to the children of Israel in Moses's time, his appearing first to him in the burning bush, and in such a wonderful way redeeming them out of Egypt, (which was, if I may so say, *the Old-Testament redemption*,) redeeming them, and revealing himself to them by Moses, and entering into covenant with them by Moses; (their great prophet, and king, and intercessor like to Christ, and that was instead of God to Pharaoh, and instead of Christ to the people, and was as it were *the Old-Testament Christ*, and therefore that church which is called *his body*, by [Jude ver. 9](#). of his epistle;) his coming down out of heaven to dwell among the people, whereby he as it were bowed the heavens and came down, and the mountains flowed down at his presence; his speaking to the people with an audible voice; his speaking to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend; his appearing in the form of a man to the seventy elders, (when they saw the God of Israel, and did eat and drink, which is spoken of as a new thing,) and afterwards leading them into Canaan, and working such wonders for them by Joshua, who bears the name of Jesus, and was called the shepherd and stone of Israel in Jacob's blessing of Ephraim, and was to the people in Christ's stead, as their leader and captain of salvation: I say those things were, as it were, the first conjunction of the moon with the sun, whence she set out in her revolution, when the gospel light, or the revelation of Christ, and the great truths respecting him, was but very small and dim, being almost wholly hid under types



and shadows. After this, it gradually increased; the prophets that were afterwards in Israel were more clear than Moses was in what they taught of gospel truth. The succession of prophets began in Samuel, and David had much of the spirit of prophecy. Gospel light was much more full and clear in the revelations made by him than it had been in any revelation the church enjoyed before. But in the revelations that were given by the prophet Isaiah, gospel light is fullest and clearest of all beyond what we have in any other Old-Testament revelation. This was at about *the middle of the space between Moses and Christ*. In Isaiah, the Old-Testament church enjoyed gospel light as it were reflected from a full moon; there was no prophet afterwards that spake so fully of Christ; and afterwards the spirit of prophecy diminished. It continued in a smaller degree, till some time after the captivity, and then wholly ceased in Malachi, or a little after his time; and the minds of the people became more and more darkened, as to their notions of Christ, and his kingdom, till Christ's time; when they were exceeding corrupt and carnal, expecting a temporal Messiah. They were under blind guides that led them into the ditch, and had in a great measure made void the commandment of God by their tradition, as the light of the moon ceases as she approaches her conjunction with the sun.

[306] [Rev. xxi. 22](#). "And the street of the city was pure gold, like unto transparent glass." This does most lively represent the perfect purity of that city and its inhabitants. In the most stately and magnificent cities in the world, however beautiful the buildings are, yet the streets are dirty and defiled, being made to be trodden under-foot; but the very streets of this heavenly city are so pure, that their being like pure gold does not sufficiently represent the purity of them, but they appear also like clear glass, or crystal. If there be the least dirt or defilement, it discovers itself in that which is transparent; but those golden streets appeared perfectly clear, without the least speck to lessen the transparency. Christ represents as though the saints that he has washed, though they are clean, yet while in this world have defiled feet, they need to be often washing their feet, but in that world their feet shall be perfectly pure, so as not at all to defile the streets. This is an evidence that what is treated of in those two last chapters of Revelations is the heavenly state of the church.

[470] [Rev. xxii. 11](#). "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still," &c. That the thing which is intended by these words was, That now, the revelation of the mind and will of God was finished, the great standing rule of faith and practice sealed, no further means of grace were to be expected, and no additions to the word of God, and no other revelations, should be given till his last coming; and that therefore they that would not well improve those means and this revelation, and were not made righteous and holy thereby, should continue in a state of sin forever. God would never provide any further means than this word, those Holy Scriptures which were now completed and sealed. I say, that this is Christ's meaning, is much confirmed by the words of the same glorious person, with which are ended and sealed the visions of Daniel, [Dan. xii. 9, 10](#). "Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and



sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." Daniel desired a further revelation to be given to him concerning those matters that had been represented to him, as in the preceding verses; but Christ here signified to him that the vision and revelation, that was to be given concerning those matters unto the church of Israel, was now finished, completed, and sealed, and all the rest that he curiously desired to pry into was concealed, and should be so to the time of the end. And moreover signifies that this revelation of them, that already had been given, was sufficient for the ends that God designed it, to give wisdom, and be a means of the sanctification of his own people: but, as for the rest, they will not understand, nor will be reclaimed from their wickedness. If they would not make a good improvement of the revelation that is now given, neither would they if a further revelation should be given. Therefore they that will not be made wise and holy by what is revealed, shall have no further revelation, they shall have no further means to make them wise, or bring them to repentance. They that are wise and holy shall increase in wisdom, and be built up in holiness, by this revelation; but they that are unwise, let them continue without understanding, and they that are unholy and unrighteous, let them continue still to do wickedly.

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**SEVENTEEN OCCASIONAL SERMONS.**



S E R M O N I .

acts xvi. 29, 30.

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

we have here and in the context an account of the conversion of the jailer, which is one of the most remarkable instances of the kind in the Scriptures. The jailer before seems not only to have been wholly insensible to the things of religion, but to have been a persecutor, and to have persecuted these very men, Paul and Silas; though he now comes to them in so earnest a manner, asking them what he must do to be saved. We are told in the context that all the magistrates and multitude of the city rose up jointly in a tumult against them, and took them, and cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Whereupon he thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And it is probable he did not act in this merely as the servant or instrument of the magistrates, but that he joined with the rest of the people in their rage against them, and that he did what he did urged on by his own will, as well as the magistrates' commands; which made him execute their commands with such rigour.

But when Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises at midnight, and there was suddenly a great earthquake, and God had in so wonderful a manner set open the prison doors, and every man's bands were loosed, he was greatly terrified; and in a kind of desperation, was about to kill himself. But Paul and Silas crying out to him, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here,"<sup>564</sup> then he called for a light, and sprang in, as we have the account in the text. We may observe,

1. The objects of his concern. He is anxious about his salvation: he is terrified by his guilt, especially by his guilt in his ill treatment of these ministers of Christ. He is concerned to escape from that guilty state, the miserable state he was in by reason of sin.

2. The sense which he has of the dreadfulness of his present state. This he manifests in several ways.

1. By his great haste to escape from that state. By his haste to inquire what he must do. He seems to be urged by the most pressing concern, sensible of his present necessity of deliverance, without any delay. Before, he was quiet and secure in his natural state; but now his eyes are opened, he is in the utmost haste. If the house had been on fire over his head, he could not have asked more earnestly, or as being in greater haste. He could soon have come to Paul and Silas, to ask them what he must do, if he had only walked. But he was in too great haste to walk only, or to run; for he sprang in; he leaped into the place where they

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564 Acts xvi. 28.

were. He fled from wrath. He fled from the fire of divine justice, and so hastened, as one that fled for his life.

2. By his behaviour and gesture before Paul and Silas. He fell down. That he fell down before those whom he had persecuted, and thrust into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks, shows what was the state of his mind. It shows some great distress, that makes such an alteration in him, that brings him to this. He was broken down, as it were, by the distress of his mind, in a sense of the dreadfulfulness of his condition.

3. His earnest manner of inquiring of them what he shall do to escape from this miserable condition; "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"<sup>565</sup> So distressed, that he is brought to be willing to do any thing; to have salvation on any terms, and by any means, however difficult; brought, as it were, to write a blank, and give it in to God, that God may prescribe his own terms.

doctrine. They who are in a natural condition, are in a dreadful condition. This I shall endeavour to make appear by a particular consideration of the state and condition of unregenerate persons.

I. As to their actual condition in this world.

II. As to their relations to the future world.

I. The condition of those who are in a natural state, is dreadful in the present world.

*First.* On account of the depraved state of their natures. As men come into the world, their natures are dreadfully depraved. Man in his primitive state was a noble piece of divine workmanship; but by the fall it is dreadfully defaced. It is awful to think that so excellent a creature as man is, should be so ruined. The dreadfulfulness of the condition, which unconverted men are in in this respect, appears in the following things:

1. The dreadfulfulness of their depravity appears in that they are so sottishly blind and ignorant. God gave man a faculty of reason and understanding, which is a noble faculty. Herein he differs from all other creatures here below. He is exalted in his nature above them, and is in this respect like the angels, and is made capable to know God, and to know spiritual and eternal things. And God gave him understanding for this end, that he might know him, and know heavenly things, and made him as capable to know these things as any others. But man has debased himself, and has lost his glory in this respect. He has become as ignorant of the excellency of God as the very beasts. His understanding is full of darkness; his mind is blind, is altogether blind to spiritual things. Men are ignorant of God, and ignorant of Christ, ignorant of the way of salvation, ignorant of their own happiness, blind in the midst of the brightest and clearest light, ignorant under all manner of instructions. [Romans iii. 17.](#) "The way of peace they have not known." [Isa. xxvii. 11.](#) "It is a people of no understand-

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565 [Acts xvi. 30.](#)

ing.” [Jer. iv. 22.](#) “My people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and have none understanding:” [v. 21.](#) [Jer. iv.21.](#) “Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding.” [Psal. xcvi. 10, 11.](#) “It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.” [1 Cor. xv. 34.](#) “Some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame.”

There is a spirit of atheism prevailing in the hearts of men; a strange disposition to doubt of the very being of God, and of another world, and of every thing which cannot be seen with the bodily eyes. [Psalm xiv. 1.](#) “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” They do not realize that God sees them, when they commit sin, and will call them to an account for it. And therefore, if they can hide sin from the eyes of men, they are not concerned, but are bold to commit it. [Psalm xciv. 7, 8, 9.](#) “Yet they say, the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?” [Psalm lxxiii. 11.](#) “They say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?” So sottishly unbelieving are they of future things, of heaven and hell, and will commonly run the venture of damnation sooner than be convinced. They are stupidly senseless to the importance of eternal things. How hard to make them believe, and to give them a real conviction, that to be happy to all eternity is better than all other good; and to be miserable for ever under the wrath of God, is worse than all other evil. Men show themselves senseless enough in temporal things; but in spiritual things far more so. [Luke xii. 56.](#) “Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?” They are very subtle in evil designs; but sottish in those things which most concern them. [Jeremiah iv. 22.](#) “They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.” Wicked men show themselves more foolish and senseless of what is best for them, than the very brutes. [Isa. i. 3.](#) “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” [Jer. viii. 7.](#) “Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.”

2. They have no goodness in them. [Romans vii. 18.](#) “In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” They have no principle that disposes them to any thing that is good. Natural men have no higher principle in their hearts than self-love. And herein they do not excel the devils. The devils love themselves, and love their own happiness, and are afraid of their own misery. And they go no further. And the devils would be as religious as the best of natural men, if they were in the same circumstances. They would be as moral, and would pray as earnestly to God, and take as much pains for salvation, if there were the like opportunity. And as there is no good principle in the hearts of natural men, so there are never any good exercises of heart, never one good thought, or motion of heart in them. Particularly, there is no love to God in them. They never had the least degree of love to the infinitely



glorious Being. They never had the least true respect to the Being that made them, and in whose hand their breath is, and from whom are all their mercies. However they may seem to do things at times out of respect to God, and wear a face as though they honoured him, and highly esteemed him, it is all in mere hypocrisy. Though there may be a fair outside, they are like painted sepulchres; within, there is nothing but putrefaction and rottenness. They have no love to Christ, the glorious Son of God, who is so worthy of their love, and has shown such wonderful grace to sinners in dying for them. They never did any thing out of any real respect to the Redeemer of the world, since they were born. They never brought forth any fruit to that God, who made them, and in whom they live, and move, and have their being. They never have in any way answered the end for which they were made. They have hitherto lived altogether in vain, and to no purpose. They never so much as sincerely obeyed one command of God; never so much as moved one finger out of a true spirit of obedience to him, who made them to serve him. And when they have seemed outwardly to comply with God's commands, their hearts were not in it. They did not do it out of any spirit of subjection to God, or any disposition to obey him, but were merely driven to it by fear, or in some way influenced by their worldly interest. They never gave God the honour of one of his attributes. They never gave him the honour of his authority by obeying him. They never gave him the honour of his sovereignty by submitting to him. They never gave him the honour of his holiness and mercy by loving him. They never gave him the honour of his sufficiency and faithfulness by trusting in him; but have looked upon God as one not fit to be believed or trusted, and have treated him as if he were a liar. [1 John v. 10](#). "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar." They never so much as heartily thanked God for one mercy they have received in their whole lives, though God has always maintained them, and they have always lived upon his bounty. They never so much as once heartily thanked Christ for coming into the world, and dying to give them an opportunity to be saved. They never would show him so much gratitude as to receive him, when he has knocked at their door; but have always shut the door against him, though he has come to knock at their door upon no other ground but only to offer himself to be their Saviour. They never so much as had any true desires after God or Christ in their whole lives. When God has offered himself to them to be their portion, and Christ to be the friend of their souls, they did not desire it. They never desired to have God and Christ for their portion. They had rather be without them than with them, if they could avoid going to hell without them. They never had so much as an honourable thought of God. They always have esteemed earthly things before him. And notwithstanding all they have heard in the commands of God and Christ, they have always preferred a little worldly profit or sinful pleasure before them.

3. Unconverted men are in a dreadful condition by reason of the dreadful wickedness which there is in them.

1. Sin is a thing of a dreadful nature, and that because it is against an infinitely great and an infinitely holy God. There is in the nature of man enmity against God, contempt of God, rebellion against God. Sin rises up as an enemy against the Most High. It is a dreadful thing for a creature to be an enemy to the Creator, or to have any such thing in his heart as enmity against him; as will be very clear, if we consider the difference between God and the creature, and how all creatures, compared with him, are as the small dust of the balance, are as nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. There is an infinite evil in sin. If we saw the hundredth part of the evil there is in sin, it would make us sensible that those who have any sin, let it be ever so small, are in a dreadful condition.

2. The hearts of natural men are exceedingly full of sin. If they had but one sin in their hearts, it would be sufficient to render their condition very dreadful. But they have not only one sin, but all manner of sin. There is every kind of lust. The heart is a mere sink of sin, a fountain of corruption, whence issue all manner of filthy streams. [Mark vii. 21, 22.](#) "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." There is no one lust in the heart of the devil, that is not in the heart of man. Natural men are in the image of the devil. The image of God is rased out, and the image of the devil is stamped upon them. God is graciously pleased to restrain the wickedness of men, principally by fear and respect to their credit and reputation, and by education. And if it were not for such restraints as these, there is no kind of wickedness that men would not commit, whenever it came in their way. The commission of those things, at the mention of which men are now ready to start, and seem to be shocked when they hear them read, would be common and general; and earth would be a kind of hell. What would not natural men do if they were not afraid? [Matthew x. 17.](#) "But beware of men." Men have not only every kind of lust, and wicked and perverse dispositions in their hearts, but they have them to a dreadful degree. There is not only pride, but an amazing degree of it: pride, whereby a man is disposed to set himself even above the throne of God itself. The hearts of natural men are mere sinks of sensuality. Man is become like a beast in placing his happiness in sensual enjoyments. The heart is full of the most loathsome lusts. The souls of natural men are more vile and abominable than any reptile. If God should open a window in the heart, so that we might look into it, it would be the most loathsome spectacle that ever was set before our eyes. There is not only malice in the hearts of natural men, but a fountain of it. Men naturally therefore deserve the language applied to them by Christ, [Matt. iii. 7.](#) "O generation of vipers;" and [Matt. xxiii. 33.](#) "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers." Men, if it were not for fear and other such restraints, would not only commit all manner of sin, but to what degree, to what length would they not proceed! What has a natural man to keep him from openly blaspheming God, as much as any of the devils; yea, from dethroning him, if that were possible, and fear and other such restraints were out of the way? Yea, would it not be thus with many of





those, who now appear with a fair face, and will speak most of God, and make many pretences of worshipping and serving him? The exceeding wickedness of natural men appears abundantly in the sins they commit, notwithstanding all these restraints. Every natural man, if he reflects, may see enough to show him how exceedingly sinful he is. Sin flows from the heart as constantly as water flows from a fountain. [Jer. vi. 7.](#) “As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness.” And this wickedness, that so abounds in their hearts, has dominion over them. They are slaves to it: [Rom. vii. 14.](#) “Sold under sin.” They are so under the power of sin, that they are driven on by their lusts in a course against their own conscience, and against their own interest. They are hurried on to their own ruin, and that at the same time their reason tells them, it will probably be their ruin: [2 Pet. ii. 14.](#) “Cannot cease from sin.” On account of wicked men’s being so under the power of sin, the heart of man is said to be *desperately* wicked. [Jer. xvii. 9.](#) and [Eph. ii. 1.](#) “Dead in trespasses and sins.”

3. The hearts of natural men are dreadfully hard and incorrigible. There is nothing but the mighty power of God will move them. They will cleave to sin, and go on in sin, let what will be done with them. [Prov. xxvii. 22.](#) “Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.” There is nothing that will awe our hearts; and there is nothing that will draw them to obedience: let there be mercies or afflictions, threatenings or gracious calls and invitations, frowning, or patience and long-suffering, or fatherly counsels and exhortations. [Isa. xxvi. 10.](#) “Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.”

*Secondly.* The relative state of those who are in an unconverted condition is dreadful. This will appear if we consider,

1. Their relative state with respect to God; and that because,

1. They are without God in the world. They have no interest or part in God: he is not their God: he hath declared he will not be their God. [Hos. i. 9.](#) God and believers have a mutual covenant relation and right to each other. They are his people, and he is their God. But he is not the covenant God of those who are in an unconverted state. There is a great alienation and estrangement between God and the wicked: he is not their Father and portion: they have nothing to challenge of God, they have no right to any one of his attributes. The believer can challenge a right in the power of God, in his wisdom and holiness, his grace and love. All are made over to him, to be for his benefit. But the unconverted can claim no right in any of God’s perfections. They have no God to protect and defend them in this evil world: to defend them from sin, or from Satan, or any evil. They have no God to guide and direct them in any doubts or difficulties, to comfort and support their minds under afflictions. They are without God in all their affairs, in all the business they undertake, in their family

affairs, and in their personal affairs, in their outward concerns, and in the concerns of their souls.

How can a creature be more miserable, than to be separated from the Creator, and to have no God, whom he can call his own God? He is wretched indeed, who goes up and down in the world, without a God to take care of him, to be his guide and protector, and to bless him in his affairs. The very light of nature teaches that a man's God is his all. [Judg. xviii. 24.](#) "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" There is but one God, and in him they have no right. They are without that God, whose will must determine their whole well being, both here and forever. That unconverted men are without God shows that they are liable to all manner of evil. They are liable to the power of the devil, to the power of all manner of temptation, for they are without God to protect them. They are liable to be deceived and seduced into erroneous opinions, and to embrace damnable doctrine. It is not possible to deceive the saints in this way. But the unconverted may be deceived. They may become papists, or heathens, or atheists. They have nothing to secure them from it. They are liable to be given up of God to judicial hardness of heart. They deserve it; and since God is not their God, they have no certainty that God will not inflict this awful judgment upon them. As they are without God in the world, they are liable to commit all manner of sin, and even the unpardonable sin itself. They cannot be sure they shall not commit that sin. They are liable to build up a false hope of heaven, and so to go hoping to hell. They are liable to die senseless and stupid, as many have died. They are liable to die in such a case as Saul and Judas did, fearless of hell. They have no security from it. They are liable to all manner of mischief, since they are without God. They cannot tell what shall befall them, nor when they are secure from anything. They are not safe one moment. Ten thousand fatal mischiefs may befall them, that may make them miserable forever. They, who have God for their God, are safe from all such evils. It is not possible that they should befall them. God is their covenant God, and they have his faithful promise to be their refuge. But what mischief is there which may not befall natural men? Whatever hopes they may have may be disappointed. Whatever fair prospect there may seem to be of their conversion and salvation, it may vanish away. They may make great progress towards the kingdom of God, and yet come short at last. They may seem to be in a very hopeful way to be converted, and yet never be converted. A natural man is sure of nothing. He is sure of no good, nor is he sure of escaping any evil. It is therefore a dreadful condition that a natural man is in. They, who are in a natural state, are lost. They have wandered from God, and they are like lost sheep, that have wandered from their shepherd. They are poor helpless creatures in a howling wilderness, and have no shepherd to protect or to guide them. They are desolate, and exposed to innumerable fatal mischiefs.

2. They are not only without God, but the wrath of God abides upon them. [John iii. 36.](#) "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

There is no peace between God and them, but God is angry with them every day. He is not only angry with them, but that to a dreadful degree. There is a fire kindled in God's anger; it burns like fire. Wrath abides upon them, which if it should be executed, would plunge them into the lowest hell, and make them miserable there to all eternity. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger. God has been angry with them ever since they began to sin: he has been provoked by them every day, ever since they exercised any reason; and he is provoked, by them more and more every hour. The flame of his wrath is continually burning. There are many now in hell that never provoked God more than they, nor so much as many of them. Wherever they go, they go about with the dreadful wrath of God abiding on them. They eat, and drink, and sleep under wrath. How dreadful a condition therefore are they in! It is the most awful thing for the creature to have the wrath of his Creator abiding on him. The wrath of God is a thing infinitely dreadful. The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion; but what is the wrath of a king, who is but a worm of the dust, to the wrath of the infinitely great and dreadful God? How dreadful is it to be under the wrath of the First Being, the Being of beings, the great Creator and mighty possessor of heaven and earth! How dreadful is it for a person to go about under the wrath of God, who gave him being, and in whom he lives and moves, who is every where present, and without whom he cannot move a step, nor draw a breath! Natural men, inasmuch as they are under wrath, are under a curse. God's wrath and curse are continually upon them. They can have no reasonable comfort, therefore, in any of their enjoyments; for they do not know but that they are given them in wrath, and shall be curses to them, and not blessings. As it is said in [Job xviii. 15](#). "Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation." How can they take any comfort in their food, or in their possessions, when they do not know but all are given them to fit them for the slaughter.

II. Their relative state will appear dreadful, if we consider how they stand related to the devil.

1. They who are in a natural state are the children of the devil. As the saints are the children of God, so the ungodly are the children of the devil. [1 John iii. 10](#). "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." [Matt. xiii. 38, 39](#). "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom: but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the devil." [John viii. 44](#). "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." They are, as it were, begotten of the devil; they proceed from him. [1 John iii. 8](#). "He that committeth sin, is of the devil." As Adam begat a son in his own likeness, so are wicked men in the likeness and image of the devil. They acknowledge this relation, and own themselves children of the devil, by consenting that he should be their father. They subject themselves to him, hearken to his counsels, as children hearken to the counsels of a father. They learn of him to imitate him, and do as he does, as children learn to imitate their parents. [John viii. 38](#). "I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and ye do that which ye have seen with your father." How awful a state is



this! How dreadful is it to be a child of the devil, the spirit of darkness, the prince of hell, that wicked, malignant, and cruel spirit! To have any thing to do with him is very dreadful. It would be accounted a dreadful, frightful thing only to meet the devil, to have him appear to a person in a visible shape. How dreadful then must it be to be his child; how dreadful for any person to have the devil for his father!

2. They are the devil's captives and servants. Man before his fall was in a state of liberty; but now he has fallen into Satan's hands. The devil has got the victory, and carried him captive. Natural men are in Satan's possession, and they are under his dominion. They are brought by him into subjection to his will, to go at his bidding, and do what he commands. [2 Timothy ii. 26.](#) "Taken captive by him at his will." The devil rules over ungodly men. They are all his slaves, and do his drudging. This argues their state to be dreadful. Men account it an unhappy state of life to be slaves; and especially to be slaves to a bad master, to one who is very hard, unreasonable, and cruel. How miserable do we look upon those persons, who are taken captive by the Turks, or other such barbarous nations, and put by them to the meanest and most cruel slavery, and treated no better than they treat their cattle! But what is this to being taken captive by the devil, the prince of hell, and made a slave to him? Had not a man better be a slave to any one on earth than to the devil? The devil is, of all masters, the most cruel, and treats his servants the worst. He puts them to the vilest service, to that which is the most dishonourable of any in the world. No work is so dishonourable as the practice of sin. The devil puts his servants to such work as debases them below the dignity of human nature. They must make themselves like beasts to do that work to serve their filthy lusts. And besides the meanness of the work, it is a very hard service. The devil causes them to serve him at the expense of the peace of their own conscience, and oftentimes at the expense of their reputation, at the expense of their estates, and shortening of their days. The devil is a cruel master; for the service upon which he puts his slaves, is to undo themselves. He keeps them hard at work day and night, to work their own ruin. He never intends to give them any reward for their pains, but their pains are to work out their own everlasting destruction. It is to gather fuel and kindle the fire for themselves to be tormented in to all eternity.

3. The soul of a natural man is the habitation of the devil. The devil is not only their father, and rules over them, but he dwells in them. It is a dreadful thing for a man to have the devil near him, often coming to him. But it is a more dreadful thing to have him dwell with a man, to take up his constant abode with him; and more dreadful yet to have him dwell in him, to take up his abode in his heart. But thus it is with every natural man. He takes up his abode in his heart. As the soul of a godly man is the habitation of the Spirit of God, so is the soul of a wicked man the habitation of unclean spirits. As the soul of a godly man is the temple of God, so the soul of a wicked man is the synagogue of Satan. A wicked man's soul is in Scripture called *Satan's house*, and *Satan's palace*. [Matthew xii. 27.](#) "How

can one enter into a strong man's house?" meaning the devil. And [Luke xi. 21](#). "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." Satan not only lives, but reigns, in the heart of a wicked man. He has not only taken up his abode there, but he has set up his throne there. The heart of a wicked man, is the place of the devil's rendezvous. The doors of a wicked man's heart are open to devils. They have free access there, though they are shut against God and Jesus Christ. There are many devils, no doubt, that have to do with one wicked man, and his heart is the place where they meet. The soul of a wicked man is, as it was said of Babylon, the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Thus dreadful is the condition of a natural man by reason of the relation in which he stands to the devil.

II. The state of unconverted men is very dreadful, if we consider its relation to the future world. Our state here is not lasting, but transitory. We are pilgrims and strangers here, and are principally designed for a future world. We continue in this present state but a short time; but we are to be in that future state to all eternity. And therefore men are to be denominated either happy or miserable, chiefly with regard to that future state. It matters but little comparatively what our state is here, because it will continue but a short time; it is nothing to eternity. But that man is a happy man who is entitled to happiness, and he is miserable who is in danger of misery, in his eternal state. Prosperity or adversity in the present state alters them but very little, because this state is of so short continuance.

1. Those who are in a natural condition, have no title to any inheritance in another world. There are glorious things in another world; there are unsearchable riches, an unspeakable and inconceivable abundance; but they have nothing to do with it. Heaven is a world of glory and blessedness; but they have no right to the least portion of those blessings. If they should die and go out of the world as they are, they would go destitute, having no inheritance, no friend, no enjoyments to go to. They will have no God to whom they may go, no Redeemer to receive their departing souls, no angel to be a ministering spirit to them, to take care of them, to guard or defend them, no interest in that Redeemer, who has purchased those blessings. What is said of the Ephesians is true of those who are in a natural condition. [Ephesians ii. 12](#). "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." What a dreadful case they are in, who live in the world having no hope, without any title to any benefits hereafter, and without any ground to hope for any good in their future and eternal state!

2. Natural men are in a dreadful condition, because of the misery to which they are exposed in the future world. This will be obvious, if we consider,

1. How great the misery is of which they are in danger;
2. How great is their danger of this misery.

1. How great the misery is of which they are in danger. It is great in two respects; 1. The torment and misery are great in themselves; and, 2. They are of endless duration.

1. The torment and misery, of which natural men are in danger, are exceedingly great in themselves. They are great beyond any of our words or thoughts. When we speak of them, our words are swallowed up. We say they are great, and exceedingly great, and very dreadful. But when we have used all the words we can to express them, how faint is the idea that is raised in our minds in comparison with the reality! This misery will appear very dreadful, if we consider what calamities meet together in it. In it the wicked are deprived of all good, separated from God and all fruits of his mercy. In this world they enjoy many of the streams of God's goodness. But in the future world they will have no more smiles of God, no more manifestations of his mercy by benefits, by warnings, by calls and invitations. He will never more manifest his mercy by the exercise of patience and lone-suffering, by waiting to be gracious; no more use any forbearance with them for their good; no more exercise his mercy by strivings of his Spirit, by sending messengers and using means. They will have no more testimonies of the fruits of God's goodness in enjoying food and raiment, and comfortable dwellings and convenient accommodations, nor any of the comforts of this life; no more manifestations of his mercy by suffering them to draw near to him with their prayers, to pray for what they need. God will exercise no pity towards them, no regard for their welfare. Cut off from all the comforts of this life, shut out of heaven, they will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but they shall be turned away from God and from all good into the blackness of darkness, into the pit of hell, into that great receptacle, which God has provided on purpose to cast into it the filthy, and polluted, and abominable of the universe. They will be in a most dreadful condition; they will have no friends. God will be their enemy, angels and the spirits of the just will be their enemies, devils and damned spirits will be their enemies. They will be hated with perfect hatred, will have none to pity them, none to bemoan their case, or to be any comfort to them. It appears that the state of the damned will be exceedingly dreadful in that they will suffer the wrath of God, executed to the full upon them, poured out without mixture. They shall bear the wrath of the Almighty. They shall know how dreadful the wrath of an Almighty God is. Now none knows, none can conceive. [Psalm xc. 11.](#) "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" Then they shall feel the weight of God's wrath. In this world they have the wrath of God abiding on them, but then it will be executed upon them; now they are the objects of it, but then they will be the subjects of it. Now it hangs over them, but then it shall fall upon them in its full weight without any alleviation, or any moderation or restraint. Their souls and their bodies shall then be filled full with the wrath of God. Wicked men shall be as full of wrath as any thing that glows in the midst of a furnace is of fire. The wrath of God is infinitely more dreadful than fire. Fire, yea the fiercest fire, is but an image and shadow of it. The vessels of wrath shall be filled up with wrath to the brim. Yea, they shall be plunged into a sea of wrath. And

therefore hell is compared to a lake of fire and brimstone, because there wicked men are overwhelmed and swallowed up in wrath, as men who are cast into a lake or sea, are swallowed up in water. O who can conceive of the dreadfulness of the wrath of an Almighty God! Everything in God is answerable to his infinite greatness. When God shows mercy, he shows mercy like a God. His love is infinitely desirable, because it is the love of God. And so when he executes wrath it is like a God. This God will pour out without mixture. [Revelations xiv. 10.](#) "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." No mixture of mercy or pity; nothing thrown into the cup of wrath to assuage or moderate it. [Job xxvii. 22.](#) "God shall cast upon him and not spare." They shall be cast into the wine-press of the wrath of God, where they shall be pressed down with wrath, as grapes are pressed in a wine-press, [Rev. xiv. 19.](#) "Cast into the great wine-press of the wrath of God." God will then make appear in their misery how terrible his wrath is, that men and angels may know how much more dreadful the wrath of God is, than the wrath of kings, or any creatures. They shall know what God can do towards his enemies, and how fearful a thing it is to provoke him to anger.

If a few drops of wrath do sometimes so distress the minds of men in this world, so as to be more dreadful than fire, or any bodily torment, how dreadful will be a deluge of wrath; how dreadful will it be, when all God's mighty waves and billows of wrath pass over them! Every faculty of the soul shall be filled with wrath, and every part of the body shall be filled with fire. After the resurrection the body shall be cast into that great furnace, which shall be so great as to burn up the whole world. These lower heavens, this air and this earth, shall all become one great furnace, a furnace that shall burn the earth, even to its very centre. In this furnace shall the bodies of the wicked lie to all eternity, and yet live, and have their sense of pain and torment not at all diminished. O, how full will the heart, the vitals, the brain, the eyes, the tongue, the hands, and the feet be of fire; of this fire of such an inconceivable fierceness! How full will every member, and every bone, and every vein, and every sinew, be of this fire! Surely it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Who can bear such wrath? A little of it is enough to destroy us. [Psalm ii. 12.](#) "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." But how will men be overwhelmed, how will they sink, when God's wrath is executed in so dreadful a degree! The misery which the damned will endure, will be their perfect destruction. [Psalm l. 22.](#) "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

In several places the wicked are compared to the stubble, and to briars and thorns before devouring flames, and to the fat of lambs, which consumes into smoke. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." They shall be as it were ground to powder under the

weight of God's wrath. [Matthew xxi. 24.](#) Their misery shall be perfect misery; and because damnation is the perfect destruction of a creature, therefore it is called death. It is eternal death, of which temporal death, with all its awful circumstances, is but a faint shadow. The struggles, and groans, and gasps of the body when dying, its pale awful visage when dead, its state in the dark grave when it is eaten with worms, are but a faint shadow of the state of the soul under the second death. How dreadful the state of the damned is, we may argue from the desert of sin. One sin deserves eternal death and damnation, which, in the least degree of it, is the total destruction of the creature. How dreadful, then, is the misery of which natural persons are in danger, who have lived some time in the world, and have committed thousands and thousands of sins, and have filled up many years with a course of sinning, and have committed many great sins, with high aggravations, who have sinned against the glorious gospel of Christ, and against great light, whose guilt is far more dreadful than that of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah! How dreadful is the punishment to which they are exposed, in which all their sins shall be punished according to their desert, and the uttermost farthing shall be exacted of them! The punishment of one idle word, or sinful thought, would be more than they could bear. How then will they bear all the wrath that shall be heaped upon them for all their multiplied and aggravated transgressions? If one sin deserves eternal death and damnation, how many deaths and damnations will they have accumulated upon them at once! Such an aggravated, multiplied death must they die every moment, and always continue dying such a death, and yet never be dead. Such misery as this may well be called the blackness of darkness. Hell may well be called the bottomless pit, if the misery is so unfathomably great. Men sometimes have suffered extreme torment in this world. Dreadful have been the sufferings of some of the martyrs; but how little those are, in comparison of the sufferings of the damned, we may learn from [1 Peter iv. 16, 17, 18.](#) "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come, that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of those that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" The apostle is here speaking of the sufferings of Christians; and from thence he argues, that seeing their sufferings are so great, how unspeakably great will be the sufferings of the wicked! And if judgment begins with them, what shall be the end of those who obey not the gospel! As much as to say, the sufferings of the righteous are nothing to what those, who obey not the gospel, are. How dreadful, therefore, does this argue their misery to be! Well may the sinners in Zion be afraid, and fearful, and surprised. Well may the kings of the earth, and the great men, and rich men, and chief captains, and every bond man, and every free man, hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, at Christ's second coming; and cry and say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come,



and who shall be able to stand? Well may there be weeping and gnashing of teeth in hell, where there is such misery. Thus the misery of those who are in a natural condition, is, in itself, exceedingly great.

2. It is of endless duration. The misery is not only amazingly great, and extreme, but of long continuance; yea, of infinitely long continuance. It never will have any end. There will be no deliverance, no rest, no hope; but they will last throughout all eternity. Eternity is a thing in the thought of which our minds are swallowed up. As it is infinite in itself, so it is infinitely beyond the comprehension of our minds. The more we think of it, the more amazing will it seem to us. Eternity is a duration, to which, a long period of time bears no greater proportion than a short period. A thousand years, or a thousand ages, bear no greater proportion to eternity than a minute; or which is the same thing, a thousand ages are as much less than eternity as a minute. A minute comes as near an equality to it; or you may take as many thousand ages out of eternity, as you can minutes. If a man by the utmost skill in arithmetic, should denote or enumerate a great number of ages, and should rise by multiplication to ever so prodigious numbers, should make as great figures as he could, and rise in multiplying as fast as he could, and should spend his life in multiplying; the product of all would be no nearer equal to the duration which the wicked must spend in the misery of hell, than one minute. Eternity is that, which cannot be made less by subtraction. If we take from eternity a thousand years or ages, the remainder is not the less for it. Eternity is that which will forever be but beginning, and that because all the time which is past, let it be ever so long, is but a point to what remains. The wicked, after they have suffered millions of ages, will be, as it were, but in the first point, only setting out in their sufferings. It will be no comfort to them that so much is gone, for they will have none the less to bear. There will never a time come, when, if what is past, is compared to what is to come, it will not be as a point, and as nothing. The continuance of their torment cannot be measured out by revolutions of the sun, or moon, or stars, by centuries or ages. They shall continue suffering after these heavens and this earth shall wax old as a garment, till the whole visible universe is dissolved. Yea, they shall remain in their misery through millions of such ages as are equal to the age of the sun, and moon, and stars, and still it will be all one, as to what remains, still no nearer the end of their misery. [Matthew xxv. 41.](#) "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." [Mark ix. 44.](#) "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." [Revelation xx. 10.](#) "They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." And [Revelation xiv. 11.](#) "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." The damned in hell in their misery, will be in absolute despair. They shall know that their misery will have no end, and therefore they will have no hopes of it. O, who can conceive the dreadfulness of such despair as this in the midst of such torment! Who can express, or think anything how dreadful the thought of eternity is to them, who are under so great torment! To what unfathomable depths of woe will it sink them! With what

a gloom and blackness of darkness will it fill them! What a boundless gulf of sorrow and woe is the thought of eternity to the damned, who shall be in absolute and utter despair of any deliverance!

How dreadful, then, is the condition of those who are in a natural state, who are in danger of such misery.

2. The dreadfulness of their condition will appear by considering how great their danger is of this misery. This will be obvious from the following things:

1. Their danger is such, that continuing in their present state, they will unavoidably sink into this misery.

1. The state in which natural persons now are, naturally tends to it. And this, because they are separate from God, and destitute of any spiritual good. The soul that is in a state of separation from its Creator, must be miserable, because he is separate from the fountain of all good. He that is separate from God, is in great danger of ruin, because he is without any defence. He that is separate from God, must perish, if he continue so, because it is from God only that he can have those supplies which can make him happy. It is with the soul as it is with the body. The body without supplies of sustenance will miserably famish, and die. So the souls of natural men are in a famishing condition. They are separate from God, and therefore are destitute of any spiritual good, which can nourish the soul, or keep it alive; like one that is remote in a wilderness, where he has nothing to eat or drink, and therefore, if he continue so, will unavoidably die. So the state of natural men naturally tends to that dreadful misery of the damned in hell, because they are separate from God.

2. They are under the power of a mortal disease, which, if it be not healed, will surely bring them to this death. They are under the power and dominion of sin, and sin is a mortal disease of the soul. If it is not cured, it will certainly bring them to death; *viz.* to that second death of which we have heard. The infection of the disease has powerfully seized their vital parts. The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint. The disease is inveterate. The infection is spread throughout the whole frame; the very nature is corrupted and ruined; and the whole must come to ruin, if God by his mighty power does not heal the disease. The soul is under a mortal wound; a wound deep and dreadfully confirmed. Its roots reach the most vital parts; yea, they are principally seated there. There is a plague upon the heart, which corrupts and destroys the source of life, ruins the whole frame of nature, and hastens an inevitable death. There is a most deadly poison, which has been infused into, and spread over, the man. He has been bitten by a fiery serpent, whose bite issues in a most tormenting death. Sin is that, which does as naturally tend to the misery and ruin of the soul, as the most mortal poison tends to the death of the body. We look upon persons far gone in a consumption, or with an incurable cancer, or some such malady, as in doleful circumstances. But that mortal disease, under whose power natural men are, makes their case a thousand times more doleful. That mortal disease of natural men does, as it were, ripen them for

damnation. We read of the clusters of the vine of the earth being for the wine-press of the wrath of God, [Rev. xiv. 18.](#) where by the clusters of the vine are meant wicked men. The wickedness of natural men tends to sink them down to hell, as the weight of a stone causes it to tend towards the centre of the earth. Natural men have, as it were, the seeds of hell within their own hearts. Those principles of sin and corruption, which are in them, if they remain unmortified, will at length breed the torment of hell in them, and that necessarily, and of their own tendency. The soul that remains under the power of sin will at length take fire of itself. Hell will kindle in them.

2. If they continue in their present state, this misery appears to be unavoidable, if we consider the justice and truth of God.

1. If they continue in their present condition, so surely as God is just, they shall suffer the eternal misery of which we have heard. The honour of God's justice requires it, and God will not disparage his own justice. He will not deny his own honour and glory, but will clarify himself on the wicked, as well as the godly. He will not lose his honour of anyone of his creatures, which he has made.

It is impossible that God should be frustrated or disappointed. And, so surely as God will not be frustrated, so surely shall they who continue in a natural condition, suffer that eternal misery, of which we have heard. The avenging justice of God is one of the perfections of his nature, and he will glorify all his perfections. God is unalterable in this as well as his other perfections. His justice shall and must be satisfied. He has declared that he will by no means clear the guilty. [Exod. xxxiv. 7.](#); and that he will not justify the wicked. [Exod. xxxiii. 7.](#) And that he will not at all acquit the wicked. [Nahum i. 3.](#) God is a strictly just Judge. When men come to stand before him, he will surely judge them according to their works. They that have guilt lying upon them, he will surely judge according to their guilt. The debt they owe to justice, must be paid to the uttermost farthing. It is impossible that any one, who dies in his sins, should escape everlasting condemnation and punishment before such a Judge. He will render to every man according to his deeds; [Rom. ii. 8.](#) "Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." It is impossible to influence God to be otherwise than just in judging ungodly men. There is no bribing him. He accepteth not the person of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor. [Deut. x. 17.](#) "He regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." It is impossible to influence him to be otherwise than strictly just, by any supplications, or tears, or cries. God is inexorably just. The cries and the moans of the malefactor will have no influence upon this Judge to pass a more favourable judgment on them, so as in any way to acquit or release them. The eternal cries, and groans, and lamentations of the wicked, will have no influence upon him. Though they are ever so long continued, they will not prevail upon God.



2. So surely as God is true, if they die in the state they are now in, they shall suffer that eternal misery. God has threatened it in a positive and absolute manner. The threatenings of the law are absolute; and they who are in a natural state, are under the condemnation of the law. The threatening of the law takes hold upon them; and if they continue under guilt, God is obliged by his word to punish them according to that threatening. And he has often, in the most positive and absolute manner, declared that the wicked shall be cast into hell; that they who believe not shall be damned; that they shall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; and that their misery shall never have an end. And therefore, if there be any truth in God, it shall surely be so. It is as impossible that he who dies in a natural condition, should escape suffering that eternal misery, as that God should lie. The word of God is stronger and firmer than mountains of brass, and shall not fail. We shall sooner see heaven and earth pass away, than one jot or tittle of all that God hath said in his word not be fulfilled. So much for the first thing, that evinces the greatness of the danger that natural men are in of hell; *viz.* that they will unavoidably sink into hell if they continue in such a condition.

2. Their danger will appear very dreadful, if we consider how uncertain it is, whether they will ever get out of this condition. It is very uncertain whether they will ever be converted. If they should die in their present condition, their misery is certain and inevitable. But it is very doubtful whether they will not die in such a condition. There is great danger that they will; great danger of their never being converted. And this will appear, if we consider two things.

1. They have nothing on which to depend for conversion. They have nothing in the world, by which to persuade themselves that they shall ever be converted. Left to themselves, they never will repent and turn to God. If they are ever converted, therefore, it is God who must do it. But they have no promise of God, that they ever shall be converted. They do not know how soon they may die. God has not promised them long life; and he has not promised them that they shall be ready for death before they die. It is but a peradventure, whether God will ever give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. [2 Tim. ii. 25](#). Their resolutions are not to be depended on. If they have convictions, they are not to be depended on; they may lose those convictions. Their conversion depends on innumerable uncertainties. It is very uncertain, then, whether they will be converted before they die.

2. Another thing which shows the danger there is that they shall never be converted, is, that there are but few, comparatively, who are ever converted. But few of those, who have been natural persons in time past, have been converted. Most of them have died unconverted. So it has been in all ages, and hence we have reason to think that but few of them, who are unconverted now, will ever be converted; that most of them will die unconverted, and will go to hell. Natural persons are ready to flatter themselves, that they shall be converted. They think there are signs of it. But a man would not run the venture of so much as a sixpence

in such an uncertainty as they are, about their ever being converted, or not going to hell. This shows the doleful condition of natural men, as it is uncertain whether they shall ever be converted.

3. They who are in a natural condition, are in danger of going to hell every day. Those now present, who are in a natural condition, are in danger of dropping into hell before tomorrow morning. They have nothing to depend on, to keep them out of hell one day, or one night. We know not what a day may bring forth. God has not promised to spare them one day; and he is everyday angry with them. The black clouds, that are full of the thunder of God's wrath, hang over their heads everyday, and they know not how soon the thunder will break forth upon their heads. Natural men are in Scripture compared to those that walk in slippery places. They know not when their feet will slip. They are continually in danger. [Psalm lxxiii. 18.](#) "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment." Natural men hang over the pit of hell, as it were, by a thread, that has a moth continually gnawing it. They know not when it will snap in twain, and let them drop. They are in the utmost uncertainty; they are not secure one moment. A natural man never goes to sleep, but that he is in danger of waking in hell. Experience abundantly teaches the matter to be so. It shows, by millions of instances, that man is not certain of life one day. And how common a thing is it for death to come suddenly and unexpectedly! And thousands, beyond all reasonable question, are going to hell every day, and death comes upon them unexpectedly. [I Thess. v. 3.](#) "When they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." It is a dreadful condition that natural persons are in upon this account; and no wise person would be in their condition for a quarter of an hour for the whole world, because such is the danger that they will drop into hell before that quarter of an hour is expired.

Thus I have shown how dreadful the condition of natural men is, relatively considered. I shall mention two or three things more, which yet further make it appear how doleful their condition is.

1. The longer it continues, the worse it grows. This is an awful circumstance in the condition of a natural man. Any disease is looked upon as the more dreadful, for its growing and increasing nature. Thus a cancer and gangrene are regarded as dreadful calamities, because they continually grow and spread; and the faster they grow, the more dreadful are they accounted. It would be dreadful to be in a natural condition, if a person could continue as he is, and his condition grow no worse; if he could live in a natural condition, and never have it any more dreadful, than when he first begins to sin. But it is yet much more dreadful,

when we consider that it every day becomes worse and none. The condition of natural men it worse to-day, than it was yesterday, and that on several accounts. The heart grows more and more polluted and hardened. The longer sin continues unmortified, the more is it strengthened and rooted. Their guilt also grows greater, and hell every day grows hotter; for they are every day adding sin to sin, and so their iniquity is increasing over their heads more and more. Every new sin adds to the guilt. Every sin deserves eternal death for its punishment. And therefore in every sin that a man commits, there is so much added to the punishment, to which he lies exposed. There is, as it were, another eternal death added to augment his damnation. And how much is added to the account in God's book everyday; how many new sins are set down, that all may be answered for; each one of which sins must be punished, that by itself would be an eternal death! How fast do wicked men heap up guilt, and treasure up wrath, so long as they continue in a natural condition! How is God more and more provoked, his wrath more and more incensed; and how does hell-fire continually grow hotter and hotter! If a man has lived twenty years in a natural condition, the fire has been increased everyday since he has lived. It has been, as it were, blown up to a greater and greater degree of fierceness. Yea, how dreadfully does one day's continuance in sin add to the heat of hell-fire!

2. All blessings are turned into curses to those who live and die in such a condition. Those things which are most pleasant and comfortable, and which men esteem the blessings of life, are but curses unto such; as their meat, and their drink, and their raiment. There is a curse goes with every mouthful of meat, and every drop of drink, to such a person. There is a curse with his raiment which he puts on; it all contributes to his misery. Though it may please him, yet it does him no good, but he is the more miserable for it. If he has any enjoyment which is sweet and pleasant to him, the pleasure is a curse to him; he is really the more miserable for it. It is an occasion of death to him. His possessions, which he values himself upon, and sets his heart upon, are turned into a curse to him. His house has the curse of God upon it, and his table is a snare and a trap to him. [Psalm lxix. 22](#). His bed has God's curse upon it. When he lies down to sleep, a curse attends his rest; and when he goes forth to labour, he is followed with a curse on that. The curse of God is upon his fields, on his corn, and herds, and all he has. If he has friends and relations, who are pleasant and dear to him, they are no blessings to him. He receives no comfort by them, but they prove a curse to him. I say it is thus with those who live and die in a natural condition. [Deuteronomy xxviii. 16, &c.](#) "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket, and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, and the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings,

whereby thou hast forsaken me.” Man’s faculties of reason and understanding, and all his natural powers, are turned into a curse. Yea, spiritual mercies and privileges shall also be turned into a curse to those who live and die in a natural condition. A curse goes with the worship of God, and with sabbaths and sacraments, with instruction, and counsels, and warnings, and with the most precious advantages. They are all turned into a curse. They are a savour of death unto death. They do but harden the heart, and aggravate the guilt and misery, and inflame the divine wrath. [Isaiah vi. 9, 10.](#) “Go, make the heart of this people fat.” [2 Cor. ii. 16.](#) “To the one we are the savour of death unto death.” It will only be an occasion of their misery, that God ever sent Christ into the world to save sinners. That which is in itself so glorious a manifestation of God’s mercy, so unspeakable a gift, that which is an infinite blessing to others who receive Christ, will be a curse unto them. [1 Peter ii. 8.](#) “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.” The blood of Christ, which is the price of eternal life and glory to some, is an occasion of sinking them vastly the lower into eternal burnings. And that is the case of such persons; the more precious any mercies are in themselves, the more of a curse are they to them. The better the things are in themselves, the more will they contribute to their misery. And spiritual privileges, which are in themselves greater mercies than any outward enjoyments, will above all other things prove a curse to them. Nothing will enhance their condemnation so much as these. On account of these, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for them. Yea, so doleful is the condition of natural men, that if they live and die in that condition, not only the enjoyments of life, but life itself, will be a curse to them. The longer they live, the more miserable will they be; the sooner they die, the better. If they live long in such a condition, and die in it at last, it would have been better for them if they had died before. It would have been far better for them to have spent the time in hell, than on earth; yea, better for them to have spent ten thousand years in hell, instead of one on earth. When they look back, and consider what enjoyments they have had, they will wish they had never had them. Though when on earth they set their hearts on their earthly enjoyments, they will hereafter wish they had been without them; for they will see they have only fitted them for the slaughter. They will wish they never had had their houses and lands, their garments, their earthly friends, their earthly possessions. And so they will wish that they had never enjoyed the light of the gospel, that they had been born among the heathen in some of the most dark and barbarous places of the earth. They will wish that Christ had never come into the world to die for sinners, so as to give men any opportunity to be saved. They will wish that God had cast off fallen man, as he did the fallen angels, and had never made him the offer of a Saviour. They will wish that they had died sooner, and had not had so much opportunity to increase their guilt and their misery. They will wish they had died in their childhood, and been sent to hell then. They will curse the day that ever they were born, and wish they had been made vipers and scorpions, or anything, rather than rational creatures.

3. They have no security from the most dismal horrors of mind in this life. They have no security, but their stupidity. A natural man can have no comfort or peace in a natural condition, but that of which blindness and senselessness are the foundation. And from what has been said, that is the very evil. A natural man can have no comfort in any thing in this world any further, than thought and consideration of mind are kept down in him; as you make a condemned malefactor senseless of his misery by putting him to sleep with opium, or make him merry just before his execution by giving him something to deprive him of the use of reason, so that he shall not be sensible of his own circumstances. Otherwise, there is no peace or comfort, which a natural man can have in a natural condition. [Isa. xlviii. 22.](#) “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” [Job xv. 20.](#) “The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days. A dreadful sound is in his ears.” The doleful state of a natural man appears especially from the horror and amazement to which he is liable on a death-bed. To have the heavy hand of God upon one in some dangerous sickness, which is wasting and consuming the body, and likely to destroy it, and to have a prospect of approaching death, and of soon going into eternity, there to be in such a condition as this: to what amazing apprehensions must the sinner be liable! How dismal must his state be, when the disease prevails, so that there is no hope that he shall recover, when the physician begins to give him over, and friends to despair of his life; when death seems to hasten on, and he is at the same time perfectly blind to any spiritual object, altogether ignorant of God, of Christ, and of the way of salvation, having never exercised one act of love to God in his life, or done one thing for his glory; having then every lust and corruption in its full strength; having then such enmity in the heart against God, as to be ready to dethrone him, if that were possible; having no right in God, or interest in Christ; having the terrible wrath of God abiding on him; being yet the child of the devil. entirely in his possession and under his power; with no hope to maintain him, and with the full view of never-ending misery just at the door. What a dismal case must a natural man be in under such circumstances! How will his heart die within him at the news of his approaching death, when he finds that he must go, that he cannot deliver himself, that death stands with his grim countenance looking him in the face, and is just about to seize him, and carry him out of the world, and that he at the same time has nothing to depend on! How often are there instances of dismal distress of unconverted persons on a death-bed! No one knows the fears, the exercise and torment in their hearts, but they who feel them. They are such that all the pleasures of sin, which they have had in their whole lives, will not pay them for. As you may sometimes see godly men go triumphing out of the world full of joy, with the foretastes of heaven, so sometimes wicked men, when dying, anticipate something of hell before they arrive there. The flames of hell do, as it were, come up and reach them in some measure, before they are dead. God then withdraws, and ceases to protect them; the tormentor begins his work, while they are alive. Thus it was with Saul and Judas; and there have been many other similar instances since;





and none, who are in a natural condition, have any security from it. The state of a natural man is doleful on this account, though this is but a prelude and foretaste of the everlasting misery which follows.

Thus I have, in some measure, shown in what a doleful condition those are who are in a natural condition. Still I have said but little. It is beyond what we can speak or think. They who say most of the dreadfulness of a natural condition, say but little. And they who are most sensible, are sensible of but a small part of the misery of a natural state.

### **APPLICATION.**

I. We may derive from this doctrine much useful and practical instruction.

1. Hence we may learn the stupidity and sottishness of many natural persons. If we consider those things which we have now heard concerning their dreadful condition, and then see how the greater part of natural men behave themselves, we may well be astonished that there should be such stupidity in the heart of man. If we rightly considered it, we should be ready to cry out with astonishment. Their sottishness appears in the following things.

1. That though they are in such a dreadful condition, they can go about easy and quiet, and in little or no concern respecting it. What might rationally be expected of such persons? If it were a new thing to us, and we had heard there was a person in a particular town or country, of such a name, who was in this awful condition; who had no interest in his Creator, who had the wrath of Almighty God abiding on him, that wrath which is great and terrible enough to make him miserable with devils in hell to all eternity; that he was a captive in the hands of the devil, was made his slave, and was under his power and dominion; that his soul was a habitation of devils; that he was condemned to be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, to drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and to suffer in an inexpressible, inconceivable extremity in both body and soul forever and ever, without hope or end; to be liable to sink in this misery every day, and the longer he continued out of it, the worse his condition, the more dreadful the wrath, and the hotter the flames of hell; I say, supposing we had just now for the first time heard there was a person in this awful condition, how should we expect to see him behave himself? If he was in the exercise of his reason, should we not expect to see him trembling and quaking on account of his misery, with all the manifestations of continual terror and amazement, regardless of all things else, spending his days and nights in tears, and groans, and lamentations, crying for pity and help, crying with an exceedingly loud and bitter cry, crying to everyone to pity him, and pray for him? Yea, how many are there in this dreadful condition, are easy and quiet, and appear to have nothing to trouble them! They go about the world without anxiety or alarm, as if they had no more reason to be disquieted than if they had already secured their salvation. Though they are told how dreadful their condition is hundreds of times, their tranquillity is wholly undisturbed. They can sit and

hear of its certainty and its nearness, of its dreadful nature, and its inconceivable degree; and then can go away with as quiet and easy hearts as they had before. There is no moving them by telling them of such things. They can sleep as quietly, and go about their business with as perfect unconcern. They can eat and drink and enjoy the pleasures of social life with no apparent load on their minds; and without being sensible of anything in their circumstances, which should hinder them from such enjoyment. And not only so, but,

2. They can go about with a merry heart. There are many of them, who not only seem to be quiet in their minds, but they are very cheerful, as if all were well with them, and everything smiled upon them; as if they were in happy circumstances, and had every thing as they desired; and are even disposed to be merry and sportive about their own condition and the dreadful realities of the future world. For their part they choose to take their ease and pleasure, and not disturb or molest themselves with such dark and melancholy thoughts, like the persons mentioned by Isaiah. [Isaiah lvi. 12.](#) “Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.”

3. They are so senseless, that they do not think it worth their while to make any considerable effort to escape from this dreadful condition. They will not take half so much pains for it, as for a little worldly gain; and they do not think it worth the while even to ask God to deliver them from it. They think it too much labour to withdraw once or twice each day to ask God to be merciful to them, that they might not continue in their natural state. And they foolishly neglect the precious opportunities, which they enjoy to get into a better state. God gives them great advantages for it, and they are called upon, and warned, and exhorted to improve them. They are told what good opportunities they have, and the danger of letting them slip, but all is to no purpose. Thus persons will let slip the time of youth, which is a precious season to escape from their natural condition. So they will let slip a time of the moving of God’s Spirit in the place where they live. They act as if they had a wish to continue in the same state. They will put themselves so little out of the way to escape from it; they are so backward to deny themselves a little, or to make a little effort; they seem to grudge it, and think it needless. If they have a great advantage put into their hands, it is to no purpose. They had as good be without it, as with it; for they have no heart to improve it. [Prov. xvii. 16.](#) “Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?”

4. Instead of using means to get into a better state, they are wilfully doing those things which make it worse and worse. Instead of striving for deliverance, they are striving against it. They are provoking God more, and increasing their guilt, and hardening their hearts, and setting themselves farther and farther from conversion; and this, too, when they are told, that the things, which they practise, have this tendency. They act as if they wished to

be sure never to be converted. Thus it is with innumerable multitudes. So exceedingly senseless and stupid are many natural persons.

2. Hence we need not wonder, that we are directed in Scripture to strive and to be very earnest to be delivered from our natural condition. This is the direction which God gives us from time to time. [Luke xiii. 24.](#) "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." [Matt. xi. 12.](#) "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence." [Eccl. ix. 10.](#) "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." [2 Peter i. 10.](#) "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." [Heb. vi. 18.](#) "Fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." The direction which was given to Lot, relating to his flight out of Sodom, was designed for the direction of all who are in a natural condition. [Gen. xix. 17.](#) "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." This doctrine shows us the reason, why persons should be directed in such a way as this to seek their salvation. That it is such a dreadful condition is reason enough why persons should thus vehemently strive, and be violent to get into a better state, and why they should haste for their lives, and flee from the wrath to come. If the case of natural men be as we have heard, no wonder that they should have such advice given them, and that God expects that the pains which they take, and the endeavours they use for it, should be in some measure answerable to its importance. No wonder that the jailer, when made sensible of his condition, should conduct himself as we have the account in the text. No wonder that he should be in such haste as not only to run in, but to spring or leap in, to the place where Paul and Silas were, and fell down before them, and ask in such an earnest manner, "What must I do to be saved?" If he had not been indeed in a dreadful state, he would have acted like one distracted. But considering that he was in a natural condition, which is so dreadful, it was not the least wonder.

3. Hence we may learn how dismal are the effects which the fall of man has brought upon the world. It has brought all mankind into this dreadful condition of which we have heard. The far greater part of those who live in this world, are in this state, and the greater part of those who die in the world, die in this state. What a miserable world, therefore, is the world in which we live! This world lies under a curse. God has denounced woe against it; and what an immeasurable amount of woe is brought upon it! What woeful devastation has sin made in the world!

II. What has been said of the dreadfulness of their condition may well awaken and terrify the impenitent. How many things are there in your circumstances, which are awful and terrible to think of. There is no one of those things which have been mentioned, but that the thought of it may well be frightful to you. It may well be a dreadful thought that you have no goodness in you, nor have ever done anything which has the least goodness in it; that you never exercised one act of love, or true thankfulness or obedience, to God in your life; nor ever did the least thing out of true respect to God. The consideration of the dreadful



depravity and wickedness of your heart, may well be frightful to you; to think what a sink of corruption it is, how full of all manner of wickedness, how full of enmity against God; to think that there are the same corruptions in your heart, as in the heart of the devil, and that there are the seeds of the same enmity against God, and that you are in the very image of the devil. If you look into your own heart, and strictly examine what it would entice you to do, if all restraints of fear and self-interest were taken off, it might well affright you. How awful may the thought well be to you, when you consider that you are a creature, separated from your Creator! that there is an alienation between you and that great Being, in whom you live and move, and have your being; that you are a poor desolate creature, that have no God to protect you, and guide you, and provide for you in the world; and that you are secure from no manner of mischief, into which human nature is capable of falling, either in soul or body! How terrifying should it be to you, to think how good, how mighty and terrible that God is, under whose wrath you lie down and rise up, and eat and drink, and engage in the daily business of life! How frightful should it be to you, when you consider in what relation you stand to the devil; that you are his child, and that he owns you; that you are his servant, his possession, and that your heart is his dwelling-place; that you are without Christ, and so without hope, and have no good thing in another world, in which you have any inheritance! And how amazing may it well be to you, when you consider how great that future misery is to which you are exposed and condemned, wherein God shows his wrath, and makes his power known in the destruction of the ungodly, in which they are vessels of wrath filled to the brim; and that you are in danger of being plunged in a bottomless gulf or deluge of wrath, where mighty waves and billows of wrath shall pass over you; and when you consider the torment of your body in that great furnace of fire, where every part, every organ, every vein, and every limb shall be filled full of fire, and yet full of quick sense, and that this torment shall remain to an endless duration, a duration which shall always be beginning, but never ending! And how well may it affright you, and strike a terror upon you, when you consider, that if you die in your present condition, it is as impossible that you should escape this misery, as that God should cease to be just and true; and that the greater part of those who are in your condition will suffer this misery, and that you have no security that you shall be kept from it one day, or one hour! How terrifying may it well be to you, when you consider how much more dreadful your ease continually grows! How frightful may it be to you every night, when you sit down, and consider how much greater your guilt is, and how much deeper your condemnation is, than it was in the morning! How awful and doleful may it be to you to consider, that if you live and die in your present state, everything is cursed to you; even your greatest mercies and best enjoyments, your food, your raiment, your nearest friends, and your earthly possessions: and not only so, but the light of the gospel, and the means of grace, and life itself will be cursed to you! All will be but an occasion of your greater misery. Such persons shall wish they had been born and brought up among

the heathen. They shall wish that Christ had never come into the world; they shall wish they had never been born. How awful may it be to you when you think that death will most certainly come upon you, and you know not how soon; and what dismal circumstances you would be in, if you were in your present condition on a death-bed! How many things are there in your case which are of a terrifying, awful nature! How can you live in such circumstances, without living in continual terror? Here consider further the following things:

1. There is nothing which you see, but what may justly minister torment to you, while you remain in a natural condition. If you lift up your eyes, and behold the sun, moon, and stars, and cast your eyes abroad on the face of the earth, and see the mountains, and fields, and trees, it may justly put you in mind of the dolefulness of your condition; that the great God, who made all these things, who stretched forth the heavens as a curtain, who ordained the sun, moon, and stars, and laid the foundations of the earth, and causes the grass and trees to grow; is a God in whom you have no interest, but who is continually angry with you, and that his wrath abides on you. So when you look on your own body, and consider how it is formed and contrived, it may be a frightful thing to you to consider, that he who made you is not at peace with you, and that you are the object of his displeasure. If you have pleasures and enjoyments, and are in flourishing circumstances, if you see the faces of your near friends and dear relations, and look upon your children and other dear friends, and behold your costly possessions, these things may justly minister torment to you, while you are in a natural state. For consider, that you do not know but that all these things are given you in wrath. When you sit down to eat and drink, you may do it in torment, because you know not but this may be in wrath. When you lie down upon your beds, it may justly be in torment, for you do not know but you shall awake in hell. And when you awake in the morning, it may justly be with torment in your heart, to think you are still in that doleful condition. When you go forth to your daily labour, you have reason to go with a terrified heart; for you know not but you are followed with God's curse in all that to which you put your hands. Whatever dispensations of Providence you may have, all may justly put you in mind of the dolefulness of your condition. If you meet with afflictions, these may remind you that you have no God to pity you, and that a God who is angry with you everyday, sends these afflictions upon you. If you meet with prosperity, you may justly receive it with a sorrowful sense of the dolefulness of your state; for you know not but it is to fit you for the slaughter. If you hear of the death of others, it may justly terrify you, and put you in mind of your own mortality, and of your danger of dying as you now are. If you hear of others conversion, it may justly renew in you a sense of the dolefulness of your own slate, that you still remain unconverted. If you see the Bible, an awful thought may justly go with the sight, that you have never yet received any good by that book, and that all the curses written in it, stand against you. Every time you enter the house of God, it may justly renew awful thoughts of your circumstances, that you have entered there so often, and obtained no good; entered

so often, and gone away worse than you came. And what danger there is, that you shall be one of those spoken of in [Ecclesiastes viii. 10](#). "I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done." And wheresoever you turn yourself, whatever you meet with, and whatever you behold, or hear, may justly renew a sense of the dolefulness of your state. The thought of your condition may justly cast a darkness upon everything.

2. Consider that the time will soon come, when you will be sensible that the dolefulness of your condition is as great as I have represented it; that I have not enlarged or magnified the matter, but that the case is as I have declared it. You will then see that it is so. Whether you are sensible of it now or not, yet in a little time you will surely be sensible, and will need no argument to convince you of it. Yea, you will be sensible that it is more doleful than I have represented. After all that has been told you now, and at other times, the lime will come when you will say, that the one half was not told you.

3. Your condition is thus doleful, notwithstanding everything with which you may flatter yourself. You may be ready to flatter yourself, that though the condition of some natural persons is thus doleful, yet yours is not; that you are in better circumstances than other natural men commonly are. Or particularly, you may flatter yourself that you are not so bad as others; you do not find such dreadful corruptions in your heart, as you hear are in others. Herein you deceive yourself. It is because you are ignorant of your own heart. What has been said of the depraved state of natural men, of their blindness, their hardness, their deadness, all belongs to you. You may possibly flatter yourself that your condition is not so doleful, because you have always walked orderly, you have been moral and religious. Here also you deceive yourself. For notwithstanding your moral and religious behaviour, and all your sobriety, you never did the least thing from a gracious respect to God. You have a heart in the likeness of the heart of the devil. You are without God in the world. God is angry with you everyday; his wrath is not at all appeased. You may flatter yourselves that you are the children of godly parents, that you have many godly friends, who may put up many prayers for you, and that your case is not so doleful on that account, and that your danger is not extremely great. But in this you miserably deceive yourself. You are children of the devil notwithstanding all this. If you die in your present condition, it is impossible that you shall escape eternal misery. And there is great danger, that you will die in it. You have no security that you shall not be in hell before to-morrow morning. Do not flatter yourself from such things as these, that you are not in a doleful condition. Some of those who flatter themselves most, and think their condition the least doleful, are indeed in the most doleful condition. It is more dreadful than their neighbours; more so than that of many, whom they esteem ten times worse than themselves. And this is one thing which adds to the dolefulness of their condition, that they so flatter themselves, and think their

state so good. So it was of old with the scribes and Pharisees. [Matt. xxi. 31.](#) “Verily I say unto you, the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”

III. This subject may well excite joy and thankfulness in the hearts of the truly penitent, that God has found out a way to deliver them from such a condition; that God has been pleased to send his Son into the world to die for them; that he has given them the gospel and the means of grace; and that he has delivered them from this dreadful condition. You were in the same circumstances. [1 Cor. vi. 11.](#) “Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” It is mere grace which has made the difference. There is no cause of boasting. God might have taken others, and left you. You deserved no more than they. You had no more righteousness of your own. Probably you have done worse than many who have eternally perished. Take heed, that you entertain no boasting thought, and that your joy in this be an humble joy; accompanied with continual praise to God, who has done such great things for you, and from all eternity set his love upon you.

IV. This subject should lead those, who are in a natural condition, earnestly to seek for deliverance. Will you rest in such a condition, when there is a way of salvation provided, and an opportunity for an escape? Will you of choice continue still in this state? Though your case is very dangerous, yet there is a possibility of rescue, if you have but a heart to improve your opportunity. But besides what has been said, I would desire you further to consider, how happy will be your state, should you obtain deliverance. A converted state is not less happy than a natural condition is miserable and dreadful. You will be brought out of darkness into marvellous light. It will be like the dawning of the morning after a long night of darkness. It will be a joyful morning to you. The daystar will arise in your heart. Then will be given you the morning star. You will then have a discovery of the glory of God, and the beauty and excellency of Jesus Christ, made to your soul; and then will be opened to your view the glorious fountain of divine grace. You will then look back and see how you have dwelt in darkness throughout your lives, and in the region and shadow of death. [Matt. iv. 16.](#) “The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” You will then be brought out of a dreadful bondage into glorious liberty. You will come forth as from a dark dungeon, to see the glorious light of the Sun of righteousness. Your eyes will then be opened, and you will be brought out of the prison house. [Isa. lxi. 1.](#) “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Then you who were dead will be made alive; and you that have been lost will be found. What you will then obtain will richly repay you for all the labour which you have undergone. If you have spent ever so many years in wrestling with corruption and temptation, in striving to enter in at the strait gate, you will not repent it. But more particularly consider,

1. How glorious will be the alteration made in your nature. Old things will be done away, and all things will become new. Sin will be mortified in you, and the glorious image of God conferred upon you. You will have holy and spiritual principles imparted to you, a spirit of divine love and heavenly-mindedness, a relish for spiritual enjoyments, a delight in the Lord Jesus Christ, a truly meek, humble, charitable, and benevolent spirit. You will be changed, from being more filthy and hateful than a reptile, into the likeness of the glorious Son of God. You will be taken out of the mire of brutal lusts and spiritual abominations, will be washed from all your filthiness, and will be adorned with the most glorious ornaments; those ornaments of mind, which in the sight of God are of great price, ornaments which will render you a thousand times more beautiful and lovely than the robes of princes. You will obtain those graces of the Spirit of God which are the ornaments of angels.

2. Consider the safety of the condition in which you will then be. The terrible wrath of the great God, which abides on wicked men, will then be removed from you. Christ will be to you as a hiding-place from the storm, and as a shadow from the heat of God's wrath. You will then be safe from hell, and will be forever delivered from that dreadful misery which is endured by the damned, and to which you are now condemned. [Rev. xx. 6.](#) "On such the second death hath no power." You will be safe from the power of Satan. Christ will be your protector, so that you shall be out of his reach, that he will not be able to destroy you. You shall dwell on high. Your place of defence shall be the munition of rocks, where you may laugh at the power of the enemy. And though you are in a world full of enemies and sinners, yet God will be your Rock, and the most high God your Redeemer. God will carry you as on eagles' wings through the world, aloft out of the reach of your enemies. They may see you, and wish your ruin, and gnash their teeth, but shall not be able to accomplish it. Satan will desire to have you, but Christ will have prayed for you, and that will be your security. You will be safe from death; that will not be able to hurt you. Natural men are in continual danger from death. They know not when nor how death may come. But if it comes while they are in that condition, it sinks them into hell. But you need not be afraid to meet death, either by day or night. Whenever it comes, and in whatever form, you are safe. While others walk in slippery places, your feet will be established on a rock. In a time of sickness and mortality, while others tremble, you need not fear. If you are sick, you need not dread the issue. For though your flesh and your heart should fail you, yet God will be the strength of your heart, your present help, and your portion forever. Though the earth should be removed, you will be safe. [Psal. xlvi. 1, 2, 3.](#) "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." If you are once in Christ Jesus, none shall ever pluck you out of his hands. [John x. 28.](#) "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." You will be freed from condemnation; for who is he that shall con-



demn you? it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again. Who shall separate you from the love of Christ? [Romans viii. 38, 39.](#) “Neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature.” What a glorious foundation will there be for your peace and quietness! [Isa. xxxii. 17.](#) “And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” Let this consideration, therefore, prompt you earnestly to seek, that you may obtain that happy condition. Can you consider how happy the change would be to you, how desirable such safety is, and not be willing earnestly to seek and do everything which lies in your power, that you may obtain it?

3. Consider how exceedingly it will be for the comfort and pleasure of your life, if you are converted. You are not only under the greatest necessity to become converted, because a natural condition is so dreadful a condition, but you will gain by it every way. You will not only gain eternal life by it, but you will gain unspeakably by it while in this world. Your pains will be richly rewarded while here, though that be but little to your future reward. You cannot take a more direct course to make your life pleasant. You will obtain by it the most excellent delight and pleasure, in comparison with which the pleasures which are to be had in worldly things are low and vile. Hereby you may obtain the most substantial, soul-satisfying, soul-refreshing pleasures. You may then live a life of divine love and communion with that glorious Being, who is the object of your love. Then you will be blest with the best company, and with heavenly society. Far better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasures with that trouble which wicked men have with their enjoyments. Then you may enjoy what God in his providence bestows upon you with peace of conscience; and may rejoice in it, as the fruit of the love of God. Then you may have the comfort of considering that you have God’s blessing on what you possess. Your enjoyments will then be sweet to you, for you will enjoy God in the fruits of his bounty. Your life will be abundantly more pleasant in all the circumstances and concerns of it. It will make God’s house a more delightful resort; your own house a more pleasant residence, for then the blessing of heaven will rest upon it; and your closet a sweeter retirement. It will make your labour sweeter to you, and it will sweeten your rest. You may then say with the psalmist, [Psal. iv. 8.](#) “I will both lay me down and sleep, for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.” It will tend to make your life pleasant, and to make your death-bed comfortable to you. When all other comforts fail, this will stand you instead. It will remain as a living spring, which will never fail. [John iv. 14.](#) “The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” This will make time comfortable, and will make the thoughts of eternity comfortable to you, when you shall have those pleasures which are at God’s right hand forever, in more immediate prospect; and shall have that faithful promise of God, that hereafter you shall see God, and shall dwell in his presence, and shall from the hands of Christ receive a crown of life.

*Direction* 1. In general be directed to act as if you were in a dreadful condition; as one who looks upon his case to be dreadful, not merely as one looks upon his case undesirable and worse than that of another; but as one who is sensible that his state is inexpressibly dismal and terrible. Consider how men act when they apprehend their circumstances to be very dreadful, though only in temporal respects. As for instance: if they are in danger of being consumed by fire, or only having their substance consumed. Or if in danger of being seized by an enemy, or otherwise in danger of some dreadful evil. How do the thoughts of danger awake their powers! What earnestness appears in them, in what haste are they! Be directed to seek for deliverance from a natural condition, in like manner, if you would be delivered. The jailer acted as one who was sensible that his condition was dreadful. So be you directed to act, if you would have the like success. Particularly,

1. Be in haste. The jailer, when he was made sensible of his dreadful condition, sprang into the presence of Paul and Silas, and cried out, what must I do to be saved? So you cannot be in too much haste. When ministers direct those who are seeking salvation to wait until God's time comes, if they understand the Scriptures, they cannot mean, that they should not be in haste to obtain a better condition, or that they should be at rest, or continue in such a condition one hour, or one moment. They can only mean these two things: that you should wait or persevere in opposition to giving up in discouragement: and that they should wait in opposition to quarrelling with God for not delivering them, and not in opposition to being uneasy in a natural condition. For persons ought to be uneasy, and it argues awful stupidity to be otherwise; but in opposition to a quarrelling spirit because God does not show mercy sooner. We should persevere in our efforts to obtain salvation, as being sensible that God is not obliged to bestow it in our time, or at all; that he may, if he will, refuse to show mercy; and if he does show mercy, that he may do it in his own time. Remember that the command of Christ to you is, "Repent and believe the Gospel." You cannot lawfully continue in your present state one day or hour. Those who defer and put off repentance till another time are not in a likely way to obtain deliverance. The way is, to improve the present time; to do now, what must be done ever. We should make securing our salvation our present and immediate business. Therefore inquire, whether you do not put it off. If you do not put off the whole of the work, yet do you not put off part of it? Do you think you now strive as much for salvation, as it will ever be needful that you should? If not, delay no longer. Let it not be said of you to-morrow, that there is any thing delayed to-day, which you yourself thought needful to be done, or in your power to do, in order to your salvation. If you are sensible that you are in this dreadful condition, you certainly will make haste; you will need no other motive to it.

2. Let nothing, which you do in seeking salvation, be done with slackness. The direction is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Therefore, let nothing be done with a slack hand. Do everything which you do in this great work earnestly. There are

many things which you have to do; many duties to be performed, many means to be employed. Let all be done with your strength. Be earnest in prayer, earnest in hearing the word preached, diligent and faithful in watching over your own heart, diligent in searching your heart, diligent in reflecting on your past life, diligent and laborious in meditation, laborious and earnest in striving against temptation. And do not perform merely the duties of religion towards God earnestly, but also its duties towards your neighbour. Be earnest that you may do every duty required of you towards all men. Be earnest and diligent to do justly and honestly, and to render every man his due. Be earnest to watch against an envious, malicious, and revengeful spirit. Be earnest to do all the duties of charity: labour with your might, that you may behave charitably towards men, and neglect no duty of charity required of you. Be earnest in performing every relative duty: in rendering suitable honour to your parents; in manifesting kindness and confidence to your husband or your wife; in instructing and governing your children, bringing them up in religion, and seeking their salvation in everyway pointed out in the Scriptures. Do this earnestly, and with all your strength. You should not merely do some things earnestly, but all.

3. Take heed lest this your earnestness be not transient; but that you continue in it to the end. It is the misery of many persons, that they seem to be very warmly engaged for a little time, but it does not last. It is a very rare thing, that any who are thoroughly and perseveringly in earnest for salvation, fail of it, unless they have put off the work until they are near death before they began. How unstable is the heart of man, and how many are there who go to hell through backsliding! It is often the case when persons begin with much seeming earnestness, that they do it upon a secret dependence that they shall not need to make these efforts very long. They flatter themselves, that in a little time they shall obtain what they seek, and then they may take their ease; therefore, when they have gone on awhile, and fail of that expectation, they soon slacken their exertions. They never consented to seek in this diligent persevering manner, always; but they appointed a time of their own, and sought it on terms of their own fixing. But a man is then in a hopeful way to be converted, when he has so great a sense of his misery, and his necessity of conversion, that he is disposed to do his utmost, to be violent for the kingdom of heaven, and to devote his life to it.

If you are seeking salvation, inquire how it is with you as to this matter. Do you feel a disposition in yourself to be at the pains and difficulty of a most laborious seeking God's grace in the denial of every lust, and in a painful performance of every duty as long as you live? Or does this seem to you to be too much; more than you can find a heart to comply with? You may be ready to say, that you could be willing to do all this, if you knew you should obtain at last. But that is not sufficient. You should be willing to run the venture of that, and seek upon what encouragement is given you, and to wait God's sovereign will and pleasure in that way. And if you cannot become willing for this, be sensible there is a defect in your manner of seeking, which it behoves you to mend. And do not think that you seek

it in the right way until you come to it. If you have a right sense of the dolefulness of your condition, it will bring you to it. Consider the great encouragement there is for this way of seeking. [Prov. viii. 34.](#) “Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.” [Hosea vi. 3.](#) “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.”

4. Seek that you may be brought to lie at God’s feet in a sense of your own exceeding sinfulness. Seek earnestly that you may have such a sight yourself; what an exceedingly sinful creature you are, what a wicked heart you have, and how dreadfully you have provoked God to anger; that you may see that God would be most just if he should never have any mercy upon you. Labour, that all quarrelling about God’s dispensations towards sinners may be wholly subdued; that your heart may be abased and brought down to the dust before God; that you may see yourself in the hands of God; and that you can challenge nothing of God, but that God and his throne are blameless in the eternal damnation of sinners, and would be in your damnation. Seek that you may be brought off from all high opinion of your own worth, all trust in your own righteousness, and to see that all you do in religion is so polluted and defiled, that it is utterly unworthy of God’s acceptance; and that you commit sin enough in your best duties to condemn you forever. Seek that you may come to see, that God is sovereign, that he is the potter and you the clay, and that his grace is his own, and that he may bestow it on whom he will, and that he might justly refuse to show you mercy. Seek that you may be sensible, that God is sovereign as to the objects of his grace, and also as to the time and manner of bestowing it, and seek to God and wait upon him as a sovereign God. Seek that you may be sensible that God’s anger is infinitely dreadful, yet, at the same time, be sensible that it is just. Labour that when you have a sense of the awfulness of the wrath of God in your mind, you may fall down before an angry God, and lie in the dust. Seek that you may see, that you are utterly undone, and that you cannot help yourself; and yet, that you do not deserve that God should help you, and that he would be perfectly just if he should refuse ever to help you. If you have come to this, then you will be prepared for comfort. When persons are thus humble, it is God’s manner soon to comfort them. When you are thus brought low, doubtless God will soon lift you up. God will not bestow such a great and infinite mercy as eternal life upon persons, who will not acknowledge his sovereignty in that matter. When once there has been that conviction upon the heart which casts down imaginations, and every nigh thing that exalts itself against God, then God is wont speedily to reveal his grace and love, and to pour the oil of comfort into the soul.

5. Abound in earnest prayer to God, that he would open your eyes, that you may behold the glorious and rich provision made for sinners in Jesus Christ. The souls of natural men are so blinded that they see no beauty or excellency in Christ. They do not see his sufficiency. They see no beauty in the work of salvation by him; and as long as they remain thus blind, it is impossible that they should close with Christ. The heart will never be drawn to an un-

known Saviour. It is impossible that a man should love that, and freely choose that, and rejoice in that, in which he sees no excellency. But if your eyes were opened to see the excellency of Christ, the work would be done. You would immediately believe on him; and you would find your heart going after him. It would be impossible to keep it back. But take heed that you do not entertain a wrong notion of what it is, spiritually to see Christ. If you do, you may seek that which God never bestows. Do not think that spiritually to see Christ, is to have a vision of him as the prophets had, to see him in some bodily shape, to see the features of his countenance. Do not pray or seek for any such thing as this. But what you are to seek is, that you may have a sight of the glorious excellency of Christ, and of the way of salvation through him, in your heart. This is a spiritual sight of Christ. This is that for which you must cry to God day and night. God is the fountain of spiritual light. He opens the eyes of the blind. He commands the light to shine out of darkness. It is easy with God to enlighten the soul, and fill it with these glorious discoveries, though it is beyond the power of men and angels.

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## SERMON II.

### HOSEA v. 15.

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.



In the preceding part of the chapter is threatened the destruction of Ephraim. Ephraim, in the prophets, generally means the ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel, as distinguished from the kingdom of Judah. When we read of Ephraim and Judah in the prophets, thereby is meant the whole people of Israel of the twelve tribes, as in [verse 12.](#) of this chapter, “Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness.” By Judah is meant the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which were under the king of Judah; and by Ephraim is meant the ten tribes under the king of Israel. Ephraim is put for the whole kingdom of Israel, because Samaria, the seat of the kingdom, the royal city, was in that tribe. In the verse immediately preceding the text it is declared in what a terrible manner God was about to deal with Ephraim. [Hosea v. 14.](#) “For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away, and none shall rescue him.” In the text God declares how he would deal with them after he had torn as a lion, &c. And here,

1. God declares how he would withdraw from them. [Hosea v. 15.](#) “I will go and return to my place;” when I have torn as a lion. I will go away; I will leave them in that condition. I will depart from them, and they shall see no more of me.

2. What God will wait for in them before he returns to them to show them mercy. There are three things here signified.

1. That they should be sensible of their guilt. [Hosea v. 15.](#) “Till they acknowledge their offence.” It is in the original, “till they become guilty.” That is, till they become guilty in their own eyes, till they are sensible of their guilt; in the same sense as the same expression is used in [Rom. iii. 19.](#) “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” that is, become guilty in their own eyes.

2. That they would be sensible of their misery, implied in the expression, [Hosea v. 15.](#) “in their affliction they shall seek me.” Their calamity was brought upon them, before God had torn them, and left them. But in their pride and perverseness, they were not well sensible of their own miserable condition, as this prophet observes in [chapter vii. 9.](#)

3. That they should be sensible of their need of God’s help, which is implied in their seeking God’s face, and seeking him early; that is, with great care and earnestness. Before, they would not seek God; they were not sensible of their helplessness, as we learn in the verse but one preceding the text. [Hosea v. 13.](#) “When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jacob.” But as we are there told, he could not heal him, nor cure his wound. And notwithstanding all the help he could

afford, God wounded him, tore him as a young lion; and, as he declares, would leave him, and he should cease going to any other, and should be sensible that no other could heal, and accordingly come to him for healing.

doctrine. That it is God's manner to make men sensible of their misery and unworthiness, before he appears in his mercy and love to them.

I. That it is ordinarily thus with respect to the bestowment of great and signal mercies.

II. That it is particularly so with respect to revealing his love and mercy to their souls.

I. This is God's ordinary way before great and signal expressions of his mercy and favour. He very commonly so orders it in his providence, and so influences men by his Spirit, that they are brought to see their miserable condition as they are in themselves, and to despair of help from themselves, or from an arm of flesh, before he appears for them, and also makes them sensible of their sin, and their unworthiness of God's help. This appears from the account which the Scriptures give us of God's dealings with his people. Joseph, before his great advancement in Egypt, must lie in the dungeon to humble him, and prepare him for such honour and prosperity. The children of Jacob, before Joseph reveals himself to them, and they receive that joy, and honour, and prosperity, which were consequent thereupon, pass through a train of difficulties and anxieties, till at last they are reduced to distress, and are brought to reflect upon their guilt, and to say, that they were verily guilty concerning their brother. God humbled them in his providence, and then an end was put to all their difficulties, and their sorrow was turned into joy upon Joseph's revealing himself to them. Jacob, before he hears the joyful news of Joseph's being yet alive, must be brought into great distress at the parting with Benjamin, and supposed loss of Simeon. He was reduced to great straits in his mind. He says in [Genesis xlii. 36](#). "All these things are against me." But soon after this he had these gladsome tidings brought to him, [Genesis xlv. 26](#). "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." And to confirm it, he sees the waggons and the noble presents, which Joseph sent to him: so that he was now brought to say, [Genesis xlv. 28](#). "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die." And so with the children of Israel in Egypt. Their bondage must wax more and more extreme. Their bondage had been very extreme. But yet Pharaoh gives commandment that more work should be laid upon them, and the task-masters tell them they must get their straw where they can find it; and nothing of their work should be diminished. And quickly upon this was their deliverance. So when the children of Israel were brought to the Red Sea, the Egyptians pursued them, and were just at their heels, and they were reduced to the utmost distress, they see that they must assuredly perish, unless God work a miracle for them; for they were shut up on all sides: the Red sea was before them, and the army of the Egyptians encompassing them round behind. And they cried unto the Lord. And then God wonderfully appeared for their help, and made them pass through the Red Sea, and put songs of deliverance into their mouths.

So before God brought the children of Israel into Canaan, he led them about in a great and terrible wilderness through a train of difficulties and temptations for forty years, that he might teach them in their dependence on him, and the sinfulness of their own hearts. [Deut. xxxii. 10.](#) “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” God brought them into those trials and difficulties in the wilderness to humble them, and let them see what was in their hearts, that they might be convinced of their own perverseness by the many discoveries of it under those temptations, and so that they might be sensible that it was not for their righteousness that God made them his people, and gave them Canaan, seeing it was so evident that they were a stiff-necked people. [Deut. viii. 2, 3.](#) “And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord cloth man live.” And [15, 16, 17.](#) “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at the latter end; and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.” And so we have examples of this from time to time in the history of the Judges. When Israel revolted, God gave them into the hands of their enemies. He let them continue in their hands, till they were reduced to great distress, and saw that they were in a helpless condition, and were brought to reflect on themselves, and to cry unto the Lord. And then God raised them up a deliverer. And when they cried unto God, he would not deliver them till he had humbled them, and brought them to own their unworthiness, and to own that they were in God’s hands. [Judges x. beginning with the 10th verse.](#) “And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baal. And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.” And this is the method in which God declared from



the beginning he would proceed with his people. [Lev. xxvi. 40, &c.](#) “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them; and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God.” It is God’s manner, when he will bestow signal blessings in answer to prayer, to make men seek them, and pray for them with a sense of their sin and misery. As [1 Kings viii. 38, 39.](#) “What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house; then hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.” By knowing the plague of their own hearts is meant both their sin and misery. Being sensible of their misery is included, as is evident from the manner of expressing the same petition of Solomon’s prayer, as it is related in [2 Chron. vi. 29.](#) “Then what prayer or supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every man shall know his own sore and his own grief.” By which is probably meant his misery and his sin, which is the foundation of it. Paul gives us an account how God brought him to have despair in himself before a great deliverance, which he experienced. [2 Cor. i. 9, 10.](#) “But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death.” How did Christ humble the woman of Canaan, or bring her to the exercise and expression of a sense of her own unworthiness before he answered her, and healed her daughter! When she continued to cry, after he answered her not a word, and seemed to take no notice of her; and his disciples desired him to send her away, and when she continued crying after him, he gave a very humbling answer, saying, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs. And when she took it well, as owning that being called a dog was not too bad, and owning that she was therefore unworthy of children’s bread, she only sought the crumbs then Christ answered her request. And the experience of God’s people in all ages corresponds with those examples. It is God’s usual method before remarkable discoveries of his mercy and love to

them, especially by spiritual mercies, in a special manner to humble them, and make them sensible of their misery and helplessness in themselves, and of their vileness and unworthiness, either by some remarkably humbling dispensation of his providence or influence of his Spirit. We are come now,

II. To show particularly that it is God's manner to make men sensible of their misery and unworthiness before he reveals his saving love and mercy to their souls. The mercy of God, which he shows to a sinner when he brings him home to the Lord Jesus Christ, is the greatest and most wonderful exhibition of mercy and love, of which men are ever the subjects. There are other things, in which God greatly expresses his mercy and goodness to men, many temporal favours. The mercies already mentioned, which God bestowed upon his people of old: his advancing Joseph in Egypt, his deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, his leading them through the Red sea on dry land, his bringing them into Canaan, and driving out the heathen from before them, his delivering them from time to time from the hands of their enemies, were great mercies; but they were not equal to this of his people from under the guilt and dominion of sin. Several of them were typical of this; and as God would thus prepare men for the bestowment of those less mercies by making them sensible of their guilt and misery, so especially will he so do, before he makes known to them this great love of his in Jesus Christ. When God designs to show mercy to sinners, it is his manner thus to begin with them.

He first brings them to reflect upon themselves, and consider and be sensible what they are, and what condition they are in. What has already been said proves this. There is a harmony between God's dispensations. And as we see that this is God's manner of dealing with men when he gives them other great and remarkable mercies and manifestations of his favour, it is a confirmation that it is his method of proceeding with the souls of men, when about to reveal his mercy and love to them in Jesus Christ.

1. God makes men consider and be sensible of what sin they are guilty. Before, it may be, they were very regardless of this. They went on sinning, and never reflected upon what they did; never considered or regarded what or how many sins they committed. They saw no cause why they should trouble their minds about it. But when God convinces them, he brings them to reflect upon themselves; he sets their sins in order before their eyes. He brings their old sins to their minds, so that they are fresh in their memory things which they had almost forgotten. And many things, which they used to regard as light offences, which were not wont to be a burden to their consciences, nor to appear worthy to be taken notice of, they are now made to reflect upon. Thus they discover of what a multitude of transgressions they have been guilty, which they have heaped up till they are grown up to heaven. There are some sins especially, of which they have been guilty, which are ever before them, so that they cannot get them out of their minds. Sometimes when men are under conviction, their sins follow them, and haunt them like a spectre. God makes them sensible of the sin of their

hearts, how corrupt and depraved their hearts are. And there are two ways in which he does this. One is by setting before them the sins of their lives. They are so set in order before them, they appear so many and so aggravated, that they are convinced what a fountain of corruption there is in their hearts. Their sinful natures appear by their sinful lives. There is sin enough, which every man has committed, to convince him, that he is sold under sin, that his heart is full of nothing but corruption, if God by his Spirit leads, him rightly to consider it.

Another way which God sometimes makes use of, is, to leave men to such internal workings of corruption under the temptations which they have in their terrors and fears of hell, as shows them what a corrupt and wicked heart they have. God sometimes brings this good out of this evil, to make men see the corruption of their nature by the workings of it under temptations, which they have in their terrors about damnation. God leads them through the wilderness to prove them, and let them know what is in their hearts, as he did the children of Israel, as we have already observed. By means of the trials which the children of Israel had in the wilderness, they might be made sensible what a murmuring, perverse, rebellious, unfaithful, and idolatrous people they were. So God sometimes makes sinners sensible what wicked hearts they have, by their experience of the exercises of corruption, while they are under convictions. Not that this will in the least excuse men for allowing such workings of corruption in their hearts, because God sometimes leaves men to be wicked, that he may afterwards turn it to their good, when he in infinite wisdom sees meet so to do. We must not go and be wicked on purpose that we may get good by it. It will be very absurd, as well as horridly presumptuous, for us so to do. Though God sometimes in his sovereign mercy makes those workings of corruption, and a spirit of opposition and enmity against God, a means of showing them the vileness of their own hearts, and so to turn to their good. So God oftentimes is provoked thereby utterly to withdraw and forsake them, after the example of those murmurers, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, of whom God swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest. And they who allow themselves therein, are the most likely so to provoke God. But it is God's manner to show men the plague of their own hearts by some means or other, before he reveals his redeeming love to their souls. While sinners are unconvinced sin lies hid. They take no notice of it. But God makes the law effectual to bring men's own sins of heart and life to be reflected on, and observed. [Romans vii. 9.](#) "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived." Then sin appeared and came to light, which was not before observed. Joseph's revealing himself to his brethren, is probably typical of Christ's revealing himself to the soul of a sinner, making known himself in his love, and in his near relation of a brother, and a redeemer of his soul. But before Joseph revealed himself to them, they were made to reflect upon themselves, and say, [Genesis 42:21.](#) "we are verily guilty."

2. God convinces sinners of the dreadful danger they are in by reason of their sin. Having their sins set before them, God makes them sensible of the relation which their sin has to misery. And here are two things of which they are convinced about their danger.

1. God makes them sensible that his displeasure is very dreadful. Before they heard often about the anger of God, and the fierceness of his wrath; but they were not moved by it. But now they are made sensible that it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. They are made in some measure sensible of the dreadfulness of hell. They are led with fixedness and impression to think what a dismal thing it will be to have God an enraged enemy, setting to work the misery of a soul, and how dismal it will be to dwell in such torment for ever without hope. [Isaiah xxxiii. 14.](#) “The sinners in Zion are afraid; tearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Other sinners are told of hell, but convinced sinners often have hell, as it were, in their view. They being impressed with a sense of the dreadfulness of its misery, is the cause why it works upon their imagination oftentimes; and it will seem as though they saw the dismal flames of hell; as though they saw God in implacable wrath exerting his fury upon them; as though they heard the cries and shrieks of the damned.

2. They are made in some measure sensible of the connection there is between their sins and that wrath, or how their sin and guilt exposes them to that wrath, of the dreadfulness of which they have such lively apprehensions, and so fear takes hold of them. They are afraid that will be their portion. And they are sensible that they are in a miserable and doleful condition by reason of sin. Many things in the Scriptures make it evident that this is God’s method. The account we have of our first parents confirms it. They had a sense of guilt and danger, before Christ was revealed to them. They were guilty, and were afraid of God’s wrath, and ran and hid themselves. They were terribly afraid when they heard God coming. And doubtless their sense of their guilt and fear, when they were brought before God, and were called to an account, and God asked them what they had done, and whether they had eaten of that tree, whereof he commanded them that they should not eat, prepared them for a discovery of mercy. God made them sensible of their guilt and danger before he revealed to them the covenant of grace. And it is probable that their reflecting upon what God said about the seed of the woman bruising the serpent’s head, soon wrought faith; that it was not long before that discovery God made of a merciful design towards them, was a means of true consolation and hope to them. Joseph’s brethren were brought into great distress for fear of their lives before Joseph revealed himself to them. Those who were converted by Peter’s sermon, were first pricked in their hearts in a sense of their guilt and their danger. [Acts ii. 37.](#) And Paul, before he had his first comfort, trembled, and was astonished. [Acts ix. 6.](#) And continued three days and three nights, and neither ate nor drank, which expressed his great distress. The jailer, before he was converted, was in terror. He called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. [Acts xvi. 29, 30.](#)

Christ's invitation is made more especially to the weary and heavy laden; which doubtless has respect, at least partly, to labouring and being weary with a sense of guilt and danger. We read when David was in the cave, then every one who was in distress, was gathered unto him. [1 Samuel xxii. 1.](#) This doubtless was written as typifying Jesus Christ, and the referring of those who were in fear and distress unto him. The expression of flying for refuge, by which coming to Christ is signified, implies, that before they come, they are in fear of some evil. They apprehend themselves in danger, and this fear gives wings to their feet. [Proverbs xviii. 10.](#) "The name of the Lord is a strong tower." The voice of God to a sinner, when he gives him true comfort, is a still small voice. But this voice is preceded by a strong wind, and a terrible earthquake, and tire, as it was in Horeb when Elijah was there. [1 Kings xix. 11, 12.](#) "And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."

Another thing in the Scriptures, which seems to evince this, is the frequent comparison made between the church spiritually bringing forth Christ, and a woman in travail, in pain to be delivered. [John xvi. 21.](#) and [Revelation xii. 2.](#) The conversion of a sinner is represented by the same thing. It is bringing forth Christ in the heart. Paul speaks of men's regeneration as of Christ being brought forth in them. [Gal. iv. 19.](#) And therefore Christ calls believers his mother. [Matt. xii. 49, 50.](#) "And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

[Hosea v. 15.](#) "I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." (Till they shall be guilty, in the original.)

doctrine. That it is God's manner to make men sensible of their misery and unworthiness, before he appears in his mercy and love to them,

III. They are made sensible of the desert of their sin; that their sin deserves that wrath of God to which it exposes them. They are not only sensible of the dreadful-ness of God's wrath, how fearful a thing it would be to fall into the hands of the living God, and to sustain the eternal expressions of his fierce anger, as well as of the connection between their sins and this wrath, and how their sins expose them to it; but God is also wont, before he comforts them, to show them that their sins deserve this wrath. By a clear discovery of the connection between their sin and God's wrath, they are sensible of their danger of hell; of which many are in a measure sensible, who are wholly insensible of their desert of hell. The threatenings of the law make them afraid indeed, that God will punish sins; yet they have no thorough apprehension of their desert of the punishment threatened; and therefore many, who are afraid, murmur against God. They charge him foolishly with being hard and cruel. But it is

God's manner before he speaks peace to them, and reveals his redeeming love and mercy in Jesus Christ, to make them sensible that they also deserve it. Thus [Matt. xviii. 24, 25, 26.](#) "And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him. and forgave him the debt." Very commonly when men are first made sensible of their danger, their mouths are open against God and his dealings; that is, their hearts are full of murmurings. But it is God's manner before he comforts and reveals his mercy and love to them, to stop their mouths, and make them acknowledge their guilt, or their desert of the threatened punishment. [Rom. iii. 19, 20.](#) "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." God would convince men of their guilt before he reveals a pardon to them. Now a man cannot be said to be thoroughly sensible of his guilt, till he is sensible that he deserves hell. A man must be sensible that he is guilty of death, or guilty of damnation, to use the scriptural mode of expression, before God will reveal to him his freedom from damnation. A sense of guilt consists in two things in a sense of sin, and in a sense of the relation which sin has to punishment. Now the relation which sin has to punishment, is also twofold: first, the connection which it has with punishment, by which it exposes to it, and brings it; and secondly, its desert of punishment. When a man is truly convinced of his desert of the punishment to which his sin exposes him, then he may be said to be thoroughly sensible of his guilt. Then he is become guilty, in the sense of our text, and in the sense of [Rom. iii. 20.](#)

*Inquiry.* How is it that a sinner is made sensible of his desert of God's wrath? A natural man may have a sense of this, though not the same sense which a person may have after conversion; because a natural man cannot have a true sight of sin, and of the evil of it. A man cannot truly know the evil of sin against God, except it be by a discovery of his glory and excellence; and then he will be sensible how great an evil it is to sin against him. Yet it cannot be denied that natural men are capable of a conviction of their desert of hell, or that their consciences may be convinced of it without a sight of God's glory. The consciences of wicked men will also be convinced of the justice of their sentence and of their punishment at the day of judgment; and doubtless will echo to the sentence of the Judge, and condemn them to the same punishment. Here, therefore, we would inquire how it is that a natural man may be made sensible of this. 1. We shall show what is the principle assisted. 2. How it is assisted. And 3. What are the chief external means which are used in order to this.

1. What principle in man is assisted in convincing him of his desert of eternal punishment? No new principle is infused. Natural men have only natural principles; and therefore all that is done by the Spirit of God before regeneration is by assisting natural principles. To observe, therefore, in answer to this inquiry,

That the principle, which is assisted in making natural men sensible of their desert of wrath, is natural conscience. Though man has lost a principle of love to God, and all spiritual principles by the fall, yet natural conscience remains. Now there are two things, which are the proper work of natural conscience. One is to give man a sense of right and wrong. A natural man has no sense of the beauty and amiableness of virtue, or of the turpitude and odiousness of vice. But yet every man has that naturally within, which testifies to him that some things are right, and others wrong. Thus if a man steals, or commits murder, there is something within, which tells him that he has done wrong; he knows that he has not done right. [Rom. ii. 14, 15.](#) “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing, one another.” And the other work of natural conscience is to suggest the relation there is between right and wrong, and a retribution. Man has that in him, which suggests to him, when he has done ill, a relation between that ill and punishment. If a man has done that which his conscience tells him is wrong, is unjust, his conscience tells him that he deserves to be punished for it. Thus natural conscience has a twofold power; a teaching, or accusing, and a condemning power. The Spirit of God, therefore, assists natural conscience the more thoroughly to do this, its work, and so convinces a man of sin. Conscience naturally suggests, when he has done a known evil, that he deserves punishment; and being assisted to its work thoroughly, a man is convinced that he deserves eternal punishment. Though natural conscience does remain in the man since the fall, yet it greatly needs assistance in order to its work. It is greatly hindered in doing its work by sin. Every thing in man, which is part of his perfection, is hindered and impaired by sin. A faculty of reason remains since the fall, but it is greatly impaired and blinded. So natural conscience remains, but sin, in a great degree, stupifies it, and hinders it in its work. Now when God convinces a sinner, he assists his conscience against the stupefaction of sin, and helps it to do its work more freely and fully. The Spirit of God works immediately upon men’s consciences. In conviction their consciences are awakened. They are convinced in their consciences. Their consciences smite them and condemn them.

2. It may be inquired, How God assists natural conscience so as to convince the sinner of his desert of hell? I answer,

1. In general, it is by light. The whole work of God is carried on in the heart of man from his first convictions to his conversion by light. It is by discoveries which are made to his soul. But by what light is it, that a sinner is made sensible that he deserves God’s wrath?

It is some discovery that he has, which makes him sensible of the heinousness of disobeying and casting contempt upon God. The light which gives evangelical humiliation, and which makes man sensible of the hateful and odious nature of sin, is a discovery of God's glory and excellence and grace. But what is it which a natural man sees of God, which makes him sensible that sin against God deserves his wrath; for he sees nothing of the excellence and loveliness of God's glory and grace? I answer,

2. Particularly, it seems to be a discovery of God's awful and terrible greatness. Natural men cannot see any thing of God's loveliness, his amiable and glorious grace, or any thing which should attract their love; but they may see his terrible greatness to excite their terror. Wicked men in another world, though they do not see his loveliness and grace, yet they see his awful greatness, and that makes them sensible of the heinousness of sin. The damned in hell are sensible of the heinousness of their sin. Their consciences declare it to them. And they are made sensible of it by what they see of the awful greatness of that Being, against whom they have sinned. And wicked men in this world are capable of being made sensible of the heinousness of sin the same way. If a wicked soul is capable while wicked of receiving the discoveries of God's terrible majesty in another world, it is capable of it in this. God may, if He pleases, make wicked men sensible of the same thing here. And in this way natural men may be so made sensible of the heinousness of sin, as to be convinced that they deserve hell; as is evident in that it is by this very means, that wicked men will be made sensible of the justice of their punishment in another world, and at the day of judgment. For then the wicked will see so much of the awful greatness of God, the Judge, that it will convince their consciences what a heinous thing it was in them to disobey and contemn such a God, and will convince them that they therefore deserve his wrath. Which shows that wicked men are capable of being convinced in the same way. A wicked man, while a wicked man, is capable of hearing the thunders, and seeing the devouring fire, of mount Sinai; that is, he is capable of being made sensible of that terrible majesty and greatness of God, which was discovered at the giving of the law. But this brings me to the

3. Thing, *viz.* the principal outward means, which the Spirit of God makes use of in this work of convincing men of their desert of hell. And that is the law. The Spirit of God in all his work upon the souls of men, works by his word. And in this whole work of conviction of sin, that part of the word is principally made use of; *viz.* the Law. It is the law which makes men sensible of their sin; and it is the law, attended with its awful threatenings and curses, which gives a sense of the awful greatness, the authority, the power, the jealousy of God. Wicked men are made sensible of the tremendous greatness of God, as it were, in the same manner in which the children of Israel were; *viz.* by the thunders, and earthquake, and devouring fire, and sound of the trumpet, and terrible voice at mount Sinai. All the people who were in the camp trembled, and they said, Let not God speak with us, lest we die. So that it is the law, which God makes use of in assisting the natural conscience to do its work.





[Gal. iii. 24.](#) “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.” It is the law which God makes use of, to make men sensible of their guilt, and to stop their mouths. [Rom. iii. 19.](#) “Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are tinder the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” It is the law, which kills men as to trusting in their own righteousness. [Romans 7:9.](#) “For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” [Gal. ii. 19.](#) “For I through the law am dead to the law.” Conviction, which precedes conversion, is of sin and misery. But men are not thoroughly sensible of their sin or guilt, till they are sensible they deserve hell; nor thoroughly sensible of their misery, till they are sensible they are helpless.

4. It is God’s manner to make men sensible of their helplessness in their own strength. It is usual with sinners, when they are first made sensible of their danger of hell, to attempt by their own strength to save themselves. They in some measure see their danger, and endeavour to work out their own deliverance. They are striving to make themselves better. They strive to convert themselves, to work their hearts into a believing frame, and to exercise a saving trust in Christ. Having heard that if ever they believe, they must put their trust in Christ, and in him alone, for salvation, they think they will trust in Christ and cast their souls upon him. And this they endeavour to do in their own strength. This is very common with persons upon a sick bed, when they are afraid that they shall die and go to hell, and are told that they must put their trust in Christ alone for salvation. They attempt to do it in their own strength. So sinners will be striving without a sense of their insufficiency in themselves to bring their own hearts to love God, and to choose him for their portion, and to repent of their sins. Or they strive to make themselves better, that so God may be more willing to convert them and give them his grace, and enable them to believe in Christ, and love God, and repent of their sins. But before God appears to them as their help and deliverance, it is his manner to make them sensible that they are utterly helpless in themselves. They are brought to despair of help from themselves. There is a death to all their hopes from themselves. [Rom. vii. 9.](#) Before God opens me prison doors, he makes them see that they are shut up, that they are close prisoners, and that there is no way in which they can escape. Christ tells us in [Isa. lxi. 1.](#) that he was sent to bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Christ was sent to open the prison to them that are not only really, but sensibly, bound. [Gal. iii. 23.](#) “But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith, that should afterwards be revealed.” God makes men sensible that they are in a forlorn condition, that they are wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, before he comforts them. Christ tells us in [John ix. 39.](#) “For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind;” meaning, partly at least, by those that see, those who think they see; having respect to the Pharisees, who were proud of their knowledge;

and by the blind, those who are sensibly blind. This is emblematically represented by Saul's blindness before his first comfort. He was blind till Ananias came to him to open his eyes; probably designed to intimate to us, that before God opens the eyes of men in conversion, he makes them sensibly blind. God brings men to this despair in their own strength in these ways.

1. God oftentimes makes use of men's own experience to convince them that they are helpless in themselves. When they first set out in seeking salvation, it may be they thought it an easy thing to be converted. They thought they should presently bring themselves to repent of their sins, and believe in Christ, and accordingly they strove in their own strength with hopes of success. But they were disappointed. And so God suffers them to go on striving to open their own eyes, and mend their own hearts. But they find no success. They have been striving to see for a long time, yet they are as blind as ever; and can see nothing. It is all Egyptian darkness. They have been striving to make themselves better; but they are bad as ever. They have often striven to do something which is good, to be in the exercise of good affections, which should be acceptable to God; but they have no success. And it seems to them, that instead of growing better, they grow worse and worse; their hearts are fuller of wicked thoughts than they were at first; they see no more likelihood of their conversion than there was at first. So God suffers them to strive in their own strength, till they are discouraged, and despair of helping themselves. The prodigal son first strove to fill his belly with the husks which the swine did eat. But when he despaired of being helped in that way, then he came to himself, and entertained thoughts of returning to his father's house.

2. God sometimes, by a particular assistance of the understanding, enables men to see so much of their own hearts, as at once causes them to despair of helping themselves. He sometimes convinces them by their own trials, suffering them to try a long time to effect their own salvation, until they are discouraged. But God, if he pleases, can convince men without such endeavours of their own; and sometimes he does so; as must be the case in many sudden conversions, of which the instances are not unfrequent. By revealing to them their own hearts, he sometimes enables them to perceive that they are so remote from the exercise of love to God, of faith, and of every other Christian grace, as well as from the possession of the least degree of spiritual light, that they despair of ever bringing themselves to it. They perceive that within their souls all is darkness as darkness itself, and as the shadow of death, and that it is too much for them to cause light. They find themselves dead to any thing good, and therefore despair of bringing themselves to the performance of gracious acts. Thus we have shown that it is God's ordinary manner, before he reveals his redeeming mercy to the souls of men, to make them sensible of their sinfulness and danger,

of their desert of the divine wrath, and of their utter helplessness in themselves. This we have shown to be most accordant with the Holy Scriptures, as well as with God's method of dealing with mankind in other things. And we have shown in an imperfect manner how, and by what means, it is that God thus convinces men. This work is what Christ speaks of, as one part of the work of the Holy Ghost. [John xvi. 8.](#) "When he is come, he will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." It is God's manner to convince men of sin, before he convinces them of righteousness.

I come now to show the reasons of the doctrine.

The propriety of such a method of proceeding is very obvious. How agreeable to the divine wisdom does it seem, that the sinner should be brought to such a conviction of his danger and misery, as to perceive his utter incapacity to help himself by any strength or contrivance of his own, and his entire unworthiness of God's help, and desert of his wrath; and that he should be brought to acknowledge that God, in the exercise of his holy sovereignty, may with perfect justice do with him as before he appears in "his pardoning mercy and love, as his helper and friend. A man who is converted is successively in two exceedingly different states; first, a very miserable, wretched state of condemnation; and then" in a blessed condition, a state of justification. How agreeable, therefore, does it seem to the divine wisdom, that such a man should be conscious of this: first, of his miserable, condemned state, and then of his happy state; that, as he is really first guilty, and under a deep desert of hell, before he is really pardoned and admitted to God's favour, so he should first be conscious that he is guilty, and under such a desert of hell, before he is conscious of being the object of pardoning and redeeming mercy and grace. But the propriety of God's thus dealing with the souls of men, will appear perhaps better by considering the following reasons:

1. It is the will of God, that the discoveries of his terrible majesty, and awful holiness and justice, should accompany the discoveries of his grace and love, in order that he may give to his creatures worthy and just apprehensions of himself. It is the glory of God, that these attributes are united in the divine nature, that as he is a being of infinite mercy and love and grace, so he is a being of infinite and tremendous majesty, and awful holiness and justice. The perfect and harmonious union of these attributes, in the divine nature, is what constitutes the chief part of their glory. God's awful and terrible attributes, and his mild and gentle attributes, reflect glory one on the other; and the exercise of the one is in the perfect consistency and harmony with that of the other. If there were the exercise of the mild and gentle attributes without the other, if there were love and mercy and grace in inconsistency with God's authority and justice and infinite hatred of sin, it would be no glory. If God's love and grace did not harmonize with his justice and the honour of his majesty, far from being an honour, they would be a dishonour to God. Therefore as God designs to glorify himself when he makes discoveries of the one, he will also make discoveries of the other. When he makes discoveries of his love and grace, it shall appear that they harmonize with

those other attributes; otherwise his true glory would not be discovered. If men were sensible of the love of God without a sense of those other attributes, they would be exposed to have improper and unworthy apprehensions of God, as though he were gracious to sinners in such a manner as did not become a Being of infinite majesty and infinite hatred of sin. And as it would expose to unworthy apprehensions of God, so it would expose the soul in some respects to behave unsuitably towards God. There would not be a due reverence blended with love and joy. Such discoveries of love, without answerable discoveries of awful greatness, would dispose the soul to come with an undue boldness to God. The very nature and design of the gospel show that this is the will of God, that those who have the discoveries of his love, should also have the discoveries of those other attributes. For this was the very end of Christ's laying down his life, and coming into the world, to render the glory of God's authority, holiness, and justice, consistent with his grace in pardoning and justifying sinners, that while God thus manifested his mercy, we might not conceive any unworthy thoughts of him with respect to those other attributes. Seeing, therefore, that this is the very end of Christ's coming into the world, we may conclude that those who are actually redeemed by Christ, and have a true discovery of Christ made to their souls, have a discovery of God's terribleness and justice to prepare them for the discovery of his love and mercy. God, of old, before the death and sufferings of Christ were so fully revealed, was ever careful that the discoveries of both should be together, so that men might not apprehend God's mercy in pardoning sin and receiving sinners, to the disparagement of his justice. When God proclaimed his name to Moses, in answer to his desire that he might see God's glory, he indeed proclaimed his mercy: [Exodus xxxiv. 6-7](#) "The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." But he did not stop here, but also proclaimed his holy justice and vengeance; "and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and fourth generation." Thus they are joined together again in the fourth commandment. [Exodus 20:5](#). "For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Thus we find them joined together in passages too numerous to be mentioned. When God was about to speak to Elijah in Horeb, he was first prepared for such a familiar conversing with God by awful manifestations of the divine majesty. First there was a wind, which rent the rocks, and then an earthquake, and then a devouring fire. [1 Kings xix. 11, 12](#). God is careful even in heaven, where the discoveries of his love and grace are given in such an exalted degree, also to provide means for a proportional sense of his terribleness, and the dreadfulness of his displeasure, by their beholding it in the miseries and torments of the damned, at the same time that they enjoy his love. Even the man Christ Jesus was first made sensible of the wrath of God, before his exaltation to that transcendent height of enjoyment of the Father's love. And this is one

reason that God gives sinners a sense of his wrath against their sins, and of his justice, before he gives them the discoveries of his redeeming love. 2. Unless a man be thus convinced of his sin and misery before God makes him sensible of his redeeming love and mercy, he cannot be sensible of that love and mercy as it is; *viz.* that it is free and sovereign. When God reveals his redeeming grace to men, and makes them truly sensible of it, he would make them sensible of it as it is. God's grace and love towards sinners is in itself very wonderful, as it redeems from dreadful wrath. But men cannot be sensible of this until they perceive in some adequate degree how dreadful the wrath of God is. God's redeeming grace and love in Christ is free and sovereign, as it is altogether without any worthiness in those who are the objects of it. But men cannot be sensible of this, until they are sensible of their own unworthiness. The grace of God in Christ is glorious and wonderful, as it is not only as the objects of it are without worthiness, but as they deserve the everlasting wrath and displeasure of God. But they cannot be sensible of this until they are made sensible that they deserve God's eternal wrath. The grace of God in Christ is wonderful, as it saves and redeems from so many and so great sins, and from the punishment they have deserved. But sinners cannot be sensible of this till they are in some measure sensible of their sinfulness, and brought to reflect upon the sins of their lives, and to see the wickedness of their hearts. It is the glory of God's grace in Christ, that it is so free and sovereign. And doubtless it is the will of God, that when he reveals his grace to the soul, it should be seen in its proper glory, though not perfectly. When men see the glory of God's grace aright, they see it as free and unmerited, and contrary to the demerit of their sins. All who have a spiritual understanding of the grace of God in Christ, have a perception of the glory of that grace. But the glory of the divine grace appears chiefly in its being bestowed on the sinner when he is in a condition so exceedingly miserable and necessitous. In order, therefore, that the sinner may be sensible of this glory, he must first be sensible of the greatness of his misery, and then of the greatness of the divine mercy. The heart of man is not prepared to receive the mercy of God in Christ, as free and unmerited, till he is sensible of his own demerit. Indeed the soul is not capable of receiving a revelation or discovery of the redeeming grace of God in Christ, as redeeming grace, without being convinced of sin and misery. He must see his sin and misery before he can see the grace of God in redeeming him from that sin and misery.

3. Until the sinner is convinced of his sin and misery, he is not prepared to receive the redeeming mercy and grace of God, as through a Mediator; because he does not see his need of a Mediator till he sees his sin and misery. If there were, on the part of God, any exercise of absolute and immediate mercy toward sinners bestowed without any satisfaction or purchase, the soul might possibly see that without a conviction of its sin and misery. But there is not. All God's mercy to sinners is through a Saviour. The redeeming mercy and grace of God is mercy and grace in Christ. And when God discovers his mercy to the soul, he will discover it as mercy in a Saviour; and it is his will that the mercy should be received

as in and through a Saviour, with a full consciousness of its being through his righteousness and satisfaction. It is the will of God, that as all the spiritual comforts which his people receive are in and through Christ, so they should be sensible that they receive them through Christ, and that they can receive them in no other way. It is the will of God, that his people should have their eyes directed to Christ, and should depend upon him for mercy and favour, that whenever they receive comforts through his purchase, they should receive them as from him. And that because God would glorify his Son as Mediator, as the glory of man's salvation belongs to Christ, so it is the will of God that all the people of Christ, all who are saved by him, should receive their salvation as of him, and should attribute the glory of it to him; and that none who will not give the glory of salvation to Christ, should have the benefit of it. Upon this account God insists upon it, and it is absolutely necessary, that a sinner's conviction of his sin, and misery, and helplessness in himself, should precede or accompany the revelation of the redeeming love and grace of God. I shall also mention two other ends which are hereby attained.

4. By this means the redeeming mercy and love of God are more highly prized and rejoiced in, when discovered. By the previous discoveries of danger, misery, and helplessness, and desert of wrath, the heart is prepared to embrace a discovery of mercy. When the soul stands trembling at the brink of the pit, and despairs of any help from itself, it is prepared joyfully to receive tidings of deliverance. If God is pleased at such a time to make the soul hear his still small voice, his call to himself and to a Saviour, the soul is prepared to give it a joyful reception. The gospel then, if it be heard spiritually, will be glad tidings indeed; the most joyful which the sinner ever heard. The love of God and of Christ to the world, and to him in particular, will be admired, and Christ will be most precious. To remember what danger he was in, what seas surrounded him; and then to reflect how safe he now is in Christ, and how sufficient Christ is to defend him, and to answer all his wants, will cause the greater exultation of soul. God, in this method of dealing with the souls of his elect, consults their happiness, as well as his own glory. And it increases happiness, to be made sensible of their misery and unworthiness, before God comforts them; for their comfort, when they receive it, is so much the sweeter.

5. The heart is more prepared and disposed to praise God for it. This follows from the reasons already mentioned; as they are hereby made sensible how free and sovereign the mercy of God is towards them, and how great his grace in saving them; and as they more highly prize the mercy and love of God made known to them: all will dispose them to magnify the name of God, to exalt the love of God the Father in giving his Son to them, and to exalt Jesus Christ by their praise, who laid down his life for them to redeem them from all iniquity. They are ready to say, How miserable should I have been, had not God had pity upon me, and provided me a Saviour! In what a miserable condition should I have been, had not Christ loved me, and given himself for me! I must have endured that dreadful wrath

of God; I must have suffered the punishment which I had deserved by all that great sin and wickedness of which I have been guilty.

### **APPLICATION.**

I. This subject admits of an application to unconverted sinners. If it be so, as has been represented, then let me exhort you to seek those convictions. Though you are at present sinners, and have no terrifying sense of your danger of hell, yet I presume to say concerning most of you at least, that you do not intend to go to hell. When you happen to think about another world, you flatter yourself, that in some way or other you shall escape eternal misery; or at least, you do not think of it with a willingness to be damned. But if it be, that you do not suffer eternal damnation, you have a great work to do before you die. It ordinarily is a very difficult work, especially to those who have gone on for a considerable time in ways of wickedness under the means of grace. If you are ever truly converted, you must be convinced of your misery and unworthiness; you must be guilty in your own sense. Begin your work, then, and seek to be made sensible of your misery and unworthiness. Make haste, and set about this work speedily. You may defer it so long, that it will be too late. It may be too late, if you delay, in these two ways. It may be too late, as you may be overtaken with death, before you set about it, as thousands and millions have been before you. And if you should not die before you begin, yet it may be too late, as you may never have an opportunity to get through. Some persons are a long time under convictions, before they are converted. There are some, whom God suffers to continue a long time seeking salvation in their own strength before he makes them despair of help from themselves. They continue many years trusting in their own righteousness, as it were, wandering from mountain to hill, from one hold to another, seeking rest and safety. They are a long time building castles in the air. They sometimes flatter themselves from one consideration, and sometimes from another. And if you should delay, there is danger that you may not have time. Some are many years under fears of damnation, and are seeking salvation. And there are many for whom death is too quick. Here we will consider briefly what are the occasions of the stupidity and senselessness of sinners; and thence shall take occasion to warn those, who would seek the convictions of God's Spirit.

1. Some provoke God to withhold the strivings and convincing influences of his Spirit. Some provoke God to give them up to hardness of heart. God lets them alone, and intends to let them alone. [Hosea iv. 16.](#) "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." [Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12.](#) "But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels."

[Hosea v. 15.](#) I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me early.

doctrine. It is God's manner to make men sensible of their misery and unworthiness, before he appears in his mercy and love to them; particularly before he appears in his redeeming love and mercy to their souls.

*Second me.* To exhort those, who have some convictions of sin and danger, that they do not lose them. If you have the strivings of God's Spirit, God has met with you, led you to reflect upon your sins, and sensible that you are in danger of hell; and so made you concerned about your soul, and put you upon seeking salvation. Take heed that you do not lose your convictions, and grow senseless of eternal things, and negligent of your soul's concern, that you do not return to your former careless way of living, that you do not return to your former sins. Here consider,

1. That there is danger of it. It is not all who are under concern for their souls, and who, by the strivings of God's Spirit, are put upon seeking and striving for salvation, who hold out. There are many more, who set out at the beginning of the race, who do not hold out to the end. Many things intervene between the beginning and the end of the race, which divert, and stop, and turn back many who commenced well. There are many, who seem to be under strong convictions, and to be very earnest in seeking, whose convictions are but short-lived. And some, who seem to be much concerned about salvation for a considerable time, it may be for years together, yet by degrees grow careless and negligent. There is much in your own heart, which tends to stupify you. It is the natural tendency of sin and lust, to stupify the conscience. And as corruption is reigning as yet in your heart, it will ever be ready to exert itself in such acts, as will have a great tendency to drive away your convictions. And Satan is doubtless diligently watching over you, striving in all ways to abate, and to take off, your convictions. He joins in with the sloth and lusts of your heart to persuade to negligence, and to turn your mind to other things. And the world is full of objects, which tend to take off your mind from the soul's concern, and are constantly, as it were, endeavouring to take possession of your mind, and to drive out the concerns of another world.

2. Consider, if you lose your convictions, it will be no advantage to you that ever you had them, as to any furtherance of your salvation. Whatever terrors you have been under about damnation, to whatever reflections you have been brought upon your sins, whatever strong desires you have had after deliverance, and whatever earnest prayers you have made, it will all be lost. What you have suffered of fear and concern will turn to no good account; and what you have done, the pains you have taken, will be utterly lost. When you have strove against sin, and laboured in duty, have stemmed the stream, and have proceeded a considerable way up the hill, and made some progress towards the kingdom of heaven, when once you have lost your convictions, you will be as far from salvation as you were before you began; you will lose all the ground you have gained; you will go quite down to the bottom of the hill; the stream will immediately carry you back. All will be lost; you had as good never have had those convictions, as to have had them, and then to lose them.





3. You do not know that you shall ever have such an opportunity again. God is now striving with you by his Spirit. If you should lose the strivings of his Spirit, it may be that God's Spirit would never return again. If you are under convictions, you have a precious opportunity, which, if you knew the worth of it, you would esteem as better than any temporal advantages. You have a price in your hands to get wisdom, which is more valuable than gold or silver. It is a great privilege to live under means of grace, to enjoy the word and ordinances of God, and to know the way of salvation. It is a greater thing still to live under a powerful dispensation of the means of grace under a very instructive, convincing ministry. But it is a much greater privilege still to be the subject of the convincing influences of the Spirit of God. If you have these, you have a precious advantage in your hands. And if you lose it, it is questionable whether you ever have the like advantage again. We are counselled to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near. [Isa. lv. 6](#). A time in which God's Spirit is striving with a man by convictions of his sin and danger, is especially such a time, that is a sinner's best opportunity. It is especially a day of salvation. God may be said to be near, when he pours out his Spirit upon many in the place where a person dwells. It is prudence for all then to be calling upon God as being near at such a time. But especially is God near, at a time when he is pouring out his Spirit in immediately convincing and awakening a man's own soul. If therefore God's Spirit is now at work with you, you have a precious opportunity. Take heed that you do not by any means let it slip. It may doubtless be said concerning many, that they have missed their opportunity. Most men, who live under the gospel, have a special opportunity, that there is a certain season, which God appoints for them, which is, above all others, a day of grace with them, when men have a very fair opportunity for securing eternal salvation, if they did but know it, and had hearts for it. But the misery of man is great upon him; for man knoweth not his time. The wise man tells us, [Eccl. viii. 6, 7](#), that "To every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him. For he knoweth not that which shall be." And again, [ix. 12](#). "Man knoweth not his time." If the Spirit of God is now striving with you, it may be it is your time; and it may be your only time. Be wise, therefore, and understand the things which belong to your peace, before they are hid from your eyes. You have not the influences of the Spirit of God in your own power. You cannot have convictions and awakenings when you please. God is sovereign as to the bestowment of them. If you are ready to flatter yourself, that although you neglect now, when you are young, yet you shall be awakened again; that is a vain and groundless presumption. It is a difficult thing for a man who has been going on in a sinful course, to reform. There are a great many difficulties in the way of thorough reformation. If you therefore have reformed, and returned again to your former sin, you will have all those difficulties to overcome again.

4. If you lose your convictions, and return again to a way of allowed sinning, there will be less probability of your salvation, than there was before you had any convictions. Back-

sliding is a very dangerous and pernicious thing to men's souls, and is often spoken of as such in God's word; which was signified in that awful dispensation of God in turning Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, to be a standing emblem of the danger of looking back after one has set out in a way of religion. The ill to which they are subject, who lose their convictions, is not merely the loss of their convictions. Their convictions are not only a means of no good to them, but they turn to much ill. It would have been better for them that they had never had them. For they are now set more remote from salvation than they were before. For having risen some considerable way towards heaven, and falling back, they sink lower, and farther down towards hell, than ever they were. The way to heaven is now blocked up with greater difficulties than ever it was. Their hearts now are become harder for light, and convictions being once conquered, they evermore are an occasion of a greater hardness of heart than there was before. Yea, there is no one thing whatsoever, which has so great a tendency to it. Man's heart is hardened by losing convictions, as iron is hardened by being heated and cooled. If you are awakened, and afterwards lose your convictions, it will be a harder thing to awaken you again. If there were only that you are growing older, there would be less probability of your being awakened again; for as persons grow older they grow less and less susceptible of convictions; evil habits grow stronger and more deeply rooted in the heart. You greatly offend God by quenching his Spirit, and returning as a dog to his vomit, and as a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. And there is danger that God will say concerning you, as he did concerning Jerusalem, [Ezek. xxiv. 13](#). "Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee." If you return again to your wicked course, if you should go to hell at last, you will lament that ever you have had any convictions; you will find your punishment so much the heavier. And if you should be hereafter awakened, and set about striving for salvation, yet you will probably find harder work in it; you do but make work for yourself by your backsliding. You will not only have all to do over again which you have done, and which you must have done, if you had gone on, but there will be new work for repentance. There probably must be greater and more dreadful terrors; and it may be, a much longer time spent in seeking and striving, a more difficult work with your own headstrong corruptions. If you were but sensible of one half of the disadvantages of backsliding, and the many woes and calamities in which it will involve you, you would be careful not to lose your convictions.

5. Consider the encouragement there is in Scripture to persevere in seeking salvation, as in [Hos. vi. 3](#). "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." Thence we may gather, that God usually gives success to those who diligently, and constantly, and perseveringly seek conversion. And that you be the better directed in taking care not to lose your

convictions, it is convenient that you should be aware of those things which are common occasions of persons losing their convictions. I shall therefore briefly mention some of them.

1. Persons falling into sin is very often the occasion of their losing their convictions. Some temptation prevails, so that they are drawn into some sin. Some lust upon some occasion has been stirred up, and they have been overcome by their sinful appetites, and have provoked God to anger. It may be they have been drawn into some criminal act of sensuality, and so have quenched the Spirit. Or they have got into some quarrel with some persons. Their spirits are disturbed, and heated with malice and revenge, and they have acted sinfully, or have sinfully expressed themselves, and have driven away the Spirit of God. These are the most ready ways to put an end to convictions.

2. Sometimes there happens some diverting occasion; there is some incident which for the present diverts their minds. Their minds are taken off from their business for a short time. They are drawn into company. It may be they see something which revives a desire of worldly enjoyments and entertainments; or they are engaged in some exercise and business, which diverts their minds. And so afterwards they are more careless than they were before. They are not so strict in attending private duties; and carelessness and stupidity by degrees steal upon them, till they wholly lose their convictions.

3. Some change in their circumstances takes off their minds from the concerns of their souls. Their minds are diverted by the new circumstances with which they are attended; or are taken up with new pleasures and enjoyments, or with new cares and business, in which they are involved. It may be they grow richer. They prosper in the world, and their worldly good things crowd in, and take possession of their minds. Or worldly cares are increased upon them, and they have so many things to look after, that their minds are taken up, and they have not time to look after their souls.



SERMON III. 566

[hosea ii. 15.](#)

And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

In the context, the church of Israel is first threatened with the awful desolation which God was about to bring upon her for her dealing so falsely and treacherously with God; because though, in the bold language of the prophet, she had been married to God, she had yet gone after other lovers, and had committed adultery with them, “For she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread, and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.”<sup>567</sup> Therefore God threatened that he would strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst, and that he would discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and destroy her vines and fig-trees, and make them a forest. So the prophet goes on terribly threatening her to the end of the thirteenth verse. And those things were fulfilled in the captivity of Israel in the land of Assyria. But in the verse preceding the text, and in the remainder of the chapter, there follows a gracious promise of mercy, which God would show her in the days of the gospel. “Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.”<sup>568</sup> “I will allure her,” that is, I will court or woo her again, as a young man woos a virgin, whom he desires to make his wife. God, for her committing adultery with other lovers, had threatened that he would give her a bill of divorce, as verse second.<sup>569</sup> “Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband.” But here in the latter part of the chapter, God promises that in gospel times he would make her his wife again, as in the sixteenth verse. “And it shall be at that day that thou shalt call me Ishi;” that is, “my husband.” And so in [verses 19, 20.](#) “And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me for ever in righteousness, and in judgment, in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness.” Here in the [fourteenth verse.](#), God promises that he will woo her, and in the latter part of the verse, he shows in what manner he will deal with her when he is about to woo or allure her. He would first bring her into the wilderness; that is, he would bring her

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566 SEPTEMBER, 1737.

567 [Hosea ii. 5.](#)

568 [Hosea ii. 14, 15.](#)

569 [Hosea ii. 2.](#)

into trouble and distress, and so humble her, and then allure her by speaking comfortably or pleasantly to her, as a young man does to a maid whom he woos. Then follow the words of the text.

1. We may observe what God would give to the children of Israel; *viz.* hope and comfort. He promises to give her vineyards; which being spiritually interpreted as most of the prophecies of gospel times are to be interpreted, signifies spiritual comforts. Vineyards afford wine, which is comfort to those who are of heavy hearts. [Prov. xxxi. 6.](#) "Give wine to those that are of heavy hearts." Wine is to make glad the heart of man. [Psalm civ. 15.](#) Gospel rest and peace are sometimes prophesied of, under the metaphor of every man's sitting under his vine and under his own fig-tree. God promises to give her hope, to open a door of hope for her, and to give her songs; that is, to give her spiritual joy, and both cause and disposition joyfully to sing praises to God.

2. We may observe after what manner God would bestow those benefits. 1. They should be given after great trouble and abasement. Before she had this hope and comfort given, she should be brought into great trouble and distress to humble her. He promises to give her her vineyards from thence; that is, from the wilderness spoken of in the foregoing verse, into which it is said that God would bring her, before he spoke comfortably to her. God would bring her into the wilderness, and then give her vineyards. God's bringing her into the wilderness was to humble her, and fit her to receive vineyards, and to make her see her dependence on God for them, that she might not attribute her enjoyment of them to her idols, as she had done before, for which reason God took them away, as in the twelfth verse. [Hosea ii. 12.](#) "And I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest." There it is threatened that God will turn her vineyards into a forest, or wilderness. Here it is promised that he would turn the wilderness into vineyards, as [Isaiah xxxii. 15.](#) "Until the Spirit be poured on us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." She should first be in a wilderness, where she shall see that she cannot help herself, nor any of her idols help, or give her any vineyards. And then God will help her, that she shall see that it is God, and not any of her idols or lovers. God would first bring her into a wilderness, and thence give her vineyards, as God first brought the children of Israel into a dreadful wilderness. So God opened a door of hope to them in the valley of Achor, which is a word that signifies trouble, and was so called from the trouble which the children of Israel suffered by the sin of Achor. So God is wont first to make their sin a great trouble to them, an occasion of a great deal of distress, before he opens a door of hope. God promises to make her sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. This plainly refers to the joyful song which Moses and the children of Israel sang when they came up out of the Red sea. The children of Israel there had great joy and comfort; but just before they had great trouble. They had been in extreme

distress by the oppression of their task-masters; and just before this triumphant song, they were brought to extremity and almost to despair, when Pharaoh and the Egyptians appeared ready to swallow them up.

2. This hope and comfort should be bestowed on the slaving and forsaking of sin. That is the troubler of the soul. It should be given in the valley of Achor, which was the valley where the troubler of Israel was slain, as you may see in [Joshua vii. 26.](#); and the place where the children of Israel sang, when they came up out of the land of Egypt. The eastern shore of the Red sea was the place where they saw their enemies and old taskmasters, the types of men's lusts, which are sinners' taskmasters, lie dead on the sea-shore, and of whom they took their final leave. And God had told them, that their enemies whom they had seen that day, they should see no more for ever.

*Doctrine.* God is wont to cause hope and comfort to arise in the soul after trouble and humbling for sin, and according as the troubler is slain and forsaken. I would show,

I. That it is thus with respect to the first true hope and comfort which is given to the soul at conversion.

II. That God is wont to bestow hope and comfort on Christians from time to time in this way.

I. God is wont to cause hope and comfort to arise to the soul in conversion after trouble and humbling for sin, and upon the slaying of the troubler.

1. It is God's manner to bestow hope and comfort on a soul in conversion after trouble and humbling for sin. Under this head are three things to be observed. 1. The trouble itself. 2. The cause, *viz.* sin. 3. The humbling.

1. Souls are wont to be brought into trouble before God bestows true hope and comfort. The corrupt hearts of men naturally incline to stupidity and senselessness before God comes with the awakening influences of his Spirit. They are quiet and secure; they have no true comfort and hope, and yet they are quiet; they are at ease. They are in miserable slavery, and yet seek not a remedy. They say, as the children of Israel did in Egypt to Moses, "let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians."<sup>570</sup> But if God has a design of mercy to them, it is his manner before he bestows true hope and comfort on them, to bring them into trouble, to distress them, and spoil their ease and false quietness, and to rouse them out of their old resting and sleeping places, and to bring them into a wilderness. They are brought into trouble, and sometimes into exceedingly great trouble and distress, so that they can take no comfort in those things in which they used to take comfort. Their hearts are pinched and stung, and they can find no ease in any thing. They have, as it were, an arrow sticking fast in them, which causes grievous and continual pain, an arrow which they cannot shake off, or pull out. The pain and anguish of it drinks up their spirit. Their worldly enjoyments were

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570 [Exodus xiv. 12.](#)

a sufficient good before; but they are not now. They wander about with wounded hearts, seeking rest, and finding none; like one wandering in a dry and parched wilderness under the burning, scorching heat of the sun, seeking for some shadow where he may sit down and rest, but finding none. Wherever he goes the beams of the sun scorch him: or he seeks some fountain of cool water to quench his thirst, but finds not a drop. He is like David in his trouble, who wandered about in the wilderness, Saul pursuing him wherever he went, driving and hunting him from one wilderness to another, from one mountain to another, and from one cave to another, giving him no rest. To such sinners, all things look dark, and they know not what to do, nor whither to turn. If they look forward or backward, to the right hand or the left, all is gloom and perplexity. If they look to heaven, behold darkness; if they look to the earth, behold trouble, and darkness, and dimness of anguish. Sometimes they hope for relief, but they are disappointed, and so again and again they travail in pain, and a dreadful sound is in their ears. They are terrified and affrighted, and they seek refuge, as a poor creature pursued by an enemy. He flies to one refuge and there is beset, and that fails; then he flies to another, and then is driven out of that. And his enemies grow thicker and thicker about, encompassing him on every side. They are like those of whom we read in [Isa. xxiv. 17, 18](#). Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon them, and when they flee from the noise of the fear they are taken in the pit; and if they come up out of the pit, they are taken in the snare. So that they know not what to do. They are like the children of Israel, while Achor troubled them. They go forth against their enemies, and they are smitten down and flee before them. They call on God, but he does not answer, nor seem to regard them. Sometimes they find something in which they take pleasure for a little time, but it soon vanishes away, and leaves them in greater distress than before. And sometimes they are brought to the very borders of despair. Thus they are brought into the wilderness, and into the valley of Achor, or of trouble.

2. Sin is the trouble or the cause of this trouble. Sin is the disease of the soul, and such a disease as will, if the soul is not benumbed, cause exceeding pain. Sin brings guilt, and that brings condemnation and wrath. All this trouble arises from conviction of sin. Awakened sinners are convinced that they are sinful. Before the sinner thought well of himself, or was not convinced that he was very sinful. But now he is led to reflect first on what he has done, how wickedly he has spent his time, what wicked acts or practices he has been guilty of. And afterwards in the progress of his awakenings he is made sensible of something of the sin and plague of his heart. They are made sensible of the guilt and wrath which sin brings. The threatenings of God's law are set home, and they are made sensible that God is angry, and that his wrath is dreadful. They are led to consider of the dreadfulness of that punishment, which God has threatened. The affection or principle, which is wrought upon to cause this trouble, is fear. They are afraid of the punishment of sin, and God's wrath for it. They are commonly afraid of many things here in this world as the fruit of sin. They are afraid that

God will not hear their prayers, that he is so angry with them, that he will never give them converting grace. They are afraid oftentimes that they have committed the unpardonable sin, or at least that they have been guilty of such sin as God will never pardon; that their day is past, and that God has given them up to judicial hardness of heart and blindness of mind. Or if they are not already, they are afraid they shall be. They are afraid oftentimes, that the Spirit of God is not striving with them now, that their fears are from some other cause. Sometimes they are afraid that it is only the devil, who terrifies and afflicts them; and that if the Spirit of God is striving with them, he will be taken from them, and they shall be left in a Christless state. They are afraid that if they seek salvation, it will be to no purpose, and that they shall only make their case worse and worse; that they are farther and farther from any thing which is good, and that there is less probability now of their being converted, than when they began to seek. Sometimes they fear, that they have but a short time to live, and that God will soon cast them to hell; that none ever were as they are, who ever found mercy; that their case is peculiar, and that all wherein they differ from others is for the worse. They have fears on every side. Oftentimes they are afraid of every thing. Every thing looks dark, and they are afraid that every thing will prove ruinous to them. But in the issue of all they are afraid they shall perish for ever. They are afraid that when they die they shall go down to hell, and there have their portion appointed them in everlasting burnings. This is the sum of all their fears. And the cause of this fear is a consciousness of the guilt of sin. It is sin, which is the cruel task-master, which oppresses them, and chastises them; and sin is the cruel Pharaoh, which pursues them. As the children of Israel, before they came to sing with joy after they came out of the land of Egypt, were under great trouble from their task-masters, and sighed by reason of the hard bondage, and then were pursued, and put into dreadful fear at the Red sea. It was their taskmasters who made them all this trouble. So it is sin which makes all the trouble which a sinner suffers under awakenings. Their trouble for sin is no gracious, godly sorrow for sin; for that does not arise merely from fear, but from love. It is not an evangelical, but legal, repentance of which we are speaking, which is not from love to God, but only self love.

3. The end of this trouble in those to whom God designs mercy is to humble them. God leads them into the wilderness before he speaks comfortably to them, for the same cause that he led the children of Israel into the wilderness before he brought them into Canaan, which we are told was to humble them. [Deut. viii. 2.](#) “And thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart.” Man naturally trusts in himself, and magnifies himself. And for man to enjoy only ease and prosperity and quietness tends to nourish and establish such a disposition. [Deut. xxxii. 15.](#) “Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked.” But by trouble and distress, and by a sense of a heavy load of guilt, God brings men down into the dust. God brings souls thus into the wilderness to show them their own helplessness,





to let them see that they have nothing to which they can turn for help, to make them sensible that they are not rich and increased with goods, but wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; to show them that they are utterly undone and ruined, to make them sensible of their exceeding wickedness, and to bring them to be sensible how justly God might cast them off for ever. Those legal troubles tend to show them their utter inability to help themselves, as their fears put them on using their utmost endeavours, and trying their utmost strength; and by continuing in that way their experience teaches them their weakness, and they find they can do nothing. It puts them upon repeated trials, and they have as repeated disappointments. But repeated disappointments tend to bring a man to give up the case, and to despair of help in that way in which he has tried for it. It tends to make men sensible of the utter insufficiency of their wisdom, and bring them to see their own exceeding blindness and ignorance. For fear, and concern, and distress, necessarily put a person on intensely thinking, and studying, and contriving for relief. But when men have been thus trying their own wisdom and invention to their utmost, and find it fails, and signifies nothing, and is altogether to no purpose, it makes them more and more sensible of their weakness and blindness, and brings them to confess themselves fools, and blind, as to those things which concern their relief. They are like one who is placed in the midst of a vast hideous wilderness. At first it may be he may not be sensible but that he knows the way home, and can directly go in the way which leads out of the wilderness. But after he has tried and has travelled awhile, and finds that he cannot find the way, and that he spends himself in vain, and only goes round and round, and comes to the same place again at last, he is brought to confess that he knows not where to go, nor what to do, and that he is sensible that he is like one who is perfectly lost, and altogether in darkness, and is brought at last to yield the case and stand still, and do nothing but call for help, that if possible any one may hear, and lead him in the wilderness. For this end God leads men into the wilderness before he speaks comfortably to them. The troubles which they have for sin tend to bring them to be sensible how justly God may cast them off for ever; and this brings them to reflect on their sins; for these are the things of which they are afraid. When a man is terribly afraid of things with which he is surrounded, this engages his eyes to behold; he looks intensely on them, and sees more and more how frightful and terrible they are. When they are in fear, they take much more notice of their sins than at other times. They think more how wickedly they have lived, and observe more the corrupt and wicked working of their own hearts, and so are more and more sensible what vile creatures they are. This makes them more and more sensible how angry God is, and how terrible his anger is. They try to appease and to reconcile God by their own righteousness, but it fails. God still appears as an angry God, refusing to hear their prayers, or appear for their help, till they despair in their own righteousness, and yield the case; and by more and more of a sight of themselves are brought to confess that they lie justly exposed to damnation, and have nothing by which to defend themselves. God appears

more and more as a terrible being to them, till they have done with any imaginations, that they have any thing sufficient to recommend them, or reconcile them to such a God. Thus God is wont first to bring the soul into trouble by reason of sin, and so to humble the soul, before he gives true hope and comfort in conversion.

4. This hope and comfort are given upon the slaying of the troubler. Whatever troubles there are for sin, yet if the troubler is not slain, it cannot be expected but that there will be trouble still. Before there will be no true comfort. The soul may return to stupidity and carelessness, and may receive a false peace and hope, and sin be kept alive; but no true hope. Persons may be exceedingly troubled for sin, and yet sin be saved alive. Persons may seem to lament they have done thus and thus, and weep many tears, and cry out of their sinfulness and wickedness, and yet the life of sin be whole in them. But if so, they never shall receive true comfort. They may refrain from sin; there may be a great reformation, and exact life for a time; or there may be a total reformation of some particular ways of sin, and yet no true hope; because sin is only restrained; it is not slain. Many men are brought to restrain sin, and to give it slight wounds, who cannot be brought to kill it. Wicked men are loth to kill sin. They have been very good friends to it ever since they have been in the world, and have always treated it as one of their most familiar and best friends. They have allowed it the best room in their hearts, and have given it the best entertainment they could, and they are very loth to destroy it. But until this be done, God never will give them true comfort. If ever men come to have a true hope, they must do as the children of Israel did by Achan. [Joshua vii. 24, 25, 26.](#) “And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan, the son of Zerah, and the silver and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called the valley of Achor unto this day.” So if ever men come to have any true hope, they must take sin which is the troubler, and all which belongs to it, even that which seems most dear and precious, though it be as choice as Achan’s silver and wedge of gold, and utterly destroy them, and burn them with fire, to be sure to make a thorough end of them, as it were, bury them and raise over them a great heap of stones, to lay a great weight upon them, to make sure of it that they shall never rise more. Yea, and thus they must serve all his sons and daughters. They must not save some of the accursed brood alive. All the fruits of sin must be forsaken. There must not be some particular lust, some dear sinful enjoyment, some pleasant child of sin, spared; but all must be stoned and burned. If we do thus, we may expect to have trouble cease, and light to arise, as it was in the camp of Israel after slaying the troubler.

*Inquiry.* Here it may be inquired, What is implied in slaying sin at conversion? And it implies these several things:

1. There must be a conviction of the evil of it as against God. All is carried on by conviction. Those legal troubles, which are before conversion, arise from some conviction of the being of sin, and the guilt and danger of it. And the slaying of sin is by conviction of its evil and hateful nature. To slay the troubler, we must find him out, as the children of Israel did before they slew Achan. They rose early in the morning, and searched, and brought all Israel by their tribes; and then searched the tribe, which was taken by families, and the family by particular persons, and so found him.

2. It is to have the heart turned from, and turned against, it in hatred. The troubler is never slain, but by a thorough and saving change of heart and renovation of nature, so that that which before loved sin and chose it, may now hate and abhor it, and may disrelish it, and all its ways, and especially hate their former ways of sin.

3. Forsaking and renouncing it. Let men pretend what they may, their hearts are not turned from sin, if they do not forsake it. He is not converted, who is not really come to a disposition utterly to forsake all ways of sin. If ever sinners have true hope and comfort, they must take a final leave of sin, as the children of Israel did of the Egyptians at the Red sea. Persons may have a great deal of trouble from sin, and many conflicts and struggles with it, and seem to forsake it for a time, and yet not forsake it finally; as the children of Israel had with the Egyptians. They had a long struggle with them before they were freed from them. How many judgments did God bring upon the Egyptians, before they would let them go? And sometimes Pharaoh seemed as if he would let them go; but yet when it came to the proof he refused. And when they departed from Rameses doubtless they thought then they had got rid of them. They did not expect to see them any more. But when they arrived at the Red sea, and looked behind them, they saw them pursuing them. They found it a difficult thing wholly to get rid of them. But when they were drowned in the Red sea, then they took an everlasting leave of them. The king and all the chiefs of them were dead; and therefore God said to them, [Exod. xiv. 13](#). "The Egyptians, whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." So sinners must not only part with sin for a little time, but they must forsake it for ever, and be willing never to see or have any thing to do with their old sinful ways and enjoyments. They must forsake that which is their iniquity, the sin which most easily besets them, and to which by their constitution or custom they have been most addicted, which has been, as it were, the dearest of all, and most respected, as a king among the army of sins; though that must be slain too, as Pharaoh, the king of the Egyptians, was in the Red sea. And we must not do as Saul did, when God sent him to kill the Amalekites; but he saved the king of the Amalekites alive, which cost him his kingdom.

4. It implies embracing Christ, and trusting in him as the Saviour from sin. We must look to him not only as a Saviour from the punishment of sin, but we must receive and

embrace him as a Saviour from sin itself. We cannot deliver ourselves from sin. We cannot slay this enemy of ourselves. He is too strong an enemy for us. We can no more slay sin ourselves, than the, children of Israel, who were themselves a poor feeble company, a mixed multitude, unprepared to resist such a force, could themselves slay Pharaoh, and all his mighty army with chariots and horsemen. It was Christ in the pillar of cloud and fire, who fought for them. They had nothing to do but trust in him. *Exod. xiv. 4.* "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." They could never have drowned the Egyptians in the sea. It was Christ who did it; for the pillar of cloud stood between them and the Israelites, and when they were up out of the sea, then Christ brought on them the waters of the sea. Our enemies must be drowned in the all-sufficient fountain, and, as it were, sea of Christ's blood, as the Egyptians were in the Red sea, and then we may sing, as the children of Israel did in the day when they came up out of the land of Egypt. When sin is thus slain, then God is wont to open a door of hope, a door through which there flashes a sweet light out of heaven upon the soul. Then comfort arises, and then is there a new song in the mouth, even praise unto God.

II. God is wont to bestow hope and comfort from time to time in the same manner on Christians.

In the consideration of this matter I would show,

1. That Christians are frequently in darkness, and their hope is often greatly obscured.
2. That it is sin which is the occasion of this darkness.
3. Their darkness is not perpetual, but God is wont to cause hope and comfort to arise again.
4. Their trouble is commonly much increased a little before the renewal of light and hope.
5. That hope and comfort are renewed to them on the slaying of the troubler.

1. It is often the case that Christians are under darkness, and their hope is greatly clouded. God is wont to give his saints hope and comfort at their first conversion, which sometimes remains without any great interruption for a considerable time. And some Christians live abundantly more in the light than others. Some for many years together have but little darkness. God is pleased to distinguish them from their neighbours. He mercifully keeps them from those occasions of darkness, into which he suffers others to fall, and gives them of the light of his countenance. God exercises his sovereignty in this matter, as he does in giving converting grace: as he bestows that on whom he pleases, so he bestows on some of those who are converted more light, on others less, according as it pleases him. But many Christians meet with a great deal of darkness, and see times in which their hopes are much clouded. Sometimes the sweet and comfortable influences of God's Spirit are withdrawn. They were wont to have spiritual discoveries made of God and Christ to their souls, but now they have none. Their minds seem to be darkened, and they cannot see spiritual things,

as they have done in times past. Formerly, when they read the Scriptures, they used often to have light come in, and they seemed to have an understanding and relish for what they read, and were filled with comfort. But now when they read, it is all a dead letter, and they have no taste for it, and are obliged to force themselves to read; they seem to have no pleasure in it, but it is a mere task and burden. Formerly they used to have passages of Scripture come to their minds, when they were not reading, which brought much light and sweetness with them. But now they have none. Formerly they used to feel the sweet exercises of grace. They could trust in God, and could find a spirit of resignation to his will, and had love drawn forth, and sweet longings after God and Christ, and a sweet complacency in God; but now they are dull and dead. Formerly they used to meet with God in the ordinances of his house: it was sweet to sit and hear the word preached, and it seemed to bring light and life with it; they used to feel life and sweetness in public prayers, and their hearts were elevated in singing God's praises. But now it is otherwise. Formerly they used to delight in the duty of prayer: the time which they spent in their closet between God and their own souls was sweet to them. But now when they go thither, they do not meet God; and they take no delight in drawing near to God in their closets. When they do pray, it seems to be a mere lifeless, heartless performance. They utter such and such words, but they seem to be nothing but words; their hearts are not engaged. Their minds are continually wandering and going to and fro, after one vanity and another. With this decay of the exercise of grace their hope greatly decays; and the evidences of their piety are exceedingly clouded. When they look into their hearts, it seems to them that they can see nothing there, from which they should hope; and when they consider after what manner they live, it seems to them to argue, that they have no grace. They have but little of any thing which is new, to furnish comfortable evidence to them of their good estate; and as to their old evidences, they are greatly darkened. Their former experience, in which they took great comfort, looks dim, and a great way off, and out of sight to them. They have almost forgotten it, and have no pleasure in thinking or speaking of it. And sometimes true Christians are brought into terrible distress. They are not only deprived of their former comforts, and have their former hopes obscured, but they have inward distressing darkness. God does not only hide his face, but they have a sense of his anger. He seems to frown upon them. So it appears to have been with David. [Ps. xlii. 7.](#) "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." So with Heman. [Ps. lxxxviii. 6, 7.](#) "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves."

2. It is sin which is the occasion of this trouble and darkness. Whenever the godly meet with such darkness, there is some Achan in their souls which is the occasion of all this; and this is sin. This is the occasion of the darkness of the godly, as well as the troubles which natural men have under awakenings. It is not for want of love in God towards his saints, or

readiness to grant comfort to them; neither is God's hand shortened, that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that he cannot hear. It is their sin which hides God's face from them. [Isa. lix. 1, 2](#). Sin is the occasion of this darkness of the saints, in these three ways.

1. Sometimes it is owing to the weakness and small degree of grace infused in conversion, and the strength of remaining corruption. The work of God is the same in all who are converted, so far that their sin is mortified, and that which reigned before does not reign now. The heart is changed from darkness to light, and from death to life, and turned from sin to God. And yet the work is very different with respect to the degree of mortification of sin, and the degree of grace which is infused. Some have more spiritual light given in their first conversion than others; have greater discoveries, and are brought at once to a much greater acquaintance with God, and have their hearts more humbled, and more weaned from sin and the world, and more filled with the love of God and Christ, and are brought nearer to heaven than others. Some at first conversion have a much more eminent work of grace in their hearts than others. Some have emphatically but little grace infused, and consequently their corruptions are left in much greater strength: when it is so, it is no wonder that such have a weaker hope, and less light and comfort, than others. The natural tendency of indwelling sin in the saints, is to cloud and darken the mind; and therefore, the more of it remains, the more will it have this effect. Persons can know their own good estate in no other way than by seeking, or perceiving grace in their hearts. But certainly the less of it there is, with the more difficulty will it be seen or felt. As indwelling sin prevails, so does it the more obscure and cloud grace, as a great smoke clouds and hides a spark. And therefore the more there is of this indwelling sin, the more will grace be hid. The greater the strength in which corruption is left, the more rare will be the good frames which the godly have, and the more frequent and of longer continuance will be their times of darkness. It may be, the darkness with which the saints meet, is from some particular corruption, which has always hitherto been in too great prevalence and strength, and has never yet been mortified to such a degree, but that it continues a great troubler in the soul. Grace being weak, the sin of the constitution takes advantage, whether that be a proud and haughty temper, or a covetous spirit, or an addictedness to some sensuality, or a peevish, fretful, discontented spirit, or ill temper, or a quarrelsome spirit, or disposition to high resentment. Or whether it be any other corrupt disposition, which is the sin to which they are chiefly exposed by natural temper, or by their education and former custom. If the grace which is infused at conversion, be comparatively weak, this constitutional sin will take the advantage, and will dreadfully cloud the mind, and hinder spiritual comfort, and bring trouble and darkness. There is a great variety in the work of grace upon men's hearts, as to the particular discoveries which are then given, and the particular graces which are in chief exercise; whereby it comes to pass, that some in their conversion are more assisted against one corruption and others against another. Some in their conversion, as well as in the manner of their experience from time to time, have more

of the exercise of one grace, and others more sensible exercises of another. And whatever that grace be of which they have the most lively exercises, they are thereby most assisted against that particular corruption which is its opposite. Hence some particular corruptions may be left in much greater prevalence than others, and so be a greater occasion of darkness. Thus some, in the particular experiences which they have, may not be so especially assisted against pride as others, whereby their pride may take occasion to work. And when they have had spiritual discoveries and comfort, they may be lifted up with them. And this may be an occasion of displeasing and grieving his Holy Spirit, and so of their having a great deal of darkness. They may not have seen so much of their own emptiness as some others, and so their corruption may work much more by self-confidence than others; and no wonder that self-confident persons meet with darkness. No wonder that when men trust in themselves for light and grace, that their confidence fails, and they go without that for which they trusted in themselves.

2. Sometimes the saints are in great darkness on occasion of some gross transgression into which they have fallen. So it was with David, when he fell into gross sin in the matter of Uriah. He exceedingly quenched the influences of the Spirit of God by it, and God withdrew those influences from him, and the comforts which they had imparted; as appears by his earnestly praying for their restoration. [Psal. li. 12.](#) "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." When Christians fall into gross transgression, it is commonly the fact that an exceedingly deep darkness follows.

3. When they do not fall into any particular gross and scandalous transgression, yet they sometimes exceedingly darken their minds by corrupt frames and evil habits, into which they fall. There is much remaining corruption in the hearts of Christians, and oftentimes they get into very ill frames. Some particular corruptions grow very prevalent. Sometimes they grow proud and conceited of themselves, either on account of their own godliness, and the good opinion others have of them, or on some other account. Sometimes they fall into a worldly frame, and spiritual things grow more tasteless to them, and their hearts are desperately bent on the acquisition of worldly good. Sometimes their minds grow light and vain, and their affections are wholly fixed on the vanities of youth, on dress, and gaiety, and fashion. Some, because their minds are not occupied as once they were, with spiritual enjoyments and delights, sweetly meditating on heavenly things, breathing and longing after them, and earnestly seeking them, become the slaves of their sensual appetites. Others grow contentious and quarrelsome, are often angry with those around them, and cherish habitual rancour against them in their hearts. They become wilful and obstinate, and stir up strife, and oppose others with vehemence; determining at all hazards to carry their own measures, and delighting to have those who oppose them defeated and humbled. It hurts them to have others prosper. Their minds and hearts are full of turmoil, and heat, and vehemence against one and another. Others fall into a discontented, fretful, and impatient frame at the disposals

of Providence. And oftentimes many of these things go together. And as these persons sink into such unhappy frames in their hearts, so they pursue very sinful courses of conduct. They behave themselves unsuitably, so as to dishonour God, and greatly to wound religion. They do not appear to others to savour of a good spirit. They fall into the practice of allowing themselves too great liberties in indulging their sensual appetites, in the gratification of covetousness and pride, in strife, backbiting, and a violent pursuit after the world. They slide into those corrupt frames and evil ways commonly by means of their first giving way to a slothful spirit. They are not so diligent and earnest in religion as they once were; but indulge their slothful disposition, and discontinue their watch, and so lie open to temptation. Thus ill frames imperceptibly creep upon them, and they insensibly more and more fall into sinful practices. So it was with David. Their sin, into which they fall in consequence of this degenerate and sinful state of the affections and the life, is the occasion of a great deal of darkness. God withdraws his Spirit from them, their light goes out, and the evidences of their piety grow dim and obscure. They seem to be in a great measure as they were before they were converted, and they have no sensible communion with God. Thus sin is the occasion of trouble and darkness to the Christian.

4. When it is thus with Christians, their trouble is commonly greatly increased a little before the renewal of hope and comfort. When sin prevails, as has been said, in the hearts of Christians, they are not wont to be easy and quiet like secure sinners. There is commonly more or less of an inward struggling and uneasiness. Grace in the heart, though it be dreadfully oppressed, and, as it were, overwhelmed, yet will be resisting its enemy and struggling for liberty. So that it is not with Christians in their ill frames, and under the prevalence of corruption, altogether as it is with carnal, wicked men, who are secure. And there is this good reason for it, that the former have a principle of spiritual life in their souls, which the latter have not. Yet Christians in their ill frames may fall into a great deal of security and senselessness; for sin is of a stupifying nature, and wherever it prevails, will have more or less of that effect. When they fall into a sinful, worldly, proud, or contentious frame, they are wont to have a great degree of senselessness and stupidity with it. And especially when they fall into gross sins, has it a tendency greatly to stupify the soul. It obviously had this effect on David. He seems to have been strangely stupified, when Nathan came to him with the parable of the rich man, who injuriously took the poor man's ewe lamb from him. He was enraged with the man in the parable, but did not seem to reflect on himself, or think how parallel his case was with his. And while they are thus senseless, their trouble is not so great; and if they feel the weight of sin it is not so burdensome to them. But God is wont, before he renews comfort and hope to them, to bring them into greater trouble. As a sinner before his first comfort in his conversion is brought into trouble, so it is wont to be with the saints after their backslidings and decays, before renewed hope and comfort is granted. There is a work of awakening wrought upon them. While they remain in their corrupt



frames, they are, as it were, asleep. They are like the ten foolish virgins who slumbered and slept; and as persons who are asleep, they are unconscious, not sensible where they are, nor what are their circumstances. Therefore when God is coming and returning to them by his Spirit, commonly his first work upon them is a work of awakening, to wake them out of sleep, and rouse them to some sensibility, to make them sensible of the great folly of their ways, and how they have displeased and offended God, and what mischief they have done. Thus God leads them into the wilderness, and brings them into the valley of Achor or trouble. Then they are in greater trouble than they were before, and have more sensible darkness, and more distress abundantly. But yet it is really much better with them now, than before they began to come to themselves. Their circumstances are much more eligible and more hopeful, though sometimes they are in distress almost insupportable. And a little before God renews light and comfort, they have a very great sense of God's anger, and his wrath lies heavy upon them. So it seems to have been with David a little before the restoration of spiritual comfort to him, which made him speak of the bones which God had broken, when he was praying for the renewal of comfort. [Psal. li. 8.](#) "Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." And probably he has respect to the same thing in [Psal. xxxviii.](#) which he calls his psalm to bring to remembrance. [Ver. 2, 3, 4.](#) "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" And often when God is about to bring them to themselves, and to restore comfort to them, he first brings them into some very great and sore temporal calamity and trouble, and awakens them by that, and in this first brings them into the wilderness before he speaks comfortably to them. [Job xxxiii. 16.,](#) &c. "Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain; so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones, that were not seen, stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth. He shall pray unto God, and he shall be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not, he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his

soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.<sup>571</sup> ” Thus those who are very weak in grace sometimes meet with great and sore trouble, both of body and mind, which is an occasion of a new work, as it were, of grace upon their hearts; so that they are more eminent saints afterwards, and have much more comfort.

3. When the saints are in darkness, their darkness is not perpetual, but God will restore hope and comfort to them again. When one of Christ’s sheep wanders away, and gets into the wilderness, Christ the good Shepherd will not leave him in the wilderness, but will seek him, and will lay him on his shoulders, and bring him home again. We cannot tell how long God may leave his saints in the dark, but yet surely their darkness shall not last for ever; for light is sown to the righteous, and gladness to the upright in heart. [Psal. xcvi. 11](#). God, in the covenant of grace in which they have an interest, has promised them joy and comfort; he has promised them everlasting joy. [Isa. lxi. 7](#). Satan may be suffered for a time to bring them into darkness, but they shall be brought out again. God may be provoked to hide his face from them for a time; and if it seems long, yet it is indeed but a little time. [Isa. liv. 7, 8](#). “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.” [Psal. xxx. 5](#). “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

5. Hope and comfort are renewed to them on the slaying of the troubler. All sin is truly mortified in conversion, or has its death-wounds then. And all the exercises of it afterwards are, in some respects, as the efforts and strugglings of a dying enemy. But yet all life is not actually extinct, and therefore it needs to be further mortified, to receive more deadly wounds. Sin is slain in the godly after trouble and darkness, and before the renewing of comfort, in these three ways.

1. It is slain as to former degrees of it. All remains of corruption are not extirpated. Sin does not cease to be in the heart; but it ceases to be any more in such strength as it has been; it ceases to have that prevalence.

2. It is slain as to former ways of exercise. The former ways of sin are forsaken. They are further afterwards from such ways of sin than ever before. The heart is fortified against them. Thus if a godly man has been in a way of contention and strife, when he comes to himself again, he slays his contention; he kills sin as to that way of exercising it. Or if it be some way of sensuality, when he comes to himself, he will slay his sensuality, and cast it out from him.

3. It is totally and perfectly slain in his will and inclination.

There is that renewed opposition made against it, which implies a mortal inclination and design against it. What the saint seeks when he comes to himself after a time of great

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571 [Job xxxiii. 16-30](#).

declension, is to be the death of sin, which has been so prevalent in him, and perfectly to extirpate it. He acts in what he does as a mortal enemy; and if he does not perfectly destroy it at one blow, it is not for want of inclination, but for want of strength. The godly man does not deal mercifully and tenderly with sin, but as far as in him lies, he deals with it as the children of Israel dealt with Achan, as it were, stones it with stones, and burns it with fire with all which belongs to it. They do not at all spare it, as wicked men do; they aim at the very life, and nothing short of it. The saints' slaying the troubler after great backslidings and ill frames, implies the following things.

1. There is a conviction of the evil of their sin. They are brought to consideration. They think on their ways before they turn their feet. [Psal. cxix. 59](#). They consider how they have behaved themselves, how unworthily, how unfaithful they have been to their profession, how ungratefully, and disagreeably to the mercies they have received. They consider how they have provoked God, and have deserved his wrath. They find the troubler led them to see a great deal more of the sinfulness and corruption of their hearts commonly than before. In this respect the work of God with saints after great declinings is agreeable to his work in the heart of a natural man in order to his conversion.

2. There is a gracious humiliation of soul before God for it. The gracious soul, when convinced of sin after great declensions, and recovered out of them, is deeply humbled; for it is brought to the dust before God. There is an evangelical repentance; the heart is broken for sin. That sacrifice is offered to God, which David offered rather than burnt-offerings after his great fall. [Psal. li. 16, 17](#). "For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." They are brought as Job was, after he had sinned, in complaining of God's dealings with him, to abhor themselves. [Job xlii. 6](#). And they are in a meeker frame, as the Christian Corinthians were, after they had greatly gone out of the way, and had been reprov'd by the apostle Paul. [2 Cor. vii. 11](#). "For behold the self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge." They were filled with sorrow, and with a kind of indignation, zeal, and spirit of revenge against themselves for their folly, and so ungratefully treating God. When Christians are convinced of their sin after remarkable miscarriages and ill frames, they are commonly convinced of many of the same things of which they were convinced under their first humiliation, but to a greater degree than ever before. They are brought to a new conviction, and a greater conviction than ever before, of their own emptiness, and to be sensible what poor, feeble, helpless creatures, and what sinful, vile, utterly unworthy creatures, they are; how undeserving they are of any mercy, and now much they deserve God's wrath. And this conviction works by a gracious humbling of the soul. The grace of humility is greatly increased by it, and very commonly they are more poor in spirit and



lowly of heart during all their future life. They see more what cause there is for them to lay their hands on their mouths, and to walk humbly with God, and lie low before him.

3. There is a renewed application to Christ as a Saviour from sin.

There is a renewed act of reliance on him for justification, of faith in his blood to cleanse them, and of trust in his righteousness to cover their nakedness and filthiness. And Christ as a Saviour becomes more precious to them. As they have a greater sense of their own emptiness and vileness, so they have a more entire dependence on Christ's fulness.

4. The heart is farther separated from those ways of sin, and more confirmed against them, than ever. After it they commonly have a greater dread of it, and greater abhorrence, look upon it more as an enemy, and remember what they have suffered from it; and their hearts are more confirmed against it than ever. They have stronger resolutions to all which savours of the like, and all which might lead to it. Therefore this is mentioned among the effects of the repentance of the Corinthians after their going astray. "What carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing; of yourselves, yea what fear, yea what earnest desire."<sup>572</sup> "There was a more than ordinary fear and dread of the like sin for the future, and more carefulness to shun it, and a more earnest desire of the contrary. The work of God in the heart of a saint after declension oftentimes, in many respects, resembles the work of God in a sinner at his conversion; though it is not in all respects like it, because of the great difference in the subject. When the troubler comes to be thus slain after times of trouble and darkness in the godly, then God is wont to open a door of hope. The darkness which has covered them, which was greatest a little before, is now scattered, and light arises. It may be before there had been a long night of clouds and darkness. But now the clouds begin to scatter, and the sweet refreshing beams begin to break forth, and come down into the heart. The soul, which has been wounded, is now healed. God pours in the oil of comfort. The renewed sense, which is given, of Christ's fulness and sufficiency, gives new life and hope and joy. The troubler being slain, God now grants renewed discoveries of his glory, and renewed manifestations of his grace; and the soul, which was before in darkness, is now entertained with sweet views. And now that hope, which was so weakened, and was almost ready to fail, is revived, and greatly confirmed. Now the soul is enabled to take comfort in the promises. Now the saint sees evidences of his own good estate by the renewed manifestations which God makes of himself, and renewed exercises of grace. Before the soul was greatly exercised with doubts and fears and dark clouds; and much time was spent in reviewing past experiences, and looking over and examining those things which were formerly regarded as evidences of piety; and all in vain. They pored on past experiences, but to no satisfaction. And the reason was, the troubler was not slain, but still remained alive. But now God gives them new light, and new experiences, which in a few moments do more towards scattering

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572 [2 Corinthians 7:11](#).

their clouds, and removing their fears, than all their poring on past experiences could do for months, and probably for years. Before their hearts seemed in a great measure dead as to spiritual exercises. But now there is, as it were, new life. Now when they read the Scripture, and when they hear the word preached, it is with a savour and relish of it. Now they can find God in his word and ordinances. Now Christ comes to them, and manifests himself to them, and they are admitted again to communion with God. When Christians have comfort and hope thus renewed, their comforts are commonly purer than ever. Their joys are more humble joys, freer from any mixture and taint of self-righteousness, than before.

Having thus shown that God is wont to cause hope and comfort to arise to the soul after trouble and humbling for sin, and upon slaying the troubler, both at first conversion and afterwards, after sad declinings, I would now give the reasons of the doctrine.

1. I would show why God is wont to give comfort after trouble and humbling for sin; or why he is wont to bring the soul into the wilderness before he speaks comfortably to it, and leads it into the valley of Achor, before he opens a door of hope.

1. It is that the soul may be prepared for a confiding application of itself to Christ for comfort. It is the will of God that men should have true hope and comfort conferred upon them in no other way, than by Jesus Christ. It is only by him that sinners have comfort at their conversion; and it is by him only that the saints have renewed hope and comfort after their declensions. And therefore the way to obtain this comfort is to look to him, to fly for refuge to him. And in order to this, persons have need to be brought to a sense of their necessity of him. And that they may be so, it is needful that they should be sensible of their calamity and misery, that they should be in trouble, and be brought to see their utter helplessness in themselves. And not only natural men, but Christians also, who are fallen into sin, and are in a dead and senseless frame, need something to make them more sensible of their necessity of Christ. Indeed the best are not so sensible of their need of Christ but that they need to be made more sensible; but especially those who are in ill and dead frames, and a declining state, need trouble and humbling to make them sensible of their need of Christ, and to prepare their minds for a renewed confiding application to Christ as their only remedy. The godly in such a case are sick with a sore disease, and Christ is the only Physician who can heal them; and they need to be sensible of their disease, that they may see their need of a physician. They, as well as natural men, need to be in a storm and tempest to make them sensible of their need to fly to him who is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. A Christian, who wanders away from God, is like Noah's dove, which flew from the ark. She flew about till weary and spent, seeking rest somewhere else, but found no rest for the sole of her foot, and then she returned to the ark. So it is needful that the soul of a godly man, who wanders from Christ, should become weary, and find no rest for the sole of his foot, that so he may see his need of returning to Christ. Therefore it is said concerning the children of Israel in [Hosea ii. 6](#). "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way

with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths.” And in our context, [Hosea ii. 7](#). “She shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them. Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now.” When gracious souls wander from Christ, their husband, following after other lovers, God is wont to bring them into trouble and distress, and make them see, that their other lovers cannot help them, that so they may see, that it is best for them to return to their first husband.

2. Another end of God in it is, that comfort and hope may be the more prized when obtained. We see in temporal things, that the worth and value of any enjoyment is learned by the want of it. He who is sick, knows the worth of health. He who is in pain, knows how to prize ease. He who is in a storm at sea, knows how to prize safety on shore. And people who are subject to the grievances of war, know how to value peace. He who endures the hardships of captivity and slavery, is thereby taught how to value liberty. And so it is in spiritual things. He who is brought to see his misery in being without hope, is prepared to prize hope when obtained. He who is brought into distress through fear of hell and God’s wrath, is the more prepared to prize the comfort which arises from the manifestation of the favour of God, and a sense of safety from hell. He who is brought to see his utter emptiness and extreme poverty and necessity, and his perishing condition on that account, is thoroughly prepared to prize and rejoice in the manifestation of a fulness in Christ. And those godly persons who are fallen into corrupt and senseless frames, greatly stand in need of something to make them more sensible of their want of spiritual comfort and hope. Their living as they do shows that they have too little sense of the worth and value of that comfort, and those inestimable spiritual and saving blessings, which God has bestowed upon them; otherwise they never would deal so ungratefully with God, who has bestowed them. If they did not greatly err in slighting spiritual comfort, as the children of Israel did manna, their hearts would never, to such a degree, have gone out after vanity, and earthly enjoyments, and carnal delights. They need to be brought into trouble and darkness to make them sensible of the worth of hope and comfort, and to teach them to prize it. They need to be brought into the wilderness, and left for a time to wander and suffer hunger and thirst in a barren desert, to teach them how to prize their vineyards. A sense of the pardon of sin, and the favour of God, and a hope of eternal life, do not afford comfort and joy to the soul any farther than they are valued and prized. So that the trouble and darkness which go before comfort, serve to render the joy and comfort the greater when obtained, and so are in mercy to those for whom God intends comfort.

3. It is so ordered that divine power and grace may be acknowledged in giving hope and comfort. There is naturally in men an exceeding insensibility of their dependence on God, and a great disposition to ascribe those things which they enjoy to themselves, or to second causes. This disposition reigns in natural men. They are wholly under the power of it.

Therefore they need to be taught their own helplessness, and utter insufficiency, and utter unworthiness. Otherwise, if hope and comfort should be bestowed upon them, they would surely ascribe all to themselves, or the creature, and so would be lifted up by it, and would not give God the glory. Therefore it is God's manner first to humble sinners before he comforts them. And all this self-confident disposition is not extirpated out of the hearts of the godly, and especially when they get into ill frames does it prevail. And it is very requisite, that before any remarkable comfort is bestowed upon them, they should be the subjects of renewed humbling. They need renewedly to see what helpless creatures they are, that so, when light is bestowed, they may be sensible how it is owing to God, and not to themselves, or any other; and that they may, by their troubles and humblings, be prepared the more to admire God's power and mercy, and free and rich grace to them. While men are continued in fulness in a fruitful land, they will not learn their own helplessness; and therefore God will cast them out of this fulness into a wilderness. This is plainly intimated to be the reason of God's so dealing with the children of Israel, as is said in the text. The church of Israel, before God thus led her into the wilderness, did not ascribe her comforts to God, as in the eighth verse.<sup>573</sup> "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold." But they ascribed them to her idols. [Verse fifth](#). "For she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink." And [verse twelfth](#). "These are my rewards, that my lovers have given me." For this reason it is that God takes away those things, as in [verse ninth](#). "Therefore will I return and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness." And [verses 11, 12](#). "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. And I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them." God took them away, and turned her vineyards into a forest, and made her sensible that they were from him; and then he restored them again. For these reasons God is wont to bring souls into trouble, and to humble them for sin before he comforts them. I proceed,

2. To give the reasons why hope and comfort are not obtained till sin, which is the troubler, is slain.

1. While sin is harboured and preserved alive, it tends to provoke God to frown and express his anger. Sin is God's mortal enemy. It is that which his soul infinitely hates, and to which he is an irreconcilable enemy. And therefore if we harbour this, and suffer it to live in our hearts, and to govern our practice, we can expect no other than that it will provoke God's frowns. Spiritual comfort consists in the manifestation of God's favour, and in friendly

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573 [Hosea ii. 8](#).

communion with God. But how can we expect this at the same time that we harbour his mortal enemy? We see what God said to Joshua, while Achan was alive. [Josh. vii. 12.](#) “Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed thing from among you.”

2. The natural tendency of sin is to darken the mind, and trouble the conscience. There is nothing which wounds a well-informed conscience but sin. Sin is the enemy of grace, and therefore the natural tendency of it is to oppose and keep down the exercises of grace, and so to extinguish spiritual comfort; for spiritual comfort comes in no other way than by the exercise of grace. That which prevents the exercises of grace darkens the evidences of a man’s good estate. For there are no evidences of this but the exercises of grace. Sin does as much tend to keep out spiritual comfort, as clouds tend to hide the light of the sun. And therefore it is necessary that this should be removed in order to our receiving light and comfort. It is impossible in its own nature that any should have spiritual light and comfort before sin is mortified. If sinners had comfort while sin is in reigning power, it could not be spiritual comfort; for spiritual comfort is the same with gracious comfort. But now can there be gracious comfort where grace has no place? But if there be grace, sin will not be in reigning power; for the nature of grace is to mortify sin. And as there can be no spiritual comfort without a degree of mortification of sin in those in whom sin is mortified, spiritual comfort cannot be any more than in proportion as sin is mortified.

3. A hope of eternal life, if given before the slaying of sin, would be misimproved and abused. If it were possible that a sinner could obtain a title to eternal life before sin was mortified, and so could have his own safety and God’s favour manifested to him, he would only improve it to encourage and imbolden himself in sin. Hope, if they had it then, would have a pernicious influence and tendency. Till sin is slain, they stand in need of fear to restrain sin. If fear were once gone before sin is slain, they would soon run into all manner of wickedness, and without restraint. And so Christians themselves, while they are in corrupt frames, stand in need of fear to restrain sin; for at such times love is in a great degree dormant. It is of necessity that persons should have some principle or other to restrain them from sin. But there is no principle which can be effectual to restrain men from sin any farther than it is in exercise. If love is not in exercise it will not restrain men. So that at such times the saints need fear. And therefore God has wisely ordered it, that at such times their evidences should be darkened and their hopes clouded, that they may have fear, when love is not awake, to restrain them. The godly themselves, if their hope were all alive at those times when they are in carnal and thoughtless frames, and grace is asleep, would be in great danger to abuse their hope, and take encouragement from it to indulge their lusts, or at least, to be the less careful to restrain and resist them. For we see that in such frames, though their hopes are clouded, and they have a considerable degree of fear, yet they are careless and negligent. But how much more so would they be, if they had no fear to restrain them!





## APPLICATION.

### I. Use of instruction.

1. Hence we may observe the wonderful wisdom of God in his dealings with the souls of men. When we consider what has been said, with the reasons of it, we may see just cause to admire the divine wisdom in his ordinary dealings with respect to those for whom he intends comfort. His wisdom is admirable in his dealings with natural men in fitting and preparing them for comfort, in bringing them into such troubles and distress, and hedging up their way with thorns, as it is expressed in the context, and leaving them in their distress to follow after their lovers, their idols, without being able to overtake them; in taking away their vineyards, and all those things in which they trusted, and making them a forest; and so showing them what poor, destitute, helpless creatures they are, before he gives them comfort. And so we may well admire the divine wisdom in his method of dealing with his saints, who decline and fall into sin, or get into corrupt frames and ill ways. God knows how to order things concerning them; and there is a marvellous wisdom observable in his manner of dealing with them in such cases. We may well admire how wisely God orders things in what has been said, for his own glory, to secure the glory due to his power and free grace, and to bring men to a sense of their dependence on him, and to ascribe all to him. And how he orders things for the glory of his Son, that he may have all the glory of the salvation of men, who is worthy of it, in that he laid down his life for their salvation. And also how wisely God orders things for the good of his own elect people, how he brings good out of evil, and light out of darkness. How wisely he consults their good and comfort in those things, which appear to them to be most against them. How he wisely prepares them for good, and makes way for their receiving comfort, and for its being the more sweet, the more prized and delighted in, when it is obtained. And oftentimes in bringing about this in those things, which they think at the time to be signs of God's hatred. And how wisely God orders things for preventing men's abusing a sense of their own safety, to giving the reins to their lusts. It is ordered so, that at those times when sin prevails, and there would be danger of this, the evidences of their safety are hid from their eyes, and the fear of hell comes on to keep them in awe; and that hope and comfort should be given only at such times and in such manner that they should have influence to draw men off from sin, and to prompt them to diligence in duty and the service of God; and that when it would have most of this tendency, then they should have most of it. When we consider these things, we may well cry out with the apostle,<sup>574</sup> "O the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

2. Hence we may learn, that souls, who are in darkness, and, as it were, in a wilderness, have no cause to be discouraged. For by the doctrine we learn that this is the way often, in

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574 [Romans xi. 33.](#)

order to hope and comfort. Persons are very often ready to be discouraged by this. God seems to frown. They have a sense of his anger. They cry to him, and he does not seem to hear their prayers. They have been striving for relief, but it seems to be to no purpose. They are in such circumstances, that every thing looks dark; every thing seems to be against them. They are lost in a wilderness; they cannot find the way out. They have gone round and round, and returned again to the same place. They know not which way to turn themselves, or what to do. Their hearts are ready to sink. But you may gather encouragement from this doctrine; for by it you may learn that you have no cause to despair. For it is frequently God's manner to bring persons into such circumstances, in order to prepare them for hope and comfort. The children of Israel were ready to be discouraged at the Red sea, when they saw Pharaoh and his hosts pursuing them. But it was only to prepare them for the greater joy after their deliverance. Joshua and the hosts of Israel were ready to be discouraged when they were smitten at Ai, as you may see in [Joshua vii. 5.](#), &c. So that you, who are in the wilderness, may take encouragement from hence, still earnestly to seek God, and hope for light and comfort in his time.

II. Use of self-examination. By this persons may try their hopes and comforts, whether they are of the right kind. If they are such as have arisen after the manner, as is spoken of in the doctrine; if it is a hope which you found in the valley of Achor, in the sense which has been explained; it is a sign that it is a hope which God has given you, and so a hope which you are not to cast away; but which you are to retain, and rejoice in, and bless God for it. Therefore particularly inquire concerning your hopes and comforts, whether they have arisen in your souls when humbled for sin, and in the slaying of sin.

1. Inquire whether your hopes and comforts have been given you upon your soul's being humbled for sin. You may try this by three things.

1. Whether you have seen what a miserable, helpless creature you were. When your hopes and comforts have arisen in your heart, has it been upon your soul's receiving such a sight of yourself; or has your hope been accompanied with such a sense of soul? When hope was given at first, was it implanted in a heart thus prepared? And when you have had remarkable comfort and joy from time to time, has your joy been accompanied with such a sense and frame of mind? At the same time that you have had a strong hope of God's favour, and that Christ was yours, have you been nothing in your own eyes; have you at such times appeared to yourself to be a poor, little, helpless, unworthy creature, deserving nothing at the hands of God? And do not only inquire whether in your own apprehension you had some such sight of yourself at first, before your first comfort. If you ever had a right understanding of yourself, of your own heart, and your own state, you will never wholly lose it. It will revive from time to time. If you had it when you received your first comfort, the same sense will come again; when your comforts are revived, this will revive with them. If the first joy was granted to a heart thus prepared, there will from time to time be a sense of your

own emptiness and worthlessness, arising with your joys and comforts. It will be with a deep sense of what a poor, miserable, and exceedingly sinful creature you are. True comfort is wont to come in such a manner. There is usually a self-emptying, a soul-abasing, sense of heart accompanying it. So that at the same time that God lifts up the soul with comfort, and joy, and inward sweetness, he casts it down with abasement. Evangelical and gracious humiliation and spiritual comfort are companions, which go one with the other, and keep company together. When one comes, the other is wont to come with it. It is not wont to be so with false comforts and joys. But pride and self-fulness are wont to be the companions of false comfort. Indeed, there may be a counterfeit abasement going with it. But if you examine it, you will find, that that very seeming abasement or humiliation lifts the man up, and fills him full of himself. The hypocrite, in the times of his greatest joy, and most confident hopes, looks large in himself. His thoughts are very busily employed about his own excellencies, how holy he is, how eminent a saint he is, how much better he is than most of his neighbours, how there are few equal to him; and therefore how it must be that God loves him better than most others; how much God distinguishes him, how much he experiences, and how good he is, and what delight he takes in them on that account. But true spiritual comfort works in another way. Gracious joy and poverty of spirit go hand in hand, and rejoice, as it were, in each other's company. The godly may at some times have comforts and joys, which do not accompany such abasement. They may be lifted up with joy and conceit of, and confidence in, themselves at the same time. But those joys are not spiritual, they are hypocritical, joys. Such comforts are not from the Spirit of God. A godly man may have false joys. He is liable to this exercise of corruption, as well as others. And there may be a mixture of one with the other, or false joy and pride may take occasion from true ones, afterwards to appear. But a gracious joy is linked together with poverty of spirit, and never forsakes it. And hence,

2. You may try this by examining what your hopes and comforts are built upon; whether on Christ only, or on your own righteousness. If you would know of what kind your comforts are, follow them up to the fountain, and see what is their source and spring. If you would know of what kind your hope is, examine the bottom of it, and see upon what foundation it stands. If your hope is that which has been given in the valley of Achor, your own righteousness is not the foundation of it. Inquire therefore what it is, which gives you ease with respect to your past sins, what it is which quiets your conscience about them. Is it any sense you have of the free, and sovereign, and infinite grace and mercy of God in Christ? Is it what you have seen in Christ, or the gospel of his grace, which has lightened your burden with respect to your sins? Or is it that now you think with yourself that you have done such and such things, or have met with such things, have such workings of affection towards God, that you are become lovely in his sight, so that he, seeing what holy affections and experiences your heart has been filled with, and what discoveries you have had,

he is on that account reconciled to you, and you are become lovely in his eyes? What makes you hope that you are in favour with God? Is it because you conceive of God as looking down from heaven upon your heart, on your gracious experiences, and so being, as it were, taken with, and receiving you into his favour on account of that? Or is your hope of God's favour built on a sense which you have of Christ's worthiness, and the saving mercy of God in him, and his faithfulness to the promises, which he has made through him?

3. Inquire concerning the effect of your comforts, whether they cause an ardent disposition and desire to exalt God, and to lie low before him. True comforts and joys, which are from the Spirit of God, and are well founded, are wont to work after this manner. They excite an inward intense desire that God may be exalted, and to lie in the dust. Such a one as the psalmist seems to have had, when he says, [Psal. cxv. 1](#). "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." The repeating of the expression seems to show how ardent his heart was. When God is pleased to lift up the light of his countenance upon the soul, and to impart inward sweetness from a manifestation of his glory, there is wont to be an inward longing to be in the dust. At such times the Christian sees how it becomes him to be humble, and how worthy God and Christ are of all the glory, more than he does at other times. He perceives and laments that he cannot bow enough; that he is not abased as low before God as becomes such a sinner as himself. Hence arises an intense desire after self-abasement; and the soul breathes and pants after humiliation before God.

2. Inquire whether your hope and comfort are such as have arisen on the slaying of sin. If your hope is that which you obtained before this, you obtained it too soon, and had better be without it than with it. It is not sufficient evidence of your hope, that it was given after much trouble and great terrors, or great relentings of heart for sin, and bewailing that you had done so wickedly, or that it was after reformations, and abstaining from former ways of sin, and a total reformation of some particular evil practices. But if it be a true hope, it was given after the slaying of sin. And in order the better to determine this point, let the following inquiries be made.

1. Whether your hope has been accompanied with a heart and a life turned from sin? Or is there no remarkable difference in this respect now from what there was before? We all own conversion to be a great change; and we have all been sufficiently taught, that the change consists in this; in turning from sin to God. Therefore there must be a great change in this respect. Is there a great change in this respect in you? I do not inquire whether there be a great change in you in respect to hope and comfort; that whereas formerly you did not suppose yourself to be in Christ, and had no hope of it, now you have hope, and a confident hope, which oftentimes is an occasion of new and peculiar joy and elevation of spirit. There may be a great change in you in this respect, and yet you may remain in a Christless state. But is there a great change with respect to the turning of your heart from sin, and against sin? You may reply to this, "I see still abundance of corruption and wickedness in my heart;

and so far is it from being delivered from corruption, that I seem at times to discover more than ever. But whether you see more or less corruption in your heart, is your heart turned against that corruption which you see? Is there a great difference in you in this respect from what there used to be with respect to your being turned against your own sin, and finding within yourself a nature opposite to it, a nature to resist it, to carry it as an uneasy burden? And is your heart turned against yourself for it, in abhorrence of yourself, and in indignation against yourself? And is your will turned from sin, that though you find a great deal of corruption in your heart, yet you do not allow it, you keep a strict watch upon it, and will not let it walk at liberty to appear in your life and conversation? Is there no lust harboured, which is prevalent in you, and which is neglected, and suffered to range and to walk on every side? Is there no sin wittingly tolerated? Do you aim strictly to keep all God's commandments; and is that your actual care and watch, that you may avoid every evil, and every false way; and that you may in all things, so far as in you lies, please and honour God? And do you find that this is the tendency of your hope; that your hope has a sanctifying influence upon you, that it turns you against sin, and stirs you up to seek after purity from sin? With respect to most who are here present, who entertain hope, there has been much opportunity for experience in this matter, since you have had your hope, so that one would think by an impartial and strict examination you might be able to answer these inquiries.

2. Those of you, who have obtained your hope again after special and remarkable departings from God, should inquire in what manner hope has been restored. Indeed hypocrites are not so apt to have their hope abated by such things, as those who have a true hope. A hypocrite's hopes and false comforts will subsist, and it may be continue as lively as ever, under such great sins, and such a course of ill practices, as, if a godly man should fall into them, would bring him into exceeding darkness. Some hypocrites will live in very immoral ways, and yet keep up their confidence, seem not to have their hope much shaken, and boast of as much comfort and joy at such times as at any other. But this is not the manner of a true comfort. A true comfort, which flows from the exercise and the breathings of the Spirit of God in the heart, must, of necessity, at such times be exceedingly suppressed; and commonly great trouble and darkness is the effect. But if it has not been altogether thus with you, but you have found that at times, when you have greatly sinned and gone on in ill practices, your hope has decayed, and in the time of it your conscience told you that the way in which you lived was contrary to known rules, and so was in doubt about your hope, but since that you have grown strong again in your hope, inquire in what manner you have obtained your hope again. Unsound professors in such cases are not wont to obtain hope again in the same manner as the truly godly do, in a deep humbling for sin, and in slaying the troubler, as has been described. But it may be only this, that now they do better than they did, and so hope comes again. If they lived in a way of some vile sensuality for a time, and afterwards cease to do so, they look on their reformation as an atonement; and so their

hope is renewed without any humbling or abasement, without any special convictions of the evil of their ways, any special repentance, or renewed sense of their own vile-ness, or any renewed flying to the mercy of God in Christ for refuge, or any further alienation of their hearts from those evil ways in which they have walked. If your comforts and confidence have been renewed after remarkable aberrations from the way of duty without something of this nature, it is to be feared that you make your own righteousness the ground of your hope and comfort.

3. Inquire whether at those times, when you have most hope and comfort, above all others, you are most disposed to be careful to avoid sin, and to strive to live holy. Sometimes the hope of hypocrites is very confident; and therefore the degree of confidence which attends a hope is no certain evidence of its truth and genuineness. But we should examine what effect this strong confidence has upon us. Do we find, when our hope is strongest and our comfort greatest, that then our hearts are most set against sin, and that then we feel the greatest desires to live holy, and have most of a disposition to keep a strict watch, and maintain an earnest warfare against sin, and are most desirous in every thing to do our duty? Or do we find, on the contrary, when our hope is strong, and we are most satisfied that our condition is safe, that then we are least careful to avoid sin, and are least disposed to take pains to curb our lusts, and resist temptation, or lay ourselves in the way of duty? If it be thus, it is a very bad sign, and a black mark on our hopes and comforts. A true hope has a tendency to prompt him who has it to purify himself, and watch and strive more earnestly against all impurity. [1 John iii. 3.](#) "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself." They are condemned who, because they think they are righteous, and so that they shall certainly have eternal life, will trust in that hope to give themselves the greater liberty in sin. [Ezek. xxxiii. 13.](#) "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die."

III. Use of direction. If it be so, that God is wont to cause hope and comfort to arise after trouble and humbling for sin, and upon slaying the troubler, this may be of direction to souls under spiritual trouble and darkness, what course to pursue for hope and comfort.

1. Thoroughly to renounce and forsake all ways of sinful behaviour. For you have heard that hope and comfort are never to be expected, till sin is slain or forsaken. He who is not thorough in his reformation, cannot reasonably hope for comfort, how much soever he may abound in some particular duties. Persons who are under awakenings, and would seek a true hope of salvation, should in the first place see, that they thoroughly renounce every wicked practice. They should search their ways, and consider what is wrong in them: what duties they have omitted, which ought to have been done; and what practices they have allowed, which ought to be forsaken; and should immediately reform, retaining no one way of sin, denying all ungodliness, omitting nothing which is required; and should see that they

persevere in it, that it be not merely a temporary, short-lived restraint, but an everlasting renunciation. This is the way to have the troubler slain.

2. Earnestly to seek humiliation. To that end they should labour to be convinced of sin. They should be much engaged in searching their own hearts, and keeping a watchful eye upon them. They should not rest in their own efforts, but earnestly seek to God to give them a right sight of themselves, and a right conviction of sin, and show them that they have deserved God's everlasting wrath. And in order to this they should carefully watch against backsliding; for backsliding prevents humiliation. If there has been any progress made by the conviction of God's Spirit towards it, it is all lost by backsliding. This again blinds and stupifies the heart, and sets the man further than ever from a right knowledge of himself, and sight of his own heart.

3. To search and endeavour to find out the troubler. You have heard that when the godly are in darkness, it is not for want of love in God to them, or a readiness in him to give them comfort; but that sin is doubtless the cause of their darkness in one way or another. Their troubler lies at their own door. There is doubtless some troubler in the camp, which causes God to withdraw. And therefore if you would have light revive, and have the comfortable presence of God again, the first thing which you do must be to search, and find out the troubler. Many, when they are in darkness, proceed in a wrong way. They go to examining past experience. And that they should do; but what is wrong in it is, that they do that only. They spend their time in seeking for something in themselves which is good; whereas they ought to spend more of it in seeking out that which is bad. Whatever good there is, they are never likely to find it out, till they find out the sin which obscures and hides it. And whatever they reflect upon, which they formerly thought was good, is not likely to afford any satisfaction to them, till that bad thing be removed out of the way which troubled them. They wonder what the cause is, that they are so in the dark. They verily thought in time past, that they were right, and that they had experienced a right work of God's Spirit on their hearts, and thought that they were the children of God. But now God hides his face from them, and they wonder what is the matter; as Joshua seemed to be astonished when Israel was smitten down at Ai. Sometimes they almost conclude, that it is because they are not the children of God. They pray to God to renew his comforts to them, and spend much "time. And they ought to pray. But they have more need to do something else. Joshua spent a great deal of time in prayer when Israel was troubled. He fell upon his face till eventide, complaining to God about his withdrawing from them. But God says to him, [Josh. vii. 10, 11](#). "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" As much as to say, you had more need to be doing something else, than lie there. "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant, which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing.<sup>575</sup>" And [ver. 13](#). "Up, sanctify yourselves." This teaches you, who are under darkness, and

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575 [Josh. vii. 11](#).

have your hopes darkened, and comforts deadened, what you should do. You must arise and search, and find out the troubler. If you do not do this, it will signify nothing to you to lie crying and complaining to God about your darkness. You have other business which you have more need to do, though prayer should not be left undone. Let me beseech you, therefore, to be thorough in this. You have need to be thorough, for it is an exceedingly difficult thing to find out the accursed thing in such cases. Men's hearts do like Achan, who hid the accursed thing in the earth in the midst of his tent. [Joshua vii. 21](#). He hid it very closely. He did not content himself with hiding it in the most secret place in his tent, but he dug in the ground and buried it in the earth under his feet, that there might be no sign of it above ground. So are men's deceitful hearts wont to hide the accursed thing which troubles them. When they are put upon searching for the cause of their trouble and darkness, they think of one thing and another, but commonly overlook the chief cause of all their trouble. It does not so much as enter their minds. They search the tent, but that is not enough; they must search the very ground, or they will not find it out. When they tell of their darkness, and are put upon searching to see whether some sinful way is not the cause, they readily own that it is their fault. But yet they mistake the true Achan, notwithstanding all they confess of the corruption of their hearts. It is not merely corruption in their hearts, working in their thoughts, which is the cause; but it is some way of outward sin and wickedness, in which they have of late in a great measure allowed themselves. That is the principal cause of their trouble; some way of pride, or covetousness, or some way of envy, or evil-speaking, or ill will to their neighbours, or self-will, or some other way of unsuitable carriage, which is the chief cause of their darkness. In some respects, it is a great deal easier to find out little sins than greater sins, which causes many to strain at a gnat who swallow a camel. Sins which are common to all, and of which all complain, such as corrupt workings of heart, they are willing to feel that it is no disgrace to have them. And the godly commonly tell of such things, and it does not affright them to see them. But such things as malice, a proud behaviour, and many other things which might be mentioned, are disagreeable. They are not willing to see such things in themselves. They therefore call them by good names, and put good constructions on them, and hide them, as Achan did his accursed thing under-ground. The sin which troubles them most, has greatest possession of their hearts, and does most blind and prejudice their minds, is passed over. They can soon enough discover and see such things in others, in one of an opposite party, or the like, but they cannot see them in themselves; and so they continue still under darkness. It is an exceedingly difficult thing to find out the troubler. You have need, therefore, to be exceedingly thorough in searching for this matter, and not to spare yourself, or bribe your conscience at all, but labour to be impartial in the search. And to induce you to this, consider what God said to Joshua. [Josh. vii. 12](#). "Neither will I be with you any more, unless you destroy the accursed thing from among you." And, therefore,



4. When you have found out the troubler, be sure thoroughly to destroy it. Renounce it with detestation, as a vile serpent that has secretly lain under your head for a long time, and infected you with his poisons time after time, and bit you, when you were asleep, made you sick and filled you with pain, and you knew it not. Would not a man, when he has found out the serpent in such a case, destroy it with indignation, and be for ever afterwards thoroughly watchful that he is not caught with such a calamity again? You cannot be too thorough in destroying such an enemy, and labouring to root it out, and extirpate all its race. Whoever of you are under darkness and trouble, I am bold to say, if God help you to follow these directions, your darkness will soon be scattered, and hope and comfort will arise. And this is the surest, and readiest, and most direct course which any of you can take in order to the renewing of comfort in your soul. And without this, do not promise yourself any considerable degree of light or comfort while you live, however many examinations of past experiences and prayers to God for light you may make.

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S E R M O N I V .

romans ix. 18.

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

The apostle, in the beginning of this chapter, expresses his great concern and sorrow of heart for the nation of the Jews, who were rejected of God. This leads him to observe the difference which God made by election between some of the Jews and others, and between the bulk of that people and the Christian Gentiles. In speaking of this he enters into a more minute discussion of the sovereignty of God in electing some to eternal life, and rejecting others, than is found in any other part of the Bible; in the course of which he quotes several passages from the Old Testament, confirming and illustrating this doctrine. In the [ninth verse](#). he refers us to what God said to Abraham, showing his election of Isaac before Ishmael “For this is the word of promise; At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son:” then to what God had said to Rebecca, showing his election of Jacob before Esau; “The elder shall serve the younger: <sup>576</sup>” in the thirteenth verse, to a passage from Malachi, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated: <sup>577</sup>” in the fifteenth verse, to what God said to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion: <sup>578</sup>” and the verse preceding the text, to what God says to Pharaoh, [Rom. ix. 17](#). “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. <sup>579</sup>” In what the apostle says in the text, he seems to have respect especially to the two last-cited passages: to what God said to Moses in the fifteenth verse, and to what he said to Pharaoh in the verse immediately preceding. God said to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. <sup>580</sup>” To this the apostle refers in the former part of the text. And we know how often it is said of Pharaoh, that God hardened his heart. And to this the apostle seems to have respect in the latter part of the text; “and whom he will he hardeneth. <sup>581</sup>” We may observe in the text,

1. God’s different dealing with men. He hath mercy on some, and hardeneth others. When God is here spoken of as hardening some of the children of men, it is not to be understood that God by any positive efficiency hardens any man’s heart. There is no positive act in God, as though he put forth any power to harden the heart. To suppose any such thing

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576 [Rom. ix. 12.](#)

577 [Rom. ix. 13.](#)

578 [Rom. ix. 15.](#)

579 [Rom. ix. 17.](#)

580 [Rom. ix. 15.](#)

581 [Rom. ix. 15.](#)

would be to make God the immediate author of sin. God is said to harden men in two ways: by withholding the powerful influences of his Spirit, without which their hearts will remain hardened, and grow harder and harder; in this sense he hardens them, as he leaves them to hardness. And again, by ordering those things in his providence which, through the abuse of their corruption, become the occasion of their hardening. Thus God sends his word and ordinances to men which, by their abuse, prove an occasion of their hardening. So the apostle said, that he was unto some “a savour of death unto death.”<sup>582</sup> So God is represented as sending Isaiah on this errand, to make the hearts of the people fat, and to make their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. *Isa. vi. 10.* Isaiah’s preaching was, in itself, of a contrary tendency, to make them better. But their abuse of it rendered it an occasion of their hardening. As God is here said to harden men, so he is said to put a lying spirit in the mouth of the false prophets. *2 Chron. xviii. 22.* That is, he suffered a lying spirit to enter into them. And thus he is said to have bid Shimei curse David. *2 Sam. xvi. 10.* Not that he properly commanded him; for it is contrary to God’s commands. God expressly forbids cursing the ruler of the people. *Exod. xxii. 28.* But he suffered corruption at that time so to work in Shimei, and ordered that occasion of stirring it up, as a manifestation of his displeasure against David.

2. The foundation of his different dealing with mankind; *viz.* his sovereign will and pleasure.<sup>583</sup> “He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.” This does not imply, merely, that God never shows mercy or denies it against his will, or that he is always willing to do it when he does it. A willing subject or servant, when he obeys his lord’s commands, may never do any thing against his will, nothing but what he can do cheerfully and with delight; and yet he cannot be said to do what he wills in the sense of the text. But the expression implies that it is God’s mere will and sovereign pleasure, which supremely orders this affair. It is the divine will without restraint, or constraint, or obligation.

*Doctrine.* God exercises his sovereignty in the eternal salvation of men.

He not only is sovereign, and has a sovereign right to dispose and order in that affair; and he not only might proceed in a sovereign way, if he would, and nobody could charge him with exceeding his right; but he actually does so; he exercises the right which he has. In the following discourse, I propose to show,

- I. What is God’s sovereignty.
- II. What God’s sovereignty in the salvation of men implies.
- III. That God actually doth exercise his sovereignty in this matter.
- IV. The reasons for this exercise.

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582 [2 Chron. ii 16.](#)

583 [Romans ix. 18](#)

I. I would show what is God's sovereignty.

The sovereignty of God is his absolute, independent right of disposing of all creatures according to his own pleasure. I will consider this definition by the parts of it.

The will of God is called his mere pleasure,

1. In opposition to any constraint. Men may do things voluntarily, and yet there may be a degree of constraint. A man may be said to do a thing voluntarily, that is, he himself does it; and, all things considered, he may choose to do it; yet he may do it out of fear, and the thing in itself considered be irksome to him, and sorely against his inclination. When men do things thus, they cannot be said to do them according to their mere pleasure.

2. In opposition to its being under the will of another. A servant may fulfil his master's commands, and may do it willingly, and cheerfully, and may delight to do his master's will; yet when he does so, he does not do it of his own mere pleasure. The saints do the will of God freely. They choose to do it; it is their meat and drink. Yet they do not do it of their mere pleasure and arbitrary will; because their will is under the direction of a superior will.

3. In opposition to any proper obligation. A man may do a thing which he is obliged to do, very freely; but he cannot be said to act from his own mere will and pleasure. He who acts from his own mere pleasure, is at full liberty; but he who is under any proper obligation, is not at liberty, but is bound. Now the sovereignty of God supposes, that he has a right to dispose of all his creatures according to his mere pleasure in the sense explained. And his right is absolute and independent. Men may have a right to dispose of some things according to their pleasure. But their right is not absolute and unlimited. Men may be said to have a right to dispose of their own goods as they please. But their right is not absolute; it has limits and bounds. They have a right to dispose of their own goods as they please, provided they do not do it contrary to the law of the state to which they are subject, or contrary to the law of God. Men's right to dispose of their things as they will, is not absolute, because it is not independent. They have not an independent right to what they have, but in some things depend on the community to which they belong, for the right they have; and in every thing depend on God. They receive all the right they have to any thing from God. But the sovereignty of God imports that he has an absolute, and unlimited, and independent right of disposing of his creatures as he will. I proposed to inquire,

II. What God's sovereignty in the salvation of men implies. In answer to this inquiry, I observe, it implies that God can either bestow salvation on any of the children of men, or refuse it, without any prejudice to the glory of any of his attributes, except where he has been pleased to declare, that he will or will not bestow it. It cannot be said absolutely, as the case now stands, that God can, without any prejudice to the honour of any of his attributes, bestow salvation on any of the children of men, or refuse it; because, concerning some, God has been pleased to declare either that he will or that he will not bestow salvation on them; and thus to bind himself by his own promise. And concerning some he has been pleased to

declare, that he never will bestow salvation upon them; *viz.* those who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. Hence, as the case now stands, he is obliged; he cannot bestow salvation in one case, or refuse it in the other, without prejudice to the honour of his troth. But God exercised his sovereignty in making these declarations. God was not obliged to promise that he would save all who believe in Christ; nor was he obliged to declare, that he who committed the sin against the Holy Ghost should never be forgiven. But it pleased him so to declare. And had it not been so that God had been pleased to oblige himself in these cases, he might still have either bestowed salvation, or refused it, without prejudice to any of his attributes. If it would in itself be prejudicial to any of his attributes to bestow or refuse salvation, then God would not in that matter act as absolutely sovereign. Because it then ceases to be a merely arbitrary thing. It ceases to be a matter of absolute liberty, and is become a matter of necessity or obligation. For God cannot do any thing to the prejudice of any of his attributes, or contrary to what is in itself excellent and glorious. Therefore,

1. God can, without prejudice to the glory of any of his attributes, bestow salvation on any of the children of men, except on those who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. The case was thus when man fell, and before God revealed his eternal purpose and plan for redeeming men by Jesus Christ. It was probably looked upon by the angels as a thing utterly inconsistent with God's attributes to save any of the children of men. It was utterly inconsistent with the honour of the divine attributes to save any one of the fallen children of men, as they were in themselves. It could not have been done had not God contrived a way consistent with the honour of his holiness, majesty, justice, and truth. But since God in the gospel has revealed that nothing is too hard for him to do, nothing beyond the reach of his power, and wisdom, and sufficiency; and since Christ has wrought out the work of redemption, and fulfilled the law by obeying, there is none of mankind whom he may not save without any prejudice to any of his attributes, excepting those who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. And those he might have saved without going contrary to any of his attributes, had he not been pleased to declare that he would not. It was not because he could not have saved them consistently with his justice, and consistently with his law, or because his attribute of mercy was not great enough, or the blood of Christ not sufficient to cleanse from that sin. But it has pleased him for wise reasons to declare that that sin shall never be forgiven in this world, or in the world to come. And so now it is contrary to God's truth to save such. But otherwise there is no sinner, let him be ever so great, but God can save him without prejudice to any attribute; if he has been a murderer, adulterer, or perjurer, or idolater, or blasphemer, God may save him if he pleases, and in no respect injure his glory. Though persons have sinned long, have been obstinate, have committed heinous sins a thousand times, even till they have grown old in sin, and have sinned under great aggravations: let the aggravations be what they may; if they have sinned under ever so great light; if they have been backsliders, and have sinned against ever so nu-

merous and solemn warnings and strivings of the Spirit, and mercies of his common providence: though the danger of such is much greater than of other sinners, yet God can save them if he pleases, for the sake of Christ, without any prejudice to any of his attributes. He may have mercy on whom he will have mercy. He may have mercy on the greatest of sinners, if he pleases, and the glory of none of his attributes will be in the least sullied. Such is the sufficiency of the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ, that none of the divine attributes stand in the way of the salvation of any of them. Thus the glory of any attribute did not at all suffer by Christ's saving some of his crucifiers.

1. God may save any of them without prejudice to the honour of his holiness. God is an infinitely holy being. The heavens are not pure in his sight. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity. And if God should in any way countenance sin, and should not give proper testimonies of his hatred of it, and displeasure at it, it would be a prejudice to the honour of his holiness. But God can save the greatest sinner without giving the least countenance to sin. If he saves one, who for a long time has stood out under the calls of the gospel, and has sinned under dreadful aggravations; if he saves one who, against light, has been a pirate or blasphemer, he may do it without giving any countenance to their wickedness; because his abhorrence of it and displeasure against it have been already sufficiently manifested in the sufferings of Christ. It was a sufficient testimony of God's abhorrence against even the greatest wickedness, that Christ, the eternal Son of God, died for it. Nothing can show God's infinite abhorrence of any wickedness more than this. If the wicked man himself should be thrust into hell, and should endure the most extreme torments which are ever suffered there, it would not be a greater manifestation of God's abhorrence of it, than the sufferings of the Son of God for it.

2. God may save any of the children of men without prejudice to the honour of his majesty. If men have affronted God, and that ever so much, if they have cast ever so much contempt on his authority; yet God can save them, if he pleases, and the honour of his majesty not suffer in the least. If God should save those who have affronted him, without satisfaction, the honour of his majesty would suffer. For when contempt is cast upon infinite majesty, its honour suffers, and the contempt leaves an obscurity upon the honour of the divine majesty, if the injury is not repaired. But the sufferings of Christ do fully repair the injury. Let the contempt be ever so great, yet if so honourable a person as Christ undertakes to be a Mediator for the offender, and in the mediation suffer in his stead, it fully repairs the injury done to the majesty of heaven by the greatest sinner.

3. God may save any sinner whatsoever consistently with his justice. The justice of God requires the punishment of sin. God is the Supreme Judge of the world, and he is, to judge the world according to the rules of justice. It is not the part of a judge to show favour to the person judged; but he is to determine according to a rule of justice without departing to the right hand or left. God does not show mercy as a judge, but as a sovereign. And therefore

when mercy sought the salvation of sinners, the inquiry was how to make the exercise of the mercy of God as a sovereign, and of his strict justice as a judge, agree together. And this is done by the sufferings of Christ, in which sin is punished fully, and justice answered. Christ suffered enough for the punishment of the sins of the greatest sinner that ever lived. So that God, when he judges, may act according to a rule of strict justice, and yet acquit the sinner, if he be in Christ. Justice cannot require any more for any man's sins, than those sufferings of one of the persons in the Trinity, which Christ suffered. [Rom. iii. 25, 26](#). "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Christ."

4. God can save any sinner whatsoever, without any prejudice to the honour of his truth. God passed his word, that sin should be punished with death, which is to be understood not only of the first, 'but of the second death. God can save the greatest sinner consistently with his truth in this threatening. For sin is punished in the sufferings of Christ, inasmuch as he is our surety, and so is legally the same person, and sustained our guilt, and in his sufferings bore our punishment. It may be objected, that God said, If thou eatest, thou shall die; as though the same person that sinned must suffer; and therefore why does not God's truth oblige him to that? I answer, that the word then was not intended to be restrained to him, that in his own person sinned. Adam probably understood that his posterity were included, whether they sinned in their own person or not. If they sinned in Adam, their surety, those words, "if thou eatest," meant, if thou eatest in thyself, or in thy surety. And therefore; the latter words, "thou shall die," do also fairly allow of such a construction as, thou shall die in thyself, or in thy surety. [Isa. xlii. 21](#). "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake, he will magnify the law and make it honourable." But,

II. God may refuse salvation to any sinner whatsoever, without prejudice to the honour of any of his attributes.

There is no person whatever in a natural condition, upon whom God may not refuse to bestow salvation without prejudice to any part of his glory. Let a natural person be wise or unwise, of a good or ill natural temper, of mean or honourable parentage, whether born of wicked or godly parents; let him be a moral or immoral person, whatever good he may have done, however religious he has been, how many prayers soever he has made, and whatever pains he has taken that he may be saved; whatever concern and distress he may have for fear he shall be damned; or whatever circumstances he may be in; God can deny him salvation without the least disparagement to any of his perfections. His glory will not in any instance be the least obscured by it.

1. God may deny salvation to any natural person without any injury to the honour of his righteousness. If he does so, there is no injustice nor unfairness in it. There is no natural man living, let his case be what it will, but God may deny him salvation, and cast him down to hell, and yet not be chargeable with the least unrighteous or unfair dealing in any respect

whatsoever. This is evident, because they all have deserved hell: and it is no injustice for a proper judge to inflict on any man what he deserves. And as he has deserved condemnation, so he has never done any thing to remove the liability, or to atone for the sin. He never has done any thing whereby he has laid any obligations on God not to punish him as he deserved.

2. God may deny salvation to any unconverted person whatever without any prejudice to the honour of his goodness. Sinners are sometimes ready to flatter themselves, that though it may not be contrary to the justice of God to condemn them, yet it will not consist with the glory of his mercy. They think it will be dishonourable to God's mercy to cast them into hell, and have no pity or compassion upon them. They think it will be very hard and severe, and not becoming a God of infinite grace and tender compassion. But God can deny salvation to any natural person without any disparagement to his mercy and goodness. That, which is not contrary to God's justice, is not contrary to his mercy. If damnation be justice, then mercy may choose its own object. They mistake the nature of the mercy of God, who think that it is an attribute, which, in some cases, is contrary to justice. Nay, God's mercy is illustrated by it, as in the twenty-third verse of the context. "That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."<sup>584</sup>

3. It is in no way prejudicial to the honour of God's faithfulness. For God has in no way obliged himself to any natural man by his word to bestow salvation upon him. Men in a natural condition are not the children of promise; but lie open to the curse of the law, which would not be the case if they had any promise to lay hold of.

III. God does actually exercise his sovereignty in men's salvation.

We shall show how he exercises this right in several particulars.

1. In calling one people or nation, and giving them the means of grace, and leaving others without them. According to the divine appointment, salvation is bestowed in connexion with the means of grace. God may sometimes make use of very unlikely means, and bestow salvation on men who are under very great disadvantages; but he does not bestow grace wholly without any means. But God exercises his sovereignty in bestowing those means. All mankind are by nature in like circumstances towards God. Yet God greatly distinguishes some from others by the means and advantages which he bestows upon them. The savages, who live in the remote parts of this continent, and are under the grossest heathenish darkness, as well as the inhabitants of Africa, are naturally in exactly similar circumstances towards God with us in this land. They are no more alienated or estranged from God in their natures than we; and God has no more to charge them with. And yet what a vast difference has God made between us and them! In this he has exercised his sovereignty. He did this of old, when he chose but one people, to make them his covenant people, and to give them the means of grace, and left all others, and gave them over to heathenish

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584 [Rom. ix. 23.](#)



darkness and the tyranny of the devil, to perish from generation to generation for many hundreds of years. The earth in that time was peopled with many great and mighty nations. There were the Egyptians, a people famed for their wisdom. There were also the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who were great, and wise, and powerful nations. There were the Persians, who by their strength and policy subdued a great part of the world. There were the renowned nations of the Greeks and Romans, who were famed over the whole world for their excellent civil governments, for their wisdom and skill in the arts of peace and war, and who by their military prowess in their turns sub-rued and reigned over the world..Those were rejected. God did not choose them for his people, but left them for many ages under gross heathenish darkness, to perish for lack of vision; and chose one only people, the posterity of Jacob, to be his own people, and to give them the means of grace. [Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.](#) “He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them.” This nation were a small, inconsiderable people in comparison with many other people. [Deut. vii. 7.](#) “The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people.” So neither was it for their righteousness; for they had no more of that than other people. [Deut. ix. 6.](#) “Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people.” God gives them to understand, that it was from no other cause but his free electing love, that he chose them to be his people. That reason is given why God loved them; it was because he loved them. [Deut. vii. 8.](#) Which is as much as to say, it was agreeable to his sovereign pleasure, to set his love upon you.

God also showed his sovereignty in choosing that people, when other nations were rejected, who came of the same progenitors. Thus the children of Isaac were chosen, when the posterity of Ishmael and other sons of Abraham were rejected. So the children of Jacob were chosen, when the posterity of Esau were rejected: as the apostle observes in the [seventh verse.](#) “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called:” and again in [verses 10, 11, 12, 13.](#) “And not only this; but when Rebekah also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; the children moreover being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the promise of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” The apostle has not respect merely to the election of the persons of Isaac and Jacob before Ishmael and Esau; but of their posterity. In the passage, already quoted from Malachi, God Has respect to the nations, which were the posterity of Esau and Jacob; [Mal. i. 2, 3.](#) “I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob; and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.” God showed his sovereignty, when Christ came, in reject-

ing the Jews, and calling the Gentiles. God rejected that nation who were the children of Abraham according to the flesh, and had been his peculiar people for so many ages, and who alone possessed the one true God, and chose idolatrous heathen before them, and called them to be his people. When the Messiah came, who was born of their nation, and whom they so much expected, he rejected them. He came to his own, and his own received him not. [John i. 11](#). When the glorious dispensation of the gospel came, God passed by the Jews, and called those who had been heathens, to enjoy the privileges of it. They were broken off, that the Gentiles might be grafted on. [Rom. xi. 17](#). She is now called beloved, that was not beloved. And more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife. [Isa. liv. 1](#). The natural children of Abraham are rejected, and God raises up children to Abraham of stones. That nation, which was so honoured of God, have now been for many ages rejected, and remain dispersed all over the world, a remarkable monument of divine vengeance. And now God greatly distinguishes some Gentile nations from others, and all according to his sovereign pleasure.

2. God exercises his sovereignty in the advantages he bestows upon particular persons. All need salvation alike, and all are, naturally, alike undeserving of it; but he gives some vastly greater advantages for salvation than others. To some he assigns their place in pious and religious families, where they may be well instructed and educated, and have religious parents to dedicate them to God, and put up many prayers for them. God places some under a more powerful ministry than others, and in places where there are more of the outpourings of the Spirit of God. To some he gives much more of the strivings and the awakening influences of the Spirit, than to others. It is according to his mere sovereign pleasure.

3. God exercises his sovereignty in sometimes bestowing salvation upon the low and mean, and denying it to the wise and great. Christ in his sovereignty passes by the gates of princes and nobles, and enters some cottage and dwells there, and has communion with its obscure inhabitants. God in his sovereignty withheld salvation from the rich man, who fared sumptuously every day, and bestowed it on poor Lazarus, who sat begging at his gate. God in this way pours contempt on princes, and on all their glittering splendour. So God sometimes passes by wise men, men of great understanding, learned and great scholars, and bestows salvation on others of weak understanding, who only comprehend some of the plainer parts of Scripture, and the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. Yea, there seem to be fewer great men called, than others. And God in ordering it thus manifests his sovereignty. [1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28](#). "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

4. In bestowing salvation on some who have had few advantages. God sometimes will bless weak means for producing astonishing effects, when more excellent means are not succeeded. God sometimes will withhold salvation from those who are the children of very pious parents, and bestow it on others, who have been brought up in wicked families. Thus we read of a good Abijah in the family of Jeroboam, and of a godly Hezekiah, the son of wicked Ahaz, and of a godly Josiah, the son of a wicked Amon. But on the contrary, of a wicked Amnon and Absalom, the sons of holy David, and that vile Manasseh, the son of good Hezekiah. Sometimes some, who have had eminent means of grace, are rejected, and left to perish, and others, under far less advantages, are saved. Thus the scribes and Pharisees, who had so much light and knowledge of the Scriptures, were mostly rejected, and the poor ignorant publicans saved. The greater part of those, among whom Christ was much conversant, and who heard him preach, and saw him work miracles from day to day, were left; and the woman of Samaria was taken, and many other Samaritans at the same time, who only heard Christ preach, as he occasionally passed through their city. So the woman of Canaan was taken, who was not of the country of the Jews, and but once saw Jesus Christ. So the Jews, who had seen and heard Christ, and saw his miracles, and with whom the apostles laboured so much, were not saved. But the Gentiles, many of them, who, as it were, but transiently heard the glad tidings of salvation, embraced them, and were converted.

5. God exercises his sovereignty in calling some to salvation, who have been very heinously wicked, and leaving others, who have been moral and religious persons. The Pharisees were a very strict sect among the Jews. Their religion was extraordinary. [Luke xviii. 11](#). They were not as other men, extortioners, unjust, or adulterers. There was their morality. They fasted twice a week, and gave tithes of all that they possessed. There was their religion. But yet they were mostly rejected, and the publicans, and harlots, and openly vicious sort of people, entered into the kingdom of God before them. [Matt. xxi. 31](#). The apostle describes his righteousness while a Pharisee. [Philip. iii. 6](#). "Touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless." The rich young man, who came kneeling to Christ, saying, Good Master, what shall I do, that I may have eternal life, was a moral person. When Christ had him keep the commandments, he said, and in his own view with sincerity, "All these have I kept from my youth up."<sup>585</sup> He had obviously been brought up in a good family, and was a youth of such amiable manners and correct deportment, that it is said, "Jesus beholding him, loved him."<sup>586</sup> Still he was left; while the thief, that was crucified with Christ, was chosen and called, even on the cross. God sometimes shows his sovereignty by showing mercy to the chief of sinners, on those who have been murderers, and profaners, and blasphemers. And even when they are old, some are called at the eleventh hour. God sometimes



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585 [Luke xviii. 21](#).

586 [Mark x. 21](#).

shows the sovereignty of his grace by showing mercy to some, who have spent most of their lives in the service of Satan, and have little left to spend in the service of God.

6. In saving some of those who seek salvation, and not others. Some who seek salvation, as we know both from Scripture and observation, are soon converted; while others seek a long time, and do not obtain at last. God helps some over the mountains and difficulties which are in the way; he subdues Satan, and delivers them from his temptations: but others are ruined by the temptations with which they meet. Some are never thoroughly awakened; while to others God is pleased to give thorough convictions. Some are left to backsliding hearts; others God causes to hold put to the end. Some are brought *off* from a confidence in their own righteousness; others never get over that obstruction in their way, as long as they live. And some are converted and saved, who never had so great strivings as some who, notwithstanding, perish.

IV. I come now to give the reasons, why God does thus exercise his sovereignty in the eternal salvation of the children of men.

1. It is agreeable to God's design in the creation of the universe to exercise every attribute, and thus to manifest the glory of each of them. God's design in the creation was to glorify himself, or to make a discovery of the essential glory of his nature. It was fit that infinite glory should shine forth; and it was God's original design to make a manifestation of his glory, as it is. Not that it was his design to manifest all his glory to the apprehension of creatures; for it is impossible that the minds of creatures should comprehend it. But it was his design to make a true manifestation of his glory, such as should represent every attribute. If God glorified one attribute, and not another, such manifestation of his glory would be defective; and the representation would not be complete. If all God's attributes are not manifested, the glory of none of them is manifested as it is; for the divine attributes reflect glory on one another. Thus if God's wisdom be manifested, and not his holiness, the glory of his wisdom would not be manifested as it is; for one part of the glory of the attribute of divine wisdom is, that it is a holy wisdom. So if his holiness were manifested, and not his wisdom, the glory of his holiness would not be manifested as it is; for one thing which belongs to the glory of God's holiness is, that it is a wise holiness. So it is with respect to the attributes of mercy and justice. The glory of God's mercy does not appear as it is, unless it is manifested as a just mercy, or as a mercy consistent with justice. And so with respect to God's sovereignty, it reflects glory on all his other attributes. It is part of the glory of God's mercy, that it is sovereign mercy. So all the attributes of God reflect glory on one another. The glory of one attribute cannot be manifested, as it is, without the manifestation of another. One attribute is defective without another, and therefore the manifestation will be defective. Hence it was the will of God to manifest all his attributes. The declarative glory of God in Scripture is often called God's *name*, because it declares his nature. But if his name does not signify his nature as it is, or does not declare any attribute, it is not a true name. The sovereignty

of God is one of his attributes, and a part of his glory. The glory of God eminently appears in his absolute sovereignty over all creatures, great and small. If the glory of a prince be his power and dominion, then the glory of God is his absolute sovereignty. Herein appear God's infinite greatness and highness above all creatures. Therefore it is the will of God to manifest his sovereignty. And his sovereignty, like his other attributes, is manifested in the exercise of it. He glorifies his power in the exercise of power. He glorifies his mercy in the exercise of mercy. So he glorifies his sovereignty in the exercise of sovereignty.

2. The more excellent the creature is over whom God is sovereign, and the greater the matter in which he so appears, the more glorious is his sovereignty. The sovereignty of God in his being sovereign over men, is more glorious than in his being sovereign over the inferior creatures. And his sovereignty over angels is yet more glorious than his sovereignty over men. For the nobler the creature is, still the greater and higher doth God appear in his sovereignty over it. It is a greater honour to a man to have dominion over men, than over beasts; and a still greater honour to have dominion over princes, nobles, and kings, than over ordinary men. So the glory of God's sovereignty appears in that he is sovereign over the souls of men, who are so noble and excellent creatures. God therefore will exercise his sovereignty over them. And the further the dominion of any one extends over another, the greater will be the honour. If a man has dominion over another only in some instances, he is not therein so much exalted, as in having absolute dominion over his life, and fortune, and all he has. So God's sovereignty over men appears glorious, that it extends to every thing which concerns them. He may dispose of them with respect to all that concerns them, according to his own pleasure. His sovereignty appears glorious, that it reaches their most important affairs, even (lie eternal state and condition of the souls of men. Herein it appears that the sovereignty of God is without bounds or limits, in that it reaches to an affair of such infinite importance. God, therefore, as it is his design to manifest his own glory, will and does exercise his sovereignty towards men, over their souls and bodies, even in this most important matter of their eternal salvation. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens.

#### **APPLICATION.**

1. Hence we learn how absolutely we are dependent on God in this great matter of the eternal salvation of our souls. We are dependent not only on his wisdom to contrive a way to accomplish it, and on his power to bring it to pass, but we are dependent on his mere will and pleasure in the affair. We depend on the sovereign will of God for every thing belonging to it, from the foundation to the top-stone. It was of the sovereign pleasure of God, that he contrived a way to save any of mankind, and gave us Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, to be our Redeemer. Why did he look on us; and send us a Saviour, and not the fallen angels? It was from the sovereign pleasure of God. It was of his sovereign pleasure what means to appoint. His giving us the Bible, and the ordinances of religion, is of his sovereign grace.

His giving those means to us rather than to others, his giving the awakening influences of his Spirit, and his bestowing saving grace, are all of his sovereign pleasure. When he says, "Let there be light in the soul of such an one," it is a word of infinite power and sovereign grace.

2. Let us with the greatest humility adore the awful and absolute sovereignty of God. As we have just shown, it is an eminent attribute of the Divine Being, that he is sovereign over such excellent beings as the souls of men, and that in every respect, even in that of their eternal salvation. The infinite greatness of God, and his exaltation above us, appears in nothing more, than in his sovereignty. It is spoken of in Scripture as a great part of his glory. [Deut. xxxii. 39.](#) "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me. I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." [Psal.](#)

[cxv. 3.](#) "Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased." [Daniel iv. 34, 35.](#) "Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Our Lord Jesus Christ praised and glorified the Father for the exercise of his sovereignty in the salvation of men. [Matt. xi. 25, 26.](#) "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let us therefore give God the glory of his sovereignty, as adoring him, whose sovereign will orders all things, beholding ourselves as nothing in comparison with him. Dominion and sovereignty require humble reverence and honour in the subject. The absolute, universal, and unlimited sovereignty of God requires, that we should adore him with all possible humility and reverence. It is impossible that we should go to excess in lowliness and reverence of that Being who may dispose of us to all eternity, as he pleases.

3. Those who are in a state of salvation are to attribute it to sovereign grace alone, and to give all the praise to him, who maketh them to differ from others. Godliness is no cause for glorying, except it be in God. [1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31.](#) "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Such are not, by any means, in any degree to attribute their godliness, their safe and happy state and condition, to any natural difference between them and other men, or to any strength or righteousness of their own. They have no reason to exalt themselves in the least degree; but God is the being whom they should exalt. They should exalt God the Father, who chose them in Christ, who set his love upon them, and gave them salvation, before they were born, and even before the world was. If they inquire, why God set his love on them, and chose them rather than others, if they think they can see



any cause out of God, they are greatly mistaken. They should exalt God the Son, who bore their names on his heart, when he came into the world, and hung on the cross, and in whom alone they have righteousness and strength.. They should exalt God the Holy Ghost, who of sovereign grace has called them out of darkness into marvellous light; who has by his own immediate and free operation, led them into an understanding of the evil and danger of sin, and brought them off from their own righteousness, and opened their eyes to discover the glory of God, and the wonderful riches of God in Jesus Christ, and has sanctified them, and made them new creatures. When they hear of the wickedness of others, or look upon vicious persons, they should think how wicked they once were, and how much they provoked God, and how they deserved for ever to be left by him to perish in sin, and that it is only sovereign grace which has made the difference. [1 Cor. vi. 10](#). Many sorts of sinners are there enumerated; fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind. And then in the [eleventh verse](#), the apostle tells them, " Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The people of God have the greater cause of thankfulness, more reason to love God, who hath bestowed such great and unspeakable mercy upon them of his mere sovereign pleasure.

4. Hence we learn what cause we have to admire the grace of God, that he should condescend to become bound to us by covenant; that he, who is naturally supreme in his dominion over us, who is our absolute proprietor, and may do with us as he pleases, and is under no obligation to us; that he should, as it were, relinquish his absolute freedom, and should cease to be merely sovereign in his dispensations towards believers, when once they have believed in Christ, and should, for their more abundant consolation, become bound. So that they can challenge salvation of this Sovereign; they can demand it through Christ, as a debt. And it would be prejudicial to the glory of God's attributes, to deny it to them; it would be contrary to his justice and faithfulness. What wonderful condescension is it in such a Being, thus to become bound to us, worms of the dust, for our consolation! He bound himself by his word, his promise. But he was not satisfied with that; but that we might have stronger consolation still, he hath bound himself by his oath. [Heb. vi. 13](#). &c. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself; saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which enter-eth into that

within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Let us, therefore, labour to submit to the sovereignty of God. God insists, that his sovereignty be acknowledged by us, and that even in this great matter, a matter which so nearly and infinitely concerns us, as our own eternal salvation. This is the stumbling-block on which thousands fall and perish; and if we go on contending with God about his sovereignty, it will be our eternal ruin. It is absolutely necessary that we should submit to God, as our absolute sovereign, and the sovereign over our souls; as one who may have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and harden whom he will.

5. And lastly. We may make use of this doctrine to guard those who seek salvation from two opposite extremes presumption and discouragement. Do not presume upon the mercy of God, and so encourage yourself in sin. Many hear that God's mercy is infinite, and therefore think, that if they delay seeking salvation for the present, and seek it hereafter, that God will bestow his grace upon them. But consider, that though God's grace is sufficient, yet he is sovereign, and will use his own pleasure whether he will save you or not. If you put off salvation till hereafter, salvation will not be in your power. It will be as a sovereign God pleases, whether you shall obtain it or not. Seeing, therefore, that in this affair you are so absolutely dependent on God, it is best to follow his direction in seeking it, which is to hear his voice to-day: “To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.”<sup>587</sup> Beware also of discouragement. Take heed of despairing thoughts, because you are a great sinner, because you have persevered so long in sin, have backslidden, and resisted the Holy Ghost. Remember that, let your case be what it may, and you ever so great a sinner, if you have not committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, God can bestow mercy upon you without the least prejudice to the honour of his holiness, which you have offended, or to the honour of his majesty, which you have insulted, or of his justice, which you have made your enemy, or of his truth, or of any of his attributes. Let you be what sinner you may, God can, if he pleases, greatly glorify himself in your salvation.

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587 [Exod. xcv. 7, 8.](#)



S E R M O N V . 5 8 8

[philippians iii. 17.](#)

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

the apostle in the foregoing part of the chapter, had been telling how he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and in the text he urges that his example should be followed.

He does this in two ways.

1. He exhorts the Philippian Christians to follow his example. "Brethren, be followers together of me.<sup>589</sup>" He exhorts them to be followers of him *together*; that is, that they should all follow his example with one heart and soul, all agreeing in it, and that all, as much as in them lay, should help and assist each other in it.

2. That they should take particular notice of others that did so, and put peculiar honour on them; which is implied in the expression in the [latter part of the verse](#), "mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."

*Doctrine.* We ought to follow the good examples of the apostle Paul. We are to consider, that the apostle did not say this of himself from an ambitious spirit, from a desire of being set up as a pattern, and eyed and imitated as an example to other Christians. His writings are not of any private interpretation, but he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost directed that the good examples of the apostle Paul should be noticed by other Christians, and imitated. And we are also to consider, that this is not a command to the Philippians only, to whom the epistle was more immediately directed, but to all those for whose use this epistle was written, for all Christians to the end of the world. For though God so ordered it, that the epistles of the apostles were mostly written on particular occasions and directed to particular churches, yet they were written to be of universal use. And those occasions were so ordered in the wisdom of Divine Providence, that they are a part of that infallible rule of faith and manners, which God has given to the Christian church to be their rule in all ages. And the precepts that we find in those epistles, are no more to be regarded as precepts intended only for those to whom the epistle was sent, than the ten commandments, that were spoken from mount Sinai to the children of Israel, are to be regarded as commands intended only for that people. And when we are directed to follow the good examples of the apostle Paul by the Holy Ghost, it is not merely as we are to imitate whatever we see that is good in any one, let him be who he may. But there are spiritual obligations that lie on Christians to follow the good examples of this great apostle. And it hath pleased the Holy Ghost in an especial manner to set up the apostle Paul, not only as a teacher of the



Christian church, but as a pattern to other Christians. The greatest example of all, that is set before us in the Scripture to imitate, is the example of Jesus Christ, which he set us in his human nature, and when in his state of humiliation. This is presented to us not only as a great pattern, but as a perfect rule. And the example of no man is set forth, as our rule, but the example of Christ. We are commanded to follow the examples which God himself set us, or the acts of the divine nature [Ephes. v. 1](#). "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." And [Matt. v. 48](#). "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." But the example of Christ Jesus, when on earth, is more especially our pattern. For, though the acts of the divine nature have the highest possible perfection, and though his inimitable perfection is our best example, yet God is so much above us, his nature so infinitely different from ours, that it is not possible that his acts should be so accommodated to our nature and circumstances, as to be an example of so great and general use, as the perfect example in our nature which Christ has set us. Christ, though a divine person, was man, as we are men; and not only so, but he was, in many respects, a partaker of our circumstances. He dwelt among men. He depended on food and raiment, and such outward supports of life, as we do. He was subject to the changes of time, and the afflictions and calamities of this evil world, and to abuse from men's corruptions, and to temptations from Satan, as we are; was subject to the same law and rule that we are, used the same ordinances, and had many of our trials, and greater trials than we. So that Christ's example is the example that is chiefly offered in Scripture for our imitation. But yet the example of some that are fallen creatures, as we are, may in some respects be more accommodated to our circumstances, and more fitted for our instructions, than the example of Jesus Christ. For though he became man as we are, and was like us, and was in our circumstances in so many respects, yet in other things there was a vast difference. He was the head of the church, and we are the members. He is Lord of all, we are his subjects and disciples. And we need an example, that shall teach and direct us how to behave towards Christ our Lord and head. And this we may have better in some, that have Christ for their Lord as well as we, than in Christ himself. But the greatest difference lies in this, that Christ had no sin, and we all are sinful creatures, all carry about with us a body of sin and death. It is said that Christ was made like to us in all things, sin only excepted. But this was excepted, and therefore there were many things required of us, of which Christ could not give us an example. Such as repentance for sin, brokenness of spirit for sin, mortification of lust, warring against sin. And the excellent example of some, that are naturally as sinful as we, has this advantage; that we may regard it as the example of those, who were naturally every way in our circumstances, and laboured under the same natural difficulties, and the same opposition of heart to that which is good, as ourselves; which tends to engage us to give more heed to their example, and the more to encourage and animate us to strive to follow it. And therefore we find that the Scripture does not only recommend the example of Christ, but does also exhibit some mere men, that

are of like passions with ourselves, as patterns for us to follow. So it exhibits the eminent saints of the Old Testament, of whom we read in the Scripture, that they inherit the promises [Heb. vi. 12](#). “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, a great number of eminent saints are mentioned as patterns for us to follow. Abraham is, in a particular manner, set forth as an example in his faith, and as the pattern of believers [Rom. iv. 12](#). “And the father of circumcision to them, that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised.” And so the prophets of the Old Testament are also recommended as patterns [James v. 10](#). “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.” And so eminently holy men under the New Testament, apostles and others, that God sent forth to preach the gospel, are also examples for Christians to follow [Heb. xiii. 7](#). “Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” But of all mere men, no one is so often particularly set forth in the Scripture, as a pattern for Christians to follow, as the apostle Paul. Our observing his holy conversation as our example, is not only insisted on in the text, but also [1 Cor. iv. 16](#). “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.” And [xi. 1](#). “Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ.” And [1 Thess. i. 6](#). Where the apostle commends the Christian Thessalonians for imitating his example; “and ye became followers of us.”<sup>590</sup> And [2 Thess. iii. 7](#). he insists on this as their duty. “For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us.”



For the more full treatment of this subject I shall,

I. Particularly mention many of the good examples of the apostle Paul, that we ought to imitate. Which I shall treat of not merely as a doctrine, but also in the way of application.

II. I shall show under what strict obligation we are to follow the good examples of this apostle.

I. I shall particularly mention many of those good examples of the apostle Paul, that we ought to imitate. And that I may be more distinct, I shall,

1. Mention those things that respect his watchfulness for the good of his own soul.
2. Those virtues in him that more immediately respected God and Christ.
3. Those that more immediately respect men.
4. Those that were exercised in his behaviour, both towards God and men.

1. We ought to follow the good example that the apostle Paul has set us in his seeking the good of his own soul.

*First.* We should follow him in his earnestness in seeking his own salvation. He was not careless and indifferent in this matter; but the kingdom of heaven suffered violence from

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590 [1 Thess. i. 6](#).

him. He did not halt between two opinions, or seek with a wavering, unsteady mind, but with the most full determination and strong resolution. He resolved, if it could by any means be possible, that he would attain to the resurrection of the dead. He does not say that he was determined to attain it, if he could, by means that were not very costly or difficult, or by labouring for it a little time, or only now and then, or without any great degree of suffering, or without great loss in his temporal interest. But if by *any* means he could do it, he would, let the means be easy or difficult. Let it be a short labour and trial, or a long one; let the cross be light or heavy; it was all one to his resolution. Let the requisite means be what they would, if it were possible, he would obtain it. He did not hesitate at worldly losses, for he tells us that he readily suffered the loss of all things, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, and in his righteousness. [Philip. iii. 8, 9](#). It was not with him as it was with the young man, that came kneeling to Christ to inquire of him what he should do to inherit eternal life, and when Christ said, Go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, he went away sorrowful. He was not willing to part with all. If Christ had bid him sell half, it may be he would have complied with it. He had a great desire to secure salvation. But the apostle Paul did not content himself with wishing. He was resolved, if it were possible, that he would obtain it. And when it was needful that he should lose worldly good, or when any great suffering was in his way, it was no cause of hesitation to him. He had been in very comfortable and honourable circumstances among the Jews. He had received the best education that was to be had among them, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and was regarded as a very learned young man. His own nation, the Jews, had a high esteem of him, and he was esteemed for his moral and religious qualifications among them. But when he could not hold the outward benefit of these things and win Christ, he despised them totally, he parted with all his credit and honour. He made nothing of them, that he might win Christ. And instead of being honoured and loved, and living in credit, as before among his own nation, he made himself the object of their universal hatred. He lost all, and the Jews hated him, and persecuted him every where. And when great sufferings were in the way, he willingly made himself conformable to Christ's death, that he might have a part in his resurrection. He parted with his honour, his ease, his former friends and former acquaintance, his worldly goods and every thing else, and plunged himself into a state of extreme labour, contempt, and suffering; and in this way he sought the kingdom of heaven. He acted in this matter very much as one that is running a race for some great prize, who makes running his great and only business, til, he has reached the end of the race, and strains every nerve and sinew, and suffers nothing to divert him, and will not stand to listen to what any one says to him, but presses forward. Or as a man that is engaged in battle, sword in hand, with strong and violent enemies, that seek his life, who exerts himself to his utmost, as for his life [1 Cor. ix. 26](#). "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." When fleshly appetites stood in the way, however importunate they were, he utterly denied them and renounced them;

they were no impediment in the way of his thorough pursuit of salvation. He would not be subject to the appetites of his body, but made them subject to his soul [1 Cor. ix. 27](#). "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." Probably there never was a soldier, when he bore his part in storming a city, that acted with greater resolution and violence, as it were forcing his way through all that opposed him, than the apostle Paul in seeking the kingdom of heaven. We have not only his own word for it; the history we have of his life, written by St. Luke, shows the same. Now those, who seek their salvation, ought to follow this example. Persons who are concerned for their salvation, sometimes inquire what they shall do. Let them do as did the apostle Paul; seek salvation in the way he did, with the like violence and resolution. Those that make this inquiry, who are somewhat anxious year after year, and complain that they have not obtained any comfort, would do well to ask themselves, whether they seek salvation in any measure in this way, with that resolution and violence of which he set them an example. Alas, are they not very far indeed from it? Can it in any proper sense be said, that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence at their hands?

*Secondly.* The apostle did not only thus earnestly seek salvation before his conversion and hope, but afterwards also. What he says in the [3rd chapter of Philippians](#) of his suffering the loss of all things, that he might be found in Christ, and its being the one thing that he did to seek salvation; and also what he says of his so running as not in vain, but as resolving to win the prize of salvation, and keeping under his body that he might not be a castaway; were long after his conviction, and after he had renounced all hope of his own good estate by nature. If being a convinced sinner excuses a man from seeking salvation any more, or makes it reasonable that he should cease his earnest care and labour for it, certainly the apostle might have been excused, when he had not only already attained true grace, but such eminent degrees of it. To see one of the most eminent saints that ever lived, if not the most eminent of all, so exceedingly engaged in seeking his own salvation, ought for ever to put to shame those who are a thousand degrees below him, and are but mere infants to him, if they have any grace at all; who yet excuse themselves from using any violence after the kingdom of heaven now, because they have attained already, who free themselves from the burden of going on earnestly to seek salvation with this, that they have finished the work, they have obtained a hope. The apostle, as eminent as he was, did not say within himself, "I am converted, and so am sure of salvation. Christ has promised it me; why need I labour any more to secure it? Yea, I am not only converted, but I have obtained great degrees of grace." But still he is violent after salvation. He did not keep looking back on the extraordinary discoveries he enjoyed at his first conversion, and the past great experience he had had from time to time. He did not content himself with the thought, that he possessed the most wonderful testimonies of God's favour, and of the love of Christ, already, that ever any enjoyed, even to his being caught up to the third heavens; but he forgot the things that were behind. He acted as though he did not consider that he had yet attained an interest in Christ

Phil. iii. 11, 12, 13, 14. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The apostle still sought that he might win Christ and his righteousness, and attain to his resurrection, not as though he had attained it already, or had already obtained a title to the crown. And this is especially the thing in which he calls on us to imitate his example in the text. It was not because Paul was at a loss whether he was truly converted or not, that he was still so earnest in seeking salvation. He not only thought that he was converted, and should go to heaven when he died, but he knew and spake particularly about it in this very epistle, in the twenty-first verse of the first chapter. "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain."<sup>591</sup> And in the [foregoing verse he says](#), "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." The apostle knew that though he was converted, yet there remained a great work that he must do, in order to his salvation. There was a narrow way to eternal glory, through which he must pass, and never could come to heaven in any other way. He knew it was absolutely necessary for him earnestly to seek salvation still; he knew there was no going to heaven in a slothful way. And therefore he did not seek salvation the less earnestly, for his having hope and assurance, but a great deal more. We nowhere read so much of his earnestness and violence for the kingdom of heaven before he was converted, as afterwards. The apostle's hope was not of a nature to make him slothful; it had a contrary effect. The assurance he had of victory, together with the necessity there was of fighting, engaged him to fight not as one that beat the air, but as one that wrestled with principalities and powers. Now this example the apostle does especially insist in the text that we ought to follow. And this should induce all present who think themselves converted, to inquire whether they seek salvation never the less earnestly, because they think it is well with them, and that they are now sure of heaven. Most certainly if the apostle was in the right way of acting, we in this place are generally in the wrong. For nothing is more apparent than that it is not thus with the generality of professors here, but that it is a common thing after they think they are safe, to be far less diligent and earnest in religion than before.

*Thirdly.* The apostle did not only diligently seek heaven after he knew he was converted, but was earnestly cautious lest he should be damned; as appears by the passage already cited. [1 Cor ix. 27.](#) "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Here you see the apostle is

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591 [Phil i. 21.](#)

very careful lest he should be a castaway, and denies his carnal appetites, and mortifies his flesh, for that reason. He did not say, "I am safe, I am sure I shall never be lost; why need I take any further care respecting it?" Many think because they suppose themselves converted, and so safe, that they have nothing to do with the awful threatenings of God's word, and those terrible denunciations of damnation that are contained in it. When they hear them, they hear them as things which belong only to others, and not at all to themselves, as though there were no application of what is revealed in the Scripture respecting hell, to the godly. And therefore, when they hear awakening sermons about the awful things that God has threatened to the wicked, they do not hear them for themselves, but only for others. But it was not thus with this holy apostle, who certainly was as safe from hell, and as far from a damnable state, as any of us. He looked upon himself as still nearly concerned in God's threatenings of eternal damnation, notwithstanding all his hope, and all his eminent holiness, and therefore gave great diligence, that he might avoid eternal damnation. For he considered that eternal misery was as certainly connected with a wicked life as ever it was, and that it was absolutely necessary that he should still keep under his body, and bring it into subjection, in order that he might not be damned; because indulging the lusts of the body and being damned were more surely connected together. The apostle knew that this conditional proposition was true concerning him, as ever it was. "If I live wickedly, or do not live in a way of universal obedience to God's commands, I shall certainly be a castaway." This is evident, because the apostle mentions a proposition of this nature concerning himself in that very chapter where he says, he kept under his body lest he should be a castaway. [1 Cor. ix. 16.](#) "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." What necessity was there upon the apostle to preach the gospel, though God had commanded him, for he was already converted, and was safe; and if he had neglected to preach the gospel, how could he have perished after he was converted? But yet this conditional proposition was still true; if he did not live a life of obedience to God, woe would be to him; woe to him, if he did not preach the gospel. The connexion still held. It is impossible a man should go any where else than to hell in a way of disobedience to God. And therefore he deemed it necessary for him to preach the gospel on that account, and on the same account he deemed it necessary to keep under his body, lest he should be a castaway. The connexion between a wicked life and damnation is so certain, that if a man lives a wicked life, it proves that all his supposed experiences are nothing. If a man at the last day be found a worker of iniquity, nothing else will be inquired of about him. Let him pretend what he will, Christ will say to him and all others like him, "Depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity."<sup>592</sup> " And God has revealed these threatenings and this connexion, not only to deter wicked men, but also godly men, from

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592 [Matt. vii. 23.](#)

sin. And though God will keep men that are converted from damnation, yet this is the means by which he will keep them from it; *viz.* he will keep them from a wicked life. And though he will keep them from a wicked life, yet this is one means by which he will keep them from it, *viz.* by their own caution to avoid damnation, and by his threatenings of damnation if they should live a wicked life. We have another remarkable instance in Job, who was an eminently holy man, yet avoided sin with the utmost care, because he would avoid destruction from God. [Job xxxi.](#) Surely we have as much cause to be cautious, that we do not expose ourselves to destruction from God, as holy Job had. We have not a greater stock of goodness than he. The apostle directs Christians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. [Phil. ii. 12.](#) And it is spoken of as the character of a true saint, that he trembles at God's word; [Isa. lxvi. 2.](#) which is to tremble especially at the awful threatenings of it, as Job did. Whereas the manner of many now is, whenever they think they are converted, to throw by those threatenings of God's word, as if they had no more to do with them, because they suppose they are converted, and out of danger. Christ gave his disciples, even those of them that were converted, as well as others, directions to strive for salvation; because broad was the way that leads to destruction, and men are so apt to walk in that way and be damned. [Matt. vii. 13, 14.](#) "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

*Fourthly.* The apostle did not seek salvation by his own righteousness. Though his sufferings were so very great, his labours so exceedingly abundant, yet he never accounted them as righteousness. He trod it under his feet, as utterly insufficient to recommend him to God. He gave diligence that he might be found in Christ, not having on his own righteousness, which is of God, through faith, as in the foregoing part of the chapter from which the text is taken, beginning with the [fourth verse.](#) "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."



*Fifthly.* In those earnest labours which he performed, he had respect to the recompence of the reward. He did it for an incorruptible crown. [1 Cor. ix. 25](#). He sought a high degree of glory, for he knew the more he laboured the more he should be rewarded, as appears from what he tells the Corinthians. [2 Cor. ix. 6](#). “He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.” And [1 Cor. iii. 8](#). “Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.” That he had respect to that crown of glory, which his Master had promised, in those great labours and sufferings, is evident from what he says to Timothy, a little before his death, [2 Tim. iv. 7, 8](#). “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” All Christians should follow his example in this also; they should not content themselves with the thought, that they have goodness enough to carry them to heaven, but should earnestly seek high degrees of glory; for the higher degrees of glory are promised to extraordinary labours for God, for no other reason, but that we should seek them.

2. I proceed to mention some of the virtues of Paul, that more immediately respect God and Christ, in which we ought to follow his example.

*First.* He was strong in faith. It may be truly said of him that he lived by faith. His faith seemed to be even without the least appearance of diffidence or doubt in his words or actions, but all seemed to proclaim, that he had God and Christ and the invisible world continually in view. Such a faith, that was in continual exercise in him, he professes, in [2 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8](#). “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” He always speaks of God and Christ and things invisible and future, as if he certainly knew them, and then saw them as fully and certainly as we see any thing that is immediately before our bodily eyes. He spoke as though he certainly knew, that God’s promise of eternal life should be accomplished, and gives this as the reason why he laboured so abundantly, and endured all manner of temporal sufferings and death, and was always delivered unto death for Christ’s sake, [2 Cor. iv. 11](#), &c. “For we which live are always delivered (into death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” He speaks of his earnest expectation and hope of the fulfilment of God’s promises. And a little before his death, when he was a prisoner, and when he knew that he was like to bear the trial of martyrdom, which is the greatest trial of faith, he expresses his faith in Christ in the strongest terms [2 Tim. i. 12](#). “For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” Such an example may well make us ashamed; for how weak and unsteady is the faith of most Christians! If now and then there seems to be

a lively exercise of faith, giving the person at that time a firm persuasion and confidence; yet how short are such exercises, how soon do they vanish! How often is faith shaken with one temptation; how often are the exercises of it interrupted with doubting, and how much is exhibited of a diffident, vibrating spirit! How little does our faith accomplish in times of trial; how often and how easily is our confidence in God shaken and interrupted, and how frequently does unbelief prevail! This is much to the dishonour of our Saviour Jesus Christ, as well as very painful to us. What a happy and glorious lot it is to live such a life of faith, as Paul lived! How far did he soar on the wings of his strong faith above those little difficulties, that continually molest us, and are ready to overcome us! Seeing we have such a blessed example set before us in the Scriptures, let it prompt us earnestly to seek, that we may soar higher also.

*Secondly.* Another virtue in which we should follow his example, is his great love to Christ. The Corinthians, who saw how the apostle acted, how he laboured, and how he suffered, and could see no worldly motive, were astonished. They wondered what it was, that so wonderfully influenced and actuated the man. The apostle says, that he was a spectacle to the world. But this was the immediate principle that moved him; his strong, his intense love to his glorious Lord and Master. This love constrained him, that he could do nothing else than strive and labour and seek for his salvation. This account he gives of it himself [2 Cor. v. 14](#). “The love of Christ constraineth us.” He had such a delight in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the knowledge and contemplation of him, that he tells us, he “counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.”<sup>593</sup> He speaks in very positive terms. He does not say merely, that he hopes he loves Christ, so as to despise other things in comparison of the knowledge of him; but “yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.”<sup>594</sup> And he assigns this reason why he even gloried in his sufferings for Christ’s sake; because the love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost. [Rom. v. 5](#). This expression seems to imply that he sensibly felt that holy affection, sweetly and powerfully diffused in his soul, like some precious, fragrant ointment. And how does he triumph in his love to Christ in the midst of his sufferings! [Rom. viii. 35, 36, 37](#). “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us.” May not this make us ashamed of our cold, dead hearts that we hear so often of Christ, and of his glorious excellencies and his wonderful love, with so little emotion, our hearts, being very commonly frozen up like a clod of earth by worldly affections. And it may be that now

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593 [Phil iii. 8](#).

594 [Phil iii. 8](#).

and then with much difficulty we persuade ourselves to do a little or expend a little for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; and then are ready to boast of it, that we have done so nobly. Such superior examples as we have are enough to make us for ever blush for our own attainments in the love of Christ, and rouse us earnestly to follow after those who have gone so far beyond us.

*Thirdly.* The apostle lived in a day when Christianity was greatly despised; yet he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Christians were every where despised by the great men of the world. Almost all those that made any figure in the world, men in honourable stations, men of learning, and men of wealth, despised Christianity, and accounted it a mean, contemptible thing to be a Christian, a follower and worshipper of a poor, crucified man. To be a Christian was regarded as what ruined a man's reputation. Christians were every where looked upon as fools, and were derided and mocked. They were the meanest of mankind, the offscouring of the world. This was a great temptation to Christians to be ashamed of the gospel. And the apostle Paul was more especially in such circumstances, as exposed him to this temptation. For before he was a Christian, he was in great reputation among his own countrymen. He was esteemed a young man of more than ordinary proficiency in learning, and was a man of high distinction among the Pharisees, a class of men of the first standing among the Jews. In times when religion is much despised, great men are more ready to be ashamed of it than others. Many of the great seem to think, that to appear religious men would make them look little. They do not know how to comply with showing a devout spirit, a spirit of supreme love to God, and a strict regard to God's commands. But yet the apostle was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ any where, or before any person. He was not ashamed of it among his own countrymen, the Jews, before their rulers, and scribes, and great men, but ever boldly professed it, and confronted them in their opposition. When he was at Athens, the chief seat of learning and of learned men in the world, though the learned men and philosophers there despised his doctrine, and called him a babbler for preaching the gospel; yet he felt no shame, but boldly disputed with and confounded those great philosophers, and converted some of them. And when he came to Rome, the metropolis and mistress of the world, where resided the emperor, and senators, and the chief rulers of the world, he was not ashamed of the gospel there. He tells the Romans; <sup>595</sup> "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The apostle was greatly derided and despised for preaching a crucified Jesus [1 Cor. iv. 13](#). "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." And in the [tenth verse](#). he says, "We are fools for Christ's sake." They were every where accounted and called fools. Yet the apostle was so far from being ashamed of the crucified Jesus, that he gloried

in him above all things [Gal. vi. 14](#). “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here is an example for us to follow, if at any time we fall in among those who hold religion in contempt, and will despise us for our pretensions to religion, and will be ready to deride us for being so precise, and look upon us as fools; that we may not be ashamed of religion, and yield to sinful compliances with vain and loose persons, lest we should appear singular, and be looked upon as ridiculous. Such a meanness of spirit possesses many persons, who are not worthy to be called Christians; and are such as Christ will be ashamed of when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

*Fourthly.* Another virtue in which we ought to follow the apostle, was his contempt of the world, and his heavenly-mindedness. He contemned all the vain enjoyments of the world. He despised its riches [Acts xx. 33](#). “I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel.” He despised the pleasures of the world. “I keep under my body.”<sup>596</sup> The apostle’s pleasures were in the sufferings of his body, instead of the gratification of its carnal appetites [2 Cor. xii. 10](#). “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake.” He despised the honours of the world [1 Thess. ii. 6](#). “Nor of men sought we glory; neither of you, nor yet of others.” He declares that the world was crucified unto him, and he unto the world. These were not the things that the apostle sought, but the things that were above, that were out of sight to other men [2 Cor. iv. 18](#). “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.” He longed greatly after heaven [2 Cor. v. 4](#). “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life.” And he tells us, that he knew no man after the flesh; that is, he did not look upon the men or things of this world, or regard them as related to the world, or as they respected the present life; but he considered all men and all things as they had relation to a spiritual nature, and to another world. In this the apostle acted as becomes a Christian; for Christians, those that are indeed so, are people that belong not to this world, and therefore, it is very unbecoming in them to have their minds taken up about these things. The example of Paul may make all such persons ashamed, who have their minds chiefly occupied about the things of the world, about gaining estates, or acquiring honours; and yet would be accounted fellow-disciples with the apostle, partakers of the same labours, and fellow-heirs of the same heavenly inheritance. And it should prompt us to strive for more indifference to the world, and for more heavenly-mindedness.

*Fifthly.* We ought also to follow the example of the apostle in his abounding in prayer and praise. He was very earnest, and greatly engaged in those duties, and continued in them, as appears from many passages [Rom. i. 8](#). “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness,

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596 [1 Cor ix. 7.](#)

whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." [Eph. i. 15, 16](#). "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers." [Col. i. 3](#). "We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." [1 Thess. i. 2, 3](#). "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." And [chapter iii. 9, 10](#). "For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly, that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?" [2 Tim. i. 3](#). "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, night and day."

*Sixthly.* We ought to follow him in his contentment under the allotments of Divine Providence. He was the subject of a vast variety of dispensations of Providence. He went through a great many changes, and was almost continually in suffering circumstances, sometimes in one respect, sometimes in another, and sometimes the subject of a great many kinds of suffering together. But yet he had attained to such a degree of submission to the will of God, as to be contented in every condition, and under all dispensations towards him [Phil. iv. 11, 12, 13](#). "Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Every where, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." What a blessed temper and disposition of mind was this to which Paul had arrived; and how happy is that man of whom it can now be said with truth! He is, as it were, out the reach of every evil. Nothing can touch him so as to disturb his rest, for he rests in every thing that God orders.

*Seventhly.* We should follow the apostle in his great caution in giving an account of his experience; not to represent more of himself in his words, than men should see in his deeds. In 2 Corinthians. he gives somewhat of an account how he had been favoured with visions and revelations, and had been caught up to the third heavens. And in the sixth verse, intimating that he could relate more, he breaks off, and forbears to say any thing further respecting his experience. And he gives this reason for it; *viz.* that he would avoid, in what he relates of himself, giving occasion for any one to be disappointed in him, in expecting more from him, by his own account of his experience and revelations, than he should see or hear of him in his conversation. His words are, "for though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth; but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me."<sup>597</sup> "Some may wonder at this in such a

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597 [2 Cor xii. 6](#).

man as the apostle, and may say, Why should a man so eminent in his conversation, be so cautious in this matter? Why need he be afraid to declare all the extraordinary things that he had witnessed, since his life was so agreeable, so eminently answerable to his experience? But yet you see the apostle forbore upon this very account. He knew there was great need of caution in this matter. He knew that if in giving an account of his extraordinary revelations, he should give rise to an expectation of too great things in his conversation, and should not live answerably to that expectation, it would greatly wound religion. He knew that its enemies would be ready to say presently, "Who is this? The man that gives so extraordinary an account of his visions and revelations, and peculiar tokens of God's favour to him; does he live no more conformably to it?" But if such a man as the apostle, so eminent in his life, was so cautious in this respect; surely we have need to be cautious, who fail so much more in our example than he did, and in whose conversation the enemy may find so much more occasion to speak reproachfully of religion. This teaches us that it would be better to refrain wholly from boasting of our experience, than to represent ourselves as better than our deeds and conversation represent us. For men will compare one with the other. And if they do not see a correspondence between them, this will be much more to the dishonour of God, than our account will be to his honour. Let Christians, therefore, be warned to be ever cautious in this respect, after the great example of the apostle.

3. I shall mention some of those virtues of the apostle, that more immediately respected men, in which we ought to follow his example.

*First.* His meekness under abuses, and his love to his enemies. There were multitudes that hated him, but there is no appearance of his hating any. The greater part of the world where he went, were his enemies. But he was the friend of every one, and laboured and prayed earnestly for the good of all. And when he was reproached and derided and buffeted, still it was with meekness and gentleness of spirit that he bore all, and wished well to them none the less, and sought their good [1 Cor. iv. 12, 13](#). "Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat." In that period of his great sufferings when he went up to Jerusalem, and there was such an uproar about him, and the people were in so furious a rage against him, eagerly thirsting for his blood; he discovered no anger or ill will towards his persecutors. At that time when he was a prisoner through their malice, and stood before king Agrippa, and Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; and his blood-thirsty enemies were standing by; he replied, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."<sup>598</sup> He wished that his accusers, and those who had bound themselves with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed him, had all of them as great privileges and as much of the favour of heaven as himself; and that they were altogether

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598 [Acts xxvi. 26-29.](#)



as he was, except his bonds and imprisonment, and those afflictions which they had brought upon him. He did not desire that they should be like him in that affliction, though it was the fruit of their own cruelty. And when some of the Corinthians, whom he had instructed and converted from heathenism, had dealt ill by him, had hearkened to some false teachers, that had been among them, who hated and reproached the apostle; he tells them, in [2 Cor. xii. 15.](#) notwithstanding these abuses, that still he would very gladly spend and be spent for them, though the more abundantly he loved them, the less he should be loved by them. If they returned him no thanks for his love, but only ill will and ill treatment, still he stood ready to spend and be spent for them. And though the apostle was so hated, and had suffered so many abuses from the unbelieving Jews, yet how does he express his love to them.? He prayed earnestly for them. [Rom. x. 1.](#) “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” And he went mourning for them. He went about with a heavy heart, and with continual grief and sorrow, from compassion for them, under the calamities of which they were the subjects; and he declares in the most solemn manner, that he had so great desire for their salvation, that he could find it in his heart to wish himself accursed from Christ for them, and to be offered up a sacrifice, if that might be a means of their salvation. [Rom. ix. 1, 2, 3.](#) We are to understand it of a temporal curse. He could be willing to die an accursed death, and so be made a curse for a time, as Christ was, if that might be a means of salvation to them. How are those reproved by this, who, when they are abused and suffer reproach or injury, have thereby indulged a spirit of hatred against their neighbour, a prejudice whereby they are always apt to entertain a distrust, and to seek and embrace opportunities against them, and to be sorry for their prosperity, and glad at their disappointments.

*Secondly.* He delighted in peace. When any contention happened among Christians, he was exceedingly grieved by it. As when he heard of the contentions that broke out in the Corinthian church. He intimates to the Philippians, how he should rejoice at their living in love and peace, and therefore earnestly entreats them that they should so live [Philip. ii. 1, 2.](#) “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” And he studied those things that should make for peace. To that end he yielded to every one as much as possible in those things that were lawful, and complied with the weakness and humours of others oftentimes, for the sake of peace. He declares that though he was free from all men, yet he had made himself servant of all. To the Jews he became as a Jew; to them that were under the law, as under the law; to them that were without law, as without law; to the weak he became as weak. He rather chose to please others than himself, for the sake of peace, and the good of their souls [1 Cor. x. 33.](#) “Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”

*Thirdly.* He was of a most tender compassionate spirit towards any that were in affliction. He showed such a spirit especially in the case of the incestuous Corinthian. The crime was very great, and the fault of the church was great in suffering such wickedness among them, and this occasioned the apostle to write with some sharpness to them respecting it. But when the apostle perceived that his reproof was laid to heart by the Corinthian Christians, and that they repented and their hearts were filled with sorrow, though he rejoiced at it, yet he was so affected with their sorrow, that his heart yearned towards them, and he was almost ready to repent that he had written so severely to them. He was full of concern about it, lest his former letter should have filled them with overmuch sorrow. “For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent; for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.<sup>599</sup>” So he had compassion for the incestuous man, though he had been guilty of so vile a crime, and was greatly concerned that he should be comforted. Whenever any Christian suffered or was hurt, the apostle says he felt it and suffered himself [2 Cor. xi. 29](#). “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?”

*Fourthly.* He rejoiced at others’ prosperity and joy. When he saw the soul of any one comforted, the apostle was a sharer with him; his soul was comforted also. When he saw any Christian refreshed in his spirit, his own spirit was refreshed [2 Cor. vii. 6, 7](#). “Nevertheless, God that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me, so that I rejoiced the more.” “Therefore we were comforted in your comfort; yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.<sup>600</sup>”

*Fifthly.* He delighted in the fellowship of God’s people. He longed after them when absent [Philip. i. 8](#). “For God is my record how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Christ.” And also, “Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown.<sup>601</sup>” So [Rom. i. 11, 12](#). “For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.”

*Sixthly.* He was truly courteous in his behaviour towards others. Though he was so great a man, and had so much honour put upon him of God, yet he was full of courtesy towards all men, rendering to all suitable respect. Thus when he was called before Jewish or heathen magistrates, he treated them with the honour and respect due to their places. When the Jews took him in the temple, though they behaved themselves more like devils than men, yet he

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599 [2 Cor. vii. 8](#).

600 [2 Cor vii. 13](#).

601 [Phil. iv. 1](#).



addresses them in terms of high respect, “Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence: <sup>602</sup>” calling the common Jews his *brethren*, and saluting the elders and scribes with the title *of fathers*, though they were a body of infidels. So when he pleads his cause before Festus, a heathen governor, he gives him the title that belonged to him in his station; calling him, “Most noble Festus. <sup>603</sup>” His courtesy also appears in his salutations in his epistles. He is particularly careful to mention many persons, directing that his salutations should be given to them. Such a degree of courtesy, in so great a person as this apostle, reproveth all those professing Christians, who, though far below him, are not courteous and respectful in their behaviour to their neighbours, and especially to their superiors. Incivility is here reproveth, and the too common neglect of Christians is reproveth, who do not take strict care, that their children are taught good manners, and politeness, and brought up in a respectful and courteous behaviour towards others.

4. I shall mention those virtues of the apostle that respected both God and men, in which we should imitate his example.

*First.* He was a man of a most public spirit; he was greatly concerned for the prosperity of Christ’s kingdom, and the good of his church. We see a great many men wholly engaged in pursuit of their worldly interests: many who are earnest in the pursuit of their carnal pleasures, many who are eager in the pursuit of honours, and many who are violent in the pursuit of gain; but we probably never saw any man more engaged to advance his estate, nor more taken up with his pleasures, nor more greedy of honour, than the apostle Paul was about the flourishing of Christ’s kingdom, and the good of the souls of men. The things that grieve other men are outward crosses; losses in estates, or falling under contempt, or bodily sufferings. But these things grieved not him. He made little account of them. The things that grieved him, were those that hurt the interests of religion; and about those his tears were shed. Thus he was exceedingly grieved, and wept greatly, for the corruptions that had crept into the church of Corinth, which was the occasion of his writing his first epistle to them [2 Cor. ii. 4](#). “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you, with many tears.” The things about which other men are jealous, are their worldly advantages and pleasures. If these are threatened, their jealousy is excited, since they are above all things dear to them. But the things that kindled the apostle’s jealousy, were those that seemed to threaten the interests of religion, and the good of the church: [2 Cor. xi. 2, 3](#). “For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” The things at which other men rejoice are their amassing earthly treasures, their being ad-

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602 [Acts xxii. 1](#)

603 [Acts xxvi. 25](#)

vanced to honours, their being possessed of outward pleasures and delights. But these excited not the apostle's joy; but when he saw or heard of any thing by which the interests of religion were promoted, and the church of Christ prospered, then he rejoiced: [1 Thess. i. 3.](#) "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." And [chapter ii. 20.](#) "Ye are our glory and joy." He rejoiced at those things, however dear they cost him, how much soever he lost by them in his temporal interest, if the welfare of religion and the good of souls were promoted; [Phil. ii. 16, 17.](#) "Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all." He rejoiced at the steadfastness of saints: [Col. ii. 5.](#) "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." And he rejoiced at the conviction of sinners, and in whatever tended to it. He rejoiced at any good which was done, though by others, and though it was done accidentally by his enemies: [Phil. i. 15,16, 17,18.](#) "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds. But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." When the apostle heard any thing of this nature, it was good news to him: [1 Thess. iii. 6, 7.](#) "But now, when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also you; therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith. "When he heard such tidings, his heart was wont to be enlarged in the praises of God: [Col. i. 3, 4.](#) "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints." He was not only wont to praise God when he first heard such tidings, but as often as he thought of such things, they were so joyful to him, that he readily praised God [Phil. i. 3, 4, 5.](#) "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now." Let us compare ourselves with such an example, and examine how far we are of such a spirit. Let those on this occasion reflect upon themselves, whose hearts are chiefly engaged in their own private temporal concerns, and are not much concerned respecting the interests of religion and the church of Christ, if they can obtain their private aims; who are greatly grieved when things go contrary to their worldly prosperity, who see religion, as it were, weltering in its blood, without much sorrow of heart. It may be, that they will say; It is greatly to be lamented that there is such declension, and it is a sorrowful thing that sin so much prevails. But if we would look into their hearts, how cold and careless should we see them. Those words are words

of course. They express themselves thus chiefly, because they think it creditable to lament the decay of religion; but they are ten times as much concerned about other things as these, about their own private interest, or some secular affairs of the town. If any thing seems to threaten their being disappointed in these things, how readily are they excited and alarmed; but how quiet and easy in their spirit, notwithstanding all the dark clouds that appear over the cause and kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of those around them! How quick and how high is their zeal against those, who, they think, unjustly oppose them in their temporal interests; but how low is their zeal, comparatively, against those things that are exceedingly pernicious of the interests of religion! If their own credit is touched, how are they awakened! but they can see the credit of religion wounded, and bleeding, and dying, with little hearty concern. Most men are of a private, narrow spirit. They are not of the spirit of the apostle Paul, nor of the psalmist, who preferred Jerusalem before his chief joy. [Psal. cxxxvii. 6.](#)

*Secondly.* We ought to follow the apostle in his diligent and laborious endeavours to do good. We see multitudes incessantly labouring and striving after the world; but not more than the apostle laboured to advance the kingdom of his dear Master, and the good of his fellow-creatures. His work was very great, and attended with great difficulties and opposition; and his labour was answerably great. He laboured abundantly more than any of the apostles: [1 Cor. xv. 10.](#) “I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” How great were the pains he took in preaching and in travelling from place to place over so great part of the world, by sea and land, and probably for the most part on foot, when he travelled by land: instructing and converting the heathen, disputing with gainsayers, and heathen Jews, and heretics, strenuously opposing and fighting against the enemies of the church of Christ, wrestling not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places; acting the part of a good soldier, as one that goes a warfare; putting on Christ and using the whole armour of God; labouring to establish, and confirm, and build up the saints, reclaiming those that were wandering, delivering those that were insnared, enlightening the dark, comforting the disconsolate, and succouring the tempted; rectifying disorders that had happened in churches, exercising ecclesiastical discipline towards offenders, and admonishing the saints of the covenant of grace; opening and applying the Scriptures, ordaining persons and giving them directions, and assisting those that were ordained; and writing epistles, and sending messengers to one and another part of the church of Christ! He had the care of the churches lying continually upon him: [2 Cor. xi. 28.](#) “Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” These things occasioned him to be continually engaged in earnest labour. He continued in it night and day, sometimes almost the whole night, preaching and admonishing, as appears by [Acts xx. 7, 11.](#) “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his

speech until midnight. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.” And he did all freely, without any view to any temporal gain. He tells the Corinthians that he would gladly spend and be spent for them. Besides his labouring in the work of the gospel, he laboured very much, yea, sometimes night and day, in a handicraft trade to procure subsistence, that he might not be chargeable to others, and so hinder the gospel of Christ: [1 Thess. ii. 9](#). “For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail, for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.” And he continued this course of labour as long as he lived. He never was weary in well-doing; and though he met with continual opposition, and thousands of difficulties, yet nothing discouraged him. But he kept on, pressing forward in this course of hard, constant labour to the end of his life, as appears by what he says just before his death, [2 Tim. iv. 6, 7](#). “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” And the effects and fruits of the apostle’s labours witnessed for him. The world was blessed by the good he did; not one nation only, but multitudes of nations. The effects of his labours were so great in so many nations before he had laboured twenty years, that the heathens called it his turning the world upside down. [Acts xvii. 6](#). This very man was the chief instrument in that great work of God, the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Roman world. And he seems to have done more good, far more good, than any other man ever did from the beginning of the world to this day. He lived after his conversion not much more than thirty years; and in those thirty years he did more than a thousand men commonly do in an age. This example may well make us reflect upon ourselves, and consider how little we do for Christ, and for our fellow-creatures. We profess to be Christians as well as the apostle Paul, and Christ is worthy that we should serve him as Paul did. But how small are our labours for God and Christ and our fellow-creatures! Though many of us keep ourselves busy, how are our labour and strength spent, and with what is our time filled up? Let us consider ourselves a little, and the manner of spending our time. We labour to provide for ourselves and families, to maintain ourselves in credit, and to make our part good among men. But is that all for which we are sent into the world? Did he who made us and gave us our powers of mind and strength of body, and who gives us our time and our talents, give them to us chiefly to be spent in this manner; or in serving him? Many years have rolled over the heads of some of us, and what have we lived for; what have we been doing all this time? How much is the world the better for us? Were we here only to eat and to drink, and to devour the good which the earth produces? Many of the blessings of Providence have been conferred upon us; and where is the good that we have done in return? If we had never been born, or if we had died in infancy, of how much good would the world have been deprived of? Such reflections should be made with concern, by those who pretend to be Christians. For certainly God does not plant vines in

his vineyard, except for the fruit which he expects they should bring forth. He does not hire labourers into his vineyard, but to do service. They who live only for themselves, live in vain, and shall at last be cut down as cumberers of the earth. Let the example of Paul make us more diligent to do good for the time to come. Men that do but little good are very ready to excuse themselves, and to say, that God has not succeeded their endeavours. But is it any wonder that we have not been succeeded, when we have been no more engaged? When God sees any person thoroughly and earnestly engaged, continuing in it, and really faithful, he is wont to succeed them in some good measure. You see how wonderfully he succeeded the great labours of the apostle.

*Thirdly.* He did not only encounter great labours, but he exercised also his utmost skill and contrivance for the glory of God, and the good of his fellow-creatures; [2 Cor. xii. 16.](#) Being crafty, I caught you with guile.” How do the men of the world not only willingly labour to obtain worldly good, but how much craft and subtlety do they use? And let us consider how it is here among ourselves. How many are our contrivances to secure and advance our own worldly concerns! Who can reckon up the number of all the schemes that have been formed among us, to gain money, and honours, and accomplish particular worldly designs? How subtle are we to avoid those things that might hurt us in our worldly interest, and to baffle the designs of those who may be endeavouring to hurt us! But how little is contrived for the advancement of religion, and the good of our neighbours! How many schemes are laid by men to promote their worldly designs, where one is laid for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of men! How frequent are the meetings of neighbours to determine how they may best advance such and such worldly affairs! But how seldom are there such meetings to revive sinking religion, to maintain and advance the credit of the gospel, and to accomplish charitable designs for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, and the comfort and well-being of mankind! May not these considerations justly be a source of lamentation? How many men are wise in promoting their worldly interests; but what a shame is it, that so few show themselves wise as serpents and harmless as doves for Christ! And how commonly is it the reverse of what the apostle advises the Christian Romans, “I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.”<sup>604</sup> Is it not often on the contrary with professing Christians, as it was with the people of Judah and Jerusalem; “They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge?”<sup>605</sup>

*Fourthly.* The apostle Paul did willingly forego those things that were in themselves lawful, for the furtherance of the interests of religion and the good of men. Thus marriage was a thing lawful for the apostle Paul as well as for other men, as he himself asserts; but he did not use the liberty he had in this matter, because he thought he might be under greater

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604 [Rom xvi. 19](#)

605 [Jer. iv. 22](#)

advantages to spread the gospel in a single than a married state. So it was lawful for the apostle to take the other course of life, as in eating and drinking, and freely using all kinds of wholesome food. And it was in itself a lawful thing for the apostle to demand a maintenance of those to whom he preached. But he forbore those things, because he supposed that in his circumstances, and in the circumstances of the church of Christ in that day, he could more advance the interests of religion and the good of men without them. For the gospel's sake, and for the good of men, he was willing to forego all the outward advantages he could derive from them. *1 Cor. viii. 13.* "Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." He would not only avoid those things that were useless in themselves, but those also that gave any occasion to sin, or which led or exposed either himself or others to sin. Then it follows in the [next chapter.](#), "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you; for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?" The apostle did not only forbear some little things, but he put himself to great difficulties by forbearing those things that were in themselves lawful. It cost him a great deal of labour of body to maintain himself. But yet he willingly laboured, working with his own hands; and as he says, though he was free from all men, yet he made himself the servant of all, that he might gain the more. Let this induce such persons to consider themselves, whether they act altogether as become Christians, who look upon it as a sufficient excuse for all the liberties they take, that the things in which they allow themselves, are in themselves lawful, that they are nowhere forbidden, though they cannot deny but that considered in their circumstances, they are of ill tendency, and expose them to temptation, and really tend to wound the credit and interest of religion, and to be a stumbling-block to others, or as the apostle expresses it, tend to cause others to offend. But they uphold themselves with this, that the things which they practise are not absolutely unlawful in themselves, and therefore they will not hearken to any counsels to avoid them. They think with themselves that it is unreasonable they should be tied up so strictly; that they may not take one and another liberty, and must be so stiff and precise above others. But why did not the apostle talk after their manner? Why did not he say within himself, It is unreasonable that I should deny myself lawful meat and drink merely to comply with the consciences of a few weak persons, that are unreasonable in their scruples? Why should I deny myself the comforts of marriage; why should I deny myself that maintenance which Christ himself has ordained for ministers, only to avoid the objection of unreasonable men? But the apostle was of another spirit. What he aimed at was by any means to promote the



interest of religion, and the good of the church. And he had rather forego all the common comforts and enjoyments of life, than that religion should suffer.

*Fifthly.* The apostle willingly endured innumerable and extreme sufferings for the honour of Christ and the good of men. His sufferings were very great; and that not only once or twice, but he went through a long series of sufferings, that continued from the time of his conversion as long as his life lasted. So that his life was not only a life of extraordinary labour, but a life of extreme sufferings also. Labours and sufferings were mixed together, and attended each other to the end of the race which he ran. He endured sufferings of all kinds, even those that cannot consist in the loss of temporal things. He tells us he had suffered the loss of all things, [Phil. iii. 8.](#) all his former enjoyments, which he had before his conversion. And he endured many kinds of positive afflictions. [1 Cor. iv. 11, 12.](#) “Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it.” [2 Cor. vi. 4-11.](#) “But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” None of the apostles went through so great and such various afflictions as he: [2 Cor. xi. 23-28.](#) “Are they ministers of Christ? I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” His sufferings were so extreme, that he did not go through a series of sufferings merely, but might be said, as it were, to go through a series of deaths. He did in effect endure the pains of death over and over again almost continually, and therefore he expresses himself as he does [2 Cor. iv. 9-11.](#) “Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” [Rom. viii. 30.](#) “As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” [1 Cor. xv. 31.](#) “I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord,

I die daily.” He was so pursued and pressed by troubles, sometimes outward and inward troubles together, that he had no rest. [2 Cor. vii. 5.](#) “For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side: without were fightings, within were fears.” Sometimes his sufferings were so extreme that his nature seemed just ready to faint under them: [2 Cor. i. 8.](#) “For we would, not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.” And at last the apostle was deprived of his life. He suffered a violent death at Rome under the hand of that cruel tyrant, Nero, soon after he wrote the second epistle to Timothy. These things he endured for Christ’s sake; for the advancement of his kingdom; as he says, he was always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake. And those he endured also from love to men, and from an earnest desire of their good: [2 Tim. ii. 10.](#) “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” He knew what afflictions awaited him beforehand; but he would not avoid his duty because of such afflictions. He was so resolute in seeking Christ’s glory, and the good of men, that he would pursue these objects, notwithstanding what might befall him: [Acts xx. 22-24.](#) “And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Yet he went through them cheerfully and willingly, and delighted to do God’s will, and to promote others’ good, though it was at this great cost: [Col. i. 24.](#) “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” And he was never weary. He did not, after he had suffered a long time, excuse himself, and say he thought he had done his part. Now here appears Christianity in its proper colours. To be of such a spirit as this, is to be of such a spirit as Christ so often requires of us, if we would be his disciples. This is to sell all and give to the poor. This is to take up the cross daily and follow Christ. To have such a spirit as this, is to have good evidence of being a Christian indeed, a thorough Christian, one that has given himself to Christ without reserve; one that hates father and mother, and wife, and children, and sisters, yea and his own life also; one that loses his life for Christ’s sake, and so shall find it. And though it is not required of all that they should endure so great sufferings as Paul did; yet it is required and absolutely necessary, that many Christians should be in a measure of this spirit, should be of a spirit to lose all things and suffer all things for Christ, rather than not obey his commands and seek his glory. How well may our having such an example as this set before our eyes make us ashamed, who are so backward now and then to lose little things, to put ourselves a little out of our way, to deny ourselves some convenience, to deny our sinful appetites, or to incur the displeasure of a neighbour. Alas! what



thought have we of Christianity, to make much of such things as these; to make so many objections, to keep back, and contrive ways to excuse ourselves, when a little difficulty arises! What kind of thoughts had we of being Christians, when we first undertook to be such, or first pretended a willingness to be Christians? Did we never sit down and count the cost, or did we cast it up at this rate, that we thought the whole sum would not amount to such little sufferings as lie in our way?

II. I now proceed to show under what special obligations we are to follow the good example of this apostle.

Beside the obligation that rests upon us to follow the good example of all, and beside the eminence of his example, there are some special reasons why we are under greater obligations to be influenced by the good example of this great apostle, than by the very same example in others. This appears if we consider,

1. In general, that those whom God has especially appointed to be teachers in the Christian church, he has also set to be examples in his church. It is part of the charge that belongs to teachers, to be examples to others. It is one thing that belongs to their work and office. So this is part of the charge that the apostle gives to Timothy,<sup>606</sup> “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” The same charge is given to Titus, “In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works.<sup>607</sup>” And this is part of the charge the apostle Peter gives to the elders and teachers of the Christian church, “The elders which are among you, I exhort; feed the flock of God. Neither being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.<sup>608</sup>” Thus Christ, the chief Shepherd of the sheep, whom God ordained to be the greatest teacher, he also ordained to be the greatest example to his church. And so those shepherds and teachers that are under him, according as they are appointed to be teachers, are also to be examples. They are to be guides of the flock in two ways, *viz.* by teaching and by example, as shepherds lead their flocks in two ways; partly by their voice by calling them, and partly by going before them, and by leading the way. And indeed guiding by word and guiding by example, are but two different ways of teaching; and therefore both alike belong to the office of teachers in the Christian church. But if this be so, if God has especially set those to be examples in the Christian church whom he has made its teachers, then it will follow, that wherever they have left us good examples, those examples are especially to be regarded. For God has doubtless made the duty of teachers towards the church, and the duty of the church towards her teachers, to answer one another. And therefore the charge is mutual. The charge is not only to teachers to set good examples, but the charge is to the church to regard and follow

606 [1 Tim iv. 12.](#)

607 [Titus ii. 7.](#)

608 [1 Peter v. 1.](#)

their good examples: [Heb. xiii. 7.](#) “Remember them which have the rule over you, which have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” It is with respect to the good examples of the teachers of the Christian church, as it is with their words, their instructions and exhortations. We ought to hear good instructions and good counsels of any one, let him be whom he may. But yet we are under special obligations to hearken to the good instructions and examples of those whom God has made our teachers; for that is the very office to which God has appointed them to teach and to counsel us.

2. There are two things that are to be observed in particular of the apostle Paul, which, from the foregoing general observation, will show that we are under very special obligations to regard and follow his good example.

*First.* God hath appointed the apostle Paul not only to be a greater teacher of the Christian church in that age in which he lived, but the principal teacher of his church of any mere man in all succeeding ages. He was set of God not only to teach the church then, when he lived, but God has made him our teacher by his inspired writings. The Christian church is taught by the apostle still, and has been in every age since he lived. It is not with the penmen of the Scriptures, as it is with other teachers of the Christian church. Other teachers are made the teachers of a particular flock in the age in which they live. But the penmen of the Scriptures hath God made to be the teachers of the church universal in all ages. And therefore, as particular congregations ought to follow the good examples of their pastors, so the church universal in all ages ought to observe and follow the good examples of the prophets and apostles, that are the penmen of the Scriptures, in all ages. So the apostle James commands us to take the ancient prophets for our example, because they have been appointed of God to be our teachers, and have spoken to us in the name of the Lord. [James v. 10.](#) “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and patience.” The prophets and apostles, in that God has made them penmen of the Scriptures, are, next to Christ, the foundation of the church of God: [Eph. ii. 20.](#) “Built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” And Paul, above all the penmen of the Scriptures, is distinguished of God as being made by him the principal teacher of the Christian church of any mere man. Moses taught gospel truths under types and shadows, whereby he did, as it were, put a veil over his face. But Paul used great plainness of speech. [2 Cor. iii. 12, 13.](#) Moses was a minister of the Old Testament and of the letter, that kills. But the apostle Paul is the principal minister of the New Testament, of the spirit, and not of the letter. [2 Cor. iii. 6, 7.](#) Christ has empowered this apostle to be the penmen of more of the New Testament than any other man, and it is by him chiefly that we have the great doctrine of it explained. And God has actually made this apostle the principal founder of the Christian church under Christ. He doubtless did more towards it than all the other apostles; and therefore is to be looked upon

as the principal shepherd under Christ of the whole flock of Christ, which is a great obligation on the flock to regard and follow his good example.

*Secondly.* We, who are Gentiles, are especially under obligations to regard his teaching and example, because it has been mainly by means of this apostle that we have been brought into the Christian church. He was the great apostle of the Gentiles; the main instrument of that great work of God, the calling of the Gentiles. It was chiefly by his means that all the countries of Europe came by the gospel. And so it was through his hands that our nation came by the gospel. They either had the gospel from him immediately, or from those who had it from him. Had it not been for the labours of this apostle, our nation might have remained to this day in gross heathenism. This consideration should especially engage us to regard him as our guide, and should endear his good example to us. The apostle often exhorts those churches, as the church of Corinth, Philippi, and others which he had converted from heathenism, and to which he had been a spiritual father, to be followers of him wherein he followed Christ. And we are some of them. We have been the more remarkably converted from heathenism by this apostle, and we ought to acknowledge him as our spiritual father. And we are obliged to follow his good example as children should follow the good example of their parents.

I now proceed to a general

## APPLICATION

Of the whole that has been said on this subject, which may be by way of exhortation to all earnestly to endeavour to follow the good example of this great apostle. We have heard what a spirit the apostle manifested, and after what manner he lived in the world; how earnestly he sought his own salvation, and that not only before, but also after, his conversion, and how earnestly cautious he was to avoid eternal damnation, long after he had obtained a saving interest in Christ. We have heard how strong he was in faith, how great was his love to his Lord and Saviour, and how he was not ashamed of the gospel, but gloried in the cross of Christ; how he abounded in prayer and praise; how he contemned the wealth, and pleasures, and glory of the world; how contented he was with the allotments of Providence; how prudent and cautious he was in giving an account of his achievements, lest he should represent more of himself in words than men should see of him in deeds. We have heard how much he suffered under abuses, how he loved his enemies, how he delighted in peace, and rejoiced with those that rejoiced, and wept with those that wept, and delighted in the fellowship of God's people, and how courteous he was in his behaviour towards others. We have heard of what a public spirit he was, how greatly concerned for the prosperity of Christ's kingdom and the good of his church, how diligent, laborious, and indefatigable in his endeavours to do good; how he studied for ways and means to promote this end, how he exercised his skill and contrivance, willingly foregoing those things that were in themselves lawful, and willingly enduring innumerable and extraordinary sufferings. My exhortation now is to imitate this example; and to enforce this, I desire that several things may be considered.

1. Let it be considered, why it is that we have so much written of the good example of this apostle, unless that we might follow it. We often read those things in the Holy Scriptures which have now been set before us on this subject; and to what purpose, unless we apply them to ourselves? We had as good never have been informed how well the apostle behaved himself, if we do not endeavour to follow him. We all profess to be Christians, and we ought to form our notions of Christianity from what is written in the Scriptures by the prophets, and from the precepts and excellent examples that are there set before us. One great reason why many professors live no better, walk no more amiably, and are in so many things so unlovely, is, that they have not good notions of Christianity. They do not seem to have a right idea of that religion that is taught us in the New Testament. They have not well learned Christ. The notions that some persons entertain of Christianity are very distorted, and ill conformed to the gospel. The notions of others are very erroneous. They lay the chief stress wrong, upon things on which it ought not to be laid. They place religion almost altogether in some particular duties, leaving out others of great weight, and, it may be, the weightier matters of the law. And the reason why they have no better notions of Christianity is, because



they take their notions of it chiefly from those sources whence they ought not to take them. Some take them from the general cry or voice of the people, among whom they live. They see that others place religion merely, if not almost wholly, in such and such things. And hence their notions of Christianity are formed. Or they take their notions from the example of particular individuals now living, who are in great reputation for godliness. And their notion of Christianity is, that it consists in being like such persons. Hence they never have just notions of religion: [2 Cor. x. 12](#). “They, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” If we would have right notions of Christianity, we should observe those in whom it shone, of whom we have an account in the Scriptures. For they are the examples that God himself has selected to set before us to that end, that from thence we might form our notions of religion; and especially the example of this apostle. God knows how to select examples. If therefore we would have right notions of Christianity, we ought to follow the good example of the apostle Paul. He was certainly a Christian indeed, and an eminent Christian. We have God’s abundant testimony. But Christianity is in itself an amiable thing, and so it appeared in the example of this apostle. And if the professors of it would form their notions of it from such examples as those, rather than from any particular customs and examples that we have now, it would doubtless appear much more amiable in their practice than it now does; it would win others. They would not be a stumbling-block. Their light would shine. They would command reverence and esteem, and be of powerful influence.

2. If we follow the good example which this apostle has set us, it will secure to us the like comfortable and sweet influence of God, that he enjoyed through the course of his life. Let us consider what a happy life the apostle lived; what peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, he possessed: [2 Cor. i. 12](#). “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience.” How did he abound with comfort and joy, even in the midst of the greatest afflictions: [2 Cor. i. 3-5](#). “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comforts wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ.” In all his tribulation his joy was exceedingly great. He seems to want words to express the greatness of the joy which he possessed continually. He says he was filled with comfort, and was exceedingly joyful: [2 Cor. vii. 4](#). “I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.” How does the apostle’s love seem to overflow with joy! [2 Cor. vi. 10,11](#). “As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.” How happy is such a life! How well is such happiness worth pursuing! We are ourselves the occasion of our own wounds and troubles. We bring darkness on our own souls. Professing Christians, by indulging their sloth, seek their own ease and comfort;

but they defeat their own aim. The most laborious and the most self-denying Christians are the most happy. There are many who are complaining of their darkness, and inquiring what they shall do for light, and the comfortable presence of God.

3. This would be the way to be helped against temptation, and to triumph over our spiritual enemies as the apostle did. Satan assaulted him violently, and men continually persecuted him. The powers of hell combined against him. But God was with him, and made him more than a conqueror. He lived a life of triumph: [2 Cor. ii. 14](#). "Now thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ." Let us consider what an excellent privilege it would be thus to be helped against temptation. What a grief of mind is it to be so often overcome.

4. This would secure us honour from God, and an extraordinary intimacy with him. Moses enjoyed a great intimacy with God, but the apostle Paul in some respects a greater. Moses conversed with God in mount Sinai. Paul was caught up to the third heavens. He had abundant visions and revelations more than he has told us, lest any should think him to boast. He was favoured with more of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit than any other person. And though we cannot expect to be honoured with intimacy with heaven in just the same way, yet if we in good earnest apply ourselves, we may have greater and greater intimacy, so that we may come with boldness, and converse with God as a friend.

This would be the way to make us great blessings in the world. The apostle, by means of such a spirit and such a behaviour as you have heard, was made the greatest blessing to the world of any who ever lived on earth, except the man Christ Jesus himself. Wherever he went, there went a blessing with him. To have him enter a city was commonly made a greater mercy to it than if the greatest monarch on earth had come there, scattering his treasures around him among the inhabitants. Wherever he went, there did, as it were, a light shine about him, seemingly to enlighten the benighted children of men. Silver and gold he had none. But what he imparted to many thousands was worth more to them than if he had bestowed upon them the richest jewels of which the Roman emperor was possessed. And he was not only a blessing to that generation, but has been so since his death, by the fruits of what he did in his lifetime, the foundations he then laid, and by the writings which he has left for the good of mankind, to the end of the world. He then was, and ever since has been, a light to the church next in brightness to the Sun of righteousness. And it was by means of his excellent spirit and excellent behaviour that he became such a blessing. Those were the things that God made useful in him for doing so much good. And if we should imitate the apostle in such a spirit and behaviour, the undoubted consequence would be, that we also should be made great blessings in the world; we should not live in vain, but should carry a blessing with us wherever we went. Instead of being cumberers of the ground, multitudes would be fed with our fruit, and would have reason to praise and bless God that he ever gave us a being. Now, how melancholy a consideration may it be to any persons that

they have lived to no purpose; that the world would have been deprived of nothing, if they had never been born; and it may be, have been better without them than with them! How desirable is it to be a blessing! How great was the promise made to Abraham, “In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed!”<sup>1</sup>”

6. For us to follow the good example of the apostle Paul, would be the way for us to die as he did. [2 Tim. iv. 6–8](#). “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.”

7. This would secure us a distinguished crown of glory hereafter. It is thought by some, and not without great probability, that the apostle Paul is the very next in glory to the man Jesus Christ himself. This is probable from his having done more good than any, and from his having done it through so great labours and sufferings. The apostle tells us, “Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”<sup>2</sup>”

I shall conclude with mentioning some things as encouragements for us to endeavour to follow the excellent example of this great apostle. Many may be ready to say that it is in vain for them to try. The apostle was a person so greatly distinguished; it is in vain for them to endeavour to be like him. But for your encouragement, consider,

1. That the apostle was a man of like passions with us. He had naturally the same heart, the same corruptions; was under the same circumstances, the same guilt, and the same condemnation. There is this circumstance that attends the apostle’s example to encourage us to endeavour to imitate him, which did not attend the example of Christ. And yet we are called upon to imitate the example of Christ. This is probably one main reason why not only the example of Christ, but also those of mere men, are set before us in the Scriptures. Though you may think you have no great reason to hope to come up to the apostle’s degree, yet that is no reason why you should not make his good example your pattern, and labour, as far as in you lies, to copy after him.

2. This apostle, before he was converted, was a very wicked man, and a vile persecutor. He often speaks of it himself. He sinned against great light.

3. He had much greater hinderances and impediments to eminent holiness from without than any of us have. His circumstances made it more difficult for him.

4. The same God, the same Saviour, and the same head of divine influence, are ready to help our sincere endeavours, that helped him. Let us therefore not excuse ourselves, but in good earnest endeavour to follow so excellent an example. And then, however weak we

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1 [Gen xii. 3](#).

2 [1 Cor iii. 8](#).

are in ourselves, we may hope to experience Christ's support, and be able to say from our own experience, as the apostle did before him, "when I am weak, then am I strong."<sup>3</sup>

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3 [2 Cor 12:10](#)



## S E R M O N   V I .

luke xxii. 44.

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

our Lord Jesus Christ, in his original nature, was infinitely above all suffering, for he was “God over all, blessed for evermore;”<sup>609</sup> but, when he became man, he was not only capable of suffering, but partook of that nature that is remarkably feeble and exposed to suffering. The human nature, on account of its weakness, is in Scripture compared to the grass of the field, which easily withers and decays. So it is compared to a leaf; and to the dry stubble; and to a blast of wind: and the nature of feeble man is said to be but dust and ashes, to have its foundation in the dust, and to be crushed before the moth. It was this nature, with all its weakness and exposedness to sufferings, which Christ, who is the Lord God omnipotent, took upon him. He did not take the human nature on him in its first, most perfect and vigorous state, but in that feeble forlorn state which it is in since the fall; and therefore Christ is called “a tender plant,”<sup>610</sup> and “a root out of a dry ground.” *Isa liii. 2.* “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Thus, as Christ’s principal errand into the world was suffering, so, agreeably to that errand, he came with such a nature and in such circumstances, as most made way for his suffering; so his whole life was filled up with suffering, he began to suffer in his infancy, but his suffering increased the more he drew near to the close of his life. His suffering after his public ministry began, was probably much greater than before; and the latter part of the time of his public ministry seems to have been distinguished by suffering. The longer Christ lived in the world, the more men saw and heard of him, the more they hated him. His enemies were more and more enraged by the continuance of the opposition that he made to their lusts; and the devil having been often baffled by him, grew more and more enraged, and strengthened the battle more and more against him: so that the cloud over Christ’s head grew darker and darker, as long as he lived in the world, till it was in its greatest blackness when he hung upon the cross and cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! Before this, it was exceedingly dark, in the time of his agony in the garden; of which we have an account in the words now read; and which I propose to make the subject of my present discourse. The word agony properly signifies *an earnest strife*, such as is witnessed in wrestling, running, or fighting. And therefore in *Luke xiii. 24.* “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able;” the word in the

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609    *2 Cor. xi. 31*

610    *Isa. liii. 2*

original, translated *strive*, is **Greek**. “*Agonize*, to enter in at the strait gate.” The word is especially used for that sort of strife, which in those days was exhibited in the Olympic games, in which men strove for the mastery in running, wrestling, and other such kinds of exercises; and a prize was set up that was bestowed on the conqueror. Those, who thus contended, were, in the language then in use, said to *agonize*. Thus the apostle in his epistle to the Christians of Corinth, a city of Greece, where such games were annually exhibited, says in allusion to the strivings of the combatants, “And every man that *striveth for the mastery*,” in the original, every one that *agonizeth*, “is temperate in all things.” The place where those games were held, was called **Greek**, or *the place of agony*; and the word is particularly used in Scripture for that striving in earnest prayer wherein persons wrestle with God: they are said to *agonize*, or to *be in agony*, in prayer. So the word is used **Rom. xv. 30**. “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye *strive* together with me in your prayers to God for me:” in the original **Greek**, that ye *agonize together* with me. So **Coloss. iv. 12**. “Always *labouring* fervently for you in prayer, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God:” in the original **Greek**, *agonizing* for you. So that when it is said in the text that Christ was *in an agony*, the meaning is, that his soul was in a *great and earnest strife and conflict*. It was so in two respects:

1. As his soul was in a great and sore conflict with those terrible and amazing views and apprehensions which he then had.

2. As he was at the same time in great labour and earnest strife with God in prayer.

I propose therefore, in discoursing on the subject of Christ’s agony, distinctly to unfold it, under these two propositions,

- I. That the soul of Christ in his agony in the garden had a sore conflict with those terrible and amazing views and apprehensions, of which he was then the subject.

- II. That the soul of Christ in his agony in the garden had a great and earnest labour and struggle with God in prayer.

- I. The soul of Christ in his agony in the garden had a sore conflict with those terrible amazing views and apprehensions, of which he was then the subject.

In illustrating this proposition I shall endeavour to show,

1. What those views and apprehensions were.

2. That the conflict or agony of Christ’s soul was occasioned by those views and apprehensions.

3. That this conflict was peculiarly great and distressing; and,

4. What we may suppose to be the special design of God in giving Christ those terrible views and apprehensions, and causing him to suffer that dreadful conflict, before he was crucified.

I proposed to show,



First, What were those terrible views and amazing apprehensions which Christ had in his agony. This may be explained by considering,

1. The cause of those views and apprehensions; and,
2. The manner in which they were then experienced.

1. The cause of those views and apprehensions, which Christ had in his agony in the garden, was the bitter cup which he was soon after to drink on the cross. The sufferings which Christ underwent in his agony in the garden, were not his greatest sufferings; though they were so very great. But his last sufferings upon the cross were his principal sufferings; and therefore they are called "the cup that he had to drink." The sufferings of the cross, under which he was slain, are always in the Scriptures represented as the main sufferings of Christ; those in which especially "he bare our sins in his own body,"<sup>611</sup> and made atonement for sin. His enduring the cross, his humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, is spoken of as the main thing wherein his sufferings appeared. This is the cup that Christ had set before him in his agony. It is manifest that Christ had this in view at this time, from the prayers which he then offered. According to Matthew, Christ made three prayers that evening while in the garden of Gethsemane, and all on this one subject, the bitter cup that he was to drink. Of the first, we have an account in [Matt. xxvi. 39](#). "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt:" of the second in the [42d verse](#), "He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done:" and of the third in the [44th verse](#), "And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words." From this it plainly appears what it was of which Christ had such terrible views and apprehensions at that time. What he thus insists on in his prayers, shows on what his mind was so deeply intent. It was his sufferings on the cross, which were to be endured the next day, when there should be darkness over all the earth, and at the same time a deeper darkness over the soul of Christ, of which he had now such lively views and distressing apprehensions.

2. The manner in which this bitter cup was now set in Christ's view.

(1.) He had a lively apprehension of it impressed at that time on his mind. He had an apprehension of the cup that he was to drink before. His principal errand into the world was to drink that cup, and he therefore was never unthoughtful of it, but always bore it in his mind, and often spoke of it to his disciples. Thus [Matt. xvi. 21](#). "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Again [ch. xx. 17, 18, 19](#). "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples

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611 [1 Peter ii. 24](#)

apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." The same thing was the subject of conversation on the mount with Moses and Elias when he was transfigured. So he speaks of his bloody baptism, [Luke xii. 50](#). "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He speaks of it again to Zebedee's children. [Matt. xx. 22](#). "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able." He spake of his being lifted up. [John viii. 28](#). "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." [John xii. 34](#). "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" So he spake of destroying the temple of his body, [John ii. 19](#). "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And he was very much in speaking of it a little before his agony, in his dying counsels to his disciples in the [12th and 13th ch. of John](#). Thus this was not the first time that Christ had this bitter cup in his view. On the contrary, he seems always to have had it in view. But it seems that at this time God gave him an extraordinary view of it. A sense of that wrath that was to be poured out upon him, and of those amazing sufferings that he was to undergo, was strongly impressed on his mind by the immediate power of God; so that he had far more full and lively apprehensions of the bitterness of the cup which he was to drink than he ever had before, and these apprehensions were so terrible, that his feeble human nature shrunk at the sight, and was ready to sink.

2. The cup of bitterness was now represented as just at hand. He had not only a more clear and lively view of it than before; but it was now set directly before him, that he might without delay take it up and drink it; for then, within that same hour, Judas was to come with his band of men, and he was then to deliver up himself into their hands to the end that he might drink this cup the next day; unless indeed he refused to take it, and so made his escape from that place where Judas would come; which he had opportunity enough to do if he had been so minded. Having thus shown what those terrible views and apprehensions were which Christ had in the time of his agony; I shall endeavour to show,

II. That the conflict which the soul of Christ then endured was occasioned by those views and apprehensions. The sorrow and distress which his soul then suffered, arose from that lively, and full, and immediate view which he had then given him of that cup of wrath; by which God the Father did as it were set the cup down before him, for him to take it and drink it. Some have inquired, what was the occasion of that distress and agony, and many speculations there have been about it, but the account which the Scripture itself gives us is

sufficiently full in this matter, and does not leave room for speculation or doubt. The thing that Christ's mind was so full of at that time was, without doubt, the same with that which his mouth was so full of: it was the dread which his feeble human nature had of that dreadful cup, which was vastly more terrible than Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace. He had then a near view of that furnace of wrath, into which he was to be cast; he was brought to the mouth of the furnace that he might look into it, and stand and view its raging flames, and see the glowings of its heat, that he might know where he was going and what he was about to suffer. This was the thing that filled his soul with sorrow and darkness, this terrible sight as it were overwhelmed him. For what was that human nature of Christ to such mighty wrath as this? it was in itself, without the supports of God, but a feeble worm of the dust, a thing that was crushed before the moth, none of God's children ever had such a cup set before them, as this first being of every creature had. But not to dwell any longer on this, I hasten to show,

III. That the conflict in Christ's soul, in this view of his last sufferings, was dreadful, beyond all expression or conception. This will appear,

1. From what is said of its dreadfulness in the history. By one evangelist we are told, ([Matt. xxvi. 37.](#)) "He began to be sorrowful and very heavy;" and by another, ([Mark xiv. 33.](#)) "And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." These expressions hold forth the intense and overwhelming distress that his soul was in. Luke's expression in the text of his being *in an agony*, according to the signification of that word in the original, implies no common degree of sorrow, but such extreme distress that his nature had a most violent conflict with it, as a man that wrestles with all his might with a strong man, who labours and exerts his utmost strength to gain a conquest over him.

2. From what Christ himself says of it, who was not wont to magnify things beyond the truth. He says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." [Matt. xxvi. 38.](#) What language can more strongly express the most extreme degree of sorrow? His soul was not only "sorrowful," but "exceeding sorrowful;" and not only so, but because that did not fully express the degree of his sorrow, he adds, "even unto death;" which seems to intimate that the very pains and sorrows of hell, of eternal death, had got hold upon him. The Hebrews were wont to express the utmost degree of sorrow that any creature could be liable to by the phrase, *the shadow of death*. Christ had now, as it were, the shadow of death brought over his soul by the near view which he had of that bitter cup that was now set before him.

3. From the effect which it had on his body, in causing that bloody sweat that we read of in the text. In our translation it is said, that [Luke xxii. 44.](#) "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground." The word rendered *great drops*, is in the original **Greek**, which properly signifies lumps or clots; for we may suppose that the blood that was pressed out through the pores of his skin by the violence of that inward struggle and conflict that there was, when it came to be exposed to the cool air of the night, congealed and



stiffened, as is the nature of blood, and so fell off from him not in drops, but in clots. If the suffering of Christ had occasioned merely a violent sweat, it would have shown that he was in great agony; for it must be an extraordinary grief and exercise of mind that causes the body to be all of a sweat abroad in the open air, in a cold night as that was, as is evident from [John xviii. 18](#). “And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, (for it was cold,) and they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.” This was the same night in which Christ had his agony in the garden. But Christ’s inward distress and grief was not merely such as caused him to be in a violent and universal sweat, but such as caused him to sweat blood. The distress and anguish of his mind was so unspeakably extreme as to force his blood through the pores of his skin, and that so plentifully as to fall in great clots or drops from his body to the ground. I come now to show,

IV. What may be supposed to be the special end of God’s giving Christ beforehand these terrible views of his last sufferings; in other words, why it was needful that he should have a more full and extraordinary view of the cup that he was to drink, a little before he drank it, than ever he had before; or why he must have such a foretaste of the wrath of God to be endured on the cross, before the time came that he was actually to endure it.

*Answer*, It was needful, in order that he might take the cup and drink it, as knowing what he did. Unless the human nature of Christ had had an extraordinary view given him beforehand of what he was to suffer, he could not, as man, fully know beforehand what he was going to suffer, and therefore could not, as man, know what he did when he took the cup to drink it, because he would not fully have known what the cup was it being a cup that he never drank before. If Christ had plunged himself into those dreadful sufferings, without being fully sensible beforehand of their bitterness and dreadfulness, he must have done he knew not what. As man, he would have plunged himself into sufferings of the amount of which he was ignorant, and so have acted blindfold; and of course his taking upon him these sufferings could not have been so fully his own act. Christ, as God, perfectly knew what these sufferings were; but it was more needful also that he should know as man; for he was to suffer as man, and the act of Christ in taking that cup was the act of Christ as God man. But the man Christ Jesus hitherto never had had experience of any such sufferings as he was now to endure on the cross; and therefore he could not fully know what they were beforehand, but by having an extraordinary view of them set before him, and an extraordinary sense of them impressed on his mind. We have heard of tortures that others have undergone, but we do not fully know what they were, because we never experienced them; and it is impossible that we should fully know what they were but in one of these two ways, either by experiencing them, or by having a view given of them, or a sense of them impressed in an extraordinary way. Such a sense was impressed on the mind of the man Christ Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, of his last sufferings, and that caused his agony. When he had a full sight given him what that wrath of God was that he was to suffer, the sight was overwhelming to him;

it made his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Christ was going to be cast into a dreadful furnace of wrath, and it was not proper that he should plunge himself into it blindfold, as not knowing how dreadful the furnace was. Therefore that he might not do so, God first brought him and set him at the mouth of the furnace, that he might look in, and stand and view its fierce and racing flames, and might see where he was going, and might voluntarily enter into it and bear it for sinners, as knowing what it was. This view Christ had in his agony. Then God brought the cup that he was to drink, and set it down before him, that he might have a full view of it, and see what it was before he took it and drank it. If Christ had not fully known what the dread-fulness of these sufferings was, before he took them upon him, his taking them upon him could not have been fully his own act as man; there could have been no explicit act of his will about that which he was ignorant of; there could have been no proper trial, whether he would be willing to undergo such dreadful sufferings or not, unless he had known beforehand how dreadful they were; but when he had seen what they were, by having an extraordinary view given him of them, and then undertaken to endure them afterwards; then he acted as knowing what he did; then his taking that cup, and bearing such dreadful sufferings, was properly his own act by an explicit choice; and so his love to sinners, in that choice of his, was the more wonderful, as also his obedience to God in it. And it was necessary that this extraordinary view that Christ had of the cup he was to drink should be given at that time, just before he was apprehended. This was the most proper season for it, just before he took the cup, and while he yet had opportunity to refuse the cup; for before he was apprehended by the company led by Judas, he had opportunity to make his escape at pleasure. For the place where he was, was without the city, where he was not at all confined, and was a lonesome, solitary place; and it was the night season; so that he might have gone from that place where he would, and his enemies not have known where to have found him. This view that he had of the bitter cup was given him while he was yet fully at liberty, before he was given into the hands of his enemies. Christ's delivering himself up into the hands of his enemies, as he did when Judas came, which was just after his agony, was properly his act of taking the cup in order to drink; for Christ knew that the issue of that would be his crucifixion the next day. These things may show us the end of Christ's agony, and the necessity there was of such an agony before his last sufferings.

#### APPLICATION.

1. Hence we may learn how dreadful Christ's last sufferings were. We learn it from the dreadful effect which the bare foresight of them had upon him in his agony. His last sufferings were so dreadful, that the view which Christ had of them before overwhelmed him and amazed him, as it is said he began to be sore amazed. The very sight of these last sufferings was so very dreadful as to sink his soul down into the dark shadow of death; yea, so dreadful



was it, that in the sore conflict which his nature had with it, he was all in a sweat of blood, his body all over was covered with clotted blood, and not only his body, but the very ground under him with the blood that fell from him, which had been forced through his pores through the violence of his agony. And if only the foresight of the cup was so dreadful, how dreadful was the cup itself, how far beyond all that can be uttered or conceived! Many of the martyrs have endured extreme tortures, but from what has been said, there is all reason to think those all were a mere nothing to the last sufferings of Christ on the cross. And what has been said affords a convincing argument that the sufferings which Christ endured in his *body* on the cross, though they were very dreadful, were yet the least part of his last sufferings; an that beside those, he endured sufferings in his soul which were vastly greater. For if it had been only the sufferings which he endured in his body, though they were very dreadful, we cannot conceive that the mere anticipation of them would have such an effect on Christ. Many of the martyrs, for aught we know, have endured as severe tortures in their bodies as Christ did. Many of the martyrs have been crucified, as Christ was; and yet their souls have not been so overwhelmed. There has been no appearance of such amazing sorrow and distress of mind either at the anticipation of their sufferings, or in their actual enduring of them.

2. From what has been said, we may see the wonderful strength of the love of Christ to sinners. What has been said shows the strength of Christ's love two ways.

1. That it was so strong as to carry him through that agony that he was then in. The suffering that he then was actually subject to, was dreadful and amazing, as has been shown; and how wonderful was his love that lasted and was upheld still! The love of any mere man or angel would doubtless have sunk under such a weight, and never would have endured such a conflict in such a bloody sweat as that of Jesus Christ. The anguish of Christ's soul at that time was so strong as to cause that wonderful effect on his body. But his love to his enemies, poor and unworthy as they were, was stronger still. The heart of Christ at that time was full of distress, but it was fuller of love to vile worms: his sorrows abounded, but his love did much more abound. Christ's soul was overwhelmed with a deluge of grief, but this was from a deluge of love to sinners in his heart sufficient to overflow the world, and overwhelm the highest mountains of its sins. Those great drops of blood that fell down to the ground were a manifestation of an ocean of love in Christ's heart.

2. The strength of Christ's love more especially appears in this, that when he had such a full view of the dreadful-ness of the cup that he was to drink, that so amazed him, he would notwithstanding even then take it up, and drink it. Then seems to have been the greatest and most peculiar trial of the strength of the love of Christ, when God set down the bitter portion before him, and let him see what he had to drink, if he persisted in his love to sinners; and brought him to the mouth of the furnace that he might see its fierceness, and have a full view of it, and have time then to consider whether he would go in and suffer the flames



of this furnace for such unworthy creatures, or not. This was as it were proposing it to Christ's last consideration what he would do; as much as if it had then been said to him, "Here is the cup that you are to drink, unless you will give up your undertaking for sinners, and even leave them to perish as they deserve. Will you take this cup, and drink it for them, or not? There is the furnace into "which you are to be cast, if they are to be saved; either they must perish, or you must endure this for them. There you see how terrible the heat of the furnace is; you see what pain and anguish you must endure on the morrow, unless you give up the cause of sinners. What will you do? is your love such that you will go on? Will you cast yourself into this dreadful furnace of wrath?" Christ's soul was overwhelmed with the thought; his feeble human nature shrunk at the dismal sight. It put him into this dreadful agony which you have heard described; but his love to sinners held out. Christ would not undergo these sufferings needlessly, if sinners could be saved without. If there was not an absolute necessity of his suffering them in order to their salvation, he desired that the cup might pass from him. But if sinners, on whom he had set his love, could not, agreeably to the will of God, be saved without his drinking it, he chose that the will of God should be done. He chose to go on and endure the suffering, awful as it appeared to him. And this was his final conclusion, after the dismal conflict of his poor feeble human nature, after he had had the cup in view, and for at least the space of one hour, had seen how amazing it was. Still he finally resolved that he would bear it, rather than those poor sinners whom he had loved from all eternity should perish. When the dreadful cup was before him, he did not say within himself, why should I, who am so great and glorious a person, infinitely more honourable than all the angels of heaven, Why should I go to plunge myself into such dreadful, amazing torments for worthless wretched worms that cannot be profitable to God, or me, and that deserve to be hated by me, and not to be loved? Why should I, who have been living from all eternity in the enjoyment of the Father's love, go to cast myself into such a furnace for them that never can requite me for it? Why should I yield myself to be thus crushed by the weight of divine wrath, for them who have no love to me, and are my enemies? they do not deserve any union with me, and never did, and never will do, any thing to recommend themselves to me. What shall I be the richer for having saved a number of miserable haters of God and me, who deserve to have divine justice glorified in their destruction? Such, however, was not the language of Christ's heart; in these circumstances; but on the contrary, his love held out, and he resolved even then, in the midst of his agony, to yield himself up to the will of God, and to take the cup and drink it. He would not flee to get out of the way of Judas and those that were with him, though he knew they were coming, but that same hour delivered himself voluntarily into their hands. When they came with swords and slaves to apprehend him, and he could have called upon his Father, who would immediately have sent many legions of angels to repel his enemies, and have delivered him, he would not do it; and when his disciples would have made resistance, he would not suffer

them, as von may see in [Matt. xxvi. 51-56.](#) and onward: “And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he will presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures he fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” And Christ, instead of hiding himself from Judas and the soldiers, told them, when they seemed to be at a loss whether he was the person whom they sought; and when they seemed still somewhat to hesitate, being seized with some terror in their minds, he told them so again, and so yielded himself up into their hands, to be bound by them, after he had shown them that he could easily resist them if he pleased, when a single word spoken by him, threw them backwards to the ground, as you may see in [John xviii. 3.](#), &c. “Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am he. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground.” Thus powerful, constant, and violent was the love of Christ; and the special trial of his love above all others in his whole life seems to have been in the time of his agony. For though his sufferings were greater afterwards, when he was on the cross, yet he saw clearly what those sufferings were to be, in the time of his agony; and that seems to have been the first time that ever Christ Jesus had a clear view what these sufferings were; and after this the trial was not so great, because the conflict was over. His human nature had been in a struggle with his love to sinners, but his love had got the victory. The thing, upon a full view of his sufferings, had been resolved on and concluded; and accordingly, when the moment arrived, he actually went through with those sufferings.

But there are two circumstances of Christ’s agony that do still make the strength and constancy of his love to sinners the more conspicuous.

1. That at the same time that he had such a view of the dreadfulness of his sufferings, he had also an extraordinary view of the hatefulness of the wickedness of those for whom those sufferings were to make atonement. There are two things that render Christ’s love wonderful: 1. That he should be willing to endure sufferings that were so great; and 2. That he should be willing to endure them to make atonement for wickedness that was so great. But in order to its being properly said, Christ of his own act and choice endured sufferings that were so great, to make atonement for wickedness that was so great, two things were necessary. 1. That he should have an extraordinary sense how great these sufferings were



to be, before he endured them. This was given in his agony. And 2. That he should also at the same time have an extraordinary sense how great and hateful was the wickedness of men for which he suffered to make atonement; or how unworthy those were for whom he died. And both these were given at the same time. When Christ had such an extraordinary sense how bitter his cup was to be, he had much to make him sensible how unworthy and hateful that wickedness of mankind was for which he suffered; because the hateful and malignant nature of that corruption never appeared more fully than in the spite and cruelty of men in these sufferings; and yet his love was such that he went on notwithstanding to suffer for them who were full of such hateful corruption.

It was the corruption and wickedness of men that contrived and effected his death; it was the wickedness of men that agreed with Judas, it was the wickedness of men that betrayed him, and that apprehended him, and bound him, and led him away like a malefactor; it was by men's corruption and wickedness that he was arraigned, and falsely accused, and unjustly judged. It was by men's wickedness that he was reproached, mocked, buffeted, and spit upon. It was by men's wickedness that Barabbas was preferred before him. It was men's wickedness that laid the cross upon him to bear, and that nailed him to it, and put him to so cruel and ignominious a death. This tended to give Christ an extraordinary sense of the greatness and hatefulness of the depravity of mankind.

1. Because hereby in the time of his sufferings he had that depravity set before him as it is, without disguise. When it killed Christ, it appeared in its proper colours. Here Christ saw it in its true nature, which is the utmost hatred and contempt of God; in its ultimate tendency and desire, which is to kill God; and in its greatest aggravation and highest act, which is killing a person that was God.

2. Because in these sufferings he felt the fruits of that wickedness. It was then directly levelled against himself, and exerted itself against him to work his reproach and torment, which tended to impress a stronger sense of its hatefulness on the human nature of Christ. But yet at the same time, so wonderful was the love of Christ to those who exhibited this hateful corruption, that he endured those very sufferings to deliver them from the punishment of that very corruption. The wonderfulness of Christ's dying love appears partly in that he died for those that were so unworthy in themselves, as all mankind have the same kind of corruptions in their hearts, and partly in that he died for those who were not only so wicked, but whose wickedness consists in being enemies to him; so that he did not only die for the wicked, but for his own enemies; and partly in that he was willing to die for his enemies at the same time that he was feeling the fruits of their enmity, while he felt the utmost effects and exertions of their spite against him in the greatest possible contempt and cruelty towards him in his own greatest ignominy, torments, and death; and partly in that he was willing to atone for their being his enemies in these very sufferings, and by that very ignominy, torment,

and death that was the fruit of it. The sin and wickedness of men, for which Christ suffered to make atonement, was, as it were, set before Christ in his view.

1. In that this wickedness was but a sample of the wickedness of mankind; for the corruption of all mankind is of the same nature, and the wickedness that is in one man's heart is of the same nature and tendency as in another's. As in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.

2. It is probable that Christ died to make atonement for that individual actual wickedness that wrought his sufferings, that reproached, mocked, buffeted, and crucified him. Some of his crucifiers, for whom he prayed that they might be forgiven, while they were in the very act of crucifying him, were afterwards, in answer to his prayer, converted, by the preaching of Peter; as we have an account of in the [2d chapter of Acts](#).

2. Another circumstance of Christ's agony that shows the strength of his love, is the ungrateful carriage of his disciples at that time. Christ's disciples were among those for whom he endured this agony, and among those for whom he was going to endure those last sufferings, of which he now had such dreadful apprehensions. Yet Christ had already given them an interest in the benefits of those sufferings. Their sins had already been forgiven them through that blood that he was going to shed and they had been infinite gainers already by that dying pity and love which he had to them, and had through his sufferings been distinguished from all the world besides. Christ had put greater honour upon them than any other, by making them his disciples in a more honourable sense than he had done any other. And yet now, when he had that dreadful cup set before him which he was going to drink for them, and was in such an agony at the sight of it, he saw no return on their part but indifference and ingratitude. When he only desired them to watch with him, that he might be comforted in their company, now at this sorrowful moment they fell asleep; and showed that they had not concern enough about it to induce them to keep awake with him even for one hour, though he desired it of them once and again. But yet this ungrateful treatment of theirs, for whom he was to drink the cup of wrath which God had set before him, did not discourage him from taking it, and drinking it for them. His love held out to them; having loved his own, he loved them to the end. He did not say within himself when this cup of trembling was before him, Why should I endure so much for those that are so ungrateful; why should I here wrestle with the expectation of the terrible wrath of God to be borne by me to-morrow, for them that in the mean time have not so much concern for me as to keep awake with me when I desire it of them even for one hour? But on the contrary, with tender and fatherly compassions he excuses this ingratitude of his disciples, and says, [Matt. xxvi. 41](#). "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;" and went and was apprehended, and mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and poured out his soul unto death, under the heavy weight of God's dreadful wrath on the cross for them.

3d Inference. From what has been said, we may learn the wonderfulness of Christ's submission to the will of God. Christ, as he was a divine person, was the absolute sovereign of heaven and earth, but yet he was the most wonderful instance of submission to God's sovereignty that ever was. When he had such a view of the terrible-ness of his last sufferings, and prayed if it were possible that that cup might pass from him, *i. e.* if there was not an absolute necessity of it in order to the salvation of sinners, yet it was with a perfect submission to the will of God. lie adds, " Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." He chose rather that the inclination of his human nature, which so much dreaded such exquisite torments, should be crossed, than that God's will should not take place. He delighted in the thought of God's will being done; and when he went and prayed the second time, he had nothing eke to say but, " O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done; <sup>612</sup>" and so the third time. What are such trials of submission as any of us sometimes have in the afflictions that "we suffer in comparison of this? If God does but in his providence signify it to be his will that we should part with a child, how hardly are we brought to yield to it, how ready to be unsubmitive and froward! Or if God lays his hand upon us in some acute pain of body, how ready are we to be discontented and impatient; when the innocent Son of God, who deserved no suffering, could quietly submit to sufferings inconceivably great, and say it over and over, God's will be done! When he was brought and set before that dreadful furnace of wrath into which he was to be cast, in order that he might look into it and have a full view of its fierceness, when his flesh shrunk at it, and his nature was in such a conflict, that his body was all covered with a sweat of blood falling in great drops to the ground, yet his soul quietly yielded that the will of God should be done, rather than the will or inclination of his human nature.

4th Infer. What has been said on this subject also shows us the glory of Christ's obedience. Christ was subject to the moral law as Adam was, and he was also subject to the ceremonial and judicial laws of Moses; but the principal command that he had received of the Father was, that he should lay down his life, that he should voluntarily yield up himself to those terrible sufferings on the cross. To do this was his principal errand into the world; and doubtless the principal command that he received, was about that which was the principal errand on which he was sent. The Father, when he sent him into the world, sent him with commands concerning what he should do in the world; and his chief command of all was about that, which was the errand he was chiefly sent upon, which was to lay down his life. And therefore this command was the principal trial of his obedience. It was the greatest trial of his obedience, because it was by far the most difficult command: all the rest were easy in comparison of this. And the main trial that Christ had, whether he would obey this command, was in the time of his agony; for that was within an hour before he was apprehen-

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612 [Matt. xxvi. 42.](#)

ded in order to his sufferings, when he must either yield himself up to them, or fly from them. And then it was the first time that Christ had a full view of the difficulty of this command; which appeared so great as to cause that bloody sweat. Then was the conflict of weak human nature with the difficulty, then was the sore struggles and wrestling with the heavy trial he had, and then Christ got the victory over the temptation, from the dread of his human nature. His obedience held out through the conflict. Then we may suppose that Satan was especially let loose to set in with the natural dread that the human nature had of such torments, and to strive to his utmost to dissuade Christ from going on to drink the bitter cup; for about that time, towards the close of Christ's life, was he especially delivered up into the hands of Satan to be tempted of him, more than he was immediately after his baptism; for Christ says, speaking of that time, [Luke xxii. 53](#). "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." So that Christ, in the time of his agony, was wrestling not only with overwhelming views of his last sufferings, but he also wrestled, in that bloody sweat, with principalities and powers he contended at that time with the great leviathan that laboured to his utmost to tempt him to disobedience. So that then Christ had temptations every way to draw him off from obedience to God. He had temptations from his feeble human nature, that exceedingly dreaded such torments; and he had temptations from men, who were his enemies; and he had temptations from the ungrateful carnage of his own disciples; and he had temptations from the devil. He had also an overwhelming trial from the manifestation of God's own wrath; when, in the words of Isaiah, it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief. But yet he failed not, but got the victory over all, and performed that great act of obedience at that time to that same God that hid himself from him, and was showing his wrath to him for men's sins, which he must presently suffer. Nothing could move him away from his steadfast obedience to God, but he persisted in saying, "Thy will be done:" expressing not only his submission, but his obedience; not only his compliance with the disposing will of God, but also with his preceptive will. God had given him this cup to drink, and had commanded him to drink it, and that was reason enough with him to drink it; hence he says, at the conclusion of his agony, when Judas came with his band, "The cup which my Father giveth me to drink, shall I not drink it?" [John xviii. 11](#). Christ, at the time of his agony, had an inconceivably greater trial of obedience than any man or any angel ever had. How much was this trial of the obedience of the second Adam beyond the trial of the obedience of the first Adam! How light was our first father's temptation in comparison of this! And yet our first surety failed, and our second failed not, but obtained a glorious victory, and went and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Thus wonderful and glorious was the obedience of Christ, by which he wrought out righteousness for believers, and which obedience is imputed to them. No wonder that it is a sweet penalty sown, and that God stands ready to bestow heaven as its reward on all that believe on him.

5. What has been said shows us the sottishness of secure sinners in being so fearless of the wrath of God. If the wrath of God was so dreadful, that, when Christ only expected it, his human nature was nearly overwhelmed with the fear of it, and his soul was amazed, and his body all over in a bloody sweat; then how sottish are sinners, who are under the threatening of the same wrath of God, and are condemned to it, and are every moment exposed to it; and yet, instead of manifesting intense apprehension, are quiet and easy, and unconcerned; instead of being sorrowful and very heavy, go about with a light and careless heart; instead of crying out in bitter agony, are often gay and cheerful, and eat and drink, and sleep quietly, and go on in sin, provoking the wrath of God more and more, without any great matter of concern! How stupid and sottish are such persons! Let such senseless sinners consider, that that misery, of which they are in danger from the wrath of God, is infinitely more terrible than that, the fear of which occasioned in Christ his agony and bloody sweat. It is more terrible, both as it differs both in its nature and degree, and also as it differs in its duration. It is more terrible in its nature and degree. Christ suffered that which, as it upheld the honour of the divine law, was fully equivalent to the misery of the damned; and in some respect it was the same suffering; for it was the wrath of the same God; but yet in other respects it vastly differed. The difference does not arise from the difference in the wrath poured out on one and the other, for it is the same wrath, but from the difference of the subject, which may be best illustrated from Christ's own comparison. [Luke xxiii. 31](#). "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Here he calls himself the green tree, and wicked men the dry, intimating that the misery that will come on wicked men will be far more dreadful than those sufferings which came on him, and the difference arises from the different nature of the subject. The green tree and the dry are both cast into the fire; but the flames seize and kindle on the dry tree much more fiercely than on the green. The sufferings that Christ endured differ from the misery of the wicked in hell in nature and degree in the following respects.

1. Christ felt not the gnawings of a guilty, condemning conscience.

2. He felt no torment from the reigning of inward corruptions and lusts as the damned do. The wicked in hell are their own tormentors, their lusts are their tormentors, and being without restraint, (for there is no restraining grace in hell,) their lusts will rage like raging flames in their hearts. They shall be tormented with the unrestrained violence of a spirit of envy and malice against God, and against the angels and saints in heaven, and against one another. Now Christ suffered nothing of this.

3. Christ had not to consider that God hated him. The wicked in hell have this to make their misery perfect, they know that God perfectly hates them without the least pity or regard to them, which will fill their souls with inexpressible misery. But it was not so with Christ. God withdrew his comfortable presence from Christ, and hid his face from him, and so poured out his wrath upon him, as made him feel its terrible effects in his soul; but yet he



knew at the same time that God did not hate him, but infinitely loved him. He cried out of God's forsaking him, but yet at the same time calls him "My God, my God!" knowing that he was his God still, though he had forsaken him. But the wicked in hell will know that he is not their God, but their judge and irreconcilable enemy.

4. Christ did not suffer despair, as the wicked do in hell. He knew that there would be an end to his sufferings in a few hours; and that after that he should enter into eternal glory. But it will be for otherwise with you that are impenitent; if you die in your present condition, you will be in perfect despair. On these accounts, the misery of the wicked in hell will be immensely more dreadful in nature and degree, than those sufferings with the fears of which Christ's soul was so much overwhelmed.

5. It will infinitely differ in duration. Christ's sufferings lasted but a few hours, and there was an eternal end to them, and eternal glory succeeded. But you that are a secure, senseless sinner, are every day exposed to be cast into everlasting misery, a fire that never shall be quenched. If then the Son of God was in such amazement, in the expectation of what he was to suffer for a few hours, how sottish are you who are continually exposed to sufferings, immensely more dreadful in nature and degree, and that lire to be without any end, but which must be endured without any rest day or night for ever and ever! If you had a full sense of the greatness of that misery to which you are exposed, and how dreadful your present condition is on that account, it would this moment put you into as dreadful an agony as that which Christ underwent; yea, if your nature could endure it, one much more dreadful. We should now see you fell down in a bloody sweat, wallowing in your gore, and crying out in terrible amazement.

Having thus endeavoured to explain and illustrate the former of the two propositions mentioned in the commencement of this discourse, I shall now proceed to show,

II. That the soul of Christ in his agony in the garden was in a great and earnest strife and conflict in his prayer to God. the labour and striving of Christ's soul in prayer was a part of his agony, and was without doubt a part of what is intended in the text, when it is said that Christ was in an agony; for, as we have shown, the word is especially used in Scripture in other places for striving or wrestling with God in prayer. From this fact, and from the evangelist mentioning his being in agony, and his praying earnestly in the same sentence, we may well understand him as mentioning his striving in prayer as part of his agony. The words of the text seem to hold forth as much as that Christ was in an agony in prayer: "Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground."<sup>613</sup> This language seems to imply thus much, that the labour and earnestness of Christ's soul was so great in his wrestling with God in prayer, that he was in a mere agony, and all over in a sweat of blood.

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613 [Luke xxii. 44.](#)



What I propose now, in this second proposition, is by the help of God to explain this part of Christ's agony which consisted in the agonizing and wrestling of his soul in prayer; which is the more worthy of a particular inquiry, being that which probably is but little understood; though, as may appear in the sequel, the right understanding of it is of great use and consequence in divinity. It is not as I conceive ordinarily well understood what is meant when it is said in the text that Christ *prayed more, earnestly*; or what was *the thing that he wrestled with God for*, or what was the subject matter of this earnest prayer, or what was the reason of his being so very earnest in prayer at this time. And therefore, to set this whole matter in a clear light, I would particularly inquire,

1. Of what nature this prayer was;
2. What was the subject matter of this earnest prayer of Christ to the Father;
3. In what capacity Christ offered up this prayer to God;
4. Why he was so earnest in his prayer;
5. What was the success of this his earnest wrestling with God in prayer; and then make some improvement.

I. Of what nature this prayer of Christ was.

Addresses that are made to God may be of various kinds. Some are confessions on the part of the individual, or expressions of his sense of his own unworthiness before God, and are thus penitential addresses to God. Others are doxologies or prayers intended to express the sense which the person has of God's greatness and glory. Such are many of the psalms of David. Others are gratulatory addresses, or expressions of thanksgiving and praise for mercies received. Others are submissive addresses, or expressions of submission and resignation to the will of God, whereby he that addresses the Majesty of heaven, expresses the compliance of his will with the sovereign will of God; saying, "Thy will, O Lord, be done!" as David, [2 Sam. xv. 26](#). "But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." Others are petitory or supplicatory; whereby the person that prays, begs of God and cries to him for some favour desired of him.

Hence the inquiry is, of which of these kinds was the prayer of Christ, that we read of in the text.

*Answer.* It was chiefly supplicatory. It was not penitential or confessional; for Christ had no sin or unworthiness to confess. Nor was it a doxology or a thanksgiving; or merely an expression of submission; for none of these agree with what is said in the text, *viz.* that he prayed more earnestly. When any one is said to pray earnestly, it implies an "earnest request for some benefit, or favour desired; and not merely a confession, or submission, or gratulation. So what the apostle says of this prayer, in [Heb. v. 7](#). "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard, in that he feared," shows that it was petitory, or an earnest supplication for some desired benefit. They are not confessions,

or doxologies, or thanksgivings, or resignations, that are called "supplications" and "strong cryines," but petitions for some benefit earnestly desired. And having thus resolved the first inquiry, and shown that this earnest prayer of Christ was of the nature of a supplication for some benefit or favour which Christ earnestly desired, I come to inquire,

II. What was the subject matter of this supplication; or what favour and benefit that was for which Christ so earnestly supplicated in this prayer of which we have an account in the text. Now the words of the text are not express on this matter. It is said that Christ, "being in an agony, prayed more earnestly;" but yet it is not said what he prayed so earnestly for. And here is the greatest difficulty attending this account: even what that was which Christ so earnestly desired, for which he so wrestled with God at that time. And though we are not expressly told in the text, yet the Scriptures have not left us without sufficient light in this matter. And the more effectually to avoid mistakes, I would answer,

1. Negatively, the thing that Christ so earnestly prayed for at this time, was not that the bitter cup which he had to drink might pass from him. Christ had before prayed for this, as in the next verse but one before the text, saying, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me! nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!"<sup>614</sup> It is after this that we have an account that Christ being in an agony, prayed more earnestly; but we are not to understand that he prayed more earnestly than he had done before, that the cup might pass from him. That this was not the thing that he so earnestly prayed for in this second prayer, the following things seem to prove:

1. This second prayer was after the angel had appeared to him from heaven, strengthening him, the more cheerfully to take the cup and drink it. The evangelists inform us that when Christ came into the garden, he began to be sorrowful, and very heavy, and that he said his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and that then he went and prayed to God, that if it were possible the cup might pass from him. [Luke says in the 41st and 42nd verses](#), "that being withdrawn from his disciples about a stone's cast, he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!" And then, after this, it is said in the next verse, that there appeared an angel from heaven unto him strengthening him. Now this can be understood no otherwise than that the angel appeared to him, strengthening him and encouraging him to go through his great and difficult work, to take the cup and drink it. Accordingly we must suppose, that now Christ was more strengthened and encouraged to go through with his sufferings: and therefore we cannot suppose that after this he would pray more earnestly than before to be delivered from his sufferings; and of course that it was something else that Christ more earnestly prayed for, after that strengthening of the angel, and not that the cup might pass from him. Though Christ seems to have a greater sight of his sufferings given him after this



614 [Luke xxii. 42.](#)

strengthening of the angel than before, that caused such an agony, yet he was more strengthened to fit him for a greater sight of them, he had greater strength and courage to grapple with these awful apprehensions, than before. His strength to bear sufferings is increased with the sense of his sufferings.

2. Christ, before his second prayer, had had an intimation from the Father, that it was not his will that the cup should pass from him. The angel's coming from heaven to strengthen him must be so understood. Christ first prays, that if it may be the will of the Father, the cup might pass; but not, if it was not his will; and then God immediately upon this sends an angel to strengthen, and encourage him to take the cup, which was a plain intimation to Christ that it was the Father's will that he should take it, and that it should not pass from him. And so Christ received it; as appears from the account which Matthew gives of this second prayer. [Matt. xxvi. 42.](#) "He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." He speaks as one that now had had an intimation, since he prayed before, that it was not the will of God. And Luke tells us how, *viz.* by God's sending an angel. Matthew informs us, as Luke does, that in his first prayer, he prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from him; but then God sends an angel to signify that it was not his will, and to encourage him to take it. And then Christ having received this plain intimation that it was not the will of God that the cup should pass from him, yields to the message he had received, and says, O my Father, if it be so as thou hast now signified, thy will be done. Therefore we may surely conclude that what Christ prayed more earnestly for after this, was not that the cup might pass from him, but something else; for he would not go to pray more earnestly that the cup might pass from him, after God had signified that it was not his will that it should pass from him, than he did before; that would be blasphemous to suppose. And then,

3dly. The language of the second prayer, as recited by Matthew, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done,"<sup>615</sup> shows that Christ did not then pray that the cup might pass from him. This certainly is not praying more earnestly that the cup might pass: it is rather a yielding that point, and ceasing any more to urge it, and submitting to it as a thing now determined by the will of God, made known by the angel. And,

4. From the apostle's account of this prayer in the [5th ch. of Hebrews](#), the words of the apostle are these, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up his prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." The strong crying and tears of which the apostle speaks, are doubtless the same that Luke speaks of in the text, when he says, "he being in an agony, prayed more earnestly;" for this was the sharpest and most earnest crying of Christ, of which

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615 [Matt. xxvi. 42.](#)

we have any where any account. But according to the apostle's account, that which Christ feared, and that for which he so strongly cried to God in this prayer, was something that he was heard in, something that God granted him his request in, and therefore it was not that the cup might pass from him. Having thus shown what it was not that Christ prayed for in this earnest prayer, I proceed to show,

2nd, What it was that Christ so earnestly sought of God in this prayer.

I answer in one word, it was. *That God's will might be done, in what related to his sufferings.* Matthew gives this express account of it, in the very language of the prayer which has been recited several times already, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done!" This is a yielding, and an expression of submission; but it is not merely that. Such words, "The will of the Lord be done," as they are most commonly used, are not understood as a supplication or request, but only as an expression of submission. Rut the words are not always to be understood in that sense in Scripture, but sometimes are to be understood as a request. So they are to be understood in the third petition of the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done in earth as in heaven." There the words are to be understood both as an expression of submission, and also a request, as they are explained in the Assembly's Catechism, and so the words are to be understood here. The evangelist Mark says that Christ went away again and spake the same words that he had done in his first prayer. [Mark xiv. 39](#). But then we must understand it as of the same words with the latter part of his first prayer, "nevertheless not my will but thine be done," as Matthew's more full and particular account shows. So that the thing mentioned in the text, for which Christ was wrestling with God in this prayer, was, that God's will might be done in what related to his sufferings.

But then here another inquiry may arise, *viz.* What is implied in Christ's praying that God's will might be done in what related to his sufferings? To this I answer,

1. This implies a request that he might be strengthened and supported, and enabled to do God's will, by going through with these sufferings. The same as when he says, "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God." It was the preceptive will of God that he should take that cup and drink it: it was the Father's command to him. The Father had given him the cup, and as it were set it down before him with the command that he should drink it. This was the greatest act of obedience that Christ «as to perform. He prays for strength and help, that his poor feeble human nature might be supported, that he might not fail in this great trial, that he might not sink and be swallowed up, and his strength so overcome that he should not hold out, and finish the appointed obedience. This was the thing that he feared, of which the apostle speaks in the [5th of Hebrews.](#), when he says, "he was heard in that he feared." When he had such an extraordinary sense of the dreadful-ness of his sufferings impressed on his mind, the fearful-ness of it amazed him. He was afraid lest his poor feeble strength should be overcome, and that he should fail in so great a trial, that he should be swallowed up by that death that he was to die, and so should

not be saved from death; and therefore he offered up strong crying and tears unto him that was able to strengthen him, and support, and save him from death, that the death he was to suffer might not overcome his love and obedience, but that he might overcome death, and so be saved from it. If Christ's courage had failed in the trial, and he had not held out under his dying sufferings, he never would have been saved from death, but he would have sunk in the deep mire; he never would have risen from the dead, for his rising from the dead was a reward of his victory. If his courage had failed, and he had given up, he would have remained from under the power of death, and so we should all have perished, we should have remained yet in our sins. If he had failed, all would have failed. If he had not overcome in that sore conflict, neither he nor we could have been freed from death, we all must have perished together. Therefore this was the saving from death that the apostle speaks of, that Christ feared and prayed for with strong crying and tears. His being overcome of death was the thing that he feared, and so he was heard in that he feared. This Christ prayed, that the will of God might be done in his sufferings, even that he might not foil of obeying God's will in his sufferings; and therefore it follows in the next verse in that passage of Hebrews, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." That it was in this respect that Christ in his agony so earnestly prayed that the will of God might be done, *viz.* that he might have strength to do his will, and might not sink and fail in such great sufferings; is confirmed from the scriptures of the Old Testament, as particularly from the [69th Psalm](#). The psalmist represents Christ in that psalm, as is evident from the fact that the words of that psalm are represented as Christ's words in many places of the New Testament. That psalm is represented as Christ's prayer to God when his soul was overwhelmed with sorrow and amazement, as it was in his agony; as you may see in the [1st and 2nd verses](#), "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul: I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." But then the thing that is represented as being the thing that he feared, was failing, and being overwhelmed, in this great trial: [verses 14 and 15](#). "Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." So again in the [22d Psalm](#), which is also represented as the prayer of Christ under his dreadful sorrow and sufferings, [verses 19, 20, 21](#). "But be not thou far from me, O Lord; O my Strength, haste thee to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth." It was meet and suitable that Christ, when about to engage in that terrible conflict, should thus earnestly seek help from God to enable him to do his will; for he needed God's help the strength of his human nature, without divine help, was not sufficient to carry him through. This was, without doubt, that in which the first Adam foiled in his first trial, that when the trial came he was not sensible of his own weakness and dependence. If he had been, and had leaned on God, and cried to him for his



assistance and strength against the temptation, in all likelihood we should have remained innocent and happy creatures to this day.

2. It implies a request that God's will and purpose might be obtained in the effects and fruits of his sufferings, in the glory to his name, that was his design in them; and particularly in the glory of his grace, in the eternal salvation and happiness of his elect. This is confirmed by [John xii. 27, 28](#). "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified, and will glorify it again." There the first request is the same with the first request of Christ here in like trouble: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour."<sup>616</sup> He first prays, as he does here, that he might be saved from his last sufferings. Then, after he was determined within himself that the will of God must be otherwise, that he should not be saved from that hour, "but for this cause," says he, "came I to this hour;" and then his second request after this is, "Father, glorify thy name." So this is doubtless the purport of the second request in his agony, when he prayed that God's will might be done. It is that God's will might be done in that glory to his own name that he intended in the effects and fruits of his sufferings, that seeing that it was his will that he should suffer, he earnestly prays that the end of his suffering, in the glory of God and the salvation of the elect, may not fail. And these things are what Christ so earnestly wrestled with God for in his prayer, of which we have an account in the text, and we have no reason to think that they were not expressed in prayer as well as implied. It is not reasonable to suppose that the evangelist in his other account of things mentions all the words of Christ's prayer. He only mentions the substance.

III. In what capacity did Christ offer up those earnest prayers to God in his agony?

In answer to this inquiry, I observe that he offered them up not as a private person, but as high priest. The apostle speaks of the strong crying and tears, as what Christ offered up as high priest. [Heb. v. 6, 7](#). "As he says also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek: who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," &c. The things that Christ prayed for in those strong cryings, were things not of a private nature, but of common concern to the whole church of which he was the high priest. That the will of God should be done in his obedience unto death, that his strength and courage should not foil, but that he should hold out, was of common concern; for, if he had failed, all would have failed and perished for ever. And of course, that God's name should be glorified in the effects and fruits of his sufferings, and in the salvation and glory of all his elect, was a thing of common concern. Christ offered up these strong cries with his flesh in the same manner as the priests of old were wont to offer up prayers with their sacrifices. Christ mixed strong crying and tears with his blood, and so

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616 [John xxii. 27](#).

offered up his blood and his prayers together, that the effect and success of his blood might be obtained. Such earnest agonizing prayers were offered with his blood, and his infinitely precious and meritorious blood was offered with his prayers.

IV. Why was Christ so earnest in those supplications? Luke speaks of them as very earnest; the apostle speaks of them as strong crying; and his agony partly consisted in this earnestness: and the account that Luke gives us, seems to imply that his bloody sweat was partly at least with the great labour and earnest sense of his soul in wrestling with God in prayer. There were three things that concurred at that time, especially to cause Christ to be thus earnest and engaged.

1. He had then an extraordinary sense how dreadful the consequence would be, if God's will should fail of being done. He had then an extraordinary sense of his own last suffering under the wrath of God, and if he had failed in those sufferings, he knew the consequence must be dreadful. He having now such an extraordinary view of the terribleness of the wrath of God, his love to the elect tended to make him more than ordinarily earnest that they might be delivered from suffering that wrath to all eternity, which could not have been if he had failed of doing God's will, or if the will of God in the effect of his suffering had failed.

2. No wonder that that extraordinary sense that Christ then had of the costliness of the means of sinners' salvation, made him very earnest for the success of those means, as you have already heard.

3. Christ had an extraordinary sense of his dependence on God, and his need of his help to enable him to do God's will in this great trial. Though he was innocent, yet he needed divine help. He was dependent on God, as man, and therefore we read that he trusted in God. [Matt. xxvii. 43.](#) "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." And when he had such an extraordinary sight of the dreadfulfulness of that wrath he was to suffer, he saw how much it was beyond the strength of his human nature alone.

V. What was the success of this prayer of Christ?

To this I answer, He obtained all his requests. The apostle says, "He was heard in that he feared;" in all that he feared. He obtained strength and help from God, all that he needed, and was carried through. He was enabled to do and to suffer the whole will of God; and he obtained the whole of the end of his sufferings a full atonement for the sins of the whole world, and the full salvation of every one of those who were given him in the covenant of redemption, and all that glory to the name of God, which his mediation was designed to accomplish, not one jot or tittle hath failed. Herein Christ in his agony was above all others Jacob's antitype, in his wrestling with God for a blessing; which Jacob did, not as a private person, but as the head of his posterity, the nation of Israel, and by which he obtained that commendation of God, "As a prince thou hast power with God;" and therein was a type of him who was the Prince of princes.

**APPLICATION.**

Great improvement may be made of the consideration of the strong crying and tears of Christ in the days of his flesh, many ways for our benefit.

1. This may teach us after what manner we should pray to God, not in a cold and careless manner, but with great earnestness and engagedness of spirit, and especially when we are praying to God for those things that are of infinite importance, such as spiritual and eternal blessings. Such were the benefits that Christ prayed for with such strong crying and tears, that he might be enabled to do God's will in that great and difficult work that God had appointed him, that he might not sink and fail, but might get the victory, and so finally be delivered from death, and that God's will and end might be obtained as the fruit of his sufferings, in the glory of God, and the salvation of the elect.

When we go before God in prayer with a cold, dull heart, and in a lifeless and listless manner pray to him for eternal blessings, and those of infinite import to our souls, we should think of Christ's earnest prayers that he poured out to God, with tears and a bloody sweat. The consideration of it may well make us ashamed of our dull, lifeless prayers to God, wherein, indeed, we rather ask a denial than ask to be heard; for the language of such a manner of praying to God, is, that we do not look upon the benefit that we pray for as of any great importance, that we are indifferent whether God answers us or not. The example of Jacob in wrestling with God for the blessing, should teach us earnestness in our prayers, but more especially the example of Jesus Christ, who wrestled with God in a bloody sweat. If we were sensible as Christ was of the great importance of those benefits that are of eternal consequence, our prayers to God for such benefits would be after another manner than now they are. Our souls also would with earnest labour and strife be engaged in this duty.

There are many benefits that we ask of God in our prayers, which are every whit of as great importance to us as those benefits which Christ asked of God in his agony were to him. It is of as great importance to us that we should be enabled to do the will of God, and perform a sincere, universal, and persevering obedience to his commands, as it was to Christ that he should not fail of doing God's will in his great work. It is of as great importance to us to be saved from death, as it was to Christ that he should get the victory over death, and so be saved from it. It is of as great, and infinitely greater, importance to us, that Christ's redemption should be successful in us, as it was to him that God's will should be done, in the fruits and success of his redemption.

Christ recommended earnest watchfulness and prayer-fulness to his disciples, by prayer and example, both at the same time. When Christ was in his agony, and came and found his disciples asleep, he bid them watch and pray, [Matt. xxvi. 41](#). "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. At the same time he set them an example of that which he commanded them, for though they slept he watched,



and poured out his soul in those earnest prayers that you have heard of; and Christ has elsewhere taught us to ask those blessings of God that are of infinite importance, as those that will take no denial. We have another example of the great conflicts and engagedness of Christ's spirit in this duty. [Luke vi. 12.](#) "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." And he was often recommending earnestness in crying to God in prayers. In the parable of the unjust judge, [Luke xviii.](#) at the beginning; "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterwards he saith within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith." [Luke 5, &c.](#) "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth." He taught it in his own way of answering prayer, as in answering the woman of Canaan, [Matt. xv. 22,](#) &c. "And behold a woman of Canaan came out of the coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." And as Christ prayed in his agony, so I have already mentioned several texts of Scripture wherein we are directed to agonize in our prayers to God.

2. These earnest prayers and strong cries of Christ to the Father in his agony, show the greatness of his love to sinners. For, as has been shown, these strong cries of Jesus Christ were what he offered up to God as a public person, in the capacity of high priest, and in the behalf of those whose priest he was. then he offered up his sacrifice for sinners whom he had loved from eternity, he withal offered up earnest prayers. His strong cries, his tears, and his blood, were all offered up together to God, and they were all offered up for the same end, for the glory of God in the salvation of the elect. They were all offered up for the same persons, *viz.* for his people. For them he shed his blood in that bloody sweat, when it fell

down in clotted lumps to the ground; and for them he so earnestly cried to God at the same time. It was that the will of God might be done in the success of his sufferings, in the success of that blood, in the salvation of those for whom that blood was shed, and therefore this strong crying shows his strong love; it shows how greatly he desired the salvation of sinners. He cried to God that he might not sink and fail in that great undertaking, because if he did so, sinners could not be saved, but all must perish. He prayed that he might get the victory over death, because if he did not get the victory, his people could never obtain that victory, and they can conquer no otherwise than by his conquest. If the Captain of our salvation had not conquered in this sore conflict, none of us could have conquered, but we must have all sunk with him. He cried to God that he might be saved from death, and if he had not been saved from death in his resurrection, none of us could ever have been saved from death. It was a great sight to see Christ in that great conflict that he was in in his agony, but every thing in it was from love, that strong love that was in his heart. His tears that flowed from his eyes were from love; his great sweat was from love; his 'blood, his prostrating himself on the ground before the Father, was from love; his earnest crying to God was from the strength and ardency of his love. It is looked upon as one principal way wherein true love and good will is shown in Christian friends one towards another, heartily to pray one for another; and it is one way wherein Christ directs us to show our love to our enemies, even praying for them. [Matt. v. 44](#). "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." But was there ever any prayer that manifested love to enemies to such a degree, as those strong cries and tears of the Son of God for the success of his blood in the salvation of his enemies; the strife and conflict of whose soul in prayer was such as to produce his agony and his bloody sweat?

3. If Christ was thus earnest in prayer to God, that the end of his sufferings might be obtained in the salvation of sinners, then how much ought those sinners to be reproved that do not earnestly seek their own salvation! If Christ offered up such strong cries for sinners as their high priest, that bought their salvation, who stood in no need of sinners, who had been happy from all eternity without them, and could not be made happier by them; then how great is the sottishness of those sinners that seek their own salvation in a dull and lifeless manner; that content themselves with a formal attendance on the duties of religion, with their hearts in the mean time much more earnestly set after other things! They after a sort attend on the duty of social prayer, wherein they pray to God that he would have mercy on them and save them; but after what a poor dull way is it that they do it! they do not apply their heart unto wisdom, nor incline their ear to understanding; they do not cry after wisdom, nor lift up their voice for understanding; they do not seek it as silver, nor search for it as for hidden treasures. Christ's earnest cries in his agony may convince us that it was not without reason that he insisted upon it, in [Luke xiii. 24](#). that we should strive to enter in at the strait gate, which, as I have already observed to you, is, in the original, **Greek**, "Agonize to enter



in at the strait gate.” If sinners would be in a hopeful way to obtain their salvation, they should agonize in that great concern as men that are taking a city by violence, as [Matt. xi. 12](#). “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” When a body of resolute soldiers are attempting to take a strong city in which they meet with great opposition, what violent conflicts are there before the city is taken! How do the soldiers press on against the very mouths of the enemies’ cannon, and upon the points of their swords! When the soldiers are scaling the walls, and making their first entrance into the city, what a violent struggle is there between them and their enemies that strive to keep them out! How do they, as it were, agonize with all their strength! So ought we to seek our salvation, if we would be in a likely way to obtain it. How great is the folly then of those who content themselves with seeking with a cold and lifeless frame of spirit, and so continue from month to month, and from year to year, and yet flatter themselves that they shall be successful!

How much more still are they to be reprov’d, who are not in a way of seeking their salvation at all, but wholly neglect their precious souls, and attend the duties of religion no further than is just necessary to keep up their credit among men; and instead of pressing into the kingdom of God, are rather violently pressing on towards their own destruction and ruin, being hurried on by their many headstrong lusts, as the herd of swine were hurried on by the legion of devils, and ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters! [Matt. viii. 32](#).

4. From what has been said under this proposition, we may learn after what manner Christians ought to go through the work that is before them. Christ had a great work before him when that took place, of which we have an account in the text. Though it was very near the close of his life, yet he then, when his agony began, had the chief part of the work before him that he came into the world to do; which was to offer up that sacrifice which he offered in his last sufferings, and therein to perform the greatest act of his obedience to God. And so the Christians have a great work to do, a service they are to perform to God, that is attended with great difficulty. They have a race set before them that they have to run, a warfare that is appointed them. Christ was the subject of a very great trial in the time of his agony; so God is wont to exercise his people with great trials. Christ met with great opposition in that work that he had to do; so believers are like to meet with great opposition in running the race that is set before them. Christ, as man, had a feeble nature, that was in itself very insufficient to sustain such a conflict, or to support such a load as was coming upon him. So the saints have the same weak human nature, and beside that, great sinful infirmities that Christ had not, which lay them under great disadvantages, and greatly enhance the difficulty of their work. Those great tribulations and difficulties that were before Christ, were the way in which he was to enter into the kingdom of heaven; so his followers must expect, “through

much tribulation to enter into the kingdom of heaven.<sup>617</sup> ” The cross was to Christ the way to the crown of glory, and so it is to his disciples. The circumstances of Christ and of his followers in those things are alike, their case, therefore, is the same; and therefore Christ’s behaviour under those circumstances, was a fit example for them to follow. They should look to their Captain, and observe after what manner he went through his great work, and the great tribulations which he endured. They should observe after what manner he entered into the kingdom of heaven, and obtained the crown of glory, and so they also should run the race that is set before them. ” Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Particularly,

(1.) When others are asleep they should be awake, as it was with Christ. The time of Christ’s agony was the night season, the time wherein persons were wont to be asleep: it was the time wherein the disciples that were about Christ were asleep; but Christ then had something else to do than to sleep; he had a great work to do; he kept awake, with his heart engaged in this work. So should it be with the believers of Christ; when the souls of their neighbours are asleep in their sins, and under the power of a lethargic insensibility and sloth, they should watch and pray, and maintain a lively sense of the infinite importance of their spiritual concerns. [1 Thess. v. 6](#). “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.”

(2.) They should go through their work with earnest labour, as Christ did. The time when others were asleep was a time when Christ was about his great work, and was engaged in it with all his might, agonizing in it; conflicting and wrestling, in tears, and in blood. So should Christians with the utmost earnestness improve their time with souls engaged in this work, pushing through the opposition they meet with in it, pushing through all difficulties and sufferings there are in the way, running with patience the race set before them, conflicting with the enemies of their souls with all their might, as those that wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

(3.) This labour and strife should be, that God may be glorified, and their own eternal happiness obtained in a way of doing God’s will. Thus it was with Christ: what he so earnestly strove for was, that he might do the will of God, that he might keep his command, his difficult command, without failing in it, and that in this way God’s will might be done, in that glory to his ever great name, and that salvation to his elect that he intended by his sufferings. Here is an example for the saints to follow in that holy strife, and race, and warfare, which God

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617 [Acts xiv. 22](#).

has appointed them; they should strive to do the will of their heavenly Father, that they may, as the apostle expresses it, [Rom. xii. 2](#). "Prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," and that in this way they may glorify God, and may come at last to be happy for ever in the enjoyment of God.

(4.) In all the great work they have to do, their eye should be to God for his help to enable them to overcome. Thus did the man Christ Jesus: he strove in his work even to such an agony and bloody sweat. But how did he strive! It was not in his own strength, but his eyes were to God, he cries unto him for his help and strength to uphold him, that he might not fail; he watched and prayed, as he desired his disciples to do; he wrestled with his enemies and with his great sufferings, but at the same time wrestled with God to obtain his help, to enable him to get the victory. Thus the saints should use their strength in their Christian course to the utmost, but not as depending on their own strength, but crying mightily to God for his strength to make them conquerors.

(5.) In this way they should hold out to the end as Christ did. Christ in this way was successful, and obtained the victory, and won the prize; he overcame, and is set down with the Father in his throne. So Christians should persevere and hold out in their great work to the end; they should continue to run their race till they have come to the end of it; they should be faithful unto the death as Christ was; and then, when they have overcome, they shall sit down with him in his throne. [Rev. iii. 21](#). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

5. Hence burdened and distressed sinners, if any such are here present, may have abundant ground of encouragement to come to Christ for salvation. Here is great encouragement to sinners to come to this high priest that offered up such strong crying and tears with his blood, for the success of his sufferings in the salvation of sinners. For,

1st, Here is great ground of assurance that Christ stands ready to accept of sinners, and bestow salvation upon them; for those strong cries of his that he offered up in the capacity of our high priest, show how earnestly desirous he was of it. If he was not willing that sinners should be saved, be they ever so unworthy of it, then why would he so wrestle with God for it in such a bloody sweat? Would any one so earnestly cry to God with such costly cries, in such great labour and travail of soul, for that, that he did not desire that God should bestow? No, surely! but this shows how greatly his heart was set on the success of his redemption; and therefore since he has by such earnest prayers, and by such a bloody sweat, obtained salvation of the Father to bestow on sinners, he will surely be ready to bestow it upon them, if they come to him for it; otherwise he will frustrate his own design; and he that so earnestly cried to God that his design might not be frustrated, will not, after all, frustrate it himself.

2. Here is the strongest ground of assurance that God stands ready to accept of all those that come to him for mercy through Christ, for this is what Christ prayed for in those



earnest prayers, whose prayers were always heard, as Christ says, [John xi. 42](#). "And I knew that thou hearest me always." And especially may they conclude, that heard *their* high priest in those strong cries that he offered up with his blood, and that especially on the following account.

(1.) They were the most earnest prayers that ever were made. Jacob was very earnest when he wrestled with God; and many others have wrestled with God with many tears; yea, doubtless, many of the saints have wrestled with God with such inward labour and strife as to produce powerful effects on the body. But so earnest was Christ, so strong was the labour and fervency of his heart, that he cried to God in a sweat of blood; so that if any earnestness and importunity in prayer ever prevailed with God, we may conclude that that prevailed.

(2.) He who then prayed was the most worthy person that ever put up a prayer. He had more worthiness than ever men or angels had in the sight of God, according as by inheritance he has obtained a more excellent name than they; for he was the only-begotten Son of God, infinitely lovely in his sight, the Son in whom he declared once and again he was well-pleased. He was infinitely near and dear to God, and had more worthiness in his eyes ten thousand times than all men and angels put together. And can we suppose any other than that such a person was heard when he cried to God with such earnestness? Did Jacob, a poor sinful man, when he had wrestled with God, obtain of God the name of Israel, and that encomium, that as a prince he had power with God, and prevailed? And did Elijah, who was a man of like passions, and of like corruptions with us, when he prayed, earnestly prevail on God to work such great wonders? And shall not the only-begotten Son of God, when wrestling with God in tears and blood, prevail, and have his request granted him?

Surely there is no room to suppose any such thing; and therefore, there is no room to doubt whether God will bestow salvation on those that believe in him, at his request.

(3.) Christ offered up these earnest prayers with the best plea for an answer that ever was offered to God, *viz.* his own blood; which was an equivalent for the thing that he asked. He not only offered up strong cries, but he offered them up with a price fully sufficient to purchase the benefit he asked.

(4.) Christ offered this price and those strong cries both together; for at the same time that he was pouring out these earnest requests for the success of his redemption in the salvation of sinners, he also shed his blood. His blood fell down to the ground at the same instant that his cries went up to heaven. Let burdened and distressed sinners, that are ready to doubt of the efficacy of Christ's intercession for such unworthy creatures as they, and to call in question God's readiness to accept them for Christ's sake, consider these things. Go to the garden where the Son of God was in an agony, and where he cried to God so earnestly, and where his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, and then see what a conclusion you will draw up from such a wonderful sight.

6. The godly may take great comfort in this, that Christ has as their high priest offered up such strong cries to God. You that have good evidence of your being believers in Christ, and his true followers and servants, may comfort yourselves in this, that Christ Jesus is your high priest, that that blood, which Christ shed in his agony, fell down to the ground for you, and that those earnest cries were sent up to God for you, for the success of his labours and sufferings in all that good you stood in need of in this world, and in your everlasting happiness in the world to come. This may be a comfort to you in all losses, and under all difficulties, that you may encourage your faith, and strengthen your hope, and cause you greatly to rejoice. If you were under any remarkable difficulties, it would be a great comfort to you to have the prayers of some man that you looked upon to be a man of eminent piety, and one that had a great interest at the throne of grace, and especially if you knew that he was very earnest and greatly engaged in prayer for you. But how much more may you be comforted in it, that you have an interest in the prayers and cries of the only-begotten and infinitely worthy Son of God, and that he was so earnest in his prayers for you, as you have heard!

7. Hence we may learn how earnest Christians ought to be in their prayers and endeavours for the salvation of others. Christians are the followers of Christ, and they should follow him in this. We see from what we have heard, how great the labour and travail of Christ's soul was for others' salvation, and what earnest and strong cries to God accompanied his labours. Here he hath set us an example. Herein he hath set an example for ministers, who should as co-workers with Christ travail in birth with them till Christ be found in them. [Gal. iv. 19](#). "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." They should be willing to spend and be spent for them. They should not only labour for them, and pray earnestly for them, but should, if occasion required, be ready to suffer for them, and to spend not only their strength, but their blood for them. [2 Cor. xii. 15](#). "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Here is an example for parents, showing how they ought to labour and cry to God for the spiritual good of their children. You see how Christ laboured and strove and cried to God for the salvation of his spiritual children; and will not you earnestly seek and cry to God for your natural children?

Here is an example for neighbours one towards another how they should seek and cry for the good of one another's souls, for this is the command of Christ, that they should love one another as Christ loved them. [John xv. 12](#). Here is an example for us, showing how we should earnestly seek and pray for the spiritual and eternal good of our enemies, for Christ did all this for his enemies, and when some of those enemies were at that very instant plotting his death, and busily contriving to satiate their malice and cruelty, in his most extreme torments, and most ignominious destruction.

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## S E R M O N   V I I .

romans ii. 8, 9.

But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

it is the drift of the apostle in the three first chapters of this epistle, to show that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin, and therefore cannot be justified by works of law, but only by faith in Christ. In the first chapter he had shown that the Gentiles were under sin: in this he shows that the Jews also are under sin, and that however severe they were in their censures upon the Gentiles, yet they themselves did the same things; for which the apostle very much blames them: "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest, doest the same things."<sup>618</sup> And he warns them not to go on in such a way, by forewarning them of the misery to which they will expose themselves by it, and by giving them to understand, that instead of their misery being less than that of the Gentiles, it would be the greater, for God's distinguishing goodness to them above the Gentiles. The Jews thought that they should be exempted from future wrath, because God had chosen them to be his peculiar people. But the apostle informs them that there should be indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, to every soul of man; not only to the Gentiles, but to every soul; and to the Jews first and chiefly, when they did evil, because their sins were more aggravated.

In the text we find,

1. A description of wicked men; in which may be observed those qualifications of wicked men which have the nature of a cause, and those which have the nature of an effect.

Those qualifications of wicked men here mentioned that have the nature of a cause, are their being *contentious*, and *not obeying the truth*, but *obeying unrighteousness*. By their being contentious, is meant their being contentious against the truth, their quarrelling with the gospel, their finding fault with its declarations and offers. Unbelievers find many things in the ways of God at which they stumble, and by which they are offended. They are always quarrelling and finding fault with one thing or another, whereby they are kept from believing the truth and yielding to it. Christ is to them a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence. They do not obey the truth, that is, they do not yield to it, they do not receive it with faith. That yielding to the truth and embracing it, which there is in saving faith, is called *obeying*, in Scripture. [Rom. vi. 17.](#) "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." [Heb. v. 9.](#) "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." [Rom. i. 5.](#) "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all





nations for his name.” But they obey unrighteousness instead of yielding to the gospel, they are under the power and dominion of sin, and are slaves to their lusts and corruptions.

It is in those qualifications of wicked men that their wickedness radically consists; their unbelief and opposition to the truth, and their slavish subjection to lust, are the foundation of all wickedness.

Those qualifications of wicked men, which have the nature of an effect, are their doing evil. This is the least of their opposition against the gospel, and of their slavish subjection to their lusts; that they do evil. Those wicked principles are the foundation, and their wicked practice is the superstructure; those were the root, and this is the fruit.

2. The punishment of wicked men, in which may be also noticed the cause and the effect.

Those things mentioned in their punishment that have the nature of a cause, are *indignation* and *wrath*; *i.e.* the indignation and wrath of God. It is the anger of God that will render wicked men miserable; they will be the subjects of divine wrath, and hence will arise their whole punishment.

Those things in their punishment that have the nature of an effect, are *tribulation* and *anguish*. Indignation and wrath in God, will work extreme sorrow, trouble, and anguish of heart, in them.

*Doctrine.* Indignation, wrath, misery, and anguish of soul, are the portion that God has allotted to wicked men.

Every one of mankind must have the portion that belongs to him. God allots to each one his portion; and the portion of the wicked is nothing but wrath, and distress, and anguish of soul. Though they may enjoy a few empty and vain pleasures and delights, for a few days while they stay in this world, yet that which is allotted to them by the Possessor and Governor of all things to be their portion, is only indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish. This is not the portion that wicked men choose; the portion that they choose is worldly happiness, yet it is the portion that God carves out for them; it is the portion that they in effect choose for themselves. For they choose those things that naturally and necessarily lead to it, and those that they are plainly told, times without number, will issue in it. [Prov. viii. 36.](#) “But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me love death.” But whether they choose it or not, this will and must be the portion to all eternity of all who live and die wicked men. Indignation and wrath shall pursue them as long as they live in this world, shall drive them out of the world, and shall follow them into another world; and there wrath and misery shall abide upon them throughout eternity.

The method that I shall take in treating this subject, is to describe the wrath and misery of which wicked men shall be the subjects, both here and hereafter, in the successive parts and periods of it, according to the order of time.

I. I shall describe the wrath that often pursues wicked men in this life. Indignation and wrath often begin with them here.

1. God oftentimes in wrath leaves them to themselves. They are left in their sins, and left to undo themselves, and work out their own ruin; he lets them alone in sin. [Hos. iv. 17.](#) “Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone.” He often leaves them to go great lengths in sin, and does not afford them that restraining grace that he does to others. He leaves them to their own blindness, so that they always remain ignorant of God and Christ, and of the things that belong to their peace. They are sometimes left to hardness of heart, to be stupid and senseless, so that nothing will ever thoroughly awaken them. They are left to their own hearts’ lusts, to continue in some wicked practices all their days. Some are left to their covetousness, some to drunkenness, some to uncleanness, some to a proud, contentious, and envious spirit, and some to a spirit of finding fault and quarrelling with God. God leaves them to their folly, to act exceedingly foolishly, to delay and put off the concerns of their souls from time to time, never to think the present time the best, but always to keep it at a distance, and foolishly to continue flattering themselves with hopes of long life, and to put far away the evil day, and to bless themselves in their hearts, and say, ” I shall have peace, though I add drunkenness to thirst.” Some are so left that they are miserably hardened and senseless, when others all around them are awakened, and greatly concerned, and inquire what they shall do to be saved.

Sometimes God leaves men to a fatal backsliding for a misimprovement of the strivings of his Spirit. They are let alone, to backslide perpetually. Dreadful is the life and condition of those who are thus left of God. We have instances of the misery of such in God’s holy word, particularly of Saul and Judas. Such are, sometimes, very much left to the power of Satan to tempt them, to hurry them on in wicked courses, and exceedingly to aggravate their own guilt and misery.

2. Indignation and wrath are sometimes exercised towards them in this world, by their being cursed in all that concerns them. They have this curse of God following them in every thing. They are cursed in all their enjoyments. If they are in prosperity, it is cursed to them; if they possess riches, if they have honour, if they enjoy pleasure, there is the curse of God that attends it. [Psalm xcii. 7.](#) “When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they may be destroyed forever.

There is a curse of God that attends their ordinary food: every morsel of bread which they eat, and every drop of water which they drink. [Psalm lxix. 22.](#) “Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.” They are cursed in all their employments, in whatsoever they put their hands to; when they go into the field to labour, or are at work at their respective trades. [Deut. xxviii. 16.](#) “Cursed shall thou be in the city, and cursed shall thou be in the field.” The curse of God remains in the houses where they dwell, and brimstone is scattered in their habitations. [Job xviii. 15.](#) The curse of God attends them in the afflictions which they meet with, whereas the afflictions that good men meet with, are fatherly corrections, and are sent in mercy. The afflictions

which wicked men meet with are in wrath, and come from God as an enemy, and are the foretaste of their everlasting punishment. The curse of God attends them also in their spiritual enjoyments and opportunities, and it would have been better for them not to have been born in a land of light. Their having the Bible and the sabbath, is only to aggravate their guilt and misery. The word of God when preached to them is a savour of death unto death. Better would it be for them, if Christ had never come into the world, if there had never been any offer of a Saviour. Life itself is a curse to them; they live only to fill up the measure of their sins. What they seek in all the enjoyments, and employments, and concerns of life, is their own happiness; but they never obtain it; they never obtain any true comfort, all the comforts which they have are worthless and unsatisfying. If they lived a hundred years with never so much of the world in their possession, their life is all filled up with vanity. All that they have is vanity of vanities, they find no true rest for their souls, they do but feed on the east wind, they have no real contentment. Whatever outward pleasures they may have, their souls are starving. They have no true peace of conscience, they have nothing of the favour of God. Whatever they do, they live in vain, and to no purpose; they are useless in the creation of God, they do not answer the end of their being. They live without God, and have not the presence of God, nor any communion with him. But on the contrary, all that they have and all that they do, does but contribute to their own misery, and render their future and everlasting state the more dreadful. The best of wicked men live but miserable and wretched lives, with all their prosperity; their lives are most undesirable, and whatever they have, the wrath of God abides upon them.

3. After a time they must die. [Eccles. ix. 3.](#) “This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.”

Death is a far different thing when it befalls wicked men, from what it is when it befalls good men; to the wicked it is in execution of the curse of the law, and of the wrath of God. When a wicked man dies, God cuts him off in wrath, he is taken away as by a tempest of wrath, he is driven away in his wickedness. [Prov. xiv. 32.](#) “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.” [Job xviii. 18.](#) “He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.” [Job xxvii. 21.](#) “The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth, and as a storm, hurleth him out of his place.” Though wicked men, while they live, may live in worldly prosperity, yet they cannot live here always, but they must die. The place that knoweth him shall know him no more; and the eye that hath seen him shall see him no more in the land of the living.

Their bounds are unchangeably set, and when they are come to those bounds they must go, and must leave all their worldly good things. If they have lived in outward glory their glory shall not descend after them; they get nothing while they live that they can carry away. [Eccles. v. 15.](#) “As he came forth of his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, to go as he

came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.” He must leave all his substance unto others. It they are at ease and quietness, death will put an end to their quietness, will spoil all their carnal mirth, and will strip them of all their glory. As they came naked into the world, so naked must they return, and go as they came. If they have laid up much goods for many years, if they have laid in stores, as they hope, for great comfort and pleasure, death will cut them off from all. [Luke xii. 16, &c.](#) “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? and he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided.” If they have many designs and projects in their breasts for promoting their outward prosperity and worldly advantage, when death comes, it cuts all off at one blow. [Psalm cxlvi. 4.](#) “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” And so whatever diligence they have had in seeking their salvation, death will disappoint all such diligence, it will not wait for them to accomplish their designs and fulfil their schemes. If they have pleased, and pampered, and adorned their bodies, death will spoil all their pleasure and their glory; it will change their countenances to a pale and ghastly aspect. Instead of their gay apparel and beautiful ornaments, they shall have only a winding-sheet; their house must be the dark and silent grave; and that body which they deified, shall turn to loathsome rottenness, shall be eaten of worms, and turn to dust. Some wicked men die in youth, wrath pursues them, and soon overtakes them; they are not suffered to live out half their days. [Job xxxvi. 14.](#) “They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.” [Psalm lv. 23.](#) “But thou, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.” They are sometimes overtaken in the very midst of their sin and vanity; and death puts a sudden end to all their youthful pleasures. They are often stopped in the midst of a career in sin, and then if their hearts cleave ever so fast to those things, they must be rent from them; they have no other good but outward good; but then they must eternally forsake it, they must close their eyes for ever on all that has been dear and pleasant to them here.

4. Wicked men are oftentimes the subjects of much tribulation and anguish of heart on their death-beds. Sometimes the pains of body are very extreme and dreadful; and what they endure in those agonies and struggles for life, after they are past speaking, and when body and soul are rending asunder, none can know. Hezekiah had an awful sense of it; he compares it to a lion’s breaking all his bones. [Isa. xxxviii. 12, 13.](#) “Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd’s tent: I have cut off as a weaver my life; he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. I reckoned

till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.” But this is but little to what is sometimes undergone by wicked men in their souls when they are on their death-beds. Death appears sometimes with an exceedingly terrible aspect to them; when it comes and stares them in the face, they cannot bear to behold it. It is always so, if wicked men have notice of the approach of death, and have reason and conscience in exercise, and are not either stupid or distracted. When this king of terrors comes to show himself to them, and they are called forth to meet him, O how do they dread the conflict! But meet him they must: “There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.”<sup>619</sup> Death comes to them with all his dreadful armour, and his sting not taken away; and it is enough to fill their souls with torment that cannot be expressed. It is an awful thing for a person to be lying on a sick bed, to be given over by physicians, to have friends stand weeping round the bed as expecting to part with him; and in such circumstances as those, to have no hope, to be without an interest in Christ, and to have the guilt of his sins lying on his soul, to be going out of the world without his peace being made with God, to stand before his holy judgment-seat in all his sins, without any thing to plead, or answer. To see the only opportunity to prepare for eternity coming immediately to an end, after which there shall be no more time of probation, but his case will be unalterably fixed, and there never will be another offer of a Saviour; for the soul to come just to the very edge of the boundless gulf of eternity, and insensibly to launch forth into it, without any God or Saviour to take tare of it; to be brought to the edge of the precipice, and to see himself falling down into the lake of fire and brimstone, and to feel that he has no power to stop himself: who can tell the shrinkings and misgivings of heart in such a case? How does he endeavour to hang back, but yet he must go on; it is in vain to wish for further opportunity! O how happy does he think those that stand about him, who may yet live, may have their lives continued longer, when he must go immediately into an endless eternity! How does he wish it might be with him as with those who have a longer time to prepare for their trial! but it must not be so. Death, sent on purpose to summon him, will give him no release nor respite: he must go before the holy judgment-seat of God as he is, to have his everlasting state determined according to his works. To such persons, how differently do things appear from what they did in the time of health, and when they looked at death as at a distance! How differently does sin look to them now; those sins which they used to make light of! How dreadful is it now to look back and consider how they have spent their time, how foolish they have been, how they have gratified and indulged their lusts, and lived in ways of wickedness; how careless they have been, and how they have neglected their opportunities and advantages, how they have refused



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619 [Eccles. viii. 8.](#)

to hearken to counsel, and have not repented in spite of all the warnings that were given! [Prov. v. 11,12,13.](#) “And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!”

How differently does the world appear to them now! They used to set much by it, and have their hearts taken up with it; but what does it avail them now? how insignificant are all their riches! [Prov. xi. 4.](#) “Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.” What different thoughts have they now of God, and of his wrath! They used to make light of the wrath of God, but how terrible does it now appear! How does their heart shrink at the thoughts of appearing before such a God! How different are their thoughts of time! Now time appears precious; and O what would they not give for a little more time! Some have in such circumstances been brought to cry out, O, a thousand worlds for an hour, for a *moment*! And how differently does eternity now appear! now it is awful indeed. Some have been brought on a death-bed to cry out, O that word Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! What a dismal gulf does it appear to them, when they come to the very brink! They often at such times cry for mercy, and cry in vain. God called, and they would not hear. “They set at nought his counsels, and would none of his reproofs. Now also he laughs at their calamity, and mocks when their fear cometh.”<sup>620</sup> They beseech others to pray for them, they send for ministers, but all often fails them. They draw nearer and nearer to death, and eternity comes more and more immediately in view. And who can express their horror, when they feel themselves clasped in the cold arms of death, when their breath fails more and more, and their eyes begin to be fixed and grow dim! That which is then felt by them, cannot be told nor conceived. Some wicked men have much of the horror and despair of hell in their last sickness. [Eccles. v. 17.](#) “All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.”

II. I shall describe the wrath that attends wicked men hereafter.

1. The soul, when it is separated from the body, shall be cast down into hell. There is without doubt a particular judgment by which every man is to be tried at death, beside the general judgment: for the soul, as soon as it departs from the body, appears before God to be judged. [Eccl. xii.](#) “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it:” that is, to be judged and disposed of by him. [Heb. ix. 27.](#) “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” But this particular judgment is probably no such solemn transaction as that which will be at the day of judgment; the soul must appear before God, but not in the manner that men shall appear at the end of the world. The souls of wicked men shall not go to heaven to appear before God, neither shall Christ descend from heaven for the soul to appear before him; neither is it to be supposed,

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620 [Prov. i. 26.](#)

that the soul shall be carried to any place where there is some special symbol of the divine presence, in order to be judged. But as God is every where present, so the soul shall be made immediately sensible of his presence. Souls in a separate state shall be sensible of the presence of God and of his operations in another manner than we now are. All separate spirits may be said to be before God: the saints are in his glorious presence, and the wicked in hell are in his dreadful presence; they are said to be tormented in the presence of the Lamb. [Rev. xiv. 10.](#) “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” So the soul of a wicked man, at its departure from the body, will be made immediately sensible that it is before an infinitely holy and dreadful God and his own final Judge; and will then see how terrible a God he is, he will see how holy a God he is, how infinitely he hates sin; he will be sensible of the greatness of God’s anger against sin, and how dreadful is his displeasure. Then will he be sensible of the dreadful majesty and power of God, and how fearful a thing it is to fall into his hands. Then the soul shall come naked with all its guilt, and in all its filthiness, a vile, loathsome, abominable creature, an enemy to God, a rebel against him, with the guilt of all its rebellion and disregard of God’s commands, and contempt of his authority, and slight of the glorious gospel, before God as its Judge. This will fill the soul with horror and amazement. It is not to be supposed that this judgment will be attended with any voice or any such outward transactions as the judgment at the end of the world; but God shall manifest himself in his strict justice inwardly, to the immediate view of the soul, and to the sense and apprehension of the conscience. This particular judgment probably will not hinder, but that the soul shall be cast into hell immediately when it goes from the body; as soon as ever the soul departs from the body, the soul shall know what its state and condition are to be to all eternity. As long as there is life, there is hope. The man, while he lived, though his case was exceedingly dreadful, yet had some hope; when he lay dying, there was a possibility of salvation. But when once the union between soul and body is broken, then that moment the case becomes desperate, and there remains no hope, no possibility. On their death-beds, perhaps, they had some hope that God would pity them and hear their cries, or that he would hear the prayers of their pious friends for them; they were ready to lay hold on something which they had at some time met with, some religious affection or some change in their external conduct, and to flatter themselves that they were then converted; they were able to indulge some degree of hope from the moral lives that they had lived, that God would have respect to them and save them; but as soon as ever the soul parts from the body, from that moment the case will be absolutely determined, there will then be an end for ever to all hope, to every thing that men hang upon in this life; the soul then shall know certainly that it is to be miserable to all eternity, without any remedy. It shall see that God is its enemy; it shall see its Judge clothed in his wrath and vengeance. Then its misery will begin, it will that

moment be swallowed up in despair; the great gulf will be fixed between it and happiness, the door of mercy will be for ever shut up, the irrevocable sentence will be passed. Then shall the wicked know what is before them. Before, the soul was in distress for fear how it would be; but now, all its fears shall come upon it; it shall come upon it as a mighty flood, and there will be no escaping. The soul was full of amazement before through fear; but now, who can conceive the amazement that fills it that moment when all hope is cut off, and it knows that there never will be any difference!

When a good man dies, his soul is conducted by holy angels to heaven. [Luke xvi. 22.](#) “And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died and was buried.” So we may well suppose that when a wicked man dies, his soul is seized by wicked angels; that they are round his bed ready to seize the miserable soul as soon as it is parted from the body. And with what fierceness and fury do those cruel spirits fly upon their prey; and the soul shall be left in their hands. There shall be no good angels to guard and defend it. God will take no merciful care of it, there is nothing to help it against those cruel spirits that shall lay hold of it to carry it to hell, there to torment it for ever. God will leave it wholly in their hands, and will give it up to their possession, when it comes to die; and it shall be carried down into hell, to the abode of devils and damned spirits. If the fear of hell on a death-bed sometimes fills the wicked with amazement, how will they be overwhelmed when they feel its torments, when they shall find them not only as great but far greater than their fears! They shall find them far beyond what they could conceive of before they felt them; for none know the power of God’s anger, but they that experience it. [Psal. xc. 11.](#) “Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.”

Departed spirits of wicked men are doubtless carried to some particular place in the universe, which God has prepared to be the receptacle of his wicked, rebellions, and miserable subjects; a place where God’s avenging justice shall be glorified; a place built to be the prison, where devils and wicked men are reserved till the day of judgment.

2. Here the souls of wicked men shall suffer extreme and amazing misery in a separate state, until the resurrection. This misery is not indeed their full punishment; nor is the happiness of the saints before the day of judgment their full happiness. It is with the souls of wicked men as it is with devils. Though the devils suffer extreme torment now, yet they do not suffer their complete punishment; and therefore it is said, that they are cast down to hell, and bound in chains. [2 Pet. ii. 4.](#) “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” [Jude 6.](#) “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” They are reserved in the state they are in; and for what are they reserved, but for a greater degree of punishment? and therefore they are said to tremble for fear. [James ii. 19.](#) “Thou



believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble.” Hence when Christ was on earth, the devils were greatly afraid that Christ was come to torment them. [Matt. viii. 29.](#) “And, behold, they cried out, saving, What hare we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” [Mark v. 7.](#) “And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.”

But yet they are there in extreme and inconceivable misery; they are there deprived of all good, they have no rest nor comfort, and they are subject to the wrath of God; God there executes wrath on them without mercy, and they are swallowed up in wrath. [Luke xvi. 24.](#) “And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me; and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” Here we are told that, when the rich man died, he lift up his eyes being in torment, and he tells Abraham that he is tormented in a flame; and it seems that the flame was not only about him, but in him; he therefore asks for a drop of water to cool his tongue. This doubtless is to represent to us that they are full of the wrath of God as it were with fire, and they shall there be tormented in the midst of devils and damned spirits; and they shall have inexpressible torment from their own consciences. God’s wrath is the fire that never shall be quenched, and conscience is the worm that never dies. How much do men suffer from horror of conscience sometimes in this world, but how much more in hell! What bitter and tormenting reflections will they have concerning the folly they have been guilty of in their lives, in so neglecting their souls, when they had such an opportunity for repentance; that they went on so foolishly to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, to add to the record of their sins from day to day, to make their misery yet greater and greater; how they have kindled the fires of hell for themselves, and spent their lives in gathering the fuel! They will not be able to help revolving such thoughts in their minds; and how tormenting will they be! And those who go to hell, never can escape thence; there they remain imprisoned till the day of judgment, and their torments remain continually. Those wicked men who died many years ago, their souls went to hell, and there they are still; those who went to hell in former ages of the world, have been in hell ever since, all the while suffering torment. They have nothing else to spend their time in there, but to suffer torment, they are kept in being for no other purpose; and though they have many companions in hell, yet they are no comfort to them, for there is no friend, no love, no pity, no quietness, no prospect, no hope.

3. The separate souls of the wicked, besides the present misery that they suffer, shall be in amazing fear of their more full punishment at the day of judgment. Though their punishment in their separate state be exceedingly dreadful, and far more than they can bear, though it be so great as to sink and crush them, yet this is not all; they are reserved for a much greater and more dreadful punishment at the day of judgment; their torment will then be vastly augmented, and continue in that augmentation to all eternity. Their punishment will

be so much greater then, that their misery in this separate state is but as an imprisonment before an execution; they, as well as the devils, are bound in chains of darkness [Jude i. 6.](#) “to the judgment of the great day.” Separate spirits are called “spirits in prison.” [1 Pet. iii. 19.](#) “By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.” And if the imprisonment be so dreadful, how dreadful indeed will be the execution! When we are under any great pain of body at any time, how do we dread the least addition to it! its continuance is greatly dreaded, much more its increase. How much more will those separate spirits that suffer the torments of hell, dread that augmentation and completing of their torment which there will be at the day of judgment, when what they feel already, is vastly more than they can support themselves; when they shall be as it were begging for one drop of water to cool their tongues, when they would give ten thousand worlds for the least abatement of their misery! How sinking will it be to think that instead of that the day is coming when God shall come forth out of heaven to sentence them to a far more dreadful degree of misery, and to continue them under it for ever! What experience they have of the dreadfulness of God’s wrath convinces them fully how terrible a thing his wrath is; they will therefore be exceedingly afraid of that full wrath which he will execute at the day of judgment; they will have no hope of escaping it, they will know assuredly that it will come.

The fear of this makes the devils, those mighty, proud, and stubborn spirits, to tremble: they believe what is threatened, and therefore tremble. If this fear overcomes them, how much more will it overwhelm the souls of wicked men! All hell trembles at the thoughts of the day of judgment.

4. When the day of judgment comes they shall rise to the resurrection of damnation.’ When that day comes, all mankind that have died from off the face of the earth shall arise; not only the righteous, but also the wicked. [Dan. xii. 2.](#) “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” [Rev. xx. 13.](#) “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man according to his works.” The damned in hell know not the time when the day of judgment will be, but when the time comes it will be made known, and it will be the most dreadful news that ever was told in that world of misery. It is always a doleful time in hell; the world of darkness is always full of shrieks and doleful cries; but when the news is heard, that the day appointed for the judgment is come, hell will be filled with louder shrieks and more dreadful cries than ever before. When Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to judgment, the news of it will fill both earth and hell with mourning and bitter crying. We read that all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, and so shall all the inhabitants of hell; and then must the souls of the wicked come up to be united to their bodies, and stand before the Judge. They shall not come willingly, but shall be dragged forth as a malefactor is dragged out of his dungeon to execution. They were unwilling when they died to leave the earth to go to hell;

but now they will be much more unwilling to come out of hell to go to the last judgment. It will be no deliverance to them, it will only be a coming forth to their execution. They will hang back, but must come; the devils and damned spirits must come up together. The last trumpet will then be heard, this will be the most terrible sound to wicked men and devils that ever was heard; and not only the wicked, that shall then be found dwelling on the earth, shall hear it, but also those that are in their graves. [John v. 28, 29](#). “Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation;” and then must the souls of the wicked enter their bodies again, which will be prepared only to be organs of torment and misery. It will be a dreadful sight to them when they come to their bodies again, those bodies which were formerly used by them as the organs and instruments of sin and wickedness, and whose appetites and lusts they indulged and gratified. The parting of soul and body was dreadful to them when they died, but their meeting again at the resurrection will be more dreadful. They shall receive their bodies loathsome and hideous, agreeably to that shame and everlasting contempt to which they shall arise. As the bodies of the saints shall arise more glorious than when on earth, and shall be like unto Christ’s glorious body, so we may well suppose that the bodies of the wicked will arise proportionably more deformed and hideous. Oftentimes in this world a polluted soul is hid in a fine and comely body, but it will not be so then when things shall appear as they are; the form and aspect of the body shall be answerable to the hellish deformity of the soul. Thus shall they rise out of their graves, and shall lift up their eyes, and see the Son of God in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels with him. Then shall they see their Judge in his awful majesty, which will be the most amazing sight to them that ever they saw, and will still add new horrors. That awful and terrible majesty in which he will appear, and the manifestation of his infinite holiness, will pierce their souls. They shall come forth out of their graves all trembling and astonished; fearfulness shall surprise them.

5. Then must they appear before their Judge to give up their account. They will find no mountains or rocks to fall upon them, that can cover them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb; Many of them will see others at that time, who were formerly their acquaintance, who shall appear with glorious bodies, and with joyful countenances and songs of praise, and mounting up as with wings to meet the Lord in the air, while they are left behind. Many shall see their former neighbours and acquaintance, their companions, their brothers, and their wives taken and they left. They shall be summoned to go and appear before the judgment-seat; and go they must, however unwilling; they must stand at Christ’s left hand, in the midst of devils and wicked men. This shall again add still further amazement, and will cause their horror still to be in a further degree than ever. With what horror will that company come together! and then shall they be called to their account; then shall be brought to light

the hidden things of darkness; then shall all the wickedness of their hearts be made known; then shall be declared the actual wickedness they have been guilty of; then shall appear their secret sins that they have kept hid from the eye of the world; then shall be manifested in their true light those sins that they used to plead for, and to excuse and justify. And then shall all their sins be set forth in all their dreadful aggravations, all their filthiness will be brought to light to their everlasting shame and contempt. Then it shall appear how heinous many of those things were, that they in their lifetime made light of; then will it appear how dreadful their guilt is in thus ill-treating so glorious and blessed a Saviour. And all the world shall see it, and many shall rise up in judgment against them and condemn them; their companions whom they tempted to wickedness, others whom they have hardened in sin by their example, shall rise up against many of them; and the heathen that have had no advantages in comparison of them, and many of whom have yet lived better lives than they, shall rise up against them; and they shall be called to a special account; the Judge will reckon with them, they shall be speechless, they shall be struck dumb, their own consciences bearing testimony against them, and shall cry aloud against them, for they shall then see how great and terrible a God he is, against whom they have sinned. Then shall they stand at the left hand, while they see others whom they knew on earth sitting at the right hand of Christ in glory, shining forth as the sun, accepted of Christ, and sitting with him to judge and condemn them.

6. Then the sentence of condemnation shall be pronounced by the Judge upon them. [Matt. xxv. 41.](#) “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” This sentence will be pronounced with awful majesty; and there shall be great indignation, and dreadful wrath shall then appear in the Judge, and in his voice, with which he shall pronounce the sentence; and what a horror and amazement will these words strike into the hearts of the wicked, on whom they shall be pronounced! Every word and syllable shall be like the most amazing thunder to them, and shall pierce their souls like the fiercest lightning. The Judge will bid them depart from him; he will drive them from his presence, as exceedingly abominable to him, and he shall give them the epithet *accursed*; they shall be an accursed company, and he will not only bid them depart from his presence, but into everlasting fire, to dwell there as their only fit habitation. And what shows the dreadfulness of the fire, is, that it is prepared for the devil and his angels: they shall lie for ever in the same fire in which the devils, those grand enemies of God, shall be tormented. When this sentence shall be pronounced, there shall be in the vast company at the left hand, tremblings, and mourning, and crying, and gnashing of teeth, in a new manner, beyond all that ever was before. If the devils, those proud and lofty spirits, tremble many ages beforehand at the bare thoughts of this sentence, how will they tremble when it comes to be pronounced! And how,

alas! will wicked men tremble! Their anguish will be aggravated by hearing that blessed sentence pronounced on those who shall be at the right hand: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." <sup>621</sup> »

7. Then the sentence shall be executed. When the Judge bids them depart, they must go; however loth, yet they must go. Immediately upon the finishing of the judgment and the pronouncing of the sentence, will come the end of the world. The frame of this world shall be dissolved. The pronouncing of that sentence will probably be followed with amazing thunders, that shall rend the heavens, and shake the earth out of its place. [2 Peter iii. 10.](#) "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." Then shall the sea and the waves roar, and the rocks shall be thrown down, and the mountains shall rend asunder, and there shall be one universal wreck of this great world. Then shall the heavens be dissolved, and then the earth shall be set on fire. As God in wrath once destroyed the world by a flood of water, so now shall he cause it to be all drowned in a deluge of fire; and the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; [2 Pet. iii. 10.](#); and that great company of devils and wicked men must then enter into those everlasting burnings to which they are sentenced.

8. In this condition they shall remain throughout the never-ending ages of eternity. Their punishment shall be then complete, and it shall remain in this completion for ever. Now shall all that come upon them which they so long trembled for fear of, while their souls were in a separate state. They will dwell in a fire that never shall be quenched, and here they must wear out eternity. Here they must wear out one thousand years after another, and that without end. There is no reckoning up the millions of years or millions of ages; all arithmetic here fails, no rules of multiplication can reach the amount, for there is no end. They shall have nothing to do to pass away their eternity, but to conflict with those torments; this will be their work for ever and ever; God shall have no other use or employment for them; this is the way that they must answer the end of their being. And they never shall have any rest, nor any atonement, but their torments will hold up to their height, and shall never grow any easier by their being accustomed to them. Time will seem long to them, every moment shall seem long to them, but they shall never have done with the ages of their torment.

#### APPLICATION.

1. Hence what need have we to take care that our foundation for eternity be sure! They who build on a false foundation, are not secure from this misery. They who build up a refuge of lies, will find that their refuge must fail them; their wall that they have daubed with un-

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621 [Matt. xxv. 34](#)

tempered mortar will fall. The more dreadful the misery is, the more need have we to see that we are safe from it; it will be dreadful indeed to be disappointed in such a case. To please ourselves with dreams and vain imaginations of our being the children of God, and of going to heaven, and at last to awake in hell, to see our refuge swept away, and our hope eternally gone, and to find ourselves swallowed up in flames, and to see an endless duration of it before us; how dreadful will this be!

There will be many that will be thus disappointed. Many shall come to the door and shall find it shut, who expected to find it open; and shall knock, but Christ will tell them that he knows them not, and he will bid them depart, and it will be in vain for them to tell Christ what affections they have had, and how religious they were, and how well they were accounted of on earth. They shall have no other answer but, "Depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity."<sup>622</sup> Let us all consider this, and give all diligence, to see that we build sure, if by any means we may at last be found in Christ. Let us see to it that we are indeed well secured from this dreadful misery. What will it avail us to please ourselves with a notion of being converted, and being beloved of God, and what will it avail us to have the good opinion of our neighbours for a few days, if we must at last be cast into hell, and appear at the day of judgment at the left hand, and have our eternal portion with unbelievers? A false hope cannot profit us, it is a thousand times worse than none. And who are more miserable than those who think that God has pardoned their sins, and who expect to have a portion with the righteous hereafter, but are all the while going headlong down into this dreadful misery? What case can be more awful than the case of those who are thus led blindfold to the slaughter; promising themselves a happiness that is never like to come, but on the contrary are sinking into endless tribulation and anguish!

Let every one therefore, who entertains hope of his own state, see to it, that he be well built; and let him not rest in past attainment, but reach forth towards those things that are before with all his might.

II. Hence we derive an argument for the awakening of ungodly men. This indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, is the portion allotted to you if you continue in your present condition. Thou art the man spoken of; it is to thee that all this misery is assigned by the threatening of God's holy word; it is on thee that this wrath of God abides; thou art now in a state of condemnation to this misery. [John iii. 18.](#) "He that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." It is not already executed upon you, but you are already condemned to it; you are not merely exposed to condemnation, but you are under the actual sentence of condemnation. This is the portion that is already allotted to you by the law, and you are under the law and not under grace. This misery is the misery into which you are every day in danger of dropping,

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622 [Matt. vii. 23.](#)

you are not safe from it one hour. How soon it may come upon you, you know not; you hang over it by a thread, that is continually growing more and more feeble. This dreadful misery in all its successive parts belongs to you, and is your due. Your friends and your neighbours, and all around you, if they knew what your condition was, might well lift up a loud and bitter cry over you, whenever they behold you, and say, Here is an unhappy being condemned to be given up eternally into the hands of devils to be tormented by them; here is a miserable man who is in danger every day of being swallowed up in the bottomless gulf of woe and misery. Here is a wretched undone creature condemned to lie down for ever in unquenchable fire, and to dwell in everlasting burnings; and he has no interest in a Saviour, he has nothing to defend him, he has nothing wherewith to appease the wrath of an offended God. Here consider two things.

1. You have no reason to question whether those future miseries and torments which are threatened in God's word are realities. Do not flatter yourself with thinking that it may not be so. Say not, How do I know that there is any such misery to be inflicted in another world; how do I know but all is a fable, and that when I come to die there will be an end of me, and that it will be with me as it is with the beasts. Do not say, How do I know but that all those things are only bugbears of man's inventing; how do I know that the Scriptures, that threaten those things, are the word of God; or if he has threatened those things, it may be it is only to frighten men to keep them to their duty, it may be he never intends to do as he threatens.

I say that there is no ground for any such suspicion, neither is there any reason for it; for that there should be no future punishment is not only contrary to Scripture, but reason. It is a most unreasonable thing to suppose that there should be no future punishment, to suppose that God, who had made man a rational creature, able to know his duty, and sensible that he is deserving punishment when he does it not; should let man alone, and let him live as he will, and never punish him for his sins, and never make any difference between the good and the bad; that he should make the world of mankind and then let it alone, and let men live all their days in wickedness, in adultery, murder, robbery, and persecution, and the like, and suffer them to live in prosperity, and never punish them; that he should suffer them to prosper in the world far beyond many good men, and never punish them hereafter. How unreasonable is it to suppose, that he who made the world, should leave things in such confusion, and never take any care of the government of his creatures, and that he should never judge his reasonable creatures! Reason teaches that there is a God, and reason teaches that if there be, he must be a wise and just God, and that he must take care to order things wisely and justly among his creatures; and therefore it is unreasonable to suppose that man dies like a beast, and that there is no future punishment. And if there be a future punishment, it is unreasonable to suppose that God has not somewhere or other given men warning of it, and revealed to them what kind of punishment they must expect. Will a wise lawgiver

keep his subjects in ignorance as to what punishment they must expect for breaking his laws? And if God has revealed it, where is it to be found but in the Scripture; what revelation have we of a future state if it is not there revealed? Where does God tell mankind what kind of rewards and punishments they must expect, if not here? and it is abundantly manifest by innumerable evidences, that these threatening are the threatenings of God, that this awful book is his revelation. And since God has threatened, there is no room to question whether he will fulfil; for he hath said it, yea, he hath sworn it, that he will repay the wicked to his face according to threatenings, and that he will glorify himself in their destruction, and that this heaven and earth shall pass away. How foolish then is the thought that God may only threaten such punishment to frighten men, and that he never intends to execute it! For as surely as God is God, he will do as he has said; he will destroy the mountains of iniquity as he has threatened, and there shall be no escaping. How vain are the thoughts of those who flatter themselves that God will not fulfil his threatenings, and that he only frightens and deceives men in them; as though God could in no other way govern the world than by making use of fallacious tricks and deceits to delude his subjects! Those that entertain such thoughts, however they may harden themselves by them for the present, will cherish them but a little while; their experience will soon convince them that God is a God of truth, and that his threatenings are no delusions. They will be convinced that he is a God who will by no means clear the guilty, and that his threatenings are substantial, and not mere shadows, when it will be too late to escape them. [Deut. xxix. 18, 19, 20, 21.](#) “Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him; but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law.” [Psal. 1. 21.](#) ” These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”

2. There is no reason to suspect that possibly ministers set forth this matter beyond what it really is, that possibly it is not so dreadful and terrible as is pretended, and that ministers strain the description of it beyond just bounds. Some may be ready to think so, because it seems to them incredible that there should be so dreadful a misery to any creature; but there is no reason for any such thoughts as these, if we consider,

*First.* How great a punishment the sins of wicked men deserve. The Scripture teaches us that any one sin deserves eternal death: [Rom. vi. 23.](#) “For the wages of sin is death: but



the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And that it deserves the eternal curse of God. [Deut. xxvii. 26.](#) “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say, Amen.” [Gal. iii. 10.](#) “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Which things imply that the least sin deserves total and eternal destruction. Eternal death, in the least degree of it, amounts to such a degree of misery as is the perfect destruction of the creature, the loss of all good, and perfect misery; and so does being accursed of God imply it. To be cursed of God, is to be devoted to perfect and ultimate destruction. The Scripture teaches that wicked men shall be punished to their full desert, that they shall pay all the debt.

*Secondly.* There is no reason to think that ministers describe the misery of the wicked beyond what it is, because the Scripture teaches us that this is one end of ungodly” men, to show the dreadfulness and power of God’s wrath. [Rom. ix. 22.](#) “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” It is often spoken of as part of the glory of God, that he is a terrible and dreadful God. [Psal. lxviii. 35.](#) “O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places:” that he is a consuming fire. [Psal. lxvi. 3.](#) “How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee:” and that herein one part of the glory of God is represented as consisting, that it is so dreadful a thing to injure and offend God. The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion, the wrath of a man is sometimes dreadful, but the future punishment of ungodly men is to show what the wrath of God is; it is to show to the whole universe the glory of God’s power. [2 Thess. i. 9.](#) “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” And therefore the punishment which we have described is not at all incredible, and there is no reason to think that it has been in the least described beyond what it really is.

*Thirdly.* The Scripture teaches that the wrath of God on wicked men is dreadful beyond all that we can conceive. [Psal. xc. 11.](#) “Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.” As it is but little that we know of God, as we know and can conceive of but little of his power and his greatness, so it is but a little that we know or can conceive of the dread-fulness of his wrath; and therefore there is no reason to suppose that we set it forth beyond what it is. We have rather reason to suppose that after we have said our utmost and thought our utmost, all that we have said or thought is but a faint shadow of the reality.

We are taught that the reward of the saints is beyond all that can be spoken or conceived of. [Eph. iii. 20.](#) “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.” [1 Cor. ii. 9.](#) “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the

heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” And so we may rationally suppose that the punishment of the wicked will also be inconceivably dreadful.

*Fourthly.* There is no reason to think that we set forth the misery of hell beyond the reality, because the Scripture teaches us that the wrath of God is according to his fear. [Psal. xc. 11.](#) This passage asserts that the wrath of God is according to his awful attributes; his greatness and his might, his holiness and power. The majesty of God is exceedingly great and awful, but according to his awfulness, so is his wrath; this is the meaning of the words; and therefore we must conclude that the wrath of God is indeed beyond all expression and signification terrible. How great and awful indeed is his majesty, who has made heaven and earth, and in what majesty will he come to judge the world at the last day! He will come to take vengeance on ungodly men. The sight of this majesty will strike wicked men with apprehensions and fears of destruction.

*Fifthly.* The description which I have given of the tribulation and wrath of ungodly men, is not beyond the truth, for it is the very description which the Scriptures give of it. The Scriptures represent that the wicked shall be cast into a furnace of fire; not only a fire, but a furnace. [Matt. xiii. 42.](#) “And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be nailing and gnashing of teeth.” [Rev. xx. 15.](#) “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.” [Psal. xxi. 8, 9.](#) “Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger; the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”

If, therefore, I have described this misery beyond the truth, then the Scriptures have done the same. It is evident then, that there is no reason to flatter yourselves with such imaginations. If God be true, you shall find the wrath of God, and your future misery, full as great; and not only so, but much greater; you will find that we know but little, and have said but little about it, and that all our expressions are faint in comparison of the reality.

III. Hence may be derived an argument to convince wicked men of the justice of God in allotting such a portion to them. Wicked men, when they hear it declared how awful the misery is of which they are in danger, often have their hearts lifted up against God for it; it seems to them very hard for God to deal so with any of his creatures. They cannot see why God should be so very severe with wicked men, for their sin and folly for a little while in this world; and when they consider that he has threatened such punishments, they are ready to entertain blasphemous thoughts against him. I would therefore endeavour to show you how justly you lie exposed to that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, of which you have heard. Particularly I would show,

1st, How just it would be in God for ever to leave you to yourself: it would be most just in God to refuse to be with you, or help you.



You have embraced and refused to let go those things which God hates; you have refused to forsake your lusts, and to abandon those ways of sin that are abominable to him. When God has commanded you to forsake them, how have you refused, and still have retained them, and been obstinate in it! Neither is your heart yet to this very day diverted from sin; but it is dear to you, you allow it the best place in your heart, you place it on the throne there. Would it be any wonder therefore if God should utterly leave you, seeing you will not leave sin? God has often declared his hatred of iniquity; and is it any wonder, that he is not willing to dwell with that which is so odious to him? Is it not reasonable that God should insist that you should part with your lusts in order to your enjoying his presence; and seeing you have so long refused, how just would it be if God should utterly forsake you? You have retained and harboured God's mortal enemies, sin and Satan; how justly therefore might God stand at a distance! Is God obliged to be present with any who harbour his enemies, and refuse to forsake them? Would God he unjust, if he should leave you utterly to yourself, so long as you will not forsake your idols?

Consider how just it would be in God to let you alone, since you have let God alone. You have not sought God for his presence and help as you ought to have done; you have neglected him; and would it not therefore be just if he should neglect you? How long have many of you lived in neglecting to seek him? how long have you restrained prayer before him? Since therefore you refused so much as to seek the presence and help of God, and did not think them worth praying to him for, how justly might he for ever withhold them, and so leave you wholly to yourself?

You have done what in you lies to drive God away from you, and to cause him wholly to leave you. When God in times past has not let you alone, but has been unwearied in awakening you, have you not resisted the motions and influences of his Spirit; have you not refused to be conducted by him, or to yield to him? [Zech. vii. 11.](#) "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear." How justly therefore might God refuse to move or strive any more! When God has been knocking at your door, you have refused to open to him; how just is it therefore that he should go away, and knock at your door no more! When the Spirit of God has been striving with you, have you not been guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit by giving way to a quarrelling temper, and by yielding yourself a prey to lust? And have not some of you quenched the Spirit, and been guilty of backsliding? and is God obliged, notwithstanding all this, to continue the striving of his Spirit with you, to be resisted and grieved still, as long as you please? On the contrary, would it not be just if his Spirit should everlastingly leave you, and let you alone?

2. How just it would be if you should be cursed in all your concerns in this world. It would be just if God should curse you in every thing, and cause every thing you enjoy, or are concerned in, to turn to your destruction.

You live here in all the concerns of life as an enemy to God; you have used all your enjoyments and possessions against God, and to his dishonour; would it not therefore be just if God should curse you in them, and turn them all against you, and to your destruction? What temporal blessing has God given you, which you have not used in the service of your lusts, in the service of sin and Satan? If you have been in prosperity, you have made use of it to God's dishonour; when you have waxed fat, you have forgotten the God that made you. How just therefore would it be if God's curse should attend all your enjoyments! Whatsoever employments you have followed, you have not served God in them, but God's enemies; how just therefore would it be if you should be cursed in all your employments! The means of grace that you have enjoyed, you have not made use of as you ought to have done; you have made light of them, and have treated them in a careless disregarding manner; you have been the worse and not the better for them. You have so attended and used sabbaths, and spiritual opportunities, that you have only made them occasions of manifesting your contempt of God and Christ, and divine things, by your careless and profane manner of attending them; would it not therefore be most just that God's curse should attend your means of grace, and the opportunities which you enjoy for the salvation of your soul?

You have improved your time only it neap up provocations and add to your transgressions, in opposition to all the calls and warnings that could be given you; how just therefore would it be if God should turn life itself into a curse to you, and suffer you to live only to fill up the measure of your sins!

You have, contrary to God's counsel, made use of your own enjoyments to the hurt of your soul, and therefore if God should turn them to the hurt and ruin of your soul, he would but deal with you as you have dealt with yourself. God has earnestly counselled you times without number to use your temporal enjoyments for your spiritual good, but you have refused to hearken to him, you have foolishly perverted them to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, you have voluntarily used what God has given you for your spiritual hurt, to increase your guilt and wound your own soul; and therefore if God's curse should attend them, so that they should all turn to the ruin of your soul, you would but be dealt with as you have dealt with yourself.

3. How just would it be in God to cut you off, and put an end to your life!

You have greatly abused the patience and long-suffering of God which have already been exercised towards you. God with wonderful long-suffering has borne with you, when you have gone on in rebellion against him, and refused to turn from your evil ways. He has beheld you going on obstinately in the ways of provocation against him, and yet he has not let loose his wrath against you to destroy you, but has still waited to be gracious. He has suffered you yet to live on his earth, and breathe his air; he has upheld and preserved you, and continued still to feed you, and clothe you, and maintain you, and still to give you a space to repent; but instead of being the better for his patience, you have been the worse,

instead of being melted by it, you have been hardened, and it has made you the more presumptuous in sin. [Eccles. viii. 11.](#) "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." You have been guilty of despising the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, instead of being led to repent by it. You cannot live one day but as God maintains and provides for you; you cannot draw a breath, or live a moment, unless God upholds you; for in his hand your breath is, and he holds your soul in life, and his visitation preserves your spirit. But what thanks has God had for it; how have you, instead of being turned to God, been only rendered the more fully set and dreadfully hardened in the ways of sin! How just therefore would it be if God's patience should soon be at an end, and he should cease to bear with you any longer!

You have not only abused his past patience, but have also abused his thoughts of future patience. You have flattered yourself that death was not near, and that you should live long in the world, and this has made you abundantly the more bold in sin. Since therefore such has been the use you have made of your expectation of having your life preserved, how just would it be in God to disappoint that expectation, and cut you short of that long life with which you have flattered yourself, and in the thoughts of which you have encouraged yourself in sin against him! How just would it be if your breath should soon be stopped, and that suddenly, when you think not of it, and you should be driven away in your wickedness!

As long as you live in sin you do but cumber the ground, you are wholly unprofitable, and live in vain. He that refuses to live to the glory of God, does not answer the end of his creation, and for what should he live? God made men to serve him; to this end he gave them life; and if there will not devote their lives to this end, how just would it be in God if he should refuse to continue their lives any longer! He has planted you in his vineyard, to bear fruit; and if you bring forth no fruit, why should he continue you any longer? how just would it be in him to cut you down!

As long as you live, many of the blessings of God are spent upon you from day to day; you devour the fruits of the earth and consume much of its fatness and sweetness; and all to no purpose, but to keep you alive to sin against God, and spend all in wickedness. The whole creation does as it were groan with you; the sun rises and sets to give you light, the clouds pour down rain upon you, and the earth brings forth her fruits, and labours from year to year to supply you; and you in the mean time do not answer the end of Him who has created all things. How just therefore would it be if God should soon cut you off, and take you away, and deliver the earth from this burden, that the creation may no longer groan with you, and cast you out as an abominable branch! [Luke xiii. 7.](#) "Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" [John xv. 2 and 6.](#) "Every branch in



me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

4. How just would it be if you should die in the greatest horror and amazement!

How often have you been exhorted to improve your time, to lay a foundation of peace and comfort on a deathbed; and yet you have refused to hearken! You have been many and many a time reminded that you must die, that it was very uncertain when, and that you did not know how soon, and have been told how mean and insignificant all your earthly enjoyments would then appear, and how unable to afford you any comfort on a death-bed. You have been often told how dreadful it would be to lie on a death-bed in a Christless state, having nothing to comfort you but your worldly enjoyments. You have been often put in mind of the torment and amazement which sinners, who have mispent their precious time, are subject to when arrested by death. You have been told how infinitely you would then need to have God your friend, and to have the testimony of a good conscience, and a well-grounded hope of future blessedness. And how often have you been exhorted to take care to provide against such a day as this, and to lay up treasure in heaven, that you might have something to depend on when you parted from this world, something to hope for when all things here below fail! But remember how regardless you have been, how dull and negligent from time to time, when you have sat under the hearing of such things, and still you obstinately refuse to prepare for death, and take no care to lay a good foundation against that time. And you have not only been counselled, but you have seen others on their death-beds in fear and distress, or have heard of them, and have not taken warning; yea, some of you have been sick yourselves, and have been afraid that you were on your death-beds, yet God was merciful to you, and restored you, but you did not take warning to prepare for death. How justly therefore might you be the subject of that horror and amazement, of which you have heard, when you come to die!

And not only so, but how industriously have you spent your time in treasuring up matter for tribulation and anguish at that time! You have not only been negligent of laying a foundation for peace and comfort then, but have spent your time continually and unweariedly in laying a foundation for distress and horror. How have you gone on from day to day, heaping up more and more guilt; more and more wounding your own conscience, still increasing the amount of folly and wickedness for you to reflect upon! How just therefore would it be that tribulation and anguish should then come upon you!

5. How just it is that you should suffer the wrath of God in another world!

Because you have wilfully provoked and stirred up that wrath. If you are not willing to suffer the anger of God, then why did you provoke him to anger? why did you act as though you would contrive to make him angry with you? why did you wilfully disobey God? You know that wilful disobedience tends to provoke him who is disobeyed; it is so in an earthly

king, or master, or father. If you have a servant who is wilfully disobedient, it provokes your anger. And again, if you would not suffer God's wrath, why have you so often cast a slight on God? If any one casts a slight on men, it tends to provoke them: how much more may the Infinite Majesty of heaven be provoked, when he is contemned! You have also robbed God of his property, you have refused to give him that which is his own. It provokes men when they are deprived of their due and they are dealt injuriously by; how much more may God be provoked when you rob him!

You have also slighted the kindness of God to you, and that the greatest love and kindness of which you can conceive. You have been supremely ungrateful, and have only abused that kindness. Nothing provokes men more than to have their kindness slighted and abused; how much more may God be provoked when men requite his infinite mercy only with disobedience and ingratitude! If therefore you go on to provoke God, and to stir up his wrath, how can you expect any other than to suffer his wrath? If then you should indeed suffer the wrath of an offended God, remember it is what you have procured for yourself, it is a fire of your own kindling.

You would not accept of deliverance from God's wrath, when it has been offered to you. When God had in mercy sent his only-begotten Son into the world, you refused to admit him. You loved your sins too well to forsake them to come to Christ, and for the sake of your sins you have rejected all the offers of a Saviour, so that you have chosen death rather than life. After you had procured wrath to yourself you clove fast to it, and would not part with it for mercy. "All they that hate me, *love* death." <sup>623</sup> »

6. How just would it be that you be delivered up into the hands of the devil and his angels, to be tormented by them hereafter, seeing you have voluntarily given yourself up to serve them here! You have hearkened to them rather than to God. How just therefore would it be if God leave you to them! You have followed Satan and adhered to his interest in opposition to God, and have subjected yourself to his will in this world, rather than to the will of God; how just therefore would it be if God should give you up to his will hereafter!

7. How justly may your bodies be made organs of torment to you hereafter, which you have made organs and instruments of sin in this world! You have given up your bodies a sacrifice to sin and Satan: how justly therefore may God give them up a sacrifice to wrath! You have employed your bodies as servants to your vile and hateful lusts How just therefore would it be for God hereafter to raise your bodies to be organs and instruments of misery; and to fill them as full of torment as they have been filled full of sin!

8. But the greatest objection of wicked men against the justice of the future punishment which God has threatened, is from the greatness of that punishment: that God should inflict upon the finally impenitent, torments so extreme, so amazingly dreadful, to have their

bodies cast into a furnace of fire of such immense heat and fierceness, there to lie unconsumed, and yet full of sense and feeling, glowing within and without; and the soul full of yet more dreadful horror and torment; and so to remain without any remedy or rest for ever, and ever, and ever. And, therefore, I would mention several things to you, to show how justly you lie exposed to so dreadful a punishment.

1. This punishment, as dreadful as it is, is not more so than the Being is great and glorious against whom you have sinned. It is true this punishment is dreadful beyond all expression or conception, and so is the greatness and gloriousness of God as much beyond all expression or conception; and yet you have continued to sin against him, yea, you have been bold and presumptuous in your sins, and have multiplied transgressions against him without end. The wrath of God that you have heard of, dreadful as it is, is not more dreadful than that Majesty which you have despised and trampled on is awful. This punishment is indeed enough to fill one with horror barely to think of it; and so it would fill you with at least equal horror to think of sinning so exceedingly against so great and glorious a God, if you conceived of it aright. [Jer. ii. 12, 13.](#) “Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very desolate, saith the Lord: for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters; and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water!” God’s being so infinitely great and excellent, has not influenced you not to sin against him, but you have done it boldly, and made nothing of it, thousands of times; and why should this misery, being so infinitely great and dreadful, hinder God from inflicting it on you? [1 Sam. ii. 25.](#) “If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?”

2. Your nature is not more averse from such misery as you have heard of, than God’s nature is averse from such sin as you have been guilty of. The nature of man is very averse from pain and torment, and especially it is exceedingly averse from such dreadful and eternal torment; but yet that does not hinder but that it is just that it should be inflicted, for men do not hate misery more than God hates sin. God is so holy, and is of so pure a nature, that he has an infinite aversion to sin; but yet you have made light of sin, and your sins have been exceedingly multiplied and enhanced. The consideration of God’s hating of it has not at all hindered you from committing it; why, therefore, should the consideration of your hating misery hinder God from bringing it upon you? God represents himself in his word as burdened and wearied with the sins of wicked men: [Isa. i. 14.](#) “Your new moons and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them;” [Mal. ii. 17.](#) “Ye have wearied the Lord with your words: yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?”

3. You have not cared how much God’s honour suffered; and why should God be careful lest your misery be great? You have been told how much these and those things which you



have practised, were to the dishonour of God: yet you did not care for that, but went on still multiplying transgressions. The consideration that the more you sinned, the more God was dishonoured, did not in the least restrain you. If it had not been for fear of God's displeasure, you would not have cared though you had dishonoured him ten thousand times as much as you did. As for any respect you had to God, you did not care what became of God's honour, nor of his happiness neither, no, nor of his being. Why then is God obliged to be careful how much you suffer? Why should he be careful of your welfare, or use any caution lest he should lay more on you than you can bear.

4. As great as this wrath is, it is not greater than that love of God which you have slighted and rejected. God, in infinite mercy to lost sinners, has provided a way for them to escape future misery, and to obtain eternal life. For that end he has given his only-begotten Son, a person infinitely glorious and honourable in himself being equal with God, and infinitely near and dear to God. It was ten thousand times more than if God had given all the angels in heaven, or the whole world, for sinners. Him he gave to be incarnate, to suffer death, to be made a curse for us, and to undergo the dreadful wrath of God in our room, and thus to purchase for us eternal glory. This glorious person has been offered to you times without number, and he has stood and knocked at your door, till his hairs were wet with the dews of the night; but all that he has done has not won upon you; you see no form nor comeliness in him, no beauty that you should desire him. When he has thus offered himself to you as your Saviour, you never freely and heartily accept of him. This love which you have thus abused, is as great as that wrath of which you are in danger. If you would have accepted of it, you might have had the enjoyment of this love instead of enduring this terrible wrath: so that the misery you have heard of is not greater than the love you have despised, and the happiness and glory which you have rejected. How just then would it be in God to execute upon you this dreadful wrath, which is not greater than that love which you have despised! [Heb. ii. 3.](#) "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

5. If you complain of this punishment as being too great, then why has it not been great enough to deter you from sin? As great as it is, you have made nothing of it. When God threatened to inflict it on you, you did not mind his threatenings, but were bold to disobey him, and to do those very things for which he threatened this punishment. Great as this punishment is, it has not been great enough to keep you from living a wilfully wicked life, and going on in ways that you knew were evil. When you have been told that such and such things certainly exposed you to this punishment, you did not abstain on that account, but went on from day to day in a most presumptuous manner, and God's threatening such a punishment was no effectual check upon you. Why therefore do you now complain of this punishment as too great, and quarrel against it, and say that God is unreasonable and cruel to inflict it? In so saying you are condemned out of your own mouth; for if it be so dreadful a punishment, and more than is just, then why was it not great enough at least to restrain

you from wilful sinning? [Luke xix. 21.](#), &c. “I feared thee, because thou art an austere man, thou takest up that thou laigest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he said unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant,” &c. You complain of this punishment as too great: but yet you have acted as if it was not great enough, and you have made light of it. If the punishment is too great, why have you gone on to make it still greater? You have gone on from day to day, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, to add to your punishment, and increase it exceedingly; and yet now you complain of it as too great, as though God could not justly inflict so great a punishment. How absurd and self-contradictory is the conduct of such an one, who complains of God for making his punishment too great, and yet from day to day industriously gathers and heaps up fuel, to make the fire the greater!

6. You have no cause to complain of the punishment being greater than is just; for you have many and many a time provoked God to do his worst. If you should forbid a servant to do a given thing, and threaten that if he did it you would inflict some very dreadful punishment upon him, and he should do it notwithstanding, and you should renew your command, and warn him in the most strict manner possible not to do it, and tell him you would surely punish him if he persisted, and should declare that his punishment should be exceedingly dreadful, and he should wholly disregard you, and should disobey you again, and you should continue to repeat your commands and warnings, still setting out the dreadfulness of the punishment, and he should still, without any regard to you, go on again and again to disobey you to your face, and this immediately on your thus forbidding and threatening him: could you take it any otherwise than as daring you to do your worst? But thus have you done towards God; you have had his commands repeated, and his threatening set before you hundreds of times, and have been most solemnly warned; yet have you notwithstanding gone on in ways which you knew were sinful, and have done the very things which he has forbidden, directly before his face. [Job xv. 25, 26.](#) “For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengthened himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his buckler.” You have thus bid defiance to the Almighty, even when you saw the sword of his vindictive wrath uplifted, that it might fall upon your head. Will it, therefore, be any wonder if he shall make you know how terrible that wrath is, in your utter destruction?

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## SERMON VIII. 6 2 4

[romans ii. 10.](#)

But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good.

the apostle, having in the preceding verses declared what is the portion of wicked men; *viz.* indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; in this verse declares what is the portion assigned to good men. In the words of the text we should observe,

1. The description of a good man; *viz. the man that worketh good.* Such men are here described by the fruit which they bring forth. Christ has taught us that the tree is known by its fruit. Paul here describes them by that which most distinguishes them; not by the external privileges which they enjoy, or the light under which they live; but by the fruits which they bring forth. For as the apostle says, in [verse 13.](#) “Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of it shall be justified.” That which distinguishes good men from bad, is not that they *hear* good, or that they *profess* good, or that they *intend* good; but that they *do* good. They are *workers* of good.

2. The reward of such a man; *viz. ”glory, honour, and peace;”*<sup>625</sup> in which are mentioned three sorts of good that are assigned to them as their portion. 1. Their moral good, expressed by the word *glory*. Glory shall be given them; *i. e.* they shall be made excellent and glorious. They shall be endued with those excellent and glorious qualifications, which will render them beautiful and lovely. They shall have the image of God, and be partakers of his holiness. Thus the word glory is used by St. Paul, [2 Cor. iii. 18.](#) We are changed into the same image from glory to glory. 2. Their relative good; *Honour.* They shall be in most honourable circumstances. They shall be advanced to great dignity, receive a relation to God, and Christ, and the heavenly inhabitants, and God shall put honour upon them. 3. Their natural good; *Peace:* which, as it is used in the Scriptures, signifies happiness; and includes all comfort, joy, and pleasure.

I shall endeavour to show from the text, that glory, honour, and peace are the portion which God has given to all good men. In describing their happiness, I shall consider the successive parts of it; both here and hereafter.

*First.* I propose to treat of their happiness in this world. Those who are truly good men have been the subjects of a real thorough work of conversion, and have had their hearts turned from sin to God. Of such persons it may be said, that they are truly blessed. They are often pronounced blessed by God. He is infinitely wise, and sees and knows all things. He perfectly knows who are blessed, and who are miserable. He hath said, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly”<sup>626</sup> “Blessed is he whose sins are for-

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6 2 4    D E C E M B E R ,   1 7 4 0 .

625   [Rom. ii. 10.](#)

626   [Ps. i. 1.](#)

given. <sup>627</sup> ” “Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust. <sup>628</sup> ” “Blessed are the poor in spirit” “the meek” “the merciful” “the pure in heart. <sup>629</sup> ”

In considering the happiness of the righteous in this world, I shall pursue the method which the text obviously points out, and shall consider, 1. The excellency; 2. The honour; and, 3. The peace and pleasure, which God bestows upon them in the present life.

I. The excellency or glory. The sum of this consists in their having the image of God upon them. When a person is converted, he has the image of God instamped on him. [Coloss. iii. 10](#). “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him.” And [Ephes. iv. 23, 24](#). “And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness.” They have their eyes opened, and are led into such a sight of God and thorough acquaintance with him, as changes the soul into the image of God’s glory.

What can render a creature more excellent than to have the very image of the Creator? and how blessed a change is that which is wrought in conversion, which brings a man thus to be in the image of God! For though the image of God in Christians in this world is very imperfect, yet it is real. The real image of God is most excellent, though it be imperfect.

Hence, “the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, <sup>630</sup> ” and “the saints are the excellent of the earth. <sup>631</sup> ” The image of God is their glory, and it may well be called glory, for imperfect as it is, it renders them glorious in the eyes of the angels of heaven. The image of God is a greater beauty in their eyes, than the brightness and glory of the sun in the firmament.

Indeed the saints have no excellency, as they are in and of themselves. In them, that is, in their flesh, dwells no good thing. They are in themselves poor, guilty, vile creatures, and see themselves to be so; but they have an excellency and glory in them, because they have Christ dwelling in them. The excellency that is in them, though it be but as a spark, yet it is something ten thousand times more excellent than any ruby, or the most precious pearl that ever was found on the earth; and that because it is something divine, something of God.

This holy heavenly spark is put into the soul in conversion, and God maintains it there. All the powers of hell cannot put it out, for God will keep it alive, and it shall prevail more and more. Though it be but small, yet it is powerful; it has influence over the heart to govern it, and brings forth holy fruits in the life, and will not cease to prevail till it has consumed all the corruption that is left in the heart, and till it has turned the whole soul into a pure,

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627 [Rom. iv. 7.](#)

628 [Ps. xl. 4](#)

629 [Matt. v. 3-8.](#)

630 [Prov. xii. 26.](#)

631 [Ps. xvi. 3.](#)

holy, and heavenly flame, till the soul of man becomes like the angels, a flame of fire, and shines as the brightness of the firmament.

II. I would consider the honour to which Christians are advanced in this world; and the sum of this is, that they are the children of God. This is an excellent and glorious degree of honour and dignity to which they are admitted; and that because the Being to whom they are related is an infinitely glorious being, a being of incomprehensible majesty and excellency; and also because the relation is so near and honourable a relation. It is a great honour to be the servant of God. John the Baptist said of Christ, that he was not worthy to stoop down to loose the latchet of Christ's shoes. But Christians are not only admitted to be the servants of God, but his children; and how much more honourable in a family is the relation of children than that of servants! [Gal. iv. 7.](#) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." [Rom. viii. 16, 17.](#) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." [1 John iii. 1.](#) "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" The honour appears the greater if it be considered how Christians are brought into their relation to God; and that is by Christ. They become the children of God by virtue of their union with the only-begotten and eternal Son of God; they are united to him as his spouse, and members of his body, as his flesh and his bones, and as one spirit; and, therefore, as Christ is the Son of God, so they are sons; therefore are they joint heirs with Christ, because they are joint sons with him. To this end God sent forth his Son, that so they might through him also be sons. [Gal. iv. 4, 5.](#) "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And therefore they partaking of the relation of the Son, so are they also of the spirit of the Son; as it follows in the next verse, "and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."<sup>632</sup>

Herein Christians are the children of God in a more honourable way than the angels themselves; for the angels are the sons of God by virtue of that relation which they have to God, as they are in themselves singly and separately. But Christians are the children of God, as partaking with Christ, the only-begotten Son, in his sonship, whose sonship is immensely more honourable than that of the angels. And Christians, being the children of God, are honoured of God as such. They are sometimes owned as such by the inward testimony of the Spirit of God. For, as it is found in the verse already cited from Romans, "the Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God."<sup>633</sup> They are treated as

<sup>632</sup> [Gal. iv. 6.](#)

<sup>633</sup> [Rom. viii. 16.](#)

such in the great value God puts upon them, for they are his jewels, those which he has set apart for himself; and he is tender of them as of the apple of his eye. He disregards wicked men in comparison of them. He will give kings for them and princes for their life. He is jealous for them. He is very angry with those that hurt them. If any offend them, it were better for them that a mill-stone were cast about their neck, and they were drowned in the depths of the sea. He loves them with a very great and wonderful love. He pities them as a father pities his children. He will protect them, and defend them, and provide for them, as a father provides for his children. This honour have all they that fear and love God, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Peace and pleasure are also the portion of Christians in this world. Their peace and joy in God begin in the present life, and are no less excellent than the glory with which he invests them, and the honour to which he advances them. We ought here to consider, 1. What foundation they have for peace and joy. 2. What peace and joy they actually have.

1st. Their foundation for peace and joy is in their safety and their riches.

1. They have ground for peace because of their safety. They are safe in Jesus Christ from the wrath of God and from the power of Satan. They that are in Christ shall never perish, for none shall pluck them out of his hand. They are delivered from all their dreadful misery, that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, which shall come on ungodly men. They were naturally exposed to it, but they are delivered from it; their sins are all forgiven them. The hand-writing is eternally blotted out. Their sins are all done away; God has cast them behind his back, and buried their sorrows in the depths of the sea, and they shall no more come into remembrance. They are most safe from misery, for they are built on Christ their everlasting rock. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God. They have the faithful promise of God for their security, that is established as a sure witness in heaven. They have an interest in that covenant, that is well ordered in all things and sure. "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. 634 »

2. They have a foundation of unspeakable comfort and joy, because of their riches. They have true and infinite riches. They are the possessors and heirs of something real and substantial, and that is worthy to be called by the name of riches. The things they possess are excellent, more precious than gold and than rubies; all the desirable things of this world cannot equal them, and they have enough of it. The riches that they have given them of God are inexhaustible. It is sufficient for them; there is no end of it. They have a fountain of infinite good for their comfort, and contentment, and joy; for God has given himself to them

to be their portion, and he is a God of infinite glory. There is glory in him to engage their contemplation for ever and ever, without ever being satiated. And he is also an infinite fountain of love; for God is love, yea, an ocean of love without shore or bottom! The glorious Son of God is theirs; that lovely one, who was from all eternity God's delight, rejoicing always before him. All his beauty is their portion, and his dying love is theirs, his very heart is theirs, and his glory and happiness in heaven are theirs, so far as their capacity will allow them to partake of it; for he has promised it to them, and has taken possession of it in their name. And the saints are also rich in the principle that is in them. They have inward riches which they carry about with them in their own hearts. They are rich in faith. [James ii. 5](#). "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" They have the grace of God in their hearts, which is a most excellent treasure, and a good foundation of joy; for it is the seed of joy. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. And the seed that is sown in their hearts, is the grace of God there. That is a seed that, however it lies hid, will certainly in due time spring up, and put forth itself, and will bud, and blossom, and will bring forth rich fruit. These riches are the true riches. This is that good which God reserves for his friends. God distributes silver and gold and such like things among his enemies, because he slights them and regards them not. They are contemptible things in his eyes, as we throw husks to swine. But he has reserved better things for his children, of which no ungodly man, though a prince or monarch, shall partake. This is the ground which Christians have of peace and pleasure in this world. However, the saints cannot always take comfort, and do not always taste the sweetness that there is in store for them, by reason of the darkness and clouds that sometimes interpose. But though they may walk in great darkness for a long time, yet they are happy notwithstanding.

2d. They sometimes in this world have the actual enjoyment of peace and pleasure, that are most excellent. Sometimes the clouds that are in the way are removed, and Christians are enabled to behold the ground they have for rejoicing. Though God's glory and love be often hid from them, as it were with a veil, or at least, so as to hinder a clear view of it, yet God sometimes is pleased to remove the veil, to draw the curtain, and to give the saints sweet visions. Sometimes there is, as it were, a window opened in heaven, and Christ shows himself through the lattice; they have sometimes a beam of sweet light breaking forth from above into the soul; and God and the Redeemer sometimes come to them, and make friendly visits to them, and manifest themselves to them. Sometimes Christians have seasons of light and gladness for some considerable period, and at other times their views are more transient. Sometimes their light and joy arise in reading of the Holy Scriptures, sometimes in hearing the word preached, sometimes at the Lord's table, sometimes in the duty of prayer, sometimes in Christian conference, sometimes in meditation when they are about their occupations,

as in the time of more set and solemn meditations; and sometimes in the watches of the night.

Those spiritual joys and pleasures which believers possess in this world, are chiefly of three sorts.

1. The joy which they have in a sense of their own good estate; in the sense they have of the pardon of their sins, and their safety from hell; and a sense of the favour of God, and in the hope they have of eternal life.

2. The joy and delight which they have in the apprehension and view of God's excellency and love. The joy of a Christian does not consist merely in the sense of his own good estate, as natural men often are ready to imagine; but there is an excellent, transcendent, soul-satisfying sweetness that sometimes fills the soul in the apprehension of the excellency of God. The soul dwells upon the thought, fixes on it, and takes complacency in God as the greatest good, the most delightful object of its contemplation. This pleasure is the sweetest pleasure that a Christian ever feels, and is the foretaste of the pleasures of heaven itself. Herein sometimes the saints do boast of the clusters of Canaan. This sort of joy is evidence of sincerity above any other joy, a more sure evidence than a rejoicing in our own good estate. From the joy which the Christian has in the view of the glory and excellency of God; the consideration of the love of God to him cannot be excluded. When he rejoices in God as a glorious God, he rejoices in him the more because he is his God, and in consideration of there being a union between him and this God; otherwise, if there were a separation, the view of God's excellency, though it would raise joy one way, would proportionally excite grief another. God is sometimes pleased to manifest his love to the saints, and commonly at those times, when a Christian has the greatest views of God's excellency, he has also of his love; the soul is spiritually sensible of God as being present with it, and as manifesting and communicating himself; and it has sweet communion with God, and tastes the sweetness of his love, and knows a little what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of that love which passeth knowledge.

3. The third kind of joy is found in doing that which is to the glory of God. The true love of God makes this sweet and delightful to the soul. The joy of a Christian not only arises in knowing and viewing but also in doing; not only in apprehending God, but also in doing for God. For he loves God not only with a love of complacency, but a love of benevolence also; and as a love of complacency delights in beholding, so does a love of benevolence delight in doing for, the object beloved. The peace and pleasure which the Christian has in these things, is far better and more desirable than the pleasures that this world can afford, and especially than the pleasures of wicked men; and that on the following accounts.

1. There is light in this pleasure. The peace and pleasures of wicked men have their foundation in darkness. When wicked men have any quietness or joy, it is because they are blind, and do not see what is their real condition. If it were not for blindness and delusion,



they could have no peace nor comfort in any thing. There needs nothing but to open a wicked man's eyes, and let him look about him and see where he is, and it would be enough to destroy all the quietness and comfort of the most prosperous wicked man in the world. But on the contrary, the peace of a godly man, is a peace that arises from light; when he sees things most as they are, then he has most peace; and the distress and trouble which he sometimes feels, arise from clouds and darkness. When a godly man is in the greatest fear and distress, if he did not know what a happy state he were in, he would at the same time rejoice with unspeakable joy; so that his pleasure is not founded, like that of wicked men, in stupidity, but in sensibleness; not in blindness, but in light and sight, and knowledge.

2. There is rest in this pleasure. He that has found this joy, finds a sweet repose and acquiescence of the soul in it. It sweetly calms the soul and allays its disappointments. Christ says, [Matt. xi. 28.](#) "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There is a sweet contentment in it; the soul that tastes it, desires no better pleasure. There is a satisfaction in it. The soul that has been wandering before, when it comes to taste of this fountain, finds in it that which satisfies its desires and cravings, and discovers that in it which it needs in order to its happiness. [John iv. 14.](#) "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It is quite otherwise with the pleasures of ungodly men. There is no true rest in them, they are not enjoyed with inward quietness, there is no true peace enjoyed within, neither do they afford contentment. But those wicked men that have the most worldly pleasures, are yet restlessly inquiring, "Who will show us any good?" "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."<sup>635</sup> Wicked men in the midst of their enjoyment of pleasure have no true rest, neither do their reflections on it afford rest; but only remorse of conscience, and disquietude of soul, under the guilt that is contracted. But the pleasures of the godly afford rest in the enjoyment, and rest and sweetness in the reflection; it oftentimes calms and refreshes the soul to look on past comforts.

3. There is life in it. It is a pleasure that strengthens and nourishes and preserves the soul, and gives it life, and does not corrupt and destroy and bring it to death, as do sinful pleasures. The pleasures of the wicked are poison to the soul, they tend to enfeeble it, to consume it, and kill it. But the pleasures of the godly feed the soul, and do not consume it; they strengthen, and do not weaken it; they exalt, and do not debase it; they enrich, and do not impoverish it. Death and corruption are the natural fruit of the pleasures of sin, but life is the fruit of spiritual pleasures. [Gal. vi. 8.](#) "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." The life in which this joy consists, and to which it tends, is the most excellent life, and the

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635 [Isa. lvii. 20.](#)

only life worthy of the name; it is spiritual, and the beginning of eternal life: this pleasure is a fountain springing up to everlasting life. [John iv. 14.](#)

4. There is substance in it. This pleasure is not a mere shadow, an empty delight, as earthly pleasures are, but it is substantial joy. The pleasures of sin last but a little season, they are the crackling of thorns under a pot, or as the blazing meteors of the night, that appear for a moment, and then vanish. But this pleasure is like the durable light of the stars or the sun. Worldly pleasures are easily overthrown; a little thing will spoil all the pleasures of a king's court. Haman, in the midst of all his prosperity and greatness, could say, "Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."<sup>636</sup> But the joys of the saints are such as the changes of time cannot overthrow. If God lifts up the light of his countenance, this will compose and rejoice the heart under the saddest tidings. They joy in affliction. Their enemies cannot overthrow this joy; the devil and even death itself cannot overthrow it; but oftentimes it lives, and is in its greatest height, in the midst of the valley of the shadow of death. When in the most tormenting death, how often have the martyrs sung in the midst of the flames, and under the hands of their cruel tormentors! [Job xxxv. 10.](#) "But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night."

5. There is holiness in it. It is the excellency of these joys that they are holy joys. They are not like the polluted stream of sinful pleasures, but they are pure and holy. [Rev. xxii. 1.](#) "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." These pleasures do not defile the soul, but purify it; they do not deform, but beautify it; they not only greatly delight the soul, but render it more excellent; they impart something more of God, more of a divine disposition and temper, dispose to holy actions, and cause the soul to shine as Moses's face did when he had been conversing with God in the mount, and as Stephen's face, which was as the face of an angel, when he saw heaven opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Thus these pleasures make the soul more excellent, and more divine, as well as more happy.

6. There is sometimes glory in it. God sometimes unveils his face, and lets in light more plentifully. This is a delight and joy, the excellency, and sweetness, and admirableness of which cannot be expressed. It is a kind of glory that fills the soul. So excellent is its nature, that the sweetest earthly delight vanishes into nothing, and appears as base and vile as dross and dirt, or as the mere mire of the street. It is bright above all that is earthly, as the sun is brighter than the glow-worm. Of this, the apostle takes notice. [1 Peter i. 8.](#) "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

*Secondly.* I proceed to consider the happiness of the saints in death. It may seem a mystery to the world that men should be happy in death, which the world looks upon as

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636 [Esther v. 13.](#)

the most terrible of all things; but thus it is to the saints. Their happiness is built upon a rock, and it will stand the shock of death: when the storm and floods of death come with their greatest violence, it stands firm, and neither death nor hell can overthrow it. Here,

1. Death is rendered no death to them. It is not worthy of the name of death. As the life of a wicked man is not worthy of the name of life, so the death of a godly man is not worthy of the name of death. It is not looked upon as any death at all in the eyes of God, who sees all things as they are, nor is it called death by him. Hence Christ promises, that those who believe in him shall not die. [John vi. 50, 51.](#) “This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” It is no death to the saints, because it is no destruction to them. The notion of death implies destruction, or perishing, in it; but the godly are not destroyed by death, death cannot destroy them; for as Christ says, they shall never perish. [John iii. 15.](#) “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” A godly man, when he dies, in no wise perishes. There is no end put to his life as a Christian, for that is a spiritual life that remains unquenched by death. A wicked man, when he dies, dies indeed, because then an end is put to all the life which he has; for he has no other life but temporal life; but the life of a Christian is hid with Christ, and safely laid up with him in heaven; and therefore death cannot reach his life, because it cannot reach heaven. Death can no more reach the believer’s life than Christ’s life. No death can reach Christ our life now, though he died once: but now he has for ever sat down at the right hand of God. He says, for the comfort of his saints, [Rev. i. 18.](#) “I am he that liveth and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death.” Death not only cannot destroy a Christian, but it cannot hurt him; Christ carries him on eagle wings aloft on high, out of the reach of death. Death, with respect to him, is disarmed of his power: and every Christian may say, “O death, where is thy sting? <sup>637</sup>” Death was once indeed a terrible enemy, but now he has become weak. He spent all his strength on Christ; in killing him, he killed himself; he was conquered then, and has now no power to hurt his followers. Death is now but the shadow of what he would have been if Christ had not conquered him; he was once a lion, but now he is but a lamb. A good man may indeed be harassed with fears of death, and may be much terrified when going through the valley of the shadow of death, but that is no just ground of any terror, and if the saints are terrified, it is only through their infirmity and darkness. As a child is frightened in the dark where there is no danger, because he is a child, so a good man may be affrighted at the terrible looks of death. But he will find this awful appearance to be only a shadow, that can look terribly, but can do nothing terrible. Death may, through the weakness of the saints, trouble

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637 [1 Cor. xv. 55.](#)

them, and exercise them, but he cannot destroy the ground they have for comfort and support. When death comes to a wicked man, all those things on which he built his comfort fail, their foundation is overflowed with a flood. [Job xxii. 16](#). But the foundation of the peace and comfort of the godly man is not shaken at such a time. Oftentimes the saints are actually carried above all the fears and terrors of death; they see that it is but a shadow, and are not afraid: not only their foundation of comfort remains, but that peace and comfort itself is undisturbed, the light shines through the darkness, and the lamb-like nature of death appears through the shadow of the lion. The godly have a God to stand by them when they come to die, in whose love and favour they may shelter themselves, in whose favour is life, yea, life in death; and they have a blessed Saviour to be with them, to uphold them with the right hand of his righteousness. These are the friends they have with them, when they are going to take their leave of all earthly friends. God will be with them when their flesh and heart fails; God will be the strength of their heart, when they are weak and faint, and nature fails. God will put underneath his everlasting arms to support them, and will make all their bed for them in their sickness. [Psal. xxxvii. 37](#). “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.”

2. Death is not only no death to them, but it is a translation to a more glorious life, and is turned into a kind of resurrection from the dead. Death is a happy change to them, and a change that is by far more like a resurrection than a death. It is a change from a state of much sin, and sorrow, and darkness, to a state of perfect light, and holiness, and joy. When a saint dies, he awakes, as it were, out of sleep. This life is a dull, lifeless state; there is but a little spiritual life, and a great deal of deadness; there is but a little light, and a great deal of darkness; there is but a little sense, and a great deal of stupidity and senselessness. But when a godly man dies, all this deadness, and darkness, and stupidity, and senselessness are gone for ever, and he enters immediately into a state of perfect life, and perfect light, and activity, and joyfulness. A man's conversion is compared to a resurrection, because then a man rises from spiritual death. [Eph. ii. 1](#). “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” But though spiritual life is then begun, yet there are great remains of spiritual death after this, and but little life. But when a godly man dies, he rises from all remains of spiritual death, and comes into a state of perfect life. This body is like a prison to the holy soul, it exceedingly clogs, and hinders, and cramps it in its spiritual exercises and comforts. But when a saint dies, the soul is released from this prison, this grave, and comes into a state of glorious freedom and happiness. So that death is not only deprived of his sting, but is made a servant to the saints, to bring them to Christ in heaven, who is their life. And their ground of comfort does not only last when they are going out of the world, but it is in some respects increased, for then their perfect happiness draws nigh. It is “far better” to depart and be with Christ, than to continue here. And when the saints are enabled to see their own happiness in death, they are enabled exceedingly to rejoice in the midst of the valley of the

shadow of death, and to triumph joyfully over the king of terrors. Death to the saints is always a passage or avenue, leading out of a world of vanity, and sin, and misery, into a world of life, light, and glory; but though often a dark avenue, it is at times full of light, the darkness all vanishes away, and the light shines out of that glorious city into which they are entering. It shines through the darkness and fills the soul, and the clouds of death vanish before it. The awful appearance of death is but a mask or disguise that death wears. It is not terrible but joyful in reality, and this light of the new Jerusalem sometimes so clearly shines, that it shines through the frightful disguise, and shows the saints that death is but a servant. Yea, sometimes it is so when death has on its most terrible disguise that ever it wears, and comes in its most dreadful forms, as when the saints are burnt at the stake, and put to all cruel and tormenting deaths. It is oftentimes joyful to the saints when dying, to think that they are now going into the glorious, presence of God, to enjoy God and Christ to the full. The joyful expectation sometimes makes them ready to cry out, [Rev. xxii. 20.](#) “Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!” and [Judges v. 28.](#) “Why is his chariot so long in coming?”

*Thirdly.* Let us next consider the happiness of the saints, in their state of separation from the body.

1. When the soul departs from the body, it is received by the blessed angels and conducted by them to the third heavens. On the eve of its departure there is a guard of angels standing round the dying bed; and the devils, though eager to seize upon it as their prey, shall by no means be suffered to come nigh. The holy angels shall be a guard to the soul, to keep off all its enemies. We are taught that this is part of the office in which God employs them. [Psal. xxxiv. 7.](#) “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” [Psal. xci. 11.](#) “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways;” as it was with Daniel in the lion’s den. [Dan. vi. 22.](#) “My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.” And as soon as the soul is loose from the body, it shall be kindly and courteously received by those bright and blessed ones, to be conducted by them into Christ’s glorious presence; for the angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be the heirs of salvation. This is one way in which they shall minister; *viz.* to guard and conduct the departed spirits of the saints; which we are plainly taught in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. [Luke xvi. 22.](#) “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.” These spirits of holiness and love, when they have received the soul, shall conduct it along through the aerial and starry heavens to the most glorious part of the universe; the highest part of the creation, the place of God’s most holy residence, the city and palace of the most high God, where Christ is. There are some who say that there is no such place as heaven; but this is evidently a mistake, for the heaven into which the man Christ Jesus entered with his glorified body, is certainly some

place. It is absurd to suppose that the heaven where the body of Christ is, is not a place. To say that the body of Christ is in no place, is the same thing as to say he has no body. The heaven where Christ is, is a place; for he was seen ascending, and will be seen descending again; and the heaven where the departed souls of the saints are, is the same heaven where Christ has ascended. And therefore Stephen, when he was departing this life, saw heaven opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And he prayed to that same Jesus whom he saw, that he would receive his spirit; *i.e.* that he would receive it to him, where he saw him, at the right hand of God. And the apostle Paul signifies, that if he should depart, he should be with Christ. [Phil. i. 23.](#) “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.” [2 Cor. v. 8.](#) “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” Besides, there are some of the saints there already with their bodies, as Enoch and Elijah. Therefore there is some place, where God gloriously manifests himself, and where Christ is, and where saints and angels dwell, and whither the angels carry the souls of the saints when they depart from their bodies; and this place is called Paradise, and the third heaven. [2 Cor. xii. 2, 4.](#) The aerial heaven is the first heaven; the starry heaven is the second; and the blessed abode of Christ and saints and angels the third, because it is above the other two; and so Christ is said to be made higher than the heavens. [Heb. vii. 26.](#) “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,” *i. e.* higher than the visible heaven. This heaven is far above the stars. So it is said that Christ ascended far above all heavens. [Eph. iv. 10.](#) “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,” *i. e.* far above all the heaven that we see. This is the mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and hither the angels conduct the souls of the saints when they leave their earthly tabernacles. When they come there, they shall be received with a joyful welcome, the doors of this glorious city are opened to them, and they shall have entrance given to them into heaven, as an inheritance to which they have a right. [Rev. xxii. 14.](#) “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” And then shall open to view that glorious world, that beautiful city, and delightful paradise, which they had often before heard of, and thought of, and desired; then they shall see it, and possess it as their own. There they shall be welcomed and joyfully received by that glorious company that dwell there, by the angels, and by the saints that went to heaven before them. There was joy among them at their conversion, and now also will there be joy among them when they are brought home to glory. To have one that was dear to them before, because a child of the same family and a disciple of the same Lord, brought home from a strange country to come and dwell with them for ever; how will their fellow-citizens and brethren in heaven be glad for them, and rejoice with them, and embrace them, when they come there to join them in their praises of God and the Lamb! And then they shall be conducted unto the Lord

Jesus Christ in his glory, and shall be presented to him perfectly free from sin, and without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; who will also abundantly welcome them to his glory, and to the blessed enjoying of his love. And then shall their good Shepherd rejoice, when he shall not only have brought home the soul that was lost to a saving close with him, but home to him in his heavenly Father's house. The Saviour shall then rejoice when he shall receive a soul that he loved before the foundation of the world; and for which he laid down his life, and endured such dreadful sufferings. This was the joy that was set before him, to redeem and make happy the souls of his elect; and he will rejoice, therefore, when he sees this accomplished. He will bid them welcome, and make them welcome, and they shall be received into the full enjoyment of his love. The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and he shall present them also to God his Father, having redeemed them to him by his blood, who shall also abundantly welcome them there. Then the soul shall behold that glory and taste that pleasure which it long hoped for, and thought of with delight, and the thoughts of which were wont to be such a support to it when on earth; then shall it know by experience what the joys of heaven are; then shall the great and precious promises of the gospel be fulfilled; then shall faith be turned into vision, and hope into fruition; then shall all sin be eternally left behind; there shall be no more indwelling corruption, wicked thoughts, or sinful dispositions, to torment them. And whatever sorrow and affliction they underwent on earth, God shall now wipe away all tears from their eyes; and though they have lately passed through death, yet there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, because the former things shall be passed away. [Rev. xxi. 4](#). If they have lived hardly in this world, and suffered hunger and thirst, there shall be an end of it all; and they that have suffered persecution, and have had their raiment stained with their own blood, shall now suffer no more. "And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." [Rev. vii. 14, 15, 16, 17](#). Though they had many enemies to conflict with while on earth, yet now shall they obtain the victory over them; now shall they triumph and sing, being for ever out of the reach of all Satan's temptations, and of all his power to afflict or molest them; now shall they appear in mount Zion with the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands. [Rev. vii. 9](#).

3. They shall remain there in a state of exceeding glory and blessedness, till the resurrection. They shall remain there in the enjoyment of God, dwelling with Jesus Christ in a state of perfect rest, without the least disturbance or molestation..[Rev. iv. 13](#). " <sup>638</sup> And I heard a

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638 This Scripture reference in the original text is incorrect. The passage referred to here is [Rev. xiv. 13](#).

voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." There they shall dwell in habitations of sweet delight and pleasure in paradise; there they shall drink of those rivers of pleasures for evermore; there they shall dwell in perfect light and perfect love; there they shall see and converse with God and Christ, and with angels and glorious spirits, and shall contemplate the wonderful love of God to men in sending his only Son; there shall they contemplate the glorious love of God to them, the love he had to them before the foundation of the world. There shall they see and know what love Christ had to them, that influenced him to lay down his life for them; and shall behold the beauty and excellency of Christ, and see face to face, and know even as they are known. [1 Cor. xiii. 12.](#) There they shall sweetly meditate on the wonderful dealings of God to them while in this lower world, in preserving of them, in granting to them to live under means of grace, when many thousands and millions of others never had these privileges. They shall contemplate the wonderful mercy of God to them in striving with them by his Spirit, in convincing them of sin, in stirring them up to seek salvation, in converting them, and in bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light. The mercy and grace of God in converting them will then appear otherwise to them than it does now. They shall then contemplate the manifold mercies of God to them through the whole course of their lives; they shall see how God has protected them, and guided them by his counsel, and led them all along; they shall see the wonderful wisdom and mercy of God towards them in these and those dispensations, that now appear most dark to them, shall see the meaning of those that were matter of difficulty to them, and shall see how all things wrought together for their good. These will be sweet meditations to them, and doubtless will be subjects of the saints' conversation with each other. How sweet will it be for the saints to look back and see how God carried them along through the wilderness, through all the storms of this world, and all its dangers, and temptations, and enemies, after they have come to their resting-place; and how sweet will it be for them to converse together of these things, and what ardent praises will it occasion! And then also shall they see the wisdom of God in the government and ordering of the affairs of his church all along, the scheme of divine providence shall be opened to them, and the admirable wisdom of it shall be unfolded; and they shall also see how God brings his purposes and promises to pass in his providence towards his church here on earth; they shall see and rejoice at it when the kingdom of God flourishes in the world. We are told, there is joy in heaven if but one sinner repenteth. Then doubtless the saints of the Old Testament after their entrance into heaven, saw and rejoiced when Christ came into the world; and therefore two of them, Moses and Elijah, came down to converse with Christ, at his transfiguration. Abraham, Moses, and David, and the prophets Isaiah and Daniel, and all the prophets, doubtless saw the fulfilment of the glorious things foretold in their prophecies with exceeding rejoicing. They saw that glorious enlargement of the church that



was produced by the preaching of the prophets. And thus also the apostles and evangelists in heaven, and other primitive Christians and martyrs, saw the glorious flourishing and prevailing of the kingdom of Christ after their death, till the utter downfall of heathenism, and the establishment of Christianity throughout the Roman empire.

The holy martyrs with joy beheld the destruction of those pagan powers that persecuted the church of God. [Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.](#) “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” Therefore they rejoiced when they saw it accomplished. And so the saints that died in former ages, they without doubt beheld and rejoiced greatly at the time of the resurrection from popery in the days of Luther and Calvin, and other reformers. And so doubtless the saints that went to heaven, before this remarkable outpouring of the Spirit on this town and other neighbouring towns, especially those that went to heaven from hence, have seen this work and greatly rejoiced at it. And so the saints, that die before the glorious days that are coming at the downfall of antichrist and the calling of the Jews, will rejoice at the conversion of the world to Christianity. We are ready to lament that we shall not probably live to see those times. But if we die and go to heaven, we shall see them nevertheless, and rejoice in them not the less for not being in this world; but we shall rejoice more, for we shall see and understand more of the glory of God in such a work, and have more love to God, and therefore shall rejoice more at the advancement of his kingdom. Thus when the apostle John had visions of the glorious things that should be brought to pass for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, he from time to time mentions the visions he also had of the hosts of heaven rejoicing at it. [Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17.](#) “And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” So when the spiritual Babylon, the church of Rome, falls, the holy apostles and prophets, though dead many ages before, are called upon to rejoice. [Rev. xviii. 20.](#) “Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.” So the multitude of the heavenly hosts are described as rejoicing, and as singing hallelujahs on that occasion; and all heaven is full of praise. [Rev. xix. 1.](#) “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged

the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke went up for ever and ever." These things may give us some notion how the spirits of just men made perfect do employ themselves.

4. They remain in a joyful expectation of their more full and complete blessedness at the resurrection. As the wicked have not their full punishment until after the resurrection, so neither have the saints their complete happiness. Though they have attained to such exceeding glory, yet they are not yet arrived at its highest degrees, for that is reserved for their final state. The reward which the saints receive after the resurrection, is often spoken of as their chief reward. This is the reward that Christ has promised. [John vi. 40](#). "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." This is the chief reward that the saints seek and wait for. [Rom. viii. 23](#). "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan earnestly within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body." [Philip. iii. 11](#). "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." [Heb. xi. 35](#). "Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." So the happiness, that shall be given at Christ's second coming, is

spoken of as the principal happiness. [Titus ii. 13](#). "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

This the saints will be in joyful expectation of in heaven; they shall rest in sweet repose on God's promise that it shall be so, their desires of it bringing no uneasiness; they rejoicing in it most in the consideration that it will be in God's time, in the fittest and best time.

*Fourthly*. I shall consider the glory, honour, and peace, which the godly shall receive at the resurrection and the day of judgment.

1. When the time appointed comes, notice shall be given of it in heaven, which will be to their exceeding joy. God has in his own eternal counsels fixed the time, but now it is kept secret; it is not only not known by any on the earth, but neither is it known in heaven by either saints or angels there, and the man Christ Jesus himself, in his state of humiliation, did not himself know it: [Matt. xxiv. 36](#). "But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." The saints and angels in heaven have a joyful expectation of it, but they know not when it is; but when the time comes, God's eternal counsels concerning it shall be made known; the joyful tidings shall be proclaimed through all heaven, that all may prepare to attend the Lord Jesus Christ in his descent to the earth.

2. They shall descend with Christ from the highest heaven towards the earth. When notice is given to the heavenly host, they shall all gather themselves together to attend on this most joyful and glorious occasion; and then the glorious Son of God shall descend, and



the holy angels with him, and not only the angels, but the souls of the saints, shall come with Christ. [1 Thess. iv. 14.](#) “For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” Christ shall descend with the glory of his Father; he shall appear in a glory becoming the Supreme Lord and Judge of heaven and earth. Now heaven will for a time be left empty of its inhabitants; those glorious and blessed abodes will be deserted by those that dwelt there, to attend the judge of the world.

3. The saints on earth shall behold this glorious sight of their Saviour coming in the clouds of heaven, with all his holy angels with him. The first notice that shall be given of this descent shall be in heaven, but soon after there shall be notice of it on earth. Christ shall be seen coming while he is yet at a great distance; every eye shall see him, of both good and bad. And it will be the most joyful sight to the saints that ever they saw. The first notice of it will cause their hearts to overflow with joy and gladness, it will fill the hearts of the godly as full of joy as it will the wicked with terror and amazement. If the saints are then waked out of their sleep at midnight with this sound, that Christ appears in the clouds of heaven coming to judgment, it will be joyful news to them. It is probable many of the saints at that time will be found suffering persecution, for there are several things in Scripture which seem to declare, that the time when Christ is coming shall be a time when wickedness shall exceedingly abound, and the saints shall be greatly persecuted. But this shall set them at liberty; then they may lift up their heads out of prisons and dungeons, and many out of galleys, and mines, and shall see their Redeemer drawing nigh. This sight will drive away their persecutors, it will put an end to all their cruelties, and set God’s people at liberty. And then when all the kindreds of the earth shall wail at the sight of Christ in the clouds of heaven, and wicked men every where shall be shrieking and crying with terrible amazement, the saints shall be filled with praise and transport. We read that, when Christ ascended into heaven, the disciples stood stedfastly looking on as he went up. But the saints then on earth shall view Christ with more steadfastness as he descends in his heavenly and exceeding glory; they shall feed and feast their eyes with this majestic sight, beholding in what solemn and glorious pomp their own blessed Redeemer descends. This sight shall put a final end to all sorrow, and their everlasting joy and glory will commence from it. The hope of the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, is said to be a blessed hope. [Titus ii. 13.](#) “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” But when it comes it will be a more blessed sight.

4. The dead in Christ shall arise at the sound of the last trumpet with glorified bodies, and the living saints shall see them. The holy and blessed souls of saints that descended from heaven with Christ, shall then be re-united to those bodies that shall be prepared by infinite wisdom and skill to be fit organs for a holy and happy soul. The body shall not rise as it was before; there shall be a vast difference in it. [1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.](#) “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness,

it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” The glory of that body that the saints shall rise with is what we now cannot conceive of. It shall not be such a dull and heavy-moulded thing as it is now: it shall be active and vigorous as a flame of fire fit for the use of a glorified soul. It will be no clog or hinderance to the soul as it is now, but an organ every way fit for the use of a glorious spirit. It shall not be weak, infirm, and frail as it is now; for, though it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. Now the body is in need of food and sleep continually, to recreate it, but it shall not be so then; now the body is subject to weariness, and to diseases, but it shall not be so then; now if God lets in any great matter of divine light into the soul, the body is ready to sink under it, but it shall not be so then. The glorified body of the saints shall not then fail or flag at all by the most powerful exercises of mind. Now no man can see God and live, but the body would immediately sink and be dissolved; but then the body shall not fail at all by the immediate beholding of God. Now the saints can see but little. When God a little reveals himself, as he doth at times, the saints are forced to beseech God either to strengthen them to see it, or to stay his hand; but then the body shall be so vigorous and spiritual, that the constant and everlasting view of the glory of God shall not in any wise overcome it, or cause it in the least to fail.

The body shall not only be raised in an exceeding strength, but in wonderful beauty, for we are told that their bodies shall be like to Christ’s glorious body. The greatest beauty that ever any human body appeared in in this world, is vile and base in comparison. The beauty of the bodies of the saints shall not only consist in the most lovely proportion of the features of their countenance and parts of their bodies, but in a semblance of the excellencies of their minds, which will appear exceedingly in their countenance; their air and mien will be such as will naturally result from the wisdom, purity, and love of the soul, and shall denote and hold forth an inexpressible sweetness, benevolence, and complacence; and if I may speak what appears to me probable, and what seems to be authorized by the Scriptures, their bodies shall be as it were clothed with garments of light. The prophet Daniel, speaking of the resurrection, says, [Dan. xii. 2, 3](#). “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” And Christ, speaking of the end of the world, says, [Matt. xiii. 43](#). “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” And there is nothing to hinder our understanding this literally of their bodies, and especially when this shining of the saints is spoken of from time to time as what shall be at the resurrection, and not of their souls in a separate state. Moses’s face shone when he had been conversing with God in the mount; much more may it be expected that the bodies of the saints shall shine, when they shall converse a thousand times more intimately with God, not in mount Sinai, but in heaven. We read of Christ, that when his body was transfigured,

to teach us what the body of Christ should be in its glorified state, we are told that, when his body was transfigured, his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. [Matt. xvii. 2](#). But we are told that the bodies of the saints shall be made like unto Christ's glorious body; there therefore seems to be much ground to think, that at the resurrection the bodies of the saints shall shine with a glorious light, and that they shall be as it were clothed with light. Thus the departed saints shall arise with glorious bodies, they shall lift up their heads out of their graves with joyful and glorious countenances: and at the same time the bodies of the living shall in a moment be changed into the same strength, and activity, and incorruptibility, and beauty and glory, with which those that were dead shall arise. [1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, 53](#). "Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

5. Then all the saints shall mount up, as with wings, to meet the Lord in the air, and to be for ever with him. After the dead in Christ are risen, and the living saints changed, then they will be prepared to go to Christ, and to meet the bridegroom. The world will be about to be destroyed, and the wicked shall be in dreadful amazement, but the saints shall be delivered. [Dan. xii. 1](#). "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall he a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." They shall take an everlasting farewell of this evil world where there is so much sin, and where they have met with so much trouble, and they shall be caught up in the clouds, and there they shall meet their glorious Redeemer; and a joyful meeting it will be. They shall go to Christ, never any more to be separated from him. [1 Thess. iv. 16, 17](#). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

6. Then shall the good works, which the saints have done, be declared to their peace and glory. We are often told that every man shall be judged according to his works, and Christ keeps a book of remembrance of the good works of the saints as well as of the sins of the ungodly. And however mean and polluted that which the saints do is in itself, yet all the pollution that attends it is hid, and every thing they do for God that has the least sincerity in it is precious in God's eyes. Through his infinite grace it shall in no case lose its reward, neither shall it in any wise lose its honour. At the day of judgment they shall receive praise and glory in reward for it. Christ will declare all the good they have done to their honour; what they did secretly and the world knew it not, and when they did not let their left hand know what their right hand did. Then shall they receive praise and honour for all their labour,

for all their self-denial, and all their suffering in the cause of Christ; and those good works of theirs that were despised, and for which they were condemned, and suffered reproach, shall now be set in a true light; and however they were reproached and slandered by men, they shall receive praise of God in the sight of angels and men. [1 Cor. iv. 5.](#) “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.” Those righteous men that have been condemned here before unjust judges, shall be acquitted and honoured then before the righteous Judge of heaven and earth. [Heb. vi. 10.](#) “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” Then will be the time when their Lord and Master will say unto them, “Well done, good and faithful servants.”<sup>639</sup> Thus, in the description of the day of judgment in the [25th chapter of Matthew.](#), Christ rehearses the good works of the saints. “For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” And though the saints there reply, “Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?”<sup>640</sup> Though they thought that nothing that they had done was worthy to be so accounted of as it was by Christ, yet Christ of his grace esteemed it highly, and highly honoured them for it, as it there follows, [40th ver.](#) “And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” And if the sins of the saints shall be rehearsed, it shall not be for their shame, but for the glory of divine grace, to give opportunity to them to plead the atonement of that Saviour who will be the Judge, to give occasion to them to produce Christ’s righteousness, which will surely be accepted by himself.

7. The saints shall sit on thrones with Christ, to judge wicked men and devils. Christ will put that honour upon them on that day, he will cause them to sit on his right hand as judges with him, and so the saints shall judge the world. [Matt. xix. 28.](#) “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” [1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.](#) “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”

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639 [Matt. xxv. 21.](#)

640 [Matt. xxv. 37-39.](#)

They shall judge kings and princes who were their persecutors, and the devils, who were their tempters.

8. At the finishing of the judgment Christ shall pronounce the blessed sentence upon them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."<sup>641</sup> »

This blessed sentence Christ shall pronounce on them with inexpressible manifestations of grace and love. Every word of it will be ravishing to them, and will cause raptures of joy in their hearts; that this glorious person, though he orders with such indignation the wicked to depart from him, yet will so sweetly invite them to come with him, and that he should accost them after such a manner, saying, "ye blessed of my Father."<sup>642</sup> » Christ will pronounce them blessed in the sight of men and angels; and blessed indeed, because blessed by his Father. There will not only be a manifestation of Christ's love to them in this sentence, but a declaration of the Father's love, for they are declared to be blessed of him. Christ shall invite them to come with him, and for no less a purpose than to inherit a kingdom. Christ gives them a glorious kingdom; the wealth to which he invites them is the wealth of a kingdom; and the honour he gives them is the honour of kings; and what yet adds to the blessedness is this, that it is a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. God loved them from all eternity, and therefore he has prepared a kingdom for them. God had respect to them in the creation of the world, and then prepared this glorious kingdom for them, and out of love to them. They have therefore a right to it, and now therefore they are invited to come to possess it; and not only to possess it, but to *inherit* it, that is, to possess it as *heirs*, as those that have a right to the kingdom by virtue of their being his children.

Thus having considered what glory, honour, and peace the saints have in this life, at death, in a separate state, and at the day of judgment, I now proceed,

*Fifthly*, To consider their consummate state of happiness after the day of judgment. And here I would consider, 1. Their entrance into this happiness; and 2. Its nature, its degree, and some of the circumstances which attend it.

1st. Their entrance into this state of consummate happiness.

1. When the judgment is ended they shall ascend with Christ in a triumphant and glorious manner into heaven. Christ, when he has passed sentence, shall then return again; he shall pass beyond these aerial heavens, and shall ascend towards the highest heaven, together with ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of glorious spirits, and of the saints with their glorified bodies. They shall leave this lower world, and all the wicked, to be burnt in everlasting fire, and as they are ascending shall look back and see it all in one vast conflagration. Then shall be fulfilled, in the most remarkable manner, the

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641 [Matt. xxv. 34.](#)

642 [Matt. xxv. 34.](#)

prophecy in [Psal. xlvii. 4, 5](#). “He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom he loved. God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.” And that will be the most joyful procession that ever will be seen. And when they are come to heaven they shall enter in with joy into that new Jerusalem where they are to dwell for ever; and this will be the most joyful day that ever was in heaven. It is probable, that when Christ ascended into heaven after his death and resurrection, it was the most joyful day in heaven that ever had been seen till then; but this second ascension will be a more glorious and joyful day than that.

2. When they have come to heaven, they shall be there actually instated by God and Christ in their ultimate and consummate happiness; and now they shall have complete redemption. To illustrate this, it may be observed,

1. They shall be perfectly happy in the whole man; both body and soul. Before their souls only were happy, while the body lay in a state of putrefaction in the grave. Now they shall be in that state which is natural to the human soul, which is a state of union with the body. It is natural for the soul to act by a body, and to make use of such an organ, and the soul is not complete without the body; and then both body and soul shall be glorified together.

2. Then will the body of Christ be perfect and complete. Then it shall have all its members, no one wanting. Now the body of Christ is incomplete, there are many members wanting; but then it will be perfected, having every member. Now the body of Christ is in a growing state, but then it shall have come to its perfect state, to receive no more addition. Then the body of Christ shall be perfect, not only as it shall have every member, but every member shall be in its perfect state. Now as there are many of the members of Christ’s body wanting, so there are many that are imperfect; many that are ingrafted into Christ have great infirmity, and great remains of corruption, and many of his members are now under affliction. But then every member shall be perfectly freed from all sin and sorrow, and there never will be any more either sin or sorrow, in any member of the body of Christ. Then also the body of Christ will be complete, because those that are brought to a perfect state are wholly brought home; before only the soul was brought home to glory, while the body that was also to be united to Christ, lay in the grave. The body of Christ will then also be in its complete state, because then all the parts will be together; and this is one end of Christ’s coming into the world, *viz.* that he might gather together all in one. [Eph. i. 16](#). Before they were scattered, some in heaven and some on earth, some mixed with wicked men, as wheat with tares, and as lilies among thorns. The church, therefore, now being made complete, will exceedingly rejoice; and Christ, having his mystical body complete, will rejoice; and all his saints will rejoice with him. Christ will rejoice in the completeness of his church, and the church will rejoice in its own completeness.

3. Then will the Mediator have fully accomplished the work for which he came into the world. Then will he have perfected the work of redemption, not only in the impetration,



but also in the application of it. Then all that God has given him will be actually and fully redeemed, their bodies as well as souls; then will he have conquered all his enemies, and will triumph over them all; then he will have put down all authority and power. [1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.](#) “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” Then Christ will surely have obtained that joy that was set before him; then he shall have perfected the full design that was upon his heart from all eternity; and then Christ will rejoice, and all his members must rejoice with him. Christ shall triumph over his enemies, and the saints shall then triumph over all their enemies, and the joys of the triumph shall last for ever.

4. Then God will have obtained the end of all his great works which he has been doing from the beginning of the world. Then will be the consummation of all things: the deep designs of God will be unfolded, his marvellous contrivances, and his hidden, intricate, and inexplicable works, will appear. The end being obtained, as all things are from God, so will they then all be to him, and will issue in his glory. His power appeared in the beginning of them, and his glory will be manifested in the end and consummation of them. Then will it be seen that all the revolutions and changes which have existed from the beginning of the world are for God’s glory; then it will appear how all the wheels of his providence have conspired together to bring about the glory of God and Christ, and the happiness of his people; and this will cause an exceeding accession of happiness to the saints who behold it. Then will God have fully glorified himself, and glorified his Son, and glorified his elect; then he will see that all is very good, and will rejoice in his own works, which will be the joy of all heaven. Then will God rest and be refreshed, and thenceforward will all the inhabitants of heaven keep an eternal sabbath of rest and praise, such as never was kept before.

5. Then will be the marriage of the Lamb. When the church is completely purified and beautified, and nothing wanting and all the parts of the body in their due proportion and joyful state; then may the Lamb’s wife be said to have made herself ready; then will she be as a bride prepared for her husband. And when the church is thus prepared by Christ at such great cost, at the shedding of his own blood; it will be brought to a more glorious union to Christ than ever before, and to a more intimate communion with him, and to a more high enjoyment of his excellency and love. Then will be the highest accomplishment of the joy spoken of in [Rev. xix. 7, 8, 9.](#) “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come; and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto

the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” It will be the day of the gladness of Christ’s heart; the feast, and pomp, and holy mirth, and joy of this marriage day, will be continued to all eternity.

6. Then will Christ present his church to his Father. The Father sent forth Christ into the world on that errand, to redeem a vast number of the children of men, and to bring them home to God, from whom they had apostatized, to bring them back to him, the great Creator and Father of all things, and the fountain of all good. Christ, having accomplished this, will bring them to God, and present them to him; and then may Christ say, as in [Heb. ii. 13](#). “Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me;” none of them is missing: “of those that thou hast given me, I have lost nothing.” We read that Christ, when he shall have accomplished the work which the Father sent him to do, shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. [1 Cor. xv. 24](#). “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.” And as he shall deliver up the kingdom, he shall present the subjects of the kingdom; and what he has obtained by ruling, he shall present as the fruits of his reign.

7. Then will God make a still more abundant manifestation and communication of himself. God shall be all in all; and the glory of God and the glory of his Son shall be displayed in heaven, in a more abundant manner than ever before; and he will pour forth more plentifully of his Spirit, and will make answerable additions to the glory of the saints, such as will be becoming the commencement of the ultimate and most perfect state of things, and such as will become the joyful occasion of the marriage of the Lamb.

2d. I shall now describe the nature and degree of the consummate and eternal glory and blessedness of the saints.

1. The nature of this glory and blessedness.

1. I would begin with the lowest part of it, *viz.* the glory of the place. We have already observed that heaven is a place. They shall dwell in the most glorious part of the whole creation of God. It is called paradise. [Luke xxiii. 43](#). “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” [2 Cor. xii. 4](#). “How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter.” [Rev. ii. 7](#). “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” The word *paradise* signifies a most pleasant and delightful garden, of which the garden of Eden was a type. The garden of Eden was without doubt a place that was delightful beyond what we can easily conceive; but if this earthly paradise was so delightful, how pleasant and glorious may we conclude the heavenly paradise to be; that was not made merely to be the residence of some of the innocent creatures of God during their time of probation, as Eden was, but was prepared by infinite wisdom and skill for the everlasting dwelling-place of the great King of heaven and earth, and of his Son Jesus Christ; the place where they might show



their glory, and wisdom, and love for ever, and which is to be the habitation of confirmed saints and angels! When God made the universe, he made many parts of it for inferior uses, in which he displayed marvellous skill; then he made the earth, and the sun, and moon, and stars, and the visible heavens, which appear truly glorious; but there was one part of the creation that God made more especially for himself, to be his own dwelling-place, the place of his glorious rest; and we may conclude that this is beyond all comparison more glorious than the other parts of it. If some parts of the visible world are so glorious, as the sun, moon, and stars, how glorious may we conclude the highest heavens to be! This is the heavenly mount Zion, the royal city of the great God. It has been the ambition of earthly monarchs to make the cities where they dwell exceedingly magnificent. Thus the king of Babylon boasted, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" [Dan. iv. 30](#). Especially will kings have their own palaces most magnificent. But if those earthly cities and palaces are some of them so glorious, which are for the habitation of worms, how glorious may we think that to be which is for the glorious habitation of God Almighty! As the third heavens are higher than the earth, so we may expect that it is proportionally more glorious than any earthly garden, city, or palace. Heaven is not only the city of God, but his palace; not only his palace, but his throne: [Isa. lxvi. 1](#). "Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me; and where is the place of my rest?" We read how magnificent was Solomon's throne. [1 Kings x. 18, 19, 20](#). "Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best of gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom." But what is the throne of a glowworm? God does not want skill to make his palace and throne glorious enough to become the majesty and glory of him whose house and seat it is. The builder is God, and there is no want of skill in the architect. How glorious and magnificent was the temple of Solomon, that was built only to be the place of the special symbols of God's presence on earth among his people Israel! How much more glorious is that heavenly temple which God himself has built, to be the place of his glorious presence among glorified saints and angels throughout all eternity! This is a place contrived on purpose to show the boundless riches of God's grace and love; and therefore, God has not spared as to the delights and glories with which he has adorned the place. God is rich enough to make the place transcend all created glory. Earthly kings build their houses and palaces, and make them magnificent, according to their wealth and ability; but God is infinitely rich, he does not spare for the cost of the treasures to be laid out in adorning heaven, through fear of impoverishing himself. The glory of his residence is what we cannot conceive of; and this is one of those things spoken of in [1 Cor. ii. 9](#). "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath

entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” Therefore in the descriptions that are given of it in the Scriptures, the images made use of to shadow it forth to us, are the most glorious with which we are conversant in the world. Such is the glorious description of it by John, as represented to him in the apocalyptic vision. [Rev. xxi. 10,11-18, 19, 20, 21,22, 23.](#) “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second sapphire; the third a chalcedony; the fourth an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” Heaven is here represented by a city, whose very walls were made of precious stones. And the foundations were also all precious stones, and the gates were each a single pearl, and the very streets of the city were of pure gold; and yet it was something so excellent, as it appeared to John, that his comparing it to pure gold did not represent the excellency of it; it had also the beautiful transparency of clear glass. The apostle could find nothing on earth excellent enough adequately to represent its surpassing beauty. “The streets of the city were pure gold, like unto clear glass.”<sup>643</sup> He goes on with the destruction in the beginning of the next chapter. [Rev. xxii. 1, 2-5.](#) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” This glorious place shall be the residence of the saints for ever. They shall dwell in this house of God, as the king’s children dwell with him in their father’s house; they shall dwell in this house, for it is Christ’s house. He is the heir and owner of it, because he is the only-begotten Son of God; and the church shall dwell in it with Christ, because she is “the Lamb’s wife. “God has made heaven to be his own peculiar dwelling-place, and the dwelling-place of his children; when he made the world, he made heaven for them, and therefore Christ says to them at the close of their trial, [Matt. xxv. 34.](#)

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643 [Rev. xxi. 18.](#)

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

2. The glory of the bodies of the saints; but this need not be insisted on here; as I have considered it already, when speaking of the resurrection. I would only observe, that however great the glory of the place is, the glory of their bodies will doubtless be far greater; for the place is made to be a dwelling-place for their glorious bodies, and the inhabitants will doubtless be more glorious than the habitation that is made for them; as the end is of greater value than the means. However bright heaven itself shall shine, the bodies of the saints themselves will shine far brighter, and appear far more beautiful.

3. The glory and beauty which God will put upon their souls, will as far exceed the beauty of their bodies, as the beauty of their bodies will far exceed the beauty of the place. Here will be their principal ornament, and if their bodies shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, how bright will their souls shine in the glorious image of God, made perfect in them! When they shall be presented to Christ, perfectly free from sin, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; when they shall appear holy and without blemish; their bodies shall not only be made like to Christ's glorious body, but their souls like to his Holy and glorified soul. They shall then shine with the glory of Christ reflected from them, without any thing to obscure the bright image. Their souls shall be made glorious in wisdom and knowledge; their faculties shall be exceedingly strengthened and enlarged, their eyes made perfectly clear, and divine light shall fill the soul, so that there shall be no darkness within, and perfect love shall reign in the heart. Divine love shall be strong; all the soul shall be as it were love. This love shall be exceedingly great in the principle of it, and shall always be in its highest exercise. Then shall humility also be brought to perfection. None can now express or conceive how pure and holy will be the disposition of the soul of a glorified saint, which shall be, as it were, all love, all sweetness, all humility. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is said to be in the sight of God of great price, in this world; but how precious will such spiritual ornaments be in heaven, when they shall be thus perfected! The souls of the saints are God's jewels; and how bright will God make those his jewels shine in heaven, when he has polished them and fitted them to be gems in his own crown of glory! The soul of man, being spiritual and rational, is susceptible of incomparably greater beauty than the body, because the soul is capable of receiving the image of God, of which the body is not; and the souls of the saints, when God has perfected them, shall appear as the very image of God himself; and in the graces in which they shall shine shall be seen the glory of the divine workmanship in its perfection. And so lovely will they be, that there will be more loveliness and beauty in the soul of one saint than in all the glory and beauty of the place put together.

4. They shall have great delight in the society and enjoyment of one another. We now do not know what enjoyment they will have in conversing together, and in communicating with each other; but doubtless it will be far more perfect than any we have now. The saints



in heaven shall all be one society, they shall be united together without any schism, there shall be a sweet harmony, and a perfect union. There the saints shall see and converse with Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and Paul, and all the holy martyrs; and *they* shall freely converse with them. It will be a most blessed society; there shall be no jars or contentions, nor breaking out among them; no manner of strife, nor envy, nor jealousy; no ill will, but perfect peace and perfect love through the whole society. Each one shall love every other with a most endeared and strong affection. Each one will be perfectly excellent and lovely, and will appear so in every other's eyes: they will be delighted exceedingly in that lovely and perfect image of God, which each one shall see in every other; they shall manifest their love to each other in the most becoming and amiable manner, without any thing ever to disturb or interrupt the peace of that blessed society. There shall be no mixture of wicked men among them as it is here in this world, to defile or dishonour their company. Here the visible churches of Christ are often defiled and dishonoured by one wicked man or other, but that church above shall always be perfectly pure. [Rev. xxi. 27](#). "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." This blessed family being all united in one body, as having many members, shall all subserve and contribute to each other's happiness, as the members of a body that is in perfect health. They shall delight to assist each other in their contemplations, communicating their glorious contemplations one to another. How sweetly will they converse together of the glories of God and Christ, and of God's glorious works of power, and wisdom, and mercy! and how will they convey the bright conceptions and the raptures of joy from one soul to another, imparting to each other the sweet communications which they themselves receive from the glorious King of heaven! and how will they help one another in their praises to God and Christ, each one bearing his part in the heavenly melody, extolling the Most High! And what a glorious harmony of celestial voices without number will that be, when the whole assembly of the upper world shall together lift up the praises of God on high! John had this represented to him at a great distance, and tells us, [Rev. xiv. 2](#). "I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps:" so ardent were they, and so great a multitude. And how will they rejoice in their numbers, to see so great a multitude all united, all perfectly holy, all full of mutual love, all fellow-citizens, all brethren!

Here a question may arise, whether the saints, when they go to heaven, have any peculiar comfort in meeting with those who have been their pious friends on earth? I answer in the affirmative, and I think it is evident from [1 Thess. iv. 13-18](#). "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of

the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Here it is evident,

1. That what the apostle mentions, as a matter of comfort to Christians respecting their departed Christian friends, is that they shall meet them, and see them again. It is not only that their departed friends, though dead, are happy, but they shall see them, and be with them again. This is here plainly asserted. Mourn not for them, says the apostle, as those that have no hope; for when Christ comes, God shall bring them again, and we which are alive shall be caught up with them; and so shall we be ever with the Lord together. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. The apostle therefore must be understood to mean, that they should comfort one another when mourners, with the consideration that they should hereafter be with their departed friends again in a glorious and happy state, and never part more.

2. That there will be something else that will give comfort in meeting them in a future state, than in seeing other saints; otherwise why did the apostle mention it for their comfort, that they should see them again rather than other saints whom they had not seen or heard of? The apostle's speaking thus to the Thessalonians might give them just ground to expect, that the peculiarly strong affection which they had cherished for their departed friends, which was crossed by their departure, would be again gratified by meeting them again; for this crossing of that affection was the ground of their mourning. If the Thessalonians knew, that to see their friends again in another world would be no gratification to the affection which they had for them as their friends, and did no way think or conceive of it as such; then to think of seeing them would be no more comfort to them or remedy to their sorrow, than to think that they should see any other saint that lived or died in another country, or in a past age; and that, because it would be no remedy to the ground and foundation of their mourning, *viz.* the crossing their affection to them as their friends; and if it would be no remedy to their mourning, to think thus respecting it, it never would have been mentioned to them by the apostle as a ground of comfort, or reason why they need not mourn. That was what they mourned for *viz.* that they should not have their affections towards them satisfied by seeing them, and conversing with them again. That for which the heathen here spoken of, that have no hope, mourned excessively, was that they should never more have that affection gratified again. Hence it follows that the special affection, which the saints have in this world to other saints who are their friends, will in some respects remain in another world. There is no reason why we should suppose that saints that have dwelt together in this world, and have showed kindness to each other, have been affectionate to each other's

true happiness, should not love one another with a love of gratitude for it in another world. There is no reason why good ministers whom God had made the instruments of salvation to others, should not have special joy in meeting their converts in heaven. [2 Cor. i. 14.](#) “As also ye have acknowledged us in part that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.” [1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.](#) “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” I see no reason why those that love one another with a virtuous love, and from such a love have shown kindness one to another, should not love one another the better for it in another world. There is no reason to think, that the friendship contracted here on earth between saints will be rooted out in another world. All natural affections, so far as founded in animal nature or the infirmity of the present state, will cease in another world; and with respect to any affection that the godly have had to the finally reprobate, the love of God will wholly swallow it up, and cause it wholly to cease. But I see nothing that argues that one saint in glory may not have a special respect to another, because God made use of that other as an instrument to bring him into being, and thus made him the remote occasion of his happiness; or that, when pious parents lose pious children, they may not comfort themselves with the thought that they shall go to them, as probably David did when he said concerning his child, [2 Sam. xii. 23.](#) “But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me:” or that even a former acquaintance with persons and their virtues may not occasion a particular respect in another world. They may go to heaven with a desire to see them upon that very account. The impressions which they have of their amiable qualifications in consequence of their acquaintance with them here, may yet remain in another world.

5. The saints in heaven shall see and converse with Christ. They shall see Christ in a twofold sense.

1. They shall see him, as appearing in his glorified human nature, with their bodily eyes; and this will be a most glorious sight. The loveliness of Christ as thus appearing will be a most ravishing thing to them; for though the bodies of the saints shall appear with an exceeding beauty and glory, yet the body of Christ will without doubt immensely surpass them, as much as the brightness of the sun does that of the stars. The glorified body of Christ will be the masterpiece of all God’s workmanship in the whole material universe. There shall be in his glorious countenance the manifestations of his glorious spiritual perfections, his majesty, his holiness, his surpassing grace, and love, and meekness. The eye will never be wearied with beholding this glorious sight. When Christ was transfigured in the mount, Peter was for making three tabernacles, that Christ, and Moses, and Elijah might remain there, and that the heavenly vision might never come to an end.

Job had respect to this sight of Christ, and comforted himself with the thoughts of it, when he said, “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day



upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. <sup>644</sup>” This will be the most glorious object that the saints will ever see with their bodily eyes; and there will be far more happiness redounding to the beholders from this sight than from any other; yea, the eyes of the glorified body will be given chiefly that the saints may behold this sight.

2. They shall see him with the eye of the soul. It is said, “They shall see him as he is.” [1 John iii. 2.](#) “And they shall know even as they are known.” [1 Cor. xiii. 2.](#) They shall have a clear understanding of Christ as Mediator, how he has undertaken from all eternity to accomplish their salvation. They shall understand the glorious covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son; shall see the eternal love Christ had to them before the foundation of the world. They shall in all probability understand the mystery of his incarnation. They shall know and understand the gloriousness of the way of salvation by Christ, “which things the angels desire to look into; <sup>645</sup>” they shall have a full understanding of the infinite wisdom of God in contriving the plan of salvation; shall comprehend the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of Christ to sinners, in undergoing for them the agony of the garden, and the more overwhelming agonies of the cross. Now the heart is dull in the contemplation of such things. How often are they heard of by the saints on earth with but little affection! How often, when they see them set forth in the Lord’s supper, are they cold and lifeless! But then it shall not be so; then the wonderful works of God, and the love of Christ in the work of redemption, will appear as they are: then there will constantly without any interruption be a most lively and full sense of it, without any deadness or coldness; every thing in the work of redemption will appear in its true glory, the understanding shall be wonderfully opened, and it shall be perpetually like the clear hemisphere with the sun in the meridian, and there shall never come over one cloud to darken the mind. And then the saints shall see fully how the excellence and loveliness of Christ appear in all that he did and suffered: they shall see the loveliness of those excellencies that appeared in Christ’s human nature when on earth; his wonderful meekness and humility, his patience under suffering, his perfect obedience to the Father. And then shall they also see the beauty that appears in Christ’s human nature in its glorified state, wherein the excellencies of it shine without a veil. They shall also see the excellence of the divine nature of Christ; they shall behold’ clearly and immediately his divine majesty, and his divine and infinite holiness, and grace, and love. They shall see Christ as the perfect image of God, an image wherein all the glory of the divine nature is fully expressed; they shall behold him as the brightness of his Father’s glory; and they shall see that bright and perfect image of God which the Father beheld, and was

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644 [Job xix. 25, 26.](#)

645 [1 Peter i. 12.](#)

infinitely happy in beholding, from all eternity. But this sight of the glory of Christ in his divine nature belongs to that beatific vision, of which I would speak more particularly hereafter.

2. They shall not only see this glorious person, as at a distance, but they shall be admitted to be near him, and to converse with him. This sight of his glory and loveliness will fill them with the most exalted love, which love will cause them to desire conversation; and they shall be admitted to it, to the full of their desires, and that at all times. Two things may be observed concerning this converse with Christ, to which the saints shall be admitted in heaven.

1. It shall be most free and intimate. There shall be nothing to forbid them or deter them. Though Christ is so glorious a person, in so exalted a state in heaven, being Lord of heaven and earth, yet he will treat them as brethren, and they shall converse with him as friends. He will also honour them and advance them to the dignity of kings, that they may be fit to converse with so glorious a King. [Rev. i. 6](#). “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.” Christ, when on earth, treated his disciples with great familiarity and freedom, he treated them as friends. [John xv. 15](#). “I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I call you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” So in heaven he will not keep them at a greater distance, but admit them nearer; because they shall be fitted to be nearer to him and to converse more intimately with him. O how happy will it render them to have so great and honourable a person treating them with such grace and condescension!

Though they shall see the awful majesty of Christ, that will not make them afraid, because they will see his love, and grace, and condescension, equal to his majesty.

2. This converse shall be most full and satisfying. This is evident from that most emphatic expression of the church being “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”<sup>646</sup> He will open the infinite and eternal fountain of his love to them, and will pour forth that fountain into their hearts. This love will be as a pure river of water of life, a river of pleasures, constantly flowing into the souls of the saints, that shall be in them as rivers of living water. And they shall also in their converse with Christ manifest their love to him: their hearts shall flow out in an unceasing stream, or ascend continually in a rapturous transport of love. Of those things we can say but little now; yet sometimes when God helps us we can conceive of them a little, but it is but a little at the most.

6. The saints in heaven shall see God. They shall not only see that glorious city, and the saints there, and the holy angels, and the glorified body of Christ; but they shall see God himself. This is promised to the saints. [Matt. v. 8](#). “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” [1 Cor. xiii. 12](#). “For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face:

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646 [Rev. xxi. 9](#).

now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." This is that which is called by divines, "the beatific vision," because this is that in which the blessedness of the saints in glory does chiefly consist. This is the fountain, the infinite fountain of their blessedness. The sight of Christ, which has already been spoken of, is not here to be excluded, for he is a divine person; the sight of him in his divine nature therefore belongs to the beatifical vision. This vision of God is the chief bliss of heaven, and therefore I would speak of it a little more particularly. And,

1. As to the faculty that is the subject of this vision. It is no sight of any thing with the bodily eyes; but it is an intellectual view. The beatific vision of God is not a sight with the eyes of the body, but with the eyes of the soul. There is no such thing as seeing God properly with the bodily eyes because he is a spirit: one of his attributes is, that he is invisible. [1 Tim. i. 17](#). "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever." [Colos. i. 15](#). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." [Heb. xi. 27](#). "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." This highest blessedness of the soul does not enter in at the door of the bodily senses; this would be to make the blessedness of the soul dependent on the body, or the happiness of man's superior part to be dependent on the inferior. The beatific vision of God is not any sight with the bodily eyes, because the separate souls of the saints, and the angels which are mere spirits, and never were united to body, have this vision. [Matt. xviii. 10](#). "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." It is not in beholding any form or visible representation, or shape, or colour, or shining light, in which the highest happiness of the soul consists; but it is in seeing God, who is a spirit, spiritually, with the eyes of the soul. We have no reason to think that there is any such thing; as God's manifesting himself by any outward glorious appearance, that is, the symbol of his presence in heaven, any otherwise than by the glorified body of Christ. God was wont in the Old Testament, oftentimes to manifest himself by an outward glory, and sometimes in an outward shape, or the form of a man. But when God manifested himself thus, it was by Christ; it was the second person of the Trinity only that was wont thus to appear to men in an outward glory and human shape. [John i. 18](#). "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." But since Christ has actually assumed a human body, there is no need of his assuming any aerial form or shape any more. The Deity now became visible to the bodily eyes in a more perfect manner by his having a real body. The saints that shall see Christ in heaven in his glorified body, much more properly see Christ than if they only saw an assumed shape, or some outward glorious appearance, as the symbol of his presence; for now, that which they see is not only a glorious appearance by which Christ is represented, but the real Christ; it is his own body. The seeing God in the glorified body of Christ, is the most perfect way

of seeing God with the bodily eyes that can be; for in seeing a real body, which one of the persons of the Trinity has assumed to be his body, and in which he dwells for ever as his own, the divine majesty and excellency appear as much as it is possible for them to appear in outward form or shape. The saints do actually see a divine person with bodily eyes, and in the same manner as we see one another. But when God showed himself under outward appearances and symbols of his presence only, that was not so proper a sight of a divine person, and it was a more imperfect way of God's manifesting himself, suitably to the more imperfect state of the church under the Old Testament. But now Christ really subsists in a glorified body; those outward symbols and appearances are done away, as being needless and imperfect. This more imperfect way therefore is altogether needless, seeing Christ there appears as a glorified body.

This seems to be one end of God's assuming a human body, *viz.* that the saints might see God with bodily eyes; that they may see him, not only in the understanding, but in every way of seeing of which the human nature is capable: that we might see God as a divine person as we see one another. And there is no need of God the Father's manifesting himself in any other glorious form; for he that sees the Son, sees the Father, [John xiv. 9.](#) and that because he is the image of the invisible God. [Coloss. i. 15.](#) [Heb. i. 3.](#) "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." But if there be any outward symbol by which God the Father represents himself in heaven; seeing that is not the beatific vision, for that is a far more imperfect way of seeing God than seeing him with the eye of the soul; the soul is capable of apprehending God in a thousand times more perfect and glorious manner than the eye of the body is; the soul has in itself those powers whereby it is sufficiently capable of apprehending spiritual objects without looking through the windows of the outward senses. The soul is capable of seeing God more immediately, and more certainly, and more fully and gloriously, than the eye of the body is.

2. The act of vision. And,

1. It will be an immediate sight, it will be no apprehension of God's excellency by acquiring it from his works; neither will it be such a spiritual sight of God as the saints have in this world, seeing him in his word and making use of his ordinances, which is called seeing "through a glass darkly." Then they shall see him "face to face." [1 Cor. xiii. 12.](#) They shall not only see the glory of God as reflected from other things, but they shall see him as we see the sun, by his own light in a clear hemisphere. It will be an intuitive view of God. What knowledge the saints have of God in this world is like the twilight before sun-rising; it is not the direct light of the sun, but the light of the sun reflected, and it is comparatively a dim light; but hereafter the saints shall enjoy the perfect day, they shall see God as we immediately

behold the sun after it is risen above the horizon, and no cloud or vapour in the heavens to hinder its sight.

2. It shall be, according to men's capacity, a perfect sight. It shall not be a perfectly comprehensive sight, because it is impossible that a saint's mind should comprehend God; but yet it shall be perfect in its kind, it shall be perfectly certain, without any doubt or possibility of doubt. There shall be a view of God in his being, and in his power, and wisdom, and holiness, and goodness, and love, and all-sufficiency, that shall be attended with intuitive certainty, without any mixture of unbelief, and with much greater certainty than any sight with the bodily eye. And then it shall be perfectly clear without any view of darkness. Now, how much darkness is there mingled with that spiritual sight, which the saints have of God's glory in this world! But then, there shall be no obscurity, nothing to cloud the understanding, or to hinder the clearness of the view. God shall be hid with no veil, neither shall there be any veil in the heavens. And this sight shall be most enlarged; they shall see vastly more of the glory of God than any of the saints do in this world; the souls of the saints shall be like the angels in extensiveness of understanding.

3. The object of this vision: concerning which I observe,

1. They shall see every thing in God that tends to excite and inflame love, *i. e.* every thing that is lovely, every thing that tends to exalt their esteem and admiration, to warm and endear the heart. They shall behold the infinite excellency and glory of God, shall have a blessed-making sight of his glorious majesty and of his infinite holiness; shall see as those angels do, of whom we read in [Isa. vi. 3](#). "That, standing before the throne, they cry, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," and shall behold the infinite grace and goodness of God. Then shall that glorious fountain and ocean be opened fully to their view; then shall they behold all its excellency and loveliness, they shall have a clear sight of his immense glory and excellency.

2. They shall see every thing in God that gratifies love. They shall see in him all that love desires. Love desires the love of the beloved. So the saints in glory shall see God's transcendent love to them; God will make ineffable manifestations of his love to them. They shall see as much love in God towards them as they desire; they neither will nor can crave any more. This very manifestation that God will make of himself that will cause the beatific vision, will be an act of love in God: it will be from the exceeding love of God to them that he will give them this vision, which will add an immense sweetness to it. When they see God so glorious, and at the same time see how greatly this God loves them, what delight will it not cause in the soul! Love desires union. They shall therefore see this glorious God united to them, and see themselves united to him. They shall see that he is their Father, and that they are his children. They shall see God gloriously present with them; God with them; and God in them; and they in God. Love desires the possession of its object. Therefore they shall see God, even their own God; when they behold this transcendent glory of God, they shall see him as their



own. When they shall see that glory, power, and wisdom of God, they shall see it as altogether engaged for them; when they shall see the beauty of God's holiness, they shall see it as their own, for them to enjoy for ever; when they see the boundless ocean of God's goodness and grace, they shall see it to be all theirs.

4. The manner in which they shall see and enjoy God; and that is as having communion with Christ therein. The saints shall enjoy God, as partaking with Christ of his enjoyment of God; for they are united to him, and are glorified and made happy in the enjoyment of God as his members. As the members of the body partake of the life and health of the head, so the saints in glory shall be happy as partaking of the blessedness of the Son of God; they being in Christ, shall partake of the love of God the Father to Christ. And as the Son knows the Father, so they shall partake with him in his sight of God, as being as it were parts of him. As he is in the bosom of the Father, so are they in the bosom of the Father; as he has immense joy in the love of the Father, so have they, every one of them in their measure, the same joy in the Father's love.

Herein they shall enjoy God in a more exalted and excellent manner than man would have done if he had never fallen; for doubtless that happiness, that Christ himself partakes of in his Father's bosom, is transcendently sweet and excellent; and how happy therefore are they who are admitted to partake of that portion of delight with him!

5. The agent by whom this vision of God shall be communicated; *viz.* the Holy Spirit. As it is by the Holy Spirit that a spiritual sight of God is given in this world, so it is the same Holy Spirit by whom the beatific vision is given of God in heaven. The saints in heaven are as dependent on God for all their happiness, and all their holiness, and all their light, as those on earth; there all is from God by his Holy Spirit, just as it is here. They shall have the beatific vision of God because they will be full of God, filled with the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost is the pure river of water of life that proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb, spoken of in [Rev. xxii. 1.](#)

6. The effects of this vision. And these are, that the soul shall be inflamed with love, and satisfied with pleasure.

1. It shall be inflamed with love. The soul shall not be an inactive spectator, but shall be most active, and in the most ardent exercise of love towards the object seen. The soul shall be as it were all eyes to behold, and yet all act to love. The soul shall be as full of love as it shall be of light, and of both it shall be as full as it can hold. The understanding will be in its most perfect act in beholding, and the will will be in its most perfect act in loving. This love will be perfectly such as it ought to be. It shall be perfectly humble, the soul shall be in its place at all times, adoring at God's feet, and yet embraced in the arms of his love. This love shall excite them to praise. And therefore, singing praises and hallelujahs shall be that in which they shall unweariedly be employed.

2. This sight of God shall satisfy the soul with pleasure. So great will the joy be that the soul will desire no greater. It shall be as full of grace, as the large desires of the soul can receive. So sweet shall it be, that the soul will desire nothing sweeter. So pure and excellent will it be, that the soul will desire nothing better. *Ps. xvii. 15.* “As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” When the soul beholds the glory and love of God, it shall be at the same time filled with the glory and love of God; it shall receive satisfying pleasure, for it shall receive God. God will communicate, and as it were pour forth, himself into the soul. And with what inexpressible sweetness and complacency will the soul open itself to be thus filled, as the flowers open before the sun to be filled with his light and pleasant influences!

Having thus considered wherein the eternal happiness of the saints consists, I proceed next to consider some circumstances of it.

1. It will add sweetness to the happiness of heaven, that it is all the fruit of free grace, and the dying love of Christ. The saints in this world are of that spirit that they choose the way of salvation by free and sovereign grace; and salvation in this way seems better and sweeter by far, than if they could have it by their own works. Much more will this exceedingly heighten the sweetness of their happiness when they are in heaven, when their love, and their humility, will be perfect, when they will be abundantly more sensible than they are now, what vile creatures they were in this world; and when they consider to what exceeding glory God has advanced them, what a sweet admiration will it excite in them of the free and boundless grace of God! And what a sweetness will it add, that all this glorious blessedness which they possess, is not of themselves, but is the fruit of the love of that glorious person whom they shall then see in his glory, the fruit of his dying love, that it was bought by his own precious blood! It adds greatly to the value of a gift, if we receive it from a dear friend as a token of his love; but how greatly then will heaven be the more prized by the saints, when they consider it as the fruit of his love who is so glorious and excellent, and who is so exceedingly beloved by them!

2. It will give them the greater sense of their own blessedness, when they contemplate the misery of those who are finally lost, and consider how exceedingly different is their own state. The saints will witness the misery of the wicked, they shall see their state at the day of judgment, they shall see them at the left hand with devils, shall hear the sentence pronounced, and see it executed. This shall greatly heighten the sense of their own happy state, when they consider how different their own state is, how differently God has dealt with themselves from what he has done with the wicked; when they see how dreadful the misery is from which they are delivered, and which they must have unavoidably suffered, had not God graciously redeemed them; when they consider that they deserved this misery as well as

those that suffer it, but that Christ has of his free grace redeemed them. This will give exalted thoughts of the free grace of God, and cause them exceedingly to admire it, and will greatly heighten their exercises of love to him who has been so gracious to them, and consequently will heighten their joy in his love. As the damned when they contemplate the happiness of the saints in heaven will find their own misery aggravated, so the saints in heaven when they contemplate the misery of the damned in hell, will feel a greater sense of their own happiness.

3. There are different degrees of happiness and glory in heaven. As there are degrees among the angels, *viz.* thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; so there are degrees among the saints. In heaven are many mansions, and of different degrees of dignity. The glory of the saints above will be in some proportion to their eminency in holiness and good works here. Christ will reward all according to their works. He that gained ten pounds was made ruler over ten cities, and he that gained five pounds over five cities. [Luke xix. 17.](#) [2 Cor. ix. 6.](#) “He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” And the apostle Paul tells us that, as one star differs from another star in glory, so also it shall be in the resurrection of the dead. [1 Cor. xv. 41.](#) Christ tells us that he who gives a cup of cold water unto a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward. But this could not be true, if a person should have no greater reward for doing many good works than if he did but few. It will be no damp to the happiness of those who have lower degrees of happiness and glory, that there are others advanced in glory above them: for all shall be perfectly happy, every one shall be perfectly satisfied. Every vessel that is cast into this ocean of happiness is full, though there are some vessels far larger than others; and there shall be no such thing as envy in heaven, but perfect love shall reign through the whole society. Those who are not so high in glory as others, will not envy those that are higher, but they will have so great, and strong, and pure love to them, that they will rejoice in their superior happiness; their love to them will be such that they will rejoice that they are happier than themselves; so that instead of having a damp to their own happiness, it will add to it. They will see it to be fit that they that have been most eminent in works of righteousness should be most highly exalted in glory; and they will rejoice in having that done, that is fittest to be done. There will be a perfect harmony in that society; those that are most happy will also be most holy, and all will be both perfectly holy and perfectly happy. But yet there will be different degrees of both holiness and happiness according to the measure of each one’s capacity, and therefore those that are lowest in glory will have the greatest love to those that are highest in happiness, because they will see most of the image of God in them; and having the greatest love to them, they will rejoice to see them the most happy and the highest in glory. And so, on the other hand, those that are highest in glory, as they will be the most lovely, so they will be fullest of love: as they will excel in happiness, they will proportionally excel in divine benevolence and love to others, and will have more love to God and to the saints than those that are lower in holiness and happiness. And besides,



those that will excel in glory will also excel in humility. Here in this world, those that are above others are the objects of envy, because that others conceive of them as being lifted up with it; but in heaven it will not be so, but those saints in heaven who excel in happiness will also in holiness, and consequently in humility. The saints in heaven are more humble than the saints on earth, and still the higher we go among them the greater humility there is; the highest orders of saints, who know most of God, see most of the distinction between God and them, and consequently are comparatively least in their own eyes, and so are most humble. The exaltation of some in heaven above the rest will be so far from diminishing the perfect happiness and joy of the rest who are inferior, that they will be the happier for it; such will be the union in their society that they will be partakers of each other's happiness. Then will be fulfilled in its perfection that which is declared in [1 Cor. xii. 22](#). "If one of the members be honoured all the members rejoice with it."

This happiness of the saints shall never have any interruption. There will never be any alloy to it; there never will come any cloud to obscure their light; there never will be any thing to cool their love. The rivers of pleasure will not fail, the glory and love of God and of Christ will for ever be the same, and the manifestation of it will have no interruption. No sin or corruption shall ever enter there, no temptation to disturb their blessedness: the divine love in the saints shall never cool, there shall be no inconsistency in any of them, the faculties of the saints shall never flag from exercise; and they will never be cloyed, their relish for those delights will for ever be kept up to its height, that glorious society shall not grow weary of their hallelujahs. Their exercises, though they are so active and vigorous, will be performed with perfect ease; the saints shall not be weary of loving, and praising, and fearing, as the sun is never weary of shining.

5. And to sum up this whole description, there shall never be any end to their glory and blessedness. Therefore is it so often called eternal life, and everlasting life. We are told that at the day of judgment, when the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, the righteous shall enter into life eternal. [Matt. xxv. 46](#). The pleasures which there are at God's right hand, are said to be for evermore; [Psal. xvi. 11](#). And that this is not merely a long duration, but an absolute eternity, is evident from that which Christ has said, that those who believe on him shall not die. [John vi. 50](#). [Rev. xxii. 5](#). In the description of the new Jerusalem it is said, "And they shall reign for ever and ever."<sup>647</sup> The eternity of this blessedness shall crown all. If the saints knew that there would be an end to their happiness, though at never so great a distance, yet it would be a great damp to their joy. The greater the happiness is, so much the more uncomfortable would the thoughts of an end be, and so much the more joyful will it be to think that there will be no end. The saints will surely know that there will be no more danger of their happiness coming to an end, than there will be that

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647 [Rev. xxii. 5](#).

the being of God will come to an end. As God is eternal, so their happiness is eternal; as long as the fountain lasts, they need not fear but they shall be supplied.

### APPLICATION.

1. Hence we learn how great a mercy conversion is, because it confers upon him who is exposed to eternal misery a right to all this blessedness. Man, as he is naturally, is very far from this blessedness; we came into the world wretched, miserable, undone creatures, in cruel bondage to sin and Satan, under guilt and under wrath, and at enmity against God, the fountain of blessedness, and in a state of condemnation to everlasting destruction. But when a man is converted there is a great change made in his state; he is that day passed from death to life, he is brought out of that state of woe and misery into a sure title to glory, honour, and peace for ever. When once a man is converted all this blessedness that we have heard of is his, he has an absolute right to it, God's word is passed for it, his faithful promise is given. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but that promise of God shall not fail, but shall be fulfilled: their witness is in heaven, and their record on high. On that day in which a man is converted he enters into a blessed state, he is sure to be a blessed person as long as he lives; and he has a right to all that blessedness we have heard of, at death, and in a state of separation, and at the day of judgment, and to that glory which the saints have in their state of consummate glory and blessedness. This teaches how great and how blessed a change conversion is in its consequences, and what cause have they who have good ground to think that they have been the subjects of it, to bless, and praise, and extol the name of God, when they consider what a situation they were once in, and what a happy state they are now in; for the bringing them out of that miserable state into so glorious a state is owing only to free and sovereign grace. [1 Cor. iv. 7.](#) "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?"

2. Hence we may learn the folly of those that are cold and slack in seeking salvation, seeing that the glory and happiness of those who are saved is so exceedingly great. How unreasonable is it to expect to obtain that which is so great without effort! Men will seek worldly riches and honours that are worth so little, and cannot make them happy, and will soon vanish away, with great and indefatigable labour and diligence; and shall men expect to obtain such eternal glory and blessedness in a slack and cold way of seeking it? How unlike the nature and importance of this blessedness do men treat it that seek it in a cold and careless manner! and can it be expected that God will also treat it so unlike its value, as to bestow it upon such seekers?

3. Hence we may solve the difficulty of some Christians meeting with so much affliction and darkness in the world. Some godly persons are the subjects of very great outward afflictions, and some are the subjects of great spiritual darkness; some truly godly persons spend



great part of their lives in the dark, in exercising doubts, and anxious thoughts, and distressing fears. And oftentimes God's people make this an argument against themselves. They argue that if God loved them, and had made them his children, he would never leave them in such darkness and distress, he would give them more of the light of his countenance. They are ready to say with themselves, if God loves me, why does he not give me more comfort, why does he see me in such darkness, and does not comfort me? But what we have heard may solve all the difficulty. If their happiness throughout all eternity be so great, of how little consequence is it what may be their condition for that short moment they continue in this world! What if they are in the dark, what if they walk in darkness and are exercised with great trouble! how little difference will it make, though it be cast into the scales, when weighed against that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory! It will prove lighter than vanity. If God gives eternal happiness to them, that is evident proof of his love, and all the darkness and sorrow they can meet with in this world are not worthy to be mentioned. All this darkness, how long soever continued, if we compare it with future glory, vanishes into nothing.

4. This subject furnishes solid ground of consolation to the righteous. What can be matter of greater joy and comfort to any person, than to consider that he is entitled to such eternal blessedness? Here is sufficient consolation under all adversity; whatever changes we meet with in the world, this may be matter of abundant comfort under the greatest and heaviest trials. In these things a Christian may well rejoice, though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there should be no fruit in the vine. Having this firm support and consolation, a Christian will not fear though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

Let these things, therefore, comfort thee, who fearest and lovest God and trustest in Christ. What a glorious hope, and incorruptible, and undefiled, and never-fading inheritance, are reserved in heaven for thee! Hence I would answer an objection or two, that unbelief in the saint may be ready to make against what has been said.

1. Some may be ready to say, this glory and blessedness are so great and wonderful that it seems too great to be given to such creatures as men are; it seems almost incredible that God should so exalt and advance worms of the dust.

Answer. The death and sufferings of Christ made every thing credible that belongs to this blessedness. If God has not thought his own Son too much for us, what will he think too much for us? If God did not spare him, but gave him even to be made a reproach, and a curse, and a victim to death for us, no blessedness, however great, can be incredible which is the fruit of this. [Rom. viii. 32.](#) "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things!" If God would so contrive to show his love in the manner and means of procuring our happiness, nothing can be incredible in the degree of the happiness itself: if nothing be too much to be given to man, and to be

done for man in the manner of procuring his happiness, nothing will be too much to be given to him as the happiness procured, and no degree of happiness too great for him to enjoy. If all that God does about it be consistent, his infinite wisdom will also work to make their happiness and glory great in the degree of it.

2. Some Christians may still be ready to object. It is not too great to be bestowed on others, yet it seems to me too great to be bestowed on such an unworthy creature as I; it seems incredible that God should ever give such glory to such an one as I am, that am so mean, and so worthless, and vile. I not only was once unworthy, but I am so unworthy still, I am so blind, I have so much sin, and so little goodness, I commit so much sin, and do so little good, that it appears incredible that I should have a title to such blessedness. I can far more easily think that others will possess it than myself.

Answer. It is no way incredible that infinite grace should bestow it on the meanest and unworthiest. God's design is to glorify his free grace, and this is one way by which free grace is glorified, *viz.* by bestowing such great blessedness on the most unworthy. This is of a piece with the rest. Every thing in the work of redemption is wonderful, and therefore one of the names by which Christ is called, is Wonderful. As grace is wonderful in the means of procurement, *viz.* giving Christ to die, and wonderful in the degree of happiness procured; so it is wonderful with respect to the subjects of it, that they are in themselves so mean and unworthy.

5. This subject furnishes ground of solemn exhortation to natural men, earnestly to seek this blessedness. And here you may well consider,

1. How poor you are who have no heaven but this world! In this exceeding and eternal glory of which you have heard, you have no lot or portion; you have nothing but a little part of this clod of earth; and what is all that you have worth? If you have a little more land than some of your neighbours, or if you are in a way to make more money than others, if your accommodations are better than others, and you have more worldly conveniences and pleasures than others, or if you are promoted a little higher among men than some others are, what a poor portion is this; and how miserable are you who have no better happiness that you can call your own! How happy do these things make you, what great satisfaction do they yield to you! Are such things as these the rivers of pleasure that you choose for your portion? O, how miserable are you that have your portion in this life! When a few days are passed you must go to the grave and into eternity, and then your glory shall not descend after you; and how wretched are they of whom it may be said, when they have done with worldly enjoyments, that they have received their consolation! [Luke vi. 24.](#)

2. To what misery are you exposed! You not only have no lot in this happiness and glory, but you are hanging over endless misery, and are in danger every day of being irrecoverably lost.

3. You have now an opportunity to obtain this blessedness. It is true that now you are exposed to this misery, but yet this glory is offered to you; the time is not past wherein the offer is made; you have yet an opportunity to be made happy for ever. The opportunity you now have to obtain the happiness of another world, is worth ten thousands of this world.

But here I would say something by way of direction in answer to this.

What must I be brought to in order to get to heaven?

Answer. 1. You must be brought entirely to renounce all hope of obtaining heaven by any thing that you can do by your own strength, that you cannot do it either directly or indirectly. Many are sensible that they cannot get to heaven by their own strength directly, but yet they hope to do it indirectly; they hope by their own strength to bring themselves to a disposition to close with Christ, and accept of him for a Saviour; they are hoping to bring themselves to a compliance with the terms of salvation. You must be brought off from all confiding in your own strength; and you must also be brought to renounce your own righteousness as the price of heaven. The consideration of what has been said of the glory and happiness of the saints, may show us the exceeding folly of those that think to purchase so great happiness by their own righteousness. What a vain thought have men of their performances to think them a sufficient price to offer to God to purchase such glory of him! How would God dishonour himself, and dishonour such riches of his own goodness, if he should bestow them on men for their righteousness, and should accept their miserable performances as the price of them!

2. Your heart must be brought to close with him who has purchased heaven. Renouncing all other ways, your heart must entirely close with him, and adhere to him, as the way, the truth, and the life. Your heart must be drawn to him, and it must be pleasing and sweet to you to have heaven as a free gift, as the fruit of mercy and saving grace, and you must assuredly believe that Christ is a sufficient Saviour, and your soul must acquiesce in the way of salvation by him, by his blood and his righteousness, as a wise, holy, sufficient, and excellent way. Your heart must incline to Jesus Christ as a Saviour above your own righteousness and all other ways. Your delight must be in this holy way of salvation.

3. You must choose the God of heaven for your portion. You must be of the same temper and disposition with the psalmist, who says, [Psal. lxxiii. 25](#). "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on the earth whom I desire beside thee." You must esteem and relish the enjoyment of him far above all other things. You must be brought to see that there is that in the enjoyment of God and communion with him that is far better than all the profits or pleasures of the world. It must be so with you, that if you could have your choice of all kinds of happiness you could devise, and have which you would, and in what degree you would, to all eternity, this would be what you would far prefer.

4. Your heart must be brought sincerely to close with the employments of heaven. In heaven they are not idle, but they are continually employed, and their employments are

holy employments; they spend their time wholly in holy exercises; in contemplating on God, in praising and serving him. [Rev. xxii. 3.](#) “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.” If ever you go to heaven, your heart must be brought beforehand to such a temper as freely to choose such employments, you must have a relish of them, and must account them excellent and delightful employments.

5. You must be pure in heart, and clean in hands. The pure in heart alone shall see God. [Matt. v. 8.](#) They that shall ascend into God’s holy hill, are those that are of pure hearts and clean bands. [Psal. xxiv. 4.](#) You must hate and abhor all sin, and allow none in your life. Sin must become to you a great burden. You must loathe yourself for it, and fight and strive against it, to purge yourself more and more from it; striving more and more to mortify sin, earnestly desiring and seeking; to be more holy, more conformed to the will of God, and to walk more becoming a Christian.

6. You must be brought to sell all for heaven. [Matt. xiii. 44, 45, 46.](#) Heaven must be to you like the treasure hid in a field; or like the pearl of great price. If you would have heaven, you must take it as your whole portion; you must in your heart part with all other things for it, and it must be your manner actually to part with them whenever they stand in the way of your getting forward towards heaven. If you would have heaven, you must sell your worldly profit and your credit, and the good will of your neighbours, and your worldly pleasures and conveniences, and whatever stands in your way. Many flatter themselves that they shall obtain heaven without this, and think they have a right to heaven, though they were never brought to this, but they are sure to find themselves disappointed.

7. You must never expect to go to heaven in any other than a strait and narrow way. Some expect to get to heaven who are not walking in a narrow way. The way they are walking in is a way of indulging their ease, and of shifting off the hard and difficult parts of religion. It is not the way of self-denial, and toil, and laboriousness, but they walk in a broad way, a way wherein they are not pinched, but can go on without labour, or watchfulness, or bearing the cross. But such as these, let their hopes be what they may, and their profession what it may, and their pretences to experiences what they may, are not like to get to heaven. To some, the way that the Scripture has laid out is too narrow and strait; therefore they are endeavouring to get to heaven in a broad way; but it is in vain for you to contrive this. If you can find out any way of getting to heaven that is not a strait and narrow way, it will be a way that you are the first inventor of. If you go thither, you must go in the way of the footsteps of the flock. If you would go to heaven, you must be content to go there in the way of self-denial and sufferings, you must be willing to take up the cross daily and follow Christ, and through much tribulation to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

6. This subject furnishes ground of solemn exhortation to the godly, to strive earnestly after holiness of life. What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and

godliness, who have received such infinite mercy of God, and entertain such glorious hopes; seeing God has admitted you to such happiness, earnestly labour that you may walk in some measure answerably; seeing God has admitted you to the happiness of children, walk as children. [Eph. v. 1](#). Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; imitate your heavenly Father; be ye holy, for he is holy. Seeing that you are admitted to the blessedness of disciples and friends of Jesus, walk as the friends of Christ, imitate your glorious Lord and Head. Here consider several things: particularly,

1. What great love God hath bestowed upon you in choosing you to such unspeakable blessedness before the foundation of the world. How wonderful was the love of God in giving his Son to purchase this blessedness for you, and how wonderful was the love of the Son of God in shedding his own blood to purchase such glory for you! how ought you therefore to live to God's glory! Let me therefore beseech, by those great mercies of God, that you give yourself up a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Give the utmost diligence that you may keep all the commandments of God: study that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; study that in all things you may be found approved: seeing God hath so loved you, strive earnestly that you may bring forth the fruits of the love of God; and seeing Christ hath so loved you, see that you love one another; let love be without dissimulation; be ye kindly affectioned one with another with brotherly love; be of the same mind one towards another, in honour preferring one another; have fervent charity among yourselves. Seeing God hath mercy on you, be ye merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful. Look not every one on his own things; be pitiful, be courteous; be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another. Christ hath thus loved you while an enemy; therefore recompense to no man evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing; do good to them that do evil to you. Such things as these become those that are the heirs of the glory that we have heard of.

2. Consider how much above the world that blessedness is which God has given; how therefore ought you to live above the world. God has redeemed you out of the world, and therefore do not live as though you had your portion in this life. Live as pilgrims and strangers; as those that are not at home; as fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. How dishonourable will it be to you that God had so advanced and entitled you to such glory, to set your heart upon the dust of the earth; how you dishonour the grace of God in giving you such blessedness; and how will you dishonour the blessedness that God has given, no more to set your heart on it, and to set it so much on the world!

3. Consider what a vast difference has God made between you and other men, how vastly different is your relative state from theirs, how much more has God done for you than for them. Seek therefore those things which are above, where God is. Will it not be a

shame if one that is entitled to such glory conducts no better than a child of the devil? Consider it seriously; and let it not be asked with reference to you, [Matt. v. 47](#). What do ye more than others? Other men love those that love them; other men do good to those that do good to them: walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called; and let it appear that you are of a spirit more excellent than your neighbour; manifest more love, and more meekness, and more humility, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering. Put ye on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, gentleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, forgiving one another; and let your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven. Seeing God has given you so much, God and men may well expect of you, that you should be greatly distinguished in your life from other men.

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S E R M O N I X .

[matthew v. 8.](#)

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

god formerly delivered his law from mount Sinai, by an audible voice, with the sound of a trumpet, with the appearance of devouring fire, with thunders, and lightnings, and earthquakes. But the principal discoveries of God's word and will to mankind were reserved to be given by Jesus Christ, his own Son, and the Redeemer of men, who is the light of the world.

In this sermon of Christ, of which the text is a part, we hear him delivering the mind of God also from a mountain. Here is God speaking, as well as from mount Sinai, and as immediately, but after a very different manner. There God spake by a preternatural formation of sounds in the air; here he becomes incarnate, takes on him our nature, and speaks, and converses with us, not in a preternatural, awful, and terrible manner, but familiarly as one of us. His face was beheld freely by all that were about him; his voice was human, without those terrors which made the children of Israel desire that God might speak to them immediately no more; and the revelation which he makes of God's word is more clear and perfect, and fuller of the discoveries of spiritual duties, of the spiritual nature of the command of God, of our spiritual and true happiness, and of mercy and grace to mankind. [John i. 17.](#) "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

This discourse of Christ on the mount seems principally levelled against the false notions, and carnal prejudices, that were at that day embraced by the nation of the Jews; and those benedictions, which we have in the beginning of his sermon, were sayings that were mere paradoxes to them, wholly contrary to the notions which they had received. That he, who was poor in spirit, was blessed, was a doctrine contrary to the received opinion of the world, and especially of that nation, who were exceedingly ambitious of the praise of men, and highly conceited of their own righteousness. And that he was a blessed and happy man, who mourned for sin, and lived mortified to the pleasures and vanities of the world, was contrary to their notions, who placed their highest happiness in worldly and carnal things. So also that they who were meek were blessed, was another doctrine very contrary to their notions, who were a very haughty, proud nation, and very revengeful, and maintained the lawfulness of private revenge, as may be seen in the 38th verse. Equally strange to them was the declaration that they who hungered and thirsted after righteousness were happy; for they placed their happiness, not in possessing a high degree of righteousness, but in having a great share of worldly good. They were wont to labour for the meat that perisheth, they had no notion of any such thing as spiritual riches, or of happiness in satisfying a spiritual appetite. The Jews were dreadfully in the dark at that day about spiritual things. The happiness which they expected by the Messiah was a temporal and carnal, and not a spiritual, happiness.

Christ also tells them that they were blessed who were merciful, and who were peace-makers; which was also a doctrine that the Jews especially stood in need of at that day, for they were generally of a cruel, unmerciful, persecuting spirit.

The truth which Christ teaches them in the text, that they were blessed who were pure in heart, was a thing wholly beyond their conceptions. The Jews at this time placed almost the whole of religion in external things, in a conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses. They laid great stress on tithing mint, and anise, and cumin, and on their traditions, as in washing hands before meat and the like; but they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and especially such as respected holiness of heart. They took much more care to have clean hands, and a clean outside, than a clean heart, as Christ tells them, [Matt. xxiii. 25, 27](#). “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within ye are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.”

We may observe concerning the words of the text,

1. That Christ pronounces the pure in heart, blessed. Christ here accommodates his instructions to the human nature. He knew that all mankind were in the pursuit of happiness, he has directed them in the true way to it, and he tells them what they must become in order to be blessed and happy.

2. He gives the reason why such are blessed, or wherein the blessedness of such consists; that they shall see God. It is probable the Jews supposed that it was a great privilege to see God, from those passages in the law, where there is an account of Moses earnestly desiring to see God’s glory; and from the account that is given of the seventy elders, [Exod. xxiv. 9, 10, 11](#). “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.”

It is also probable that they had very imperfect notions of what the vision of God was, and of the happiness that consisted in it, and that their notion of this matter, agreeably to the rest of their carnal, childish notions, was of some outwardly splendid and glorious sight, to please the eye and to entertain the fancy. From these words I shall derive two propositions.

I. It is a truly blessed thing to the soul of man to see God.

II. To be pure in heart, is the certain and only way to attain to this blessedness.

I. It is a truly blessed thing to the soul of man to see God. Here I shall attempt to show,

1. What is meant by seeing God.

*First.* It is not any sight with the bodily eyes: the blessedness of the soul does not enter in at that door. This would make the blessedness of the soul dependent on the body, or the happiness of man's superior part dependent on the inferior; and this would have confirmed the carnal and childish notions of the Jews.

God is a spirit, and is not to be seen with the bodily eyes. We find it attributed to God, that he is invisible. [Heb. xi. 27.](#) "As seeing him, who is invisible." [Col. i. 15.](#) Who is the image of the invisible God." It is mentioned as a part of God's glory, [1 Tim. i. 17.](#) "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." That it is not any sight with the bodily eyes, is evident, because the unembodied souls of the saints see God, and the angels also, who are spirits and were never united to bodies. [Matt. xviii. 10.](#) "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

It is not any form or visible representation, nor shape, nor colour, nor shining light, that is seen, wherein this great happiness of the soul consists. Indeed God was wont to manifest himself of old in outward glorious appearances. There was a shining light that was called the glory of the Lord. Thus the glory of the Lord was said to descend on mount Sinai, and in the tabernacle of the congregation. There was an outward visible token of God's presence, and the seventy elders, when they saw God in the mount, saw a visible shape. It seems also that when Moses desired to see God's glory, and when God passed by and covered him with his hand in the cleft of the rock, that Moses saw some visible glory. [Exod. xxxiii. 18-23.](#) "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live." But it seems that God then condescended to the infant state of the church, and to the childish notions that were entertained in those days of lesser light; and Moses's request seems to have been answered, by God making his goodness to pass before him, and proclaiming his name, and giving him a strong apprehension of the things contained in that name, rather than by showing him any outward glory.

The saints in heaven will behold an outward glory as they are in the human nature of Christ, which is united to the Godhead, as it is the body of that person who is God; and there will doubtless be appearances of a divine and inimitable glory and beauty in Christ's glorified body, which it will indeed be a refreshing and blessed sight to see.

But the beauty of Christ's body as seen by the bodily eyes, will be ravishing and delightful, chiefly as it will express his spiritual glory. The majesty that will appear in Christ's body, will express and show forth the spiritual greatness and majesty of the divine nature; the pureness and beauty of that light and glory, will express the perfection of the divine holiness;



the sweetness and ravishing mildness of his countenance, will express his divine and spiritual love and grace.

Thus it was when the three disciples beheld Christ at his transfiguration upon the mount. They beheld a wonderful outward glory in Christ's body, an inexpressible beauty in his countenance; but that outward glory and beauty delighted them principally as an expression of the divine excellencies of his mind, as we may see from their manner of speaking of it. It was the sweet mixture of majesty and grace in his countenance, by which they were ravished. [2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18.](#) "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." But especially from the account which John gives of it. [John i. 14.](#) "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth;" where John very probably had in his mind what he had seen in the mount at the transfiguration. Grace and truth are not outward, but spiritual, glories.

*Secondly.* It is an intellectual view by which God is seen. God is a spiritual being, and he is beheld with the understanding. The soul has in itself those powers which are capable of apprehending objects, and especially spiritual objects, without looking through the windows of the outward senses. This is a more perfect way of perception than by the eyes of the body. We are so accustomed and habituated to depend upon our senses, and our intellectual powers are so neglected and disused, that we are ready to conceive that seeing things with the bodily eyes is the most perfect way of apprehending them. But it is not so; the eye of the soul is vastly more perfect than the eye of the body; yet it is not every apprehension of God by the understanding that may be called the seeing of him. As,

1st. The having an apprehension of God merely by hearsay. If we hear of such a being as God, are educated in the belief that there is such a being, are told what sort of being he is, and what he has done, and are rightly told, and we give credit to what we hear; yet if we have no apprehension of God in any other way, we cannot be said to see God in the sense of the text. This is not the beatific sight of God.

2d. If we have an apprehension of God merely by speculative reasoning. If we come to some apprehension of God's being, and of his being almighty, all-wise, and good, by ratiocination, that is not what the Scripture calls seeing God. It is some more immediate way of understanding and viewing that is called sight; nor will such an apprehension as this merely ever make the soul truly blessed. Nor,

3d. Is every more immediate and sensible apprehension of God, that seeing of him mentioned in the text, and that which is truly beatific. The wicked spirits in the other world have doubtless more immediate apprehensions of the being of God, and of his power and wrath, than the wicked in this world. They stand before God to be judged, they receive the

sentence from him, they have a dreadful apprehension of his wrath and displeasure. But yet they are exceedingly remote from seeing God, in the sense of the text.

But to see God, is this. It is to have an immediate, sensible, and certain understanding of God's glorious excellency and love.

1st. There must be a *direct* and *immediate* sense of God's glory and excellency. I say direct and immediate, to distinguish it from a mere perception that God is glorious and excellent by means of speculative and distant argumentation, which is a more indirect way of apprehending things. A true sense of the glory of God is that which can never be obtained by speculative ratiocination; and if men convince themselves by argument that God is holy, that never will give a sense of his amiable and glorious holiness. If they argue that he is very merciful, that will not give a sense of his glorious grace and mercy. It must be a more immediate, sensible discovery that must give the mind a real sense of the excellency and beauty of God. He that sees God, has a direct and immediate view of God's great and awful majesty, of his pure and beautiful holiness, of his wonderful and endearing grace and mercy.

2d. There is a certain understanding of his love, there is a certain apprehension of his presence. He that beholds God, does not merely see him as present by his essence, for so he is present with all, both godly and ungodly. But he is more especially present with those whom he loves, he is graciously present with them; and when they see him, they see him and know him to be so; they have an understanding of his love to them; they see him from love manifesting himself to them. He that has a blessed-making sight of God, not only has a view of God's glory and excellency, but he views it as having a property in it; he sees God's love to him; he receives the testimonies and manifestations of that love.

God's favour is sometimes in Scripture called his face: [Psal. cxix. 58.](#) where it is translated, "I entreated *thy favour* with my whole heart;" it is in the original "thy face:" and God's *hiding his face*, is a very common expression to signify his withholding the testimonies of his favour.

To see God, as in the text, implies the sight of him as glorious and as gracious; a vision of the light of his countenance, both as it is understood of the effulgence of his glory, and the manifestations of his favour and love.

The discoveries which the saints have in this world of the glory and love of God, are often in Scripture called the sight of God. Thus it is said of Abraham, that he saw him who is invisible. [Heb. xi. 27.](#) So the saints are said to see as in a glass the glory of the Lord. [2 Cor. iii. 18.](#) "But we all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Christ speaks of the spiritual knowledge of God. [John xiv. 7.](#) "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." The saints in this world have an earnest of what is future, they have the dawnings of future light.

But the more perfect view which the saints have of God's glory and love in another world, is what is especially called the seeing of God. Then they shall see him as he is. That



light which now is but a glimmering, will be brought to clear sunshine; that which is here but the dawning, will become perfect day.

Those intellectual views which will be granted in another world, are called seeing God.

1st. Because the view will be very direct; as when we see things with the bodily eyes. God will, as it were, immediately discover himself to their minds, so that the understanding shall behold the glory and love of God, as a man beholds the countenance of his friend. The discoveries which the saints here have of God's excellency and grace, are immediate in a sense; that is, they do not mainly consist in ratiocination; but yet in another sense they are indirect, that is, they are by means of the gospel, as through a glass; but in heaven God will immediately excite apprehensions of himself, without the use of any such means.

2d. It is called seeing, because it will be most certain. When persons see a thing with their own eyes, it gives them the greatest certainty they can have of it, greater than they can have by any information of others. So the sight that they will have in heaven will exclude all doubting. The knowledge of God which the saints have in this world, has certainty in it, but yet the certainty is liable to be interrupted with temptations, and some degree of doubtings, but there is no such thing in heaven. The looking at the sun does not give a greater nor fuller certainty that it shines.

3d. It is called seeing, because the apprehension of God's glory and love is as clear and lively as when any thing is seen with bodily eyes. When we are actually beholding any thing with our eyes in the meridian light of the sun, it does not give a more lively idea and apprehension of it than the saints in heaven have of the divine excellency and love of God. When we are looking upon things our idea is much more clear and perfect, and the impression stronger on the soul, than when we only think of a thing absent. But the intellectual views that the saints in heaven will have of God, will have far the advantage of bodily sight, it will be a much more perfect way of apprehending. The saints in heaven will see the glory of the body of Christ after the resurrection with bodily eyes, but they will have no more immediate and perfect way of seeing that visible glory than they will of beholding Christ's divine and spiritual glory. They will not want eyes to see that which is spiritual, as well as we can see any thing that is corporeal; they will behold God in an ineffable, and to us now inconceivable, manner.

4th. The intellectual sight which the saints will have of God will make them as sensible of his presence, and give them as great advantages for conversing with him, as the sight of the bodily eyes doth an earthly friend; yea, and more too; for when we see our earthly friends with bodily eyes, we have not the most full and direct sight of their principal part, even their souls. We see the qualities, and dispositions, and acts of their minds, no otherwise than by outward signs of speech and behaviour; strictly speaking, we do not see the man, the soul, at all, but only its tabernacle or dwelling.

But their souls will have the most clear sight of the spiritual nature of God itself. They shall behold his attributes and disposition towards them more immediately, and therefore with greater certainty, than it is possible to see any thing in the soul of an earthly friend by his speech and behaviour; and therefore their spiritual sight will give them greater advantage for conversing with God, than the sight of earthly friends with bodily eyes, or hearing them with our ears, gives us for conversing with them.

2. I shall now give the reasons why the thus seeing God is that which will make the soul truly happy.

*First.* It yields a delight suitable to the nature of an intelligent creature. God hath made man, and man only, of all the creatures here below, an intelligent creature; and his reason and understanding are that by which he is distinguished from all inferior ranks of beings. Man's reason is, as it were, a heavenly ray, or, in the language of the wise man, it is "the candle of the Lord." It is that wherein mainly consists the natural image of God, it is the noblest faculty of man, it is that which ought to bear rule over the other powers; being given for that end, that it might govern the soul.

Therefore those delights are most suitable to the nature of man, that are intellectual, which result from the exercises of this noblest, this distinguishing faculty. God, by giving man understanding, made him capable of such delights, and fitted him for them, and designed that such pleasures as those should be his happiness.

Intellectual pleasures consist in the beholding of spiritual excellencies and beauties, but the glorious excellency and beauty of God are far the greatest. God's excellence is the supreme excellence. When the understanding of the reasonable creature dwells here, it dwells at the fountain, and swims in a boundless, bottomless ocean. The love of God is also the most suitable entertainment of the soul of man, which naturally desires the happiness of society, or of union with some other being. The love of so glorious a being is infinitely valuable, and the discoveries of it are capable of ravishing the soul above all other love. It is suitable to the nature of an intelligent being also, as it is that kind of delight that reason approves of. There are many other delights in which men indulge themselves, which, although they are pleasing to the senses and inferior powers, yet are contrary to reason; reason opposes the enjoyment of them, so that unless reason be suppressed and stifled, they cannot be enjoyed without a war in the soul. Reason, the noblest faculty, resists the inferior rebellious powers; and the more reason is in exercise, the more will it resist, and the greater will be the inward war and opposition.

But this delight of seeing God the understanding approves of; it is a thing most agreeable to reason that the soul should delight itself in this, and the more reason is in exercise, the more it approves of it. So that when it is enjoyed, it is with inward peace, and a sweet tranquillity of soul; there is nothing in human nature that is opposite to it, but every thing agrees and conforms to it.

*Secondly.* The pleasure which the soul has in seeing God, is not only its delight, but it is at the same time its highest perfection and excellency. Man's true happiness is his perfection and true excellency. When any reasonable creature finds that his excellency and his joy are the same thing, then he is come to right and real happiness, and not before. If a man enjoys any kind of pleasure and lives in it, how much soever he may be taken with what he enjoys, yet if he be not the more excellent for his pleasures, it is a certain sign that he is not a truly happy man. There are many pleasures that men are wont violently to pursue, which are no part of their dignity or perfection, but which, on the contrary, debase the man and make him vile. Instead of rendering the mind beautiful and lovely, they only serve to pollute it; instead of exalting its nature, they make it more akin to that of beasts.

But it is quite the contrary with the pleasure that is to be enjoyed in seeing God. To see God is the highest honour and dignity to which the human nature can attain; that intellectual beholding of him is itself the highest excellency of the understanding. The great cart of the excellency of man is his knowledge and understanding; but the knowledge of God is the most excellent and noble kind of knowledge.

The delight and joy of the soul in that sight are the highest excellency of the other faculty, the will. The heart of man cannot be brought to a higher excellency than to have delight in God, and complacency in the divine excellency and glory. The soul, while it remains under the power of corruption and depravity, cannot have any delight in God's glory: and when its moral relish is so far changed that it is disposed to delight in it, it is most excellently disposed; and when it actually exercises delight in God, it is the most noble and exalted exercise of which it is capable. So that the soul's seeing of God, and having pleasure and joy in the sight, is the greatest excellency of both the faculties.

*Thirdly.* The happiness of seeing God is a blessing without any mixture. That pleasure has the best claim to be called man's true happiness, which comes unmixed, and without alloy. But so doth the joy of seeing God; it neither brings any bitterness, nor will it suffer any.

This pleasure brings no bitterness with it. That is not the case with other delights, in which natural men are wont to place their happiness; they are bitter sweets, yielding a kind of momentary pleasure in gratifying an appetite, but wormwood and gall are mingled in the cup. He who plucks these roses, finds that they grow on thorns; he who tastes of this honey is sure to find in it a sting. If men place their happiness in them, reason and conscience will certainly give them inward disturbance in their enjoyment. There will be the sting of continual disappointments, for carnal delights are of such a nature that they keep the soul, that places its happiness in them, always big with expectation and in eager pursuit; while they are evermore like shadows, and never yield what is hoped for. They who give themselves up to them, unavoidably bring upon themselves many heavy inconveniences. If they promote





their pleasure in any way, they destroy their comforts in many other ways; and this sting ever accompanies them, that they are but short-lived, they will soon vanish, and be no more.

And as to the pleasure found in the enjoyment of earthly friends, there is a bitterness goes also with that. An intense love to any earthly object, though it may afford high enjoyment, yet greatly multiplies our cares and anxieties through the defects and blemishes, the instability and changeableness, of the object, the calamities to which it is exposed, and the short duration of all such friendships, and of the pleasures thence arising

Some men take a great deal of pleasure in study, in the increase of knowledge: but Solomon, who had great experience, long ago observed that this also is vanity, because he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. [Eccles. i. 17,18.](#) "And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief; and lie that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." But the delight which the sight of God affords to the soul, brings no bitterness with it, there is no disappointment accompanies it, it promises not more than it yields, but on the contrary the pleasure is greater than could be imagined before God was seen. It brings no sting of conscience along with it, it brings no vexing care nor anxiety, it leaves no loathing nor dis-relish behind it.

There is nothing in God which gives uneasiness to him who beholds him. The view of one attribute adds to the joy that is raised by another. A sight of the holiness of God, gives unspeakable pleasure to the mind; the idea of it is a perception beyond measure, the most delightful that can exist in a created mind. And then the beholding of God's grace adds to this joy, for the soul then considers that the Being who is so amiable in himself, is so communicative, so disposed to love and benevolence. The view of the majesty of God greatly heightens this joy: to behold such grace and goodness, and such goodness and majesty, united together. Especially will the sight of God's love to himself, the person beholding, increase the pleasure, when he considers that so great and glorious a being loves him, and is his God and friend. Again, the beholding of God's infinite power will still add to the pleasure, for he reflects that he, who is his friend, and loves him with so great a love, can do all things for him. For the beholding of his wisdom, because he thereby knows what is best for him, and knows how so to order things as shall make him most blessed. So the consideration of his eternity and immutability; it will rejoice him to think that his friend and his portion is an eternal and unchangeable friend and portion. The beholding of God's happiness will increase the joy, to consider that he is so happy, who is so much the object of his love. That love of God, in those who shall see God, will cause them exceedingly to rejoice in the happiness of God. Even the sight of God's vindictive justice will add to their joy. This justice of God will appear glorious to them, and will make them prize his love.

2d. This joy is without mixture, not only as it brings not bitterness with it, but also as it will not suffer any. The sight of God excludes every thing that is of a nature different from delight. This light is such, as who He excludes darkness.

It is not in the power of any earthly enjoyment to drive and shut out all trouble from the heart. If a man has some things in which he takes comfort and pleasure, there are others that yield him uneasiness and sorrow; if he has some things in the world that are sweet, there are others that are bitter, against which it is not in the power of his pleasures to help him.

We never can find any thing here below that shall make us so happy, but that we shall have grief and pleasure mixed together. This world, let us make the best of it, will be spotted with black and white, varied with clouds and sunshine, and to them who yield their hearts to it, it will yield pain as well as pleasure. But this pleasure of seeing God can suffer no mixture; for this pleasure of seeing God is so great and strong that it takes the full possession of the heart, it fills it perfectly full, so that there shall be no room for any sorrow, no room in any corner for any thing of an adverse nature from joy. There is no darkness that can bear such powerful light. It is impossible that they who see God face to face, who behold his glory and love so immediately as they do in heaven, should have any such thing as grief or pain in their hearts. When once the saints are come into God's presence, tears shall be wiped from their eyes, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. The pleasure will be so great, as fully and perfectly to employ every faculty; the sight of God's glory and love will be so wonderful, so engaging to the mind, and it shall keep all the powers of it in such strong attention, that the soul will be wholly possessed and taken up.

Again. There will be in what they shall see, a sufficient antidote against every thing that would afford uneasiness, or that can have any tendency thereto. If there were sin in the heart before, that used by its exercise to disturb its peace and quiet, and was a seed and spring of trouble, the immediate and full sight of God's glory will at once drive it all away. Sin cannot remain in the heart which thus beholds God, for sin is a principle of enmity against God; but there can no enmity remain in one, who after this manner sees God's glory. It must and will wholly drive away any such principle, and change it into love. The imperfect sight that the saints have of God's glory here, transforms them in part into the same image; but this perfect sight will transform them perfectly. If there be the hatred of enemies, the vision of the love and power of God will be a sufficient antidote against it; so that it can give no uneasiness. If the saint is removed by death from all his earthly friends, and earthly enjoyments, that will give no uneasiness to him, when he sees what a fulness there is in God. He will see that there is all in him, so that he who possesses him can lose nothing: whatever is taken from him he sustains no loss. And whatever else there may be, that would otherwise afford grief and uneasiness to the soul, it cannot affect him who is in the presence of God and sees his face.

*Fourthly.* This joy of seeing God is the true blessedness of man, because the fountain that supplies it is equal to man's desire and capacity.

When God gave man his capacity of happiness, he doubtless made provision for the filling of it. There was some good which God had in his eye, when he made the vessel, and made it of such dimensions, which he knew to be sufficient to fill it; and doubtless that, whatever it be, is man's true blessedness; and that good which is found not to be commensurate to man's capacity and natural desires, and never can equal it, is certainly not that wherein man's happiness consists. Man's desires and capacities are commensurate one with another. When once the capacity is filled, the soul desires no more.

Now in order to judge how great man's capacity is, we must consider the capacity of his principal and leading faculty, his understanding.

So great as is the capacity of that faculty, so great is man's capacity of enjoyment; so great a good as the soul is capable of understanding, so great a good it is capable of enjoying. As great a good as the soul is capable of comprehending in its perception and idea, so great a good is it capable of receiving with the other faculty, the will, which keeps pace with the understanding; and that good which the soul can receive with both faculties, of that is it capable of being made the possessor and enjoyer.

But it is easy to perceive that there is nothing here below that can give men such delight as shall be equal to this faculty. Let a man enjoy as great an affluence of earthly comforts as he will, still there is room; man's nature is capable of a great deal more, there are certain things wanting to which the understanding can extend itself, which he could wish were added.

But the fountain that supplies that joy and delight, which the soul has in seeing God, is sufficient to fill the vessel, because it is infinite. He that sees the glory of God, in his measure beholds that of which there is no end. The understanding may extend itself as far as it will; it doth but take its flight into an endless expanse, and dive into a bottomless ocean. It may discover more and more of the beauty and loveliness of God, but it never will exhaust the fountain. The body of man may as well swallow up the ocean, or his soul embrace immensity, as he can extend his faculties to the utmost of God's excellency.

So in like manner it may be said of the love of God. We can never by soaring and ascending come to the height of it; we can never by descending come to the depth of it; or by measuring, know the length and breadth of it. [Eph. iii. 18, 19.](#) "That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." So that let the thoughts and desires extend themselves as they will, here is space enough for them, in which they may expand for ever. How blessed therefore are they that do see God, who are come to this exhaustless fountain! They have obtained that delight which gives full satisfaction; having come to this pleasure, they neither do nor can desire any more. They can sit down fully contented, and take up with this enjoyment for ever and



ever, and desire no change. After they have had the pleasure of beholding the face of God millions of ages, it will not grow a dull story; the relish of this delight will be as exquisite as ever, there is enough still for the utmost employment of every faculty.

*Fifthly.* This delight in the vision of God hath an unfailing foundation. God made man to endure for ever, and therefore that which is man's true blessedness, we may conclude has a sure and lasting foundation. As to worldly enjoyments, their foundation is a sandy one, that is continually wearing away, and certainly will at last let the building fall. If we take pleasure in riches, riches in a little while will be gone; if we take pleasure in gratifying our senses, those objects whence we draw our gratifications will perish with the using; and our senses themselves also will be gone, the organs will be worn out, and our whole outward form will turn to dust. If we take pleasure in union with our earthly friends, that union must be broken; the bonds are not durable, but will soon wear asunder.

But he who has the immediate intellectual vision of God's glory and love, and rejoices in that, has his happiness built upon an everlasting rock. [Isaiah xxvi. 4.](#) "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." In the Hebrew it is, "in the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of ages."

The glory of God is subject to no changes nor vicissitudes, it will never cease to shine forth. History gives us an account of the sun's light failing, and becoming more faint and dim for many months together; but the glory of God will never be subject to fade. Of the light of that Sun there never will be any eclipse or dimness, but it will shine eternally in its strength. [Isa. lx. 19.](#) "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." So the love of God, to those who see his face, will never fail, or be subject to any abatement; he loves his saints with an everlasting love. [Jer. xxxi. 3.](#) "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Those streams of pleasure which are at God's right hand, are never dry, but ever flowing and ever full.

How much doth the sense of the sureness of this foundation confirm and heighten the joy! The soul enjoys its delight in a sense of this, free from all fears and jealousies, and with an unspeakable quietness and assurance. [Isa. xxxii. 17.](#) "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever."

From this part of the subject we may derive several important and useful reflections.

1. Here we may see one instance wherein the revelation of Jesus Christ excels all human wisdom. It was a thing that had been beyond the wisdom of the world, to see wherein man's true happiness consisted; there was a vast variety of opinions about it among the wise men and philosophers of the heathen; indeed on no other subject was there so great difference among them. If I remember right, there were several hundred different opinions reckoned up respecting it, which shows that they were woefully in the dark. Though there were many

very wise men among them, men famed through all succeeding ages for their knowledge and wisdom; yet their reason was not sufficient to find out man's true happiness.

We can give reasons for it now that it is revealed, and it seems so rational, that one would think the light of nature sufficient to discover it; but we having always lived in the enjoyment of gospel light, and being accustomed to it, are hardly sensible how dependent we are upon it, and how much we should be in the dark about things that now seem plain to us, if we never had had our reason assisted by revelation.

God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world by the gospel.

1 Cor. i. 20. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" *i. e.* he hath shown the foolishness of their wisdom by this brighter light of his revelation.

For all that philosophy and human wisdom could do, it was the gospel that first taught the world wherein mankind's true blessedness consisted, and that taught them the way to attain to it.

2. Hence we learn the great privilege we have, who possess such advantages to come to the blessedness of seeing God. We have the true God revealed to us in the word of God, who is the Being in the sight of whom this happiness is to be enjoyed. We have the glorious attributes and perfections of God declared to us. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is discovered in the gospel which we enjoy, his beauties and glories are there as it were pointed forth by God's own hand to our view; so that we have those means which God hath provided for our obtaining those beginnings of this sight of him which the saints have in this world, in that spiritual knowledge which they have of God, which is absolutely necessary in order to our having it perfectly in another world.

The knowledge which believers have of God and his glory, as appearing in the face of Christ, is the imperfect beginning of this heavenly sight, it is an earnest of it, it is the dawning of the heavenly light; and this beginning must evermore precede, or a perfect vision of God in heaven cannot be obtained; and all those that have this beginning, shall obtain that perfection also. Great therefore is our privilege, that we have the means of this spiritual knowledge. We may in this world see God as in a glass darkly, in order to our seeing him hereafter face to face; and surely our privilege is very great, that he has given us that glass from whence God's glory is reflected. We have not only the discoveries of God's glory in the doctrine of his word, but we have abundant directions how to act, so that we may obtain a perfect and beatific sight of God; one of which we have in our text, and of which I shall speak particularly hereafter.

3. This doctrine may lead us to a sense of the blessedness of the heavenly state, and justly cause us to long after it. In heaven the saints do see God, they enjoy that vision of him of which we have been seeking in its perfection. All clouds and darkness are there removed, they there behold the glory and love of God more immediately, and with greater certainty,

and a more strong and lively apprehension, than a man beholds his friend when he is with him, and sees his face by the noon-day sun, and with far greater advantages for conversation and enjoyment.

Well may this make the heavenly state appear a blessed state to us, and make us to breathe after it; well may the consideration of these things make the saints wait for and desire their happy change; well may it make them long for the appearing of Christ. This they know, that when he shall appear, they shall “see him as he is.” [1 John iii. 2](#). “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

This may well be comforting to the saints under the apprehensions of death, and it is a consideration sufficient to take away the sting of it, and uphold them while walking through the midst of that valley. This also may well comfort and uphold them in all troubles and difficulties they meet with here, that after a little while they shall see God; which will immediately dry up all tears, and drive away all sorrow and sighing, and expel for ever every darksome thought from the heart.

4. Hence we learn that a life of holiness is the pleasantest life in this world, because in such a life we have the imperfect beginnings of a blessed and endless sight of God; and so they have somewhat of true happiness while here, they have the seeds of blessedness sown in their souls, and they begin to shoot forth.

As for all others, those who do not live a holy life, they have nothing at all of true happiness, because they have nothing of the knowledge of God.

II. To be pure in heart, is the certain and only way to attain to this blessedness.

We have shown what this seeing of God is, and have represented in some measure how great is the blessedness of so seeing him; and if what we have heard is believed and cordially received by us, it will be sufficient to awaken our attention to any instructions from the word of God that are to point out the way to us wherein we may attain to this blessedness.

If men should hear of some vast estate, or some rich hidden treasure, and at the same time should hear of some very feasible way in which they might make it all their own; how ready would they be to hear, with what eagerness would they listen to those who should bring such news and give them such directions, provided they had reason to believe that what was told them was true. We are here told of a much truer and greater blessedness, than any treasure of silver, and gold, and pearls can yield; and we are also told of the way whereby we may assuredly become the possessors of it, by him who certainly knows. I shall show,

1. What it is to be pure in heart.
2. That to be pure in heart, is the sure way to gain this blessedness.
3. That it is the only way.

1. I shall inquire what it is to be pure in heart. Purity of heart is here to be understood in distinction from a mere external purity, or a purity of the outward actions and behaviour

in those things that appear to men in an external morality, and an outward attendance on ordinances, and a profession of the true religion and pure doctrine, and a making an outward show and appearance of godliness.

Christ had very probably in our text an eye to the formality and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, and other great saints, as they accounted themselves, and were accounted among the Jews.

These were exceedingly exact in their observance of the ordinances of the ceremonial law, they were careful not to deviate from it in the least punctilio. For instance, how exact were they in observing the law of tithes; they were careful to bring the tenth of the herbs in their gardens, as mint, anise, and cumin. They were very careful to keep themselves from all ceremonial uncleanness, and they even added to the law in this particular; they were for being stricter and purer than the law required, and therefore made conscience of washing their hands before every meal. They were very strict to avoid conversing with the Samaritans; they would not eat with them, nor have any dealings with them, lest they should be defiled.

They used to say to other nations, “Stand by thyself, come not nigh, for I am holier than thou.”<sup>648</sup> They looked upon themselves only as pure, because they were the children of Abraham, and because they were circumcised, and attended the ceremonial law; because they made clean the outside of the cup and the platter, and because of their external purity, they looked upon themselves as the peculiar favourites of heaven, and expected to be admitted to see God, when all the uncircumcised, and those that were not the children of Abraham, should be excluded.

But Christ corrects this their mistake, and teaches that such an external purity will never give a man a title to this blessedness, for it is purity of heart that is requisite in order to attain to it. [Matt. v. 20](#). “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

However exact any man may be in the external observance of moral, instituted duties, if he be careful to wrong no man, and can say, as the young Pharisee did, [Matt. ix. 20](#). “All these have I kept from my youth,” *i. e.* as to an external observance, if he be very strict in keeping the sabbath and in coming to the house of God, in attending family and secret prayer, yet if he has not holiness of heart, he is never likely to see God. It is no reformation of manners that is sufficient, but there must be a new heart, and a right spirit. It is the heart that God requires. [Prov. xxiii. 26](#). “My son, give me thine heart.” It is the heart that God looks at. However fair and pure an outside there may be, that may be very pleasing to men, yet if there be not purity of heart; the man is not at all the more acceptable to God. [1 Sam. xvi. 7](#). “But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of

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648 [Isa. lxxv. 5](#).

his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” If men outwardly behave well and speak well, yet it is not accepted without trying and weighing the heart. [Prov. xvi. 2.](#) “All the ways of man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits.” It is the spirit which is the subject of this blessedness of seeing God, and therefore the qualities of the spirit, and not so much those of the outward man, are regarded.

Now the heart is said to be pure in the sense of the text,

*First.* With respect to the spiritual defilement from which it is pure;

*Secondly.* With respect to certain positive qualities that it is endowed with.

The word *pure*, in its common acceptation, merely signifies something negative, *viz.* the absence of all mixture or defilement; but in pureness of heart, as it is used in Scripture, seems to be implied both something negative and positive, not only the absence or removal of defilement, but also positive qualities, that are called pure.

*First.* The heart is said to be pure with respect to the filthiness from which it is pure. Sin is the greatest filthiness. There is nothing that can so defile and render so abominable. It is that which has an infinite abominableness in it; and indeed it is the only spiritual defilement; there is nothing else that can defile the soul.

Now there are none in this life who are pure from sin in such a sense that there is no remainder, no mixture of sin. [Prov. xx. 9.](#) “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” So that if this were the requisite qualification, none of the children of men would ever come to see God.

But the purity of heart with respect to sin, that may be obtained in this life, consists in the following things:

1st. It implies that the soul sees the filthiness that there is in sin, and accordingly abhors it. Sin, that is so filthy in itself, is become so sensibly to the man whose heart is pure; he sees its odiousness and deformity, and it is become nauseous to him.

To those animals which are of a filthy and impure nature, as swine and dogs, ravens and vermin, those things that are filthy and nauseous to mankind, do not seem at all disgusting; but on the contrary they love them, it is food that suits their appetites. It is because they are of an impure and filthy nature; the nature of the animal is agreeable to such things. So it is with men of impure hearts. They see no filthiness in sin, they do not nauseate it, it is in no way uncomfortable to them to have it hanging about them, they can wallow in it without any reluctance; yea, they take pleasure in it, it is their meat and their drink, because they are of an impure nature. But he who has become pure in heart hates sin; he has antipathy to it; he does not love to be near it; if he sees any of it hanging about him, he abhors himself for it; he seems filthy to himself, he is a burden to himself, he abhors the very sight of it, and shuns the appearance of it. If he sees sin in others, it is a very unpleasant sight to him; as



sin, and as committed against God, it is grievous and uncomfortable to him wherever he discovers it. It is because his heart is changed, and God has given him a pure nature.

2d. It implies godly sorrow for sin. The pure heart has not only respect to that spiritual filthiness that is present to abhor it and shun it, but it has also respect to past sin. The consideration of that grieves it; it causes shame and sorrow to think that it ever rejoiced in such defilement, that it ever was so abominable as to love it and feed upon it. Every transgression leaves a filth behind it upon the soul, and this remaining filth occasions pain to the renewed and purified heart. By godly sorrow the heart exerts itself against the filthiness of past sins, and does, as it were, endeavour to cast it off, and purge itself from it.

3d. It implies that sin is mortified in the heart, so that it is free from the reigning power and dominion of it. Though the heart is not perfectly free from all sin, yet a freedom is begun. Before, spiritual filth had the possession of the heart, corruption had the entire government of the soul, every faculty was so wholly defiled by it, that all its acts were filthy, and only filthy, the heart was entirely enslaved to sin.

But now the power of sin is broken, the strong bands by which it was tied and fastened to the heart are in a great measure loosed, so that corruption has no longer the possession and government of the heart as before.

The principal seat, the throne of the heart, that was formerly possessed by corruption, is now purged, and filthiness does now as it were only possess the inferior and exterior parts of the soul. [John xiii. 10.](#) "He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet."

4th. The heart that is pure will be continually endeavouring to cleanse itself from all remaining filthiness. Though there be remains of impurity, yet the new nature is so contrary to it that it will never rest or be quiet, but will always be cleansing itself; like a vessel of fermenting liquor, it will continue working, till it has worked itself clear, and cast off all the filth and sediment. Or like a stream of good water, if the water be in itself sweet and good, however it may be defiled from the muddy banks, it will refine as it runs, and will run itself clear again, but the fountain that yields impure water will never cleanse itself. So he who is pure in heart will never suffer himself to live in any sin. If he be overtaken in a fault he will return and cleanse himself again by repentance, and reformation, and a more earnest care that he may avoid that sin for the future.

The remaining corruption that is in his heart will be his great and continual burden, and he will be endeavouring to cleanse himself more and more; he will not rest in any supposed degree of purity, so long as he sees any degree of impurity remaining, but he will be striving after progress in the mortification of sin and in the increase of holiness.

5th. The heart is said to be pure, especially with respect to its cleanness from, and opposition to, the lust of uncleanness. This kind of wickedness we find to be more especially called uncleanness and filthiness in Scripture; it brings a peculiar turpitude upon the soul, and defiles the temple of God. [1 Cor. iii. 17.](#) "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall

God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” Pureness in Scripture is sometimes used only in this restrained sense, with respect to freedom from fleshly impurities. So it seems to be, [Phil. iv. 8](#). “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”.

Now this sort of purity of heart is absolutely necessary in order to our coming to see God. There must be a renunciation of all impure and lascivious practices and conversation. They who live in the indulgence of such a lust in one kind of practice or another, or though it be only with their eyes or in their thoughts, are of impure hearts, and shall never come to see God unless they have new hearts given them.

They that have pure hearts, abhor and are afraid of such things. [Jude 23](#). They take heed that they do not prostitute their souls to so much *as* mental and imaginary, much less to practical, impurities, and works of darkness.

*Secondly*. The heart is said to be pure, in respect to its being endowed with positive qualities, that are of a contrary nature to spiritual filthiness.

Though purity in strictness be only a freedom from filth, yet there are positive qualities of mind that seem to be implied in purity of heart; which may be reckoned a part of it, because of their contrariety to filthiness. The heart by reason of them is still more remote from defilement, as a greater light may be said to be purer than a lesser; for although the lesser light has no mixture of darkness, yet the greater light is still more remote from darkness.

1st. He is pure in heart, who delights in holy exercises. Those exercises that are holy are natural and pleasant to him, he sees the beauty there is in holiness, and that beauty has such strong influence upon his heart that he is captivated thereby. He delights in the pure and holy exercise of love to God, in the fear of God, in praising and glorifying God, and in pure and holy love to men. He delights in holy thoughts and meditations. Those exercises of the understanding that are holy, are most agreeable to him, and those exercises of the will. Such inclinations, desires, and affections, are most delightful, which are spiritual and holy.

2d. He is pure in heart, who chooses and takes the greatest delight in spiritual enjoyment. A spiritual appetite is that which governs in his soul, and carries him above the mean lust and defiled enjoyments of this world, towards spiritual and heavenly objects. The enjoyments which he chooses and chiefly desires, such as seeing God and enjoying communion with him, are enjoyments of the most refined and pure nature. He hungers and thirsts after the pure light of the new Jerusalem.

3d. To be pure in heart is the sure way to obtain the blessedness of seeing God. This is the divine road to the blissful and glorious presence of God, which, if we take it, will infallibly lead us thither.

God is the giver of the pure heart, and he gives it for this very end; that it may be prepared for the blessedness of seeing him. Thus we are taught in the Scriptures. The people of God are sanctified, and their hearts are made pure, that they may be prepared for glory, as vessels are prepared by the potter for the use he designs. They are elected from all eternity to eternal life, and have purity of heart given them, on purpose to fit them for that to which they are chosen.

[Rom. ix. 23.](#) “And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared to glory.”

We read of the church being arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, by which is signified the church’s purity; and it was to fit it for the enjoyment of Christ. [Rev. xix. 7, 8.](#) “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready; and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” And in the 21st. Chapter verse 2d, the church thus purified, is said to be as a bride adorned for her husband. [Rev. xxi. 2.](#) “And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Therefore if God gives the pure heart to fit and prepare us for the vision of himself, he will obtain his own end; for who can prevent him from doing what he purposes?

God also hath promised it. He hath given his faithful word for it in our text; and to the same purpose is [Psai xxiv. 3, 4.](#) “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” And again, [Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16, 17.](#) “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly: he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks: bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

This is the only way to come to this blessedness.

*First.* It is no way fit or suitable that those who have not pure hearts, should be admitted to this privilege. It would be most unsuitable for those who are all over defiled with the most loathsome filth, to be admitted into the glorious presence of the King of heaven and earth. It would not become the majesty of God, to allow those who are so abominable to come into his blessed presence; nor is it at all becoming his holiness, whereby he is of purer eyes than to behold such pollution.

It becomes persons when they come into the presence of a king, so to attire themselves, that they may not appear in a sordid habit, and it would be much more unsuitable still, for any to come all defiled with filth; but sin is that which renders the soul much more loathsome in the sight of God. This spiritual filth is of a nature most disagreeable to that pure, heavenly



light; it would be most unsuitable to have the pollution of sin and wickedness, and the light of glory? mixed together; and it is what God never will suffer. It would be a most unbecoming thing for such to be the objects of God's favour, and to see the love of God, and to receive the testimonies of that love. It would be most unsuitable for the glorious and most blessed God to embrace in the arms of his love, that that is infinitely more filthy than a reptile.

*Secondly.* It is naturally impossible that the soul which is impure should see God. The sight of God's glory, and impurity of heart, are not compatible in the same subject. Where spiritual defilement holds possession of the heart, it is impossible that the divine light which discovers God's glory should enter. How can he, who is under the power of enmity against God, and who only hates God, see his beauty and loveliness at the same time? Sin, so long as it has the government and possession of the soul, will blind the mind and maintain darkness. As long as sin keeps possession, the heart will be blinded through its deceitfulness.

*Thirdly.* If it were possible for them to see God, they could not find any blessedness in it. What pleasure would it give to the soul that hates holiness, to see the holiness of God; what pleasure to them who are God's enemies, to see his greatness and glory? Wicked men have no relish for such intellectual, pure, and holy delights and enjoyments. As we have observed already, to have a relish for spiritual enjoyments, is one part of the purity of heart spoken of in the text.

*Fourthly.* It is impossible that such should be the objects of God's favour and complacence, and therefore they cannot have this part of the blessed-making vision of God, *viz.* the seeing of his love. It is impossible that God should take pleasure in wickedness, or should have complacence in the wicked, and therefore they cannot have the blessed-making vision of God, for seeing the love of God is an essential part of it. If a man sees how glorious God is, and has not this consideration with it, that he has a property in this glory of God; if he cannot consider this glorious being as his friend; if he takes no pleasure in him, but, on the contrary, loathes and abhors him, the sight of God will be to him no blessedness.

## A P P L I C A T I O N

1. Hence we learn how great a thing it is to be an upright and sincere Christian; for all such are pure in heart, and stand entitled to the blessedness of seeing the most high God. The time is coming when they shall assuredly see him; they shall see him who is infinitely greater than all the kings of the earth; they shall see him face to face, shall see as much of his glory and beauty as the eyes of their souls are capable of beholding. They shall not only see him for a few moments, or an hour, but they shall dwell in his presence, and shall sit down for ever to drink in the rays of his glory. They shall see him invested in all this majesty, with smiles and love in his countenance; they shall see him, and converse with him, as their nearest and best friend.

Thus shall they see him soon. The intervening moments fly swiftly, the time is even at the door, when they shall be admitted to this blessedness.

2. Let the consideration of this subject put us all upon inquiring, whether we ourselves are pure in heart. Is our religion of that kind which has its seat chiefly in the heart, or doth it chiefly consist in what is outward in morality and formality. Have we ever experienced a change of heart; have we a right spirit renewed within us; have we ever seen the odiousness and filthiness that there is in sin;

is it what we hate, wherever we see it; and do we especially hate it in ourselves, and loathe ourselves for it; is it the object of our hatred as sin, and as it is against God?

And are there any that now hear me, who think themselves to be Christians, who do yet, either in their imaginations and thoughts, or in any secret practice, allow and indulge the lust of uncleanness, and live in such a way? If it be so, they had great need to bethink themselves whether or no they are not of that generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not cleansed from their filthiness. If they imagine that they are pure in heart, and live in such wickedness, their confidence is vain presumption. Inquire whether holy exercises and holy employments are the delight of your soul, and what you take pleasure in above all other things in which you can be engaged. Are the enjoyments that you choose, and take the greatest delight in, spiritual and heavenly enjoyments? Is the seeing of God, and conversing with him, and dwelling in his presence for ever, what you should of your own accord choose above all other things?

3. I would earnestly exhort those who hear me, to make to themselves a pure heart. Though it be God's work to give it, yet it is as truly your work to obtain it; though it be God's work to purify the heart, yet the actual, or rather the active, procuring of it is your act. All pure and holy exercises are man's acts, and they are his duty. Therefore we are commanded to make us a new heart, and a right spirit. [Ezek. xviii. 31.](#) "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die?"

We must not think to excuse ourselves by saying that it is God's work, that we cannot purify our own hearts; for though it be God's work in one sense, yet it is equally our work in another. [James iv. 8.](#) "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded." If you do not engage in this work yourselves, and purify your own hearts, they never will be pure. If you do not get a pure heart, the blame of it will be laid to your own backwardness. The unclean soul hates to be purified; it is opposite to its nature; there is a great deal of self-denial in it. But be content to contradict the nature and bent of your own heart, that it may be purified; however grating it may be to you at first, yet consider how blessed the issue will be. Though the road be a little rough in the beginning, yet it will grow pleasanter and pleasanter, till at last it will infallibly lead to that lightsome and glorious country, the inhabitants of which do see and

converse with God. [Prov. iv. 18.](#) “But the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

If you would be in the way to have a pure heart,

1. Purify your hands: cleanse yourself from every external impurity of speech and behaviour; take heed that you never defile your hands in known wickedness; break off all your sins by righteousness; and take heed that you do not give way to impure lusts that would entice to sinful actions. If you set about the work of cleansing yourself, but when a temptation comes then plunge yourself into the mire again, you never will be likely to become pure; but you must be steady in your reformation and the amendment of your ways and doings.

2. Take heed you do not rest in external purity, but seek purity of heart in the ways of God’s appointment; seek it in a constant and diligent attendance on all God’s ordinances.

3. Be often searching your own heart, and seek and pray that you may see the filthiness of it. If ever you are made pure you must be brought to see that you are filthy; you must see the plague and pollution of your own heart.

4. Beg of God that he would give you his Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God that purifies the soul. Therefore the Spirit of God is often compared to fire, and is said to baptize with fire. He cleanses the heart, as fire cleanses the metals; and burns up the filth and pollution of the mind, and is therefore called the Spirit of burning. [Isa. iv. 4.](#) “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”



S E R M O N X .

THANKSGIVING SERMON, NOV. 7, 1734.

rev. xiv. 2.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.

we may observe in these words, (1.) What it was that John heard, *viz.* the voice and melody of a company praising God. It is said in the next verse that they sung a new song before the throne. (2.) Whence he heard this voice, [Rev. xiv. 2.](#) "I heard," says he, "a voice from heaven." This company that he heard praising God was in heaven, It is said in the following verse, [Rev. xiv. 3.](#) "They sung this song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders:" but the throne of God, and the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, are all represented in these visions of John, as being in heaven. So that this voice was the voice of the heavenly inhabitants, the voice of the blessed and glorious company that is in heaven, before the throne of God there. (3.) The kind of voice, which is here set forth in a very lively and elegant manner; it is said to be as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, and as the voice of harpers harping with their harps. Hereby several things are represented in a very striking manner. 1. The distance of the voice. 2. That it was the voice of a vast and innumerable multitude: so that it was as the voice of many waters. How naturally does this represent the joint, continual, and loud voice of a vast multitude at a distance, that it resembled the voice of many waters. 3. The loudness of the voice. It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; which describes the extraordinary fervency of their praises, and how lively and vigorous they were therein, and how that every one praised God with all his might. They all, joining together, sung with such fervency, that heaven did as it were ring with their praises. The noise of thunder, and the roaring of many waters, are the most great and majestic sounds ever heard upon earth, and are often spoken of in the Scriptures as the mightiest sounds. John could not distinctly hear what they sang, but they being in heaven, at a great distance, he knew not what better to compare it to, than to the roaring of the sea, or a great thunder. Yet, 4. It was a melodious sound, signified by this expression, I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. The harp was a stringed instrument, that David made much use of in praising God. John represents the matter thus to us, That the voice which he heard, being at a great distance, it was indistinct; and being of such a vast multitude, and such a mighty fervent, voice, that it seemed in some measure like distant thunder, or the roaring of water, and yet he could perceive the music of the voice at the same time: though it was in some respects as thunder and the noise of water, yet there was a sweet and excellent melody in it. In short, though these comparisons of which John makes use, to signify to us

what kind of a voice and sound it was that he heard, are exceedingly lively and elegant; yet this seems to be evident from them, that what he heard was inexpressible, and that he could find nothing that could perfectly represent it. That a voice should be as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and yet like the voice of harpers, is to us not easily to be conceived of. But the case was, that John could find no earthly sound that was sufficient to represent it; and therefore such various and different similitudes are aggregated and cast together to represent it. But thus much seems to be signified by it, that it seemed to be the voice of an innumerable multitude, and that they were exceedingly fervent and mighty in their praises: that the voice of this multitude was very great, and exceedingly full of majesty, and yet a most sweet and melodious voice at the same time.

doctrine. The work of the saints in heaven doth very much consist in praising God.

1. *Proposition.* The saints in heaven are employed; they are not idle; they have there much to do: they have a work before them that will fill up eternity.

We are not to suppose, when the saints have finished their course and done the works appointed them here in this world, and are got to their journey's end, to their Father's house, that they will have nothing to do. It is true, the saints when they get to heaven, rest from their labours and their works follow them. Heaven is not a place of labour and travail, but a place of rest. [Heb. iv. 9.](#) There remaineth a rest for the people of God. And it is a place of the reward of labour. But yet the rest of heaven does not consist in idleness, and a cessation of all action, but only a cessation from all the trouble and toil and tediousness of action. The most perfect rest is consistent with being continually employed. So it is in heaven. Though the saints are exceedingly full of action, yet their activity is perfectly free from all labour, or weariness, or unpleasantness. They shall rest from their work, that is, from all work of labour and self-denial, and grief, care, and watchfulness, but they will not cease from action. The saints in glory are represented as employed in serving God, as well as the saints on earth, though it be without any difficulty or opposition. [Rev. xxii. 3.](#) "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him." Yea, we are told, that they shall serve God day and night, that is, continually or without ceasing; [Rev. vii. 15.](#) "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." And yet this shall be without any manner of trouble, as it follows in the next verse. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat."<sup>649</sup> In this world saints labour, as it were, in the wearisome heat of the sun; but there, though they shall still serve God, yet shall the sun not light on them nor any heat. In one sense, the saints and angels in heaven rest not day nor night, [Rev. iv. 8.](#) that is, they never cease from their blessed employment. Perfection of happiness does not consist in idleness, but on the contrary, it very much consists in action. The angels are

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649 [Rev. vii. 16.](#)



blessed spirits, and yet they are exceedingly active in serving God. They are as a flame of fire, which is the most active thing that we see in this world. God himself enjoys infinite happiness and perfect bliss, and yet he is not inactive, but is himself in his own nature a perfect act, and is continually at work in bringing to pass his own purposes and ends. That principle of holiness that is in its perfection in the saints in heaven, is a most active principle; so that though they enjoy perfect rest, yet they are a great deal more active than they were when in this world. In this world they were exceedingly dull, and heavy, and inactive, but now they are a flame of fire. The saints in heaven are not merely passive in their happiness. They do not merely enjoy God passively, but in an active manner. They are not only acted upon by God, but they mutually act towards him, and in this action and re-action consists the heavenly happiness.

II. *Proposition.* Their employment consists very much in praising God.

John the beloved disciple had often visions of heaven, and in almost every instance had a vision of the inhabitants as praising God. So in the fourth chapter He tells us, that he looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven, and he was called up thither, and that he saw the throne of God and him that sat on the throne; and there he gives us an account how those that were round about the throne were praising God; the four living creatures rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him, the four and twenty elders fall down before him and worship him, &c. &c. Again in the fifth chapter, we have an account how they sing praises to Christ, [8, 9,](#) &c. And so in the seventh chapter, [9, 10, 11, 12 verses.](#) And in the eleventh chapter, [16, 17.](#) verses. And in the twelfth chapter, [10th.](#) verse. And in the fifteenth chapter, [2, 3, 4.](#) verses. And in the beginning of the [nineteenth chapter.](#) we have an account how the hosts of heaven sing hallelujahs to God. By all which it most evidently appears, that their work very much consists in praising God and Christ. We have but a very imperfect knowledge of the future state of blessedness, and of their employment: without doubt they have various employments there. We cannot reasonably question but they are employed in contributing to each other's delight. They shall dwell together in society. They shall also probably be employed in contemplating on God, his glorious perfections, and glorious works, and so gaining knowledge in these things. And doubtless they will be employed many ways, that we know nothing of: but this we may determine, that much of their employment consists in praising God, and that for the following reasons.

1. Because they there see God. This is a blessedness promised to the saints, that they shall see God. [Matt. v. 8.](#) That they see God, sufficiently shows the reason why they praise him. They that see God cannot but praise him. He is a Being of such glory and excellency, that the sight of this excellency of his will necessarily influence them that behold it to praise him. Such a glorious sight will awaken and rouse all the powers of the soul, and will irresistibly

impel them, and draw them into acts of praise. Such a sight enlarges their souls, and fills them with admiration, and with an unspeakable exultation of spirit.

'Tis from the little that the saints have seen of God, and know of him in this world, that they are excited to praise him in the degree they do here. But here they see but as in a glass darkly; they have only now and then a little glimpse of God's excellency; but then they shall have the transcendent glory and divine excellency of God set in their immediate and full view. They shall dwell in his immediate glorious presence, and shall see face to face. [1 Cor. xiii. 12](#). Now the saints see the glory of God but by a reflected light, as we in the night see the light of the sun reflected from the moon; but in heaven they shall directly behold the Sun of righteousness, and shall look full upon him when shining in all his glory. This being the case, it can be no otherwise, but that they should very much employ themselves in praising God. When they behold the glorious power of God, they cannot but praise that power: when they see God's wisdom that is so wonderful, and infinitely beyond all created wisdom, they cannot but continually praise that wisdom; when they view the infinitely pure and lovely holiness of God, whereby the heavens themselves are not pure in comparison with him, how can they avoid with an exalted heart to praise that beauty of the divine nature! When they see the infinite grace of God, and see what a boundless ocean of mercy and love he is, how can they but celebrate that grace with the highest praise!

2. They will have another sense of the greatness of the fruits of God's mercy than we have here in this world. They will not only have a sight of the glorious attributes of God's goodness and mercy in their beatific vision of God, but they will be sensible of the exceeding greatness of the fruits of it; the greatness of the benefits that he has bestowed. They will have another sense of the greatness and manifoldness of the communications of his goodness to his creation in general. They will be more sensible how that God is the fountain of all good, the Father of lights from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift. We do now but little consider, in comparison with what we should do, how full the world is of God's goodness, and how it appears in the sun, moon, and stars, and in the earth and seas, with all their fullness, and wheresoever we turn our eyes, and how all ranks and orders of being, from the highest angel to the lowest insect, are dependent upon, and maintained by, the goodness of God. These the saints in heaven clearly see; they see how the universe is replenished with his goodness, and how the communications of his goodness are incessantly issuing from God as from an ever-flowing fountain, and are poured forth all around in vast profusion into every part of heaven and earth, as light is every moment diffused from the sun. We have but faint imperfect notions of these things, but the saints in heaven see them with perfect clearness. They have another sense of the greatness of God's goodness to mankind, and to the church, and to them in particular, than any of us have. They have another sense of the greatness of God's goodness in the temporal mercies which God bestowed upon them while they were here in this world, though they know that spiritual mercies are infinitely

greater. But especially they have an immensely greater sense of the exceeding greatness of the fruits of God's grace and mercy bestowed in redemption. They have another sense how great a gift the gift of God's only-begotten Son is. They have another sense of the greatness and dignity of the person of Christ, and how great a thing it was for him to become man, and how great a thing it was for him to lay down his life, and to endure the shameful and accursed death of the cross. They have another sense how great the benefits are that Christ has purchased for men, how great a mercy it is to have sin pardoned, and to be delivered from the misery of hell. They have another sense how dreadful that misery is, for the damned are tormented in the presence of the holy angels and saints, and they see the smoke of their torment; and have another sense what eternity is, and so are proportionably more sensible how great a mercy it is to be delivered from that torment. They have another sense how great a fruit of God's grace it is to be the children of God, and to have a right and title to eternal glory. They are sensible of the greatness of the benefits that Christ has purchased, by their experience; for they are in possession of that blessedness and glory that he has purchased; they taste the sweetness of it: and therefore they are more sensible what cause they have to praise God for these things. The grace and goodness of God in the work of redemption, appears so wonderful to them, that their thoughts of it do excite them to the most ardent praise. When they take a view of the grace of God and of the love of Christ in redemption, they see that there is cause that they should exert the utmost of their capacities, and spend an eternity in praising God and the Lamb. It is but a very little that we at best can conceive of the greatness of the benefits of redemption, and therefore we are but little affected by it. and our praises for it are low and dull things.

3. Another reason is, they will be perfect in humility. In order to a person's being rightly disposed to the work of praise, he must be an humble person. A proud person is for assuming all praise to himself, and is not disposed to ascribe it to God. It is humility only that will enable us to say from the heart, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name be the glory." The humble person admires the goodness and grace of God to him. he sees more how wonderful it is that God should take such notice of him, and show such kindness to him, that is so much below his notice. Now the saints in heaven have this grace of humility perfected in them. They do as much excel the saints on earth in humility as in other graces. Though they are so much above the saints on earth in holiness and in their exalted state, yet they are vastly more humble than the saints on earth be. They are much lower in humility as they are higher in honour and happiness. And the reason of it is that they know more of God; they see more of his greatness and infinite highness, and therefore are so much the more sensible of their own comparative nothingness. They are the more sensible of the infinite difference there is between God and them; and therefore are more sensible how wonderful it is that God should take so much notice of them, to have such communion with them, and give them such a full enjoyment of him. They are far more sensible what unworthy



creatures they have been, that God should bestow such mercies upon them, than the saints on earth. They have a greater sight of the evil of sin. They see more what filthy vile creatures they were by nature, and how dreadfully they provoked God by actual sin, and how they have deserved God's hatred and wrath. The saints in heaven have as much greater a sense of their unworthiness in their natural state than the saints on earth, as they have a greater sense of God's glorious excellency, for it is the sight of God's excellency which gives them a sight of their own unworthiness. And therefore they do proportionally admire the love of God to them in giving Christ to die for them, and the love of Christ in being willing to offer himself for their sins; and of the wonderful mercy of God in their conversion, and bestowing eternal life upon them. The humble sense the saints have of their own unworthiness, doth greatly engage and enlarge their hearts in praise to him for his infinite mercy and grace.

4. Their love to God and Christ will be perfect. Love is a principal ingredient in the grace of thankfulness. There is a counterfeit thankfulness in which there is no love. But there is love in exercise in all sincere thankfulness. And the greater any person's love is, the more will he be disposed to praise. Love will cause him to delight in the work. He that loves God, proportionably seeks the glory of God, and loves to give him glory. Now the hearts of the saints in heaven are all, as it were, a pure flame of love. Love is the grace that never faileth; whether there be prophecies, they shall fail, whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. Faith shall cease in vision, and hope in fruition, but love never faileth. The grace of love will be exalted to its greatest height and highest perfection in heaven; and love will vent itself in praise. Heaven will ring with praise, because it is full of love to God. This is the reason that great assembly, that innumerable host, praise God with such ardency, that their praise is as the voice of many waters, and as the mighty thunderings, because they are animated by so ardent, vigorous, and powerful a principle of divine love.

#### **APPLICATION.**

I. This subject may be applied in the way of instruction.

1. Hence we may learn the excellency of this work of praising God. That it is a most excellent employment, appears, because it is a heavenly employment. It is that work wherein the saints and angels are continually employed.

If we sincerely and frequently praise God, we shall therein be like the heavenly inhabitants, and join with them.

That it is the work of heaven shows it to be the most honourable work. No employment can be a greater honour to a man, than to praise God. It is the peculiar dignity of the nature of man, and the very thing wherein his nature is exalted above things without reason, and things without life; that he is made capable of actively glorifying his Creator. Other creatures do glorify God; the sun, moon, and stars, and the earth and waters, and all the trees of the field, and grass and herbs, and fishes and insects, do glorify God. [Psal. xix. 1-6.](#) [Job xii. 7, 8.](#)

But herein is the peculiar dignity of the nature of man, that he is capable of glorifying him as a cause, by counsel, understandingly and voluntarily, which is a heavenly work.

2. This doctrine may give us an idea of the glorious and happy state of the saints in heaven. It shows how joyfully and gloriously they spend their time. Joy is a great ingredient in praise. There is an exultation of spirit in fervent praise. Praise is the most joyful work in the world. And how joyful a society are they that join together, so many thousands and millions of them, with one heart and one soul, to sing a new song before the throne, that fill heaven with their glorious melody! How joyful they are in their work, appears in the text, by their fervency in it, so that their voices resounded as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. What ineffable joy was there in those harpers whom John heard harping with their harps!

This shows how different a state the saints are in in heaven, from what they are in this world. Here much of the work to which the saints are called, consists in labouring, in fighting, in toilsome travelling in a waste howling wilderness, in mourning and suffering, and in offering up strong crying and tears. But there in heaven, their work continually is to lift up their joyful songs of praise.

This world is a valley of tears, a world filled with sighs and groans. One is groaning under some bodily pain, another is mourning and lamenting over a dear departed friend; another is crying out by reason of the arm of the oppressor. But in heaven there is no mixture of such sounds as these; there is nothing to be heard amongst them but the sweet and glorious melody of God's praises. There is a holy cheerfulness to be seen throughout that blessed society. [Rev. xxi. 4.](#) "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying." They shall never have any thing more to do with sighing and crying; but their eternal work henceforward shall be praise.

This should make us long for heaven, where they spend their time so joyfully and gloriously. The saints especially have reason to be earnestly breathing after that happy state, where they may in so joyful a manner praise God.

3. This may put natural persons upon reflecting on their own state, that they have no part nor lot in this matter. You are an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. You are not one of the people of God. You do not belong to their society, that are to spend their eternity after that joyful manner, which you have now heard. You have no right nor portion in heaven. If you hereafter come and offer yourself to be admitted into this blessed society, in your present state; if you come and try to be admitted, you will be thrust out; you will be driven away. If you come and knock, and cry to be admitted to the wedding, saying, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, all will be to no purpose! You will hear no other word except *Depart!* You shall be shut out into outer darkness. You shall not be permitted to sing among the children, but shall be driven out, to howl among dogs. [Rev. xxii. 14, 15.](#) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in

through the gates into the city; for without are dogs," &c. You are in danger of spending eternity, not in joyfully singing praises, but in a quite contrary manner; in weeping, in wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and blaspheming God because of your pains and because of your plagues. You shall see others coming from the east and the west, and sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; taking their places among that blessed, happy society, and joining their voices in their heavenly music. Cut you see your lot; you shall have other work to do. [Isa. lxxv. 14](#). "Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart; but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit."

II. In the way of exhortation. If it be so that praising God is very much the employment of heaven, hence let all be exhorted to the work and duty of praising God. The following considerations will show why we should be stirred up by this doctrine to this work.

1. Let it be considered that the church on earth is the same society with those saints who are praising God in heaven. There is not one church of Christ in heaven, and another here upon earth. Though the one be sometimes called the church triumphant, and the other the church militant, yet they are not indeed two churches. By the church triumphant, is meant the triumphant part of the church; and by the church militant, the militant part of it: for there is but one universal or catholic church. [Cant. vi. 9](#). "My dove, my undefiled, is but one." Christ has not two mystical bodies. [1 Cor. xii. 12](#). "The body is one, and hath many members." The glorious assembly and the saints on earth make but one family. [Eph. lii. 15](#). "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Though some are in heaven, and some on earth, in very different circumstances, yet they are all united: for there is but *one body, and one spirit, and one Lord Jesus Christ. One. God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, find in all*. God hath in Christ united the inhabitants of heaven, and the holy inhabitants of this earth, and hath made them one. [Eph. i. 10](#). "That in the dispensation of the fulness of time, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." Heaven is at a great distance from the earth: it is called a *far country*. [Matt. xxv. 14](#). Yet the distance of place does not separate them so as to make two societies. For though the saints on earth, at present, are at a distance from heaven, yet they belong there; that is their proper home. The saints that are in this world are strangers here; and therefore the apostle reproved the Christians in his day, for acting as though they belonged to this world. [Col. ii. 20](#). "Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?"

Some of a people may be in their own land, and some in a strange land; and yet be but one people. Some of a family may be at home, and some sojourning abroad; and yet be but one family. The saints on earth, though they be not actually in heaven, yet have their inheritance in heaven, and are travelling towards heaven, and will arrive there in a little time. They are nearly related to the saints in heaven; they are their brethren, being children of the same Father, and fellow-heirs with Jesus Christ. In [Ephes. ii. 10](#). the saints on earth are said

to be *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*. And the apostle tells the Christian Hebrews, [Heb. xii. 22-24](#). that they were "come to mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." But how were they *come* to this heavenly city, and this glorious assembly, when they were yet here on earth? They were come to them, ere they were brought and united to them in the same family. But this is what I would inculcate by all this, that the church of God on earth ought to be employed in the same work with the saints in heaven, because they are the same society: as they are but one family, have but one Father, one inheritance; so they should have but one work. The church on earth ought to join with the saints in heaven in their employment, as God hath joined them in one society by his grace.

We profess to be of the visible people of Christ, to be Christians and not heathens, and so to belong to the universal church. We profess therefore to be of the same society, and shall not walk answerably to our profession, unless we employ ourselves in the same work.

2. Let it be considered, that we all of us hope to spend an eternity with the saints in heaven, and in the same work of praising God. There is, it may be, not one of us but who hopes to be a saint in heaven, and there continually to sing praises to God and the Lamb; but how disagreeable will it be with such a hope, to live in the neglect of praising God now! We ought now to begin that work which we intend shall be the work of another world; for this life is given us on purpose that therein we might prepare for a future life. The present state is a state of probation and preparation; a state of preparation for the enjoyments and employment of another, future, and eternal state; and no one is ever admitted to those enjoyments and employments, but those who are prepared for them here. If ever we would go to heaven, we must be fitted for heaven in this world; we must here have our souls moulded and fashioned for that work and that happiness. They must be formed for praise, and they must begin their work here. The beginnings of future things are in this world. The seed must be sown here; the foundation must be laid in this world. Here is laid the foundation of future misery, and of future happiness. If it be not begun here, it never will be begun. If our hearts be not in some measure tuned to praise in this world, we shall never do any thing at the work hereafter. The light must dawn in this world, or the sun will never rise in the next. As we therefore all of us would be, and hope to be, of that blessed company which praise God in heaven, we should now inure ourselves to the work.

3. Those works of God's mercy for which the saints in heaven will chiefly praise him, have been wrought amongst us in this world.

The mercy and grace of God for which the saints in heaven will chiefly praise him, is his mercy exercised in the work of redemption, which work has been wrought out in this

world. This love of God is the chief object of their admiration, and what they chiefly contemplate, and that employs their most ardent praises.

The grace of Christ, about which their praises will be principally employed, is that he should so love sinful man as to undertake for him, to take upon him man's nature, and lay down his life for him. We find that is the subject of their praises, in [Rev. v. 8, 9](#). "And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints; and they sang a new song, Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

They will chiefly praise God for these fruits of his mercy, because these are the greatest fruits of it that ever have been; far greater than the glorifying of saints. The saints in heaven will praise God for bestowing glory upon them; but the actual bestowment of glory upon them, after it has been purchased by the blood of Christ, is in no measure so great a thing as the purchasing of it by his blood. For Christ, the eternal Son of God, to become man, and to lay-down his life, was a far greater thing than the glorifying of all the saints that ever have been or ever will be glorified, from the beginning of the world to the end of it. The giving Christ to die, comprehends all other mercies: for all other mercies are through this. The giving of Christ is a greater thing than the giving of all things else for the sake of Christ. This evidently appears, from [Rom. viii. 32](#). "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" So that the work of redemption is that for which the saints in heaven do chiefly praise God. But this work has been wrought here, among us in this world. [John i. 14](#). "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The incarnation of Christ was a thing that was brought to pass in this world, and the sufferings and death of Christ were also accomplished on earth. Shall heaven be filled with praises for what was done on earth, and shall there be no praises on earth where it was done?

4. If you praise God sincerely in this world, it will be a sign that you are really to be one of those that shall praise him in heaven. If any man be found sincerely glorifying God, he will in due time be brought to them, as one who is fit to be of their company. Heaven is the appointed place of all sincere praisers of God; they are all to be gathered together there. And no man can sincerely praise God, unless he be one of those who are redeemed from among men, one that God has separated from the rest of the world, and set apart for himself.

5. If we begin now to exercise ourselves in the work of heaven, it will be the way to have foretastes of the enjoyments of heaven. The business and the happiness go together. This will be the way to have your heart filled with spiritual joy and comfort. If you heartily praise God, you shall rejoice in him, and he will show you more of himself, of his glory and love, that you may still have greater cause of praise.

I proceed to give some directions for the performance of this work.



1. Be directed, in order to your acceptably performing this duty, to repent of your sins, and turn to God. If you have not a work of conversion wrought in you, you will do nothing to any purpose, in this work of praise. An unconverted person never once sincerely or acceptably praises God. If you would do the work of the saints in heaven, you must be, not only in profession, but really, one of their society; for there are none else can do their work. As in the verse following the text: " And they sung as it were a new song, before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty-four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." A hundred and forty-four thousand is a mystical number for the church of God, or the assembly of the saints, or those that are redeemed from the earth. There is no man can learn the song that they sing in heaven, but those of that number. It is beyond the reach of all natural men, let them be persons of ever so great abilities and sagacity. They never can learn that heavenly song, if they be not of that number. For it is only the sanctifying, saving instruction of the Spirit of God, that can teach us that song.

2. Labour after more and more of those principles from whence the praise of the saints in heaven doth arise. You have already heard that the saints in heaven do praise the Lord so fervently, because they *see* him; labour therefore that you, though you have not an immediate vision of God, as they have, may yet have a clear spiritual sight of him, and that you may know more of God, and have frequent discoveries of him made to you.

You have heard that the saints in heaven make praise so much their work, because of the great sense they have of the greatness and wonderfulness of the fruits of the Lord's goodness. Labour therefore to get your minds more deeply impressed with such a sense.

The saints in glory are so much employed in praise, because they are perfect in *humility*, and have so great a sense of the infinite distance between God and them. They have a great sense of their own unworthiness, that they are by nature unworthy of any of the mercy of God. Labour therefore that you may obtain more of a sense of your own littleness, and vileness; that you may see more what you are, how ill you have deserved at the hands of God, and how you are less than the least of all his mercies.

The hearts of the saints in heaven are all inflamed with divine *love*, which continually influences them to praise God. Seek that this principle may abound in you, and then you likewise will delight in praising God. It will be a most sweet and pleasant employment to you.

3. Labour, in your praises, to praise God, so far as may be, in the same manner that the saints do in heaven. They praise him *fervently*, with their whole heart, and with all their strength, as was represented in vision to John by the exceeding loudness of their praise. Labour therefore that you may not be cold and dull in your praises, but that you also may praise God fervently.

The saints in heaven praise God *humbly*. Let it also be your delight to abase yourselves, to exalt God, and set him upon the throne, and to lie at his footstool.

The saints in heaven praise God *unitedly*. They praise him with one heart and one soul, in a most firm union. Endeavour that you may thus praise God in union with his people; having your hearts knit to them in fervent love and charity; which will be a great help to your praising and glorifying God unitedly with them

III. In the way of reproof to those who neglect the *singing* of God's praises. Certainly, such a neglect is not consonant to the hope and expectation of spending an eternity in that work. It is an appointment of God, that we should not only praise in our prayers, but that we should *sing* his praises. It was a part of divine worship, not only under the Old Testament, but the New. Thus we read that Christ and his disciples sung praises together. [Matt. xxvi. 30](#). So it is commanded, [Eph. v. 19](#). "Be ye filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." And [Col. iii. 16](#). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; leaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." [1 Cor. xiv. 15](#). "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." So also the saints in heaven are represented as singing God's praises. And is that their happy and glorious employment; and yet shall it be so neglected by us, who hope for heaven? If there be any of the godly that do neglect this duty, I would desire them to consider how discordant such a neglect is. with their profession, with their state, and with the mercies which God has bestowed. How much cause has God given you to sing his praise! You have received more to prompt you to praise God than all the natural men in the world; and can you content yourself to live in the world without singing the praises of your heavenly Father, and your glorious Redeemer?

Parents ought to be careful that their children are instructed in singing, that they may be capable of performing that part of divine worship. This we should do, as we would have our children trained up for heaven; for we all of us would have our children go to heaven.

IV. In the way of consolation to the godly. It may be matter of great comfort to you, that you are to spend your eternity with the saints in heaven, where it is so much their work to praise God. The saints are sensible what cause they have to praise God, and oftentimes are ready to say, they long to praise him more, and that they never can praise him enough. This may be a consolation to you, that you shall have a whole eternity in which to praise him. They earnestly desire to praise God better. This, therefore, may be your consolation, that in heaven your heart shall be enlarged, you shall be enabled to praise him in an immensely more perfect and exalted manner than you can do in this world. You shall not be troubled with such a dead, dull heart, with so much coldness, so many clogs and burdens from corruption, and from an earthly mind; with a wandering, unsteady heart; with so much darkness and so much hypocrisy. You shall be one of that vast assembly that praise God so

ferently, that their voice is “as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders.”<sup>650</sup>

You long to have others praise God, to have every one praise him. There will be enough to help you, and join you in praising him, and those that are capable of doing it ten thousand times better than saints on earth. Thousands and thousands of angels and glorified saints will be around you, all united to you in the dearest love, all disposed to praise God, not only for themselves, but for his mercy to you.

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S E R M O N   X I .

[matthew xi. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#)

But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came, eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

the occasion of this discourse was John's sending to Christ two of his disciples, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" When the messengers had gone back, Christ enters into a discourse with the multitude concerning John, of which the verses read are a part, in which Christ reproves the unreasonableness of the Jews in rejecting God's messengers. We may observe in the words the following things:

1. The messengers of God that are here instanced in that they had been rejected, *viz.* John the Baptist and Christ. The former is spoken of in the context as being on some accounts the greatest of all the prophets that ever came before Christ, as you may see, [ver. 9, 10, 11.](#) "But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The latter, even Christ, was the great prophet of God, the Head and Lord of the prophets, God's only-begotten Son.

2. In what the unreasonableness of their rejecting these messengers of God appears, *viz.* in their inconsistency with themselves in those objections which they made against them. And here we may observe,

1st. The nature of their objections against these two messengers of God; they objected against their manner of living with respect to their meat and drink.

2d. The different manner of living of those two messengers of God. Christ came eating and drinking, but John came neither eating nor drinking, *i. e.* John lived on a very coarse and spare diet, as we read, [Matt. iii. 4.](#) "And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." He carefully abstained from that free use of pleasant meats and drinks that others allowed themselves in. But Christ came eating and drinking, *i. e.* freely using the comforts and enjoyments of life, taking indifferently all kinds of food or drink that were wholesome, comfortable, and lawful. This diverse manner of living of John the Baptist and Christ, was agreeable to the diverse errands that they came upon. John's errand was to call men to repentance, to awaken them to a sense of their sin and misery, to bring them to mourn for their sins, and humble themselves before God for them, that they might be prepared for the comforts and blessings of the kingdom of heaven that were to be introduced by Jesus Christ. A life of abstinence

from the pleasant things of this world was agreeable to the purpose of awakening the soul, and of leading it to mourning and humiliation for sin, which it was especially John's business to preach and set an example of.

But after John had thus prepared the way with awakenings and repentance, then Christ came to administer comfort to those that were thus prepared for it, to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort those that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. [Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3.](#) And freely eating and drinking, and enjoying the comforts and pleasant things of life, was agreeable to such an errand as this, and therefore Christ, in his first beginning of his public ministry which succeeded John's, declares this to be the business he was come upon. [Luke iv. 16, 17, 18, 19.](#) "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when he had opened the book he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

3d. Their unreasonableness appears in the fact, that though the way of living of these two persons was in this respect so diverse, yet they objected against both. John came neither eating nor drinking; and for that they objected against him, and reviled him, as though he was one that was very odd and strange, and beside himself, and under the influence of a diabolical spirit. This objection seemed to manifest a dislike of such a way of living, as though it was their opinion that a man ought not to live thus abstemiously, but should eat and drink freely as other people did. But yet when Christ came and did that, then they objected against that too, and bitterly reproached him for that, and called him a glutton, and wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. So that there was no escaping their reproaches. If a man of God lived a life of trial and abstinence, they spoke of it as matter of great reproach, and yet if he did not so, they made that a matter of no less reproach. It was a crime with them for a prophet to eat and drink, and it was also a crime to let it alone. So inconsistent were they with themselves, that there was no such thing as a prophet's suiting them; they condemned the doing of that which at the same time they condemned the not doing of, and both they condemned with great bitterness, and virulent and contemptuous reproaches. This plainly showed that their objections against John the Baptist and Christ, were but vain pretences, and that the true reason why they disliked them, was, not the manner of living of either of

them with respect to eating and drinking, but because they hated their persons and the business they came upon. When men have a prejudice against other persons they will be ready to find fault with every thing in them, they will find out bad names for their virtues, and will reproach those things in them which they will approve of and commend in others to whose persons they have a liking.

3. The thing to which Christ compares their inconsistency with themselves, to wit, to children who meet their companions in the streets or market-places, and endeavour to aid them in their play, in things of a diverse and contrary nature; for if they pipe unto them with notes manifesting cheerfulness and mirth, that does not suit them; they refuse to fall in with this, as though they did not like such cheerfulness, and as though mourning would suit them better; and then, when they see that they took a contrary course, they mourned with them, but yet neither do they fall in with that, they do not lament with them; so that they comfort them in nothing, neither mirth nor mourning.

So John the Baptist preaching repentance came with tokens of sorrow and mourning, and mean apparel, with a garment of camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle about his loins, and with great abstinence. But Christ when he comes, comes eating and drinking with tokens of comfort and joy; but neither of them suited them. From the text thus explained we shall derive the following

*Doctrine.* Wicked men are very inconsistent with themselves. They are so in the following respects:

- I. The dictates of their darkened understandings are inconsistent with themselves.
- II. Their wills are inconsistent with their reason.
- III. Their wills are inconsistent with themselves.
- IV. Their outward show is inconsistent with their hearts.
- V. Their profession is inconsistent with their practice.
- VI. Their practice is inconsistent with their hopes.
- VII. Their practice is inconsistent with itself.

I. Their understandings are inconsistent with themselves. I do not mean, that the faculty of reason and understanding is inconsistent with itself; for the faculty of understanding with which God has endowed man is wholly good and right. It is that wherein the natural image of God consists, and is the excellency of man's nature; and if the faculty of reason be duly improved, it will lead men right. Light is never inconsistent with itself. But the understandings of natural men are perverted and blinded by sin, and are inconsistent with themselves in two ways:

1. Their practical judgment is inconsistent with their own reason. By their practical judgment, I mean that judgment which they make of things that prevail, so as to determine their actions and govern their practice. This in wicked men is innumerable things contrary to their own reason; for, in forming their judgment of things by which they govern them-



selves, they do not inquire at the mouth of reason, but at the mouth of their inclinations. Their lusts have a far greater hand in the judgments that they make of things, and by which they govern themselves, than their reason. As for instance; their practical judgment is, that the things of this fading world, the enjoyments of this short life, are things of greater importance than the things of the eternal world; and yet if they inquire at the mouth of their own reason, that tells them the contrary. Their reason tells them that it is most plain and evident that eternal things, things that are to last for ever, are of vastly greater importance than the things of time.

So their reason tells them, that it must needs be the part of wisdom and prudence to improve the present time with the utmost diligence and earnestness, and to make ready for death; and yet they are not convinced of it, but their governing opinion is, that it is best to neglect the business of religion for the present, and to enjoy their ease, and sloth, and lusts awhile longer.

Their reason tells them, that it is well worth the while for every man to deny himself outward pleasure for the good of his soul. But their governing opinion or judgment is contrary, *viz.* that it is not best; and that pleasures, and the gratification of their lusts, are worth more than any benefit they would obtain by seeking their salvation.

The reason of young people tells them that it is their true wisdom to improve the time of youth. Reason tells them that life is very uncertain. But when such persons hear ministers preach concerning the infinite importance of eternal things; the uncertainty of life, the peace and comfort that will be found in a state of happier existence with God; are told how light a thing the difficulty and sufferings of a holy life are in comparison; their reason assents to all this, but their practical judgments are the contrary. When a person has lately died, either in extreme terror and amazement, under a sense of the guilt of a mispent life, or full of joy and comfort, in consequence of a life of holy walking with God; their reason tells them that it would be well worth their while to labour and deny themselves all their lifetime to be ready for death, and to have a solid foundation of peace and comfort laid up against such an hour. But yet their practice is directly the reverse.

2. Some of their judgments of things are inconsistent with others. For instance, in temporal things, they judge that the good which is of long continuance is to be preferred before that which is of short continuance, and that a long-continued calamity is more to be dreaded and avoided than a short one. Their governing judgment is thus in these things, but yet it is the reverse in spiritual things.

Again. Such arguments as they judge to furnish good and clear evidence with them in those things that are agreeable to their sinful inclination, they think not to have any evidence in those things that are contrary to them. In temporal things they think it to be their wisdom to improve times of special advantage, and to watch against that which might insnare them,

or endanger their welfare, but in other things they think the reverse. In these things, and many more that might be mentioned, their judgments are inconsistent with themselves.

II. Their wills are inconsistent with their reason. This inconsistency is a consequence of the foregoing; for if their practical judgment be contrary to their own reason, it will follow that their wills are contrary to their reason; for the will ever follows the dictate of the practical judgment.

Their wills are contrary to their reason in two respects.

1. They will those things which their reason tells them are inconsistent with their duty; and so they are inconsistent with themselves, as their wills are inconsistent with their consciences. Conscience is a principle implanted in the heart of every man, and is as essential to his nature as the faculty of reason, for it is a natural and necessary attendant of that faculty. But the wills of wicked men are contrary to it, and inconsistent with it. They choose those things which they know to be evil, and ought not to be chosen; they choose that which their own reason tells them is unreasonable and vile, and unbecoming men, and justly provoking to their Maker, and contrary to the end for which they are made.

Hence arises an inward war in their own minds: their wills and their consciences warring one against another. There is no true peace in their hearts, for they are at war with themselves, and therefore they are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, unless by a course of horrible violations of the dictates of their own conscience, they have proceeded so far in their war against their own consciences as to stupify conscience, and lay it as it were dead, which is the case of some persons.

2. They will those things which their reason tells them are contrary to their own interest, yea, those things which their own reason tells them are the way to their ruin and misery. At the very same time that wicked men are tempted to commit some sin, and their reason then tells them that it will expose them to the eternal wrath of God, and that it will therefore be a dreadful folly for them to do it, yet they will do it. Or when their reason tells them that the course in which they are going leads to destruction, and represents to them that it is the greatest folly, yet they will go on in it, and run the venture of being everlastingly undone.

So inconsistent are they with themselves, that they do and allow that of which they hope to repent, they choose that now for choosing which at the same time they expect and hope hereafter to charge themselves with great folly, and to be convinced that it is folly, and to lament and bewail it; nay, they would not do it, if they did not expect hereafter to see that it is very foolish in them so to do, and heartily to mourn for it.

In this respect they are so inconsistent with themselves that they are their own worst enemies. They are inconsistent with themselves, as two mortal enemies cannot consist together, or walk together. By choosing those things which their own reason tells them is contrary to their own interest, and tends to their own undoing, they may be said to hate



their own souls, and to love their own ruin. [Prov. viii. 36.](#) “He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me, love death.”

III. Their wills and dispositions are inconsistent with their wills. The Jews would neither have a prophet to come eating and drinking, nor would they have him otherwise. They knew not what they would have themselves, there was no pleasing them. To eat and drink did not please them; that they reproached as drunkenness, and gluttony: nor did it please them any more not to eat nor drink; this they reproached no less virulently, as though it were an argument that a man was out of his wits, and possessed by the devil. The inconsistency of wicked men’s wills with themselves appears in the following things:

1st. They do, in some respects, choose and refuse the same things.

I shall mention some instances.

*First.* In some respects, many of them wish to be converted from sin to God. They think that they should be ready to give almost all that they have in the world to be converted, and they pray to God to convert them, and seek for conversion, and take advice to that end, and use a great deal of labour for it. But yet if it be considered what conversion is, or what is meant by conversion, *viz.* the being turned from all their sins to God; they have no desire to be converted, they will not have conversion when it is offered them, when it comes to them they are not willing to be saved from sin, for they are not willing to part with their sins. When they think of the thing in the general, they wish that they were turned from sin; but when it comes to particulars they cannot comply with it, they love their sins too well. When a particular lust comes, and pleads to be indulged and gratified, then in this instance they have no wish to be converted, they are not willing to be turned from their sin altogether, they cannot bear entirely and for ever to renounce and reject it. They have a wish to be converted, but not from enjoying their right hands, and right eyes. They pray that they may be thoroughly and savingly converted, and seem to wish and pray for it; but yet when it comes to them, they are not willing for any more than a partial conversion. They cannot comply with a thorough conversion, for a thorough conversion is a turning from every one of their sins; and that proves that they would be willing to be converted from their sins for a little while, but to part with them finally is what they cannot find it in their hearts to comply with.

*Secondly.* Some wicked men do in certain respects desire that a work of humiliation may be wrought in them, and yet are utterly opposed to humiliation. They do many things that they may be humbled, and pray that they may be brought off from their own righteousness, and yet would by no means let it go, but are indeed building up their own righteousness all the time.

They seem in some respects to wish that they might submit to the justice and sovereignty of God in their condemnation, but yet are utterly averse to any such thing as owning God’s justice. They are averse to this submission, as appears from their showing such a spirit of



strife with God. They do not believe that God is just and sovereign, and how therefore is it possible that they should desire really to submit to God's justice and sovereignty? They cannot heartily and fervently desire to submit to God as just and sovereign, when they do not believe that he possesses those attributes, but think him unjust and tyrannical.

*Thirdly.* They in some respects wish that they might come to Christ, but indeed are utterly averse to come to him, so that their will is in this also inconsistent with itself. They pray that they may come to Christ, they are ready to say that they would give all the world for an interest in Christ; and yet they will not have an interest in him, for that is what is offered them, and what Christ is continually inviting and urging them to accept, but they refuse it. It is true they like some things in Christ, they like salvation from the pains of hell, they like that safety from everlasting misery which they hear is to be had in him; but there are other things in him which they do not like, his holiness, his salvation from sin, his kingly office, and therefore they will not accept him as he is. If they could have a part of Christ without the rest they would, but they will not accept of the whole of Christ. Indeed they are not willing to come to Christ and cordially accept of him as a Saviour from hell, for they do not see that he is sufficient to save; and besides, they are not convinced that they have deserved it. There is no such thing as being cordially willing to accept of a Saviour, who offered to deliver us from an unjust and undeserved punishment; for the hearty accepting of him as a Saviour from the punishment, would be allowing the punishment to be just; and God's offering a Saviour from undeserved punishment, is an imposition upon them; a man therefore can never heartily and sincerely accept such an offer. At the same time that natural men seem to wish, and pray, and strive to come to Christ, they are in their hearts bitter enemies to him; and there is no such thing as a sincere willingness to accept of one towards whom at the same time we are bitter enemies.

*Fourthly.* Natural men in some respects are desirous to go to heaven, and yet are averse to heaven. They are full of designs as to what they will do hereafter that they may go to heaven, but yet have no inclination to that wherein heaven really consists. The employments of heaven, which consist altogether in holy acts and holy contemplation, in holy exercises and holy praises, are that for which they have no desires nor inclination. And for the happiness of heaven they have no relish, but on the contrary, a dislike and an aversion; for the happiness of heaven consists in holy communion with God and Christ, to which their natures are opposite. Nor have they any desire for the company of heaven; and when it is observed what heaven really is, they choose this world before heaven.

*Fifthly.* They wish to have salvation from misery, but yet are averse to those things wherein salvation consists; and at the same time that they pray to Christ to serve them, they undo themselves as fast as they can, they spend their time daily in working out their own ruin. They pray that they may be delivered from hell, and yet are all the while piling up fuel,

and kindling and blowing the fire. Thus their wills are inconsistent with themselves, as they do in some respects choose and refuse the same things.

2. They dislike and refuse spiritual things as they are, and yet refuse to have them otherwise. This was the very case with the Jews in the text, they would not have a prophet come eating and drinking, if he did so, they looked on him very reproachfully; nor yet would they have him not come eating and drinking, for if he did so they called him a mad man, and possessed with a devil, which is a lively specimen of the inconsistency of wicked men, of which we are speaking.

I will mention several instances of this inconsistency on the part of wicked men.

*First.* They do not like God as he is, and yet they would not like him if he were otherwise. They would not like him if he were otherwise than he is in those very things for which they most dislike him.

1st. They dislike God because he is a holy God. This is the main foundation of the enmity that wicked men have against God. His perfect purity and holiness make them enemies to him, because from this perfection of his nature he necessarily hates sin, and so hates their sins, which they love, and he will not and cannot allow of any sin in them. They are utter enemies to such a holy God. And yet they would not like him if they supposed him to be an unholy being, or if they supposed him to be at all wanting in perfect holiness, for then he could not be depended upon. If he were unholy, they know that if he promised them any thing they could have no certain dependence upon it, for an unholy being is liable to break his promises; if he were unholy they could have no dependence on his faithfulness, and therefore they would never be willing to give up themselves to him as their God, for they would not know how he would dispose of them, what he would do with them. If he were to obligate himself by covenant, yet they could have no dependence upon it: and therefore they would by no means accept of such a God to be their God, to rule over them, and dispose of them.

2d. They do not like God, because he is a God of justice. This indeed is a branch of his holiness, for being strictly and perfectly just, he is disposed to execute just punishment on all iniquity. Therefore they are exceeding enemies to him, for they are the persons who are obnoxious, being those that have committed iniquity, and exposed themselves to just punishment; and yet they would not like God if he were an unjust God. If he were an unjust being, that would be an insuperable objection with them against accepting him as their God, for then they would think with themselves, "how do I know how unjustly he may deal with me;" and wicked men, however unjust they are, never like injustice against themselves. And they never would be persuaded to accept of such a God as their Lord and King, for they

should then expect to be wronged and abused by him. They would dread committing themselves into the hands of a God that is infinite in power, and can do what he will with them, and has no principle of holiness or justice to keep him from using that power in the most unjust and abusive manner towards them.



Though they are enemies to God because of his justice, yet whenever at any time they think God deals unjustly, they quarrel with him for it. How frequent is it for natural men, when there are any of God's methods of providence, the justice of which they cannot see through, to have their hearts swell with enmity, and to be full of blasphemous, malignant thoughts against God, if they do not even manifest it outwardly by a fretful, discontented behaviour, and murmuring speeches?

3d. They do not like God, because he is an Almighty God, and is able to destroy them when he pleases; nor yet would they like him if he were a weak being and of but little power. They would on this account refuse to close with him as their God, for they would have a God able to do great things for them; they wish to have many things done for them, and they would have a God that can do them.

4th. They do not like God because he is an omniscient God, for hereby he sees all their wickedness. But yet neither would they like him if he did not know all things, for then in many cases he would not know what their case is, and what it requires, and what is best for them. He might ruin them in the disposal of them through mistake, he might not know how to extricate them out of difficulties in which they are or may be involved.

5th. Natural men oftentimes dislike God in the exercises of his infinite sovereign mercy, when it is exercised towards others. They are greatly displeased at God's being so gracious to others; they dislike it much that God bestows converting grace upon them and pardoning mercy, and a title to eternal life upon them. When they hear of their conversion it is unpleasant news, and they find fault with it the more when the persons who seem to have received such mercy are very unworthy, and have been very great sinners; they think of the sins of which they have been guilty, and reckon up all the instances of wickedness they can think of, so that the mercy exercised towards them is the more displeasing because it appears so great in being bestowed on one so unworthy; like the elder brother, [Luke xv. 30](#). "But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." And yet they would not like God if he were not infinitely merciful, for then they would have less hopes of obtaining mercy themselves. They are angry because God appears so merciful in the exercises of his grace to others; but yet they would have God merciful, and are at the same time afraid that he is not merciful enough to be willing to pardon their sins, and bestow his blessing on them. Thus natural men do not like God as he is, nor yet would they like him if he were otherwise.

*Secondly.* They do not like men that are holy, nor yet do they like men that are wicked. They do not like holy men, for they know that such do not approve of that which themselves

love, and the lives of the godly are a condemnation of the wickedness of their own hearts and lives. Hence there is an enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. [Gen. iii. 15.](#) “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel.” But although they do not like men if they are godly, so neither do they like them if they are ungodly; they are more forward than the godly are to reprove others for their vice and wickedness, and bitterly to reflect on others for their pride, their covetousness, and their idleness. None are more apt to find fault with wickedness in others than those who are wicked themselves, and one great reason is that other men’s lusts clash with theirs. Thus one man’s pride crosses the pride of another, for it is the nature of pride to desire to be alone in advancement, to make the person in whom it is affect to be a God, to appropriate all power and all honour to himself as his own prerogative. But such an aim in one man clashes with such an aim in another. Hence there are none that can bear pride in others so ill, as those that are very proud themselves, and there never are such strife and enmity as between proud, haughty men. Proud men love to have others walk humbly before them, and nothing enrages them so much as to have others carry themselves proudly. For the same reason covetous men dislike covetous men, for this lust clashes with the same lust in another. Every covetous man strives to get all into his own hands, to get and keep all that he can to himself from his neighbour. So the lusts of envy, and malice, and revenge, are hated in others by envious and malicious men; because none are so obnoxious to malice, and envy, and revenge, as those that have the most of these qualities. Hence the wicked world on earth, who are at enmity with the church of God for its holiness, do not at all agree together. Though they agree in being alike under the power of wickedness, yet how full is the world of wicked men of strife and contention, of perpetual jars, animosities, and confusion! [Rom. i. 29, 30, 31, 32.](#) “Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” So [Titus iii. 3.](#) “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” And hence also it comes to pass that devils and wicked men in hell, though they hate angels and saints in heaven for their holiness, have yet no love one to another; though they all agree in being perfectly wicked, yet they hate one another with implacable hatred, and are continually mortifying and tormenting one another; so that hell is a world of perfect malice and contention.

*Thirdly.* They refuse to accept of heaven as it is; yet they would not like it if it were otherwise. As has been observed before, they have no relish for the holy enjoyments and

employments of heaven. They dislike heaven for its holiness, and yet they would not like it if it were unholy; for then they would be liable to the same troubles and vexations in heaven that they meet with in this world. If it were not that heaven differs from this world in holiness, it would be as full of pride and malice, envy, revenge, contention, injustice, violence, and cruelty, as this world is, and so would be as vexatious a world as this is. Wicked men are as liable to the trouble and vexation of the world, which arise from those things, as godly men, and in some respects more so, for they have no divine supports against those things, no safer portion to which their hearts betake themselves.

3. The things that wicked men choose, imply an inconsistency in their own nature. The things which they would have are impossibilities and self-contradictions.

*First.* They would have a sufficient Saviour, and not a holy one. They would not have a holy Saviour, because such a Saviour does not at all agree with their lusts; but yet they would have a sufficient Saviour, one that is sufficient to save them from hell, and so one that is sufficient to make a proper atonement for all their sins, to make full satisfaction to the justice of God, that they may escape the penalty of that justice. But these things prove a great inconsistency, for how is it possible that a Saviour, who is not perfectly holy himself, should make satisfaction for the unholiness of others? How is it possible that one who deserves to suffer the eternal wrath of God himself for his own sin, should by his sufferings appease God's wrath for the sins of others?

They would have a worthy Saviour, as appears in this; when they are awakened, and in some measure sensible of their guilt, they dare not come to Christ, because they cannot see that he has worthiness enough to commend them to God; they are afraid that he is not worthy enough; and yet they dislike Christ because he is a holy Saviour! And what an inconsistency is this! How can he be a worthy Saviour, and not a holy one? So that their choice does in effect contain this inconsistency in it, that they would have a Saviour who is infinitely worthy, without worthiness.

*Secondly.* They wish for salvation from misery without salvation from sin. They do not love misery any better than others, and hope to be saved from it; and some of them are in distress for fear of misery; but yet they would have it without being parted from their sins: which is in its own nature impossible, for the creature that is sinful, must be miserable. For misery consists in separation from the fountain of happiness, and an enmity between the creature and the chief good. But sin implies in its own nature such a separation: it is a separation from that God who is the fountain of good, and is enmity against him, and therefore necessarily brings enmity from that being against the sinner, if it be continued. Sin is the seed of misery; misery is the necessary fruit of it. It is necessary from the nature of God, who, being infinitely holy, necessarily hates it, and so necessarily arrays himself against that being who remains under the pollution and guilt of it. And it is necessary from the nature of man, and the nature of sin: misery is the natural fruit of sin, as the bud and blossom are



the natural fruit of that on which they grow, and is so spoken of, [Ezek. vii. 9, 10](#). “And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways, and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth. Behold the day, behold it is come; the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed; pride hath budded.”

Natural men would be freed from hell without being saved from sin, which is an inconsistency and impossibility; for where sin remains the reigning power, it will necessarily kindle up the flames of hell, and will bring on the torments of hell. Indeed, while men remain in the body, in the midst of the carnal objects of this world to engross the mind, to please the carnal appetites, to stupify the conscience, and lull the soul asleep, they may avoid the torments of hell for a little while; but when the body comes to be dissolved, and all worldly objects, diversions, and entertainments come to an end, and the polluted and guilty soul comes to be stripped and turned out naked, infernal horror and misery will naturally and necessarily arise in such a soul. So that there is no such thing as being saved from hell, without being saved from sin.

*Thirdly.* They desire happiness with holiness. Wicked men have as earnest a desire of happiness as others. They are restlessly saying, “Who will show us any good?” And yet they are enemies to holiness. Here also they are inconsistent with themselves, for there is no such thing as happiness without holiness; the happiness of the creature consists in holiness. It is as great an inconsistency to suppose that a creature should be happy without being holy, as that a man should enjoy all the strength, and ease, and activity, and other comforts of health, in sore sickness; or that the notes of a tune should be harmonious that are disproportionate and discordant. So that they would be happy, and yet would not be happy: the thing they choose contains as great an inconsistency as if they should choose light or brightness, consisting in the blackness of darkness.

4. In things that do most nearly concern them they will neither choose nor refuse. The things of religion are things that concern them in the highest degree. It is no matter of indifference to them, whether they will betake themselves in good earnest to the business of religion or not, whether they will obtain heaven, or be content with a portion in this life. But yet many natural men seem to remain in suspense about these things all the days of their lives; they are always at a loss, always halting between two opinions, which Elijah reproves, [1 Kings xviii. 21](#). “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” No wonder that they had nothing to answer, for their unreasonableness and inconsistency too manifestly appeared in it. Many, who hear of these subjects from their infancy, never come to a thorough conclusion in their own minds, whether they will continue to go on in the way to hell, or whether they will do what must be done to escape it; they neither resolve that they will forsake all their sins, nor yet that they will retain them;

they do not determine to hearken to the warnings and counsels given to them, nor yet do they fully reject them. They have life and death set before them, one or the other, but they never come to a determination which they will choose.

5. In pursuing the objects which they desire, their lusts are inconsistent with each other. It has before been shown that the lusts of one wicked man clash with those of another; but not only is it thus; some of the lusts of the same person disagree with other lusts of his. Often, wicked men's covetousness clashes with their pride; their pride prompts them to many things that their covetousness forbids. It would be agreeable to men's pride to make a splendid show in their houses and apparel, and manner of living, who yet are not willing, through their covetousness, to be at the cost of it. So their covetousness often thwarts their sensuality. Their sensual disposition inclines them to feast their appetites, but their covetousness will not allow it.

Sometimes men's sloth and idleness clash with their other lusts, with their pride, their covetousness, and sensuality. These lusts draw them one way to obtain much of the world, in order to pamper and gratify them; but their slothfulness draws another, or rather holds them and binds their hands from obtaining these things.

IV. The outward show of wicked men disagrees with their hearts. They very often make an appearance that is exceedingly different and contrary to what they really are inwardly. They have the clothing of sheep, but the nature of wolves. [Matt. vii. 15](#). They are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. They make a show as though they believed the truth of the gospel, and believed that God was an infinitely great and an infinitely excellent being; they make a show of great respect to God, a show of reverence and love, when indeed they have no such thing in their hearts, but the contrary. The outward show they make, which is at war with their hearts, consists either in their words, or in their behaviour.

The show they make in words is inconsistent with their hearts. Many of them profess to believe that God is an infinitely excellent being, when indeed they think that the meanest of their carnal enjoyments is more excellent than he. They profess to believe that there is another world, a heaven and a hell, when indeed they realize no such thing. They profess to believe that Christ is the only Saviour, and that they can be saved in no other; and yet they all the while believe in their hearts that there are other saviours, and particularly that they can be saviours for themselves by their own strength and righteousness.

They do abominably dissemble in the profession they make of the favour of God, and of love to him, and willingness to obey him, and desire to glorify him. They have not a jot of these things in their hearts, but are all the while wholly under the influence of vile carnal principles in all that they do, and are only aiming at selfish ends and serving their lusts in all.



So did those Jews dissemble that came to Jeremiah, and desired him to inquire of the Lord. [Jer. xlii. 20.](#) “For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God; and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it.” So did the Jews of whom we read in the text dissemble. They pretended to be enemies of gluttony, and drunkenness, and to dislike any such thing as associating with sinners; and so made a pretence of zeal against wickedness, in their opposition to Christ; when indeed they were actuated by a love to wickedness, and were enemies to Christ, for the sake of his holiness. So they pretended to be influenced by enmity against the devil in their opposition to John the Baptist, who they pretended had a devil; when indeed it was not enmity against the devil, but against God. Many pretend a great deal of love to God in what they do, when it is only love to the world at bottom. [Ezek. xxxiii. 31.](#) “And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.”

The show which they make in their prayers, is quite inconsistent with their hearts. Their very approach to God in this duty has a show of religion in it without the reality. And those things they say in their prayers are hypocritical dissembling pretences. They profess honour, reverence, trust, humility, a sense of unworthiness, repentance towards God, trust in Christ as a Mediator, a willingness to forsake sin, from which they pray to be delivered, and thankfulness for the divine mercies. In this manner they resemble the Jews spoken of in [Isa. xxix. 13.](#) “Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth; and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men;” and in [Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37.](#) “Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.” And many of them make a show in words, in conversation with their neighbour, that is quite inconsistent with their hearts. They are forward in religious conversation, in giving an account of their experience in a show of zeal, merely to be seen of men, their God is themselves, their own honour, and the esteem of men. It is themselves whom they love and honour in every thing, and not God.

2. They often make that show in their external behaviour that is inconsistent with their hearts. Many who are destitute of the least spark of love to God, and are at utter enmity with him, will make a great show of respect to him in many things in their behaviour. They may put on a religious saint-like visage, may seem devout in keeping the sabbath, and in their attendance on religious duties and the ordinances of worship, may in some things be very strict, and may appear to do all from a holy respect to God. So it was of old with the Israelites. [Isa. lviii. 1, 2, 3.](#) “Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their

God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.”

So did the Pharisees of old. They made a great show of love and holy regard to God in their behaviour; they abounded in religious duties, they fasted twice a week, and they were very strict in many things. They were so in many duties of the moral law, they were not extortioners, nor unjust, nor adulterers; and they were exceedingly exact in duties of the ceremonial law. They gave tithes of all that they possessed, and so exact were they in paying tithes, that they tithed all the herbs of their gardens, as mint, anise, and the like, and put on an exceedingly religious countenance, and wore a righteous garment for a show of great humility; and yet had no love to God in their hearts, but were a generation of vipers, and most bitter enemies to God and Christ, and cruel persecutors of good men.

The practice of wicked men is often very inconsistent with their profession.

It is so, whether we look at the profession which they make in common with others who are brought up under the light of the gospel, or at the distinguishing and extraordinary profession which some of them make.

1. If we look at the professions which they make in common with the generality of those who are brought up under the gospel. These do in general profess that there is a God, an infinitely great and holy God, who hates sin; and who is every where present, who always sees them, has his eye continually upon them, sees what they do in secret as well as what is done openly; a God, who not only knows all their words and actions, but sees all their thoughts, and who is able to do what he pleases with them, and can save or destroy them as he will.

But how does the practice of the greater part of them consist with their profession, when they live in direct opposition to his commands; when they live as though there were no God that had the care and government of the world; and as though he were not a holy God, but altogether such an one as themselves, liking ways of sin as well as they; or as though they thought him a weak being, and not able to do them any great matter of hurt; or as though they thought they were stronger than he, and should be able to make their part good with him another day? *1 Cor. x. 22.* “Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?”

How does that wickedness, which many persons who are brought up under gospel light commit in secret, those abominable secret practices of which many young people are guilty, agree with their professing that God is every where present? These things they do not commit openly for fear of human punishment, or for fear of shame and disgrace among men; and yet they commit them boldly, and live on them in the sight of God, upon whose favour they profess that their happiness infinitely more depends than on the esteem of men.

They profess to believe that there is another world, and a future judgment, and that they must in a little time stand before the judgment-seat of God, to give an account of themselves to him; and that then the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light, and the counsels of the heart made manifest; and that then God will call them to a strict account of their improvement of their time, and all their talents, and that for every idle word men must give account in the day of judgment; and that then every man shall have his state everlastingly and unalterably fixed by the sentence of the great Judge, according to the thing's done in the body; that they who have done well shall be invited into heaven, where they shall enjoy honour, and glory, and pleasure unspeakable for evermore, and that they who have done evil, shall be sentenced and sent down to hell, into everlasting fire, with the devil and his angels, where they shall endure unspeakable torments, as in a furnace of fire, without any end, or any hope, and that they shall have no rest day nor night; and that their souls shall be fixed in one or other of those states in a little time, as soon as ever the body dies.

Now how does their practice consist with such a profession, while they live idle, careless lives, little troubling themselves about the good of their souls, and have their hearts and pursuits after the vanities of the world, just as if they never expected any other world but this, going on in sins against the plainest commands, and loudest warnings, and fullest light, and conviction of their own conscience? How does this consist with the profession of a belief, that they must in a little time be called to give account of themselves to God? Would any spectator who should judge only by their practice, in the least imagine that these men expected within a few years to burn in everlasting fire, if they did not please and serve an infinitely holy God, and to be received to an everlasting paradise of blessedness if they did; could he be persuaded to think that such men are in heart, as they profess to be, the followers of the meek, holy, and humble Lamb of God, of him who laid down his life for his enemies?

2. If we look at the profession which some of them make of special and distinguishing experiences of the influence of God's grace in their hearts, their practice is very inconsistent with their profession. Persons may make a profession of such experiences, and yet be carnal and wicked men. So did some of the Galatians, of whom the apostle was afraid, lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain; they professed great experience of the sweetness and blessedness which is to be had in religion, and experienced in the truths of the gospel. [Gal. iv. 11, 15](#). "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." At their first seeming conversion, they appeared to be exceedingly lifted up with their new light, and full of joy and comfort, and full of affection; but by this expostulation of the apostle it appears that their lives afterwards did not well agree with their profession. Some wicked men may profess that they have seen their own utter insufficiency and helplessness, their own vileness and wickedness, and have been brought to God's footstool self-emptied and self-abased, as wretched, miserable,

poor, blind, and naked. But yet how ill does their walk and life agree with such a profession! In this none appear fuller of themselves than they; none seem to manifest more of a spirit of self-sufficiency, and of dependence on their own righteousness, or more high conceit of their own goodness, or are more ready to say to others, "Stand by thyself, come not nigh to me, for I am holier than thou;" none appear in their walk and conversation further from lying in the dust as being poor in spirit than they. So it was with the Pharisees, they pretended to be extraordinarily emptied of themselves, and to have a low thought of themselves, in their wearing a rough garment, and in so often keeping days of fasting; and yet none were more self-righteous and self-sufficient than these very men, who are set forth in sacred history as living examples of self-righteousness to all succeeding ages.



So some of them may profess that they have had great discoveries made to their souls of God's glory and excellency, and that they have seen how much more glorious God is than all earthly things. But if it be so, why do not they cleave to God, and follow him, rather than other things? If they have known God to be so much more excellent than the things of the world, because they have had acquaintance with God, why do they in their practice cast off God for the sake of the things of the world; why do they in their practice prefer a little of the world, a little worldly gain, a little worldly honour, or a little worldly convenience or pleasure, before God? Certainly, if God be more excellent than the whole world, as they profess that they have seen him to be, then surely he is worth more than so small a part of the world.

So they may tell what love they have found in their hearts to God, how they have found their hearts drawn out in love to him at different times. But if they love him so well, why do they take no more care to please him; why are they so careless of his honour, and of their duty to him; why do they allow themselves in practices which they know he hates, and utterly forbids?

So they may profess that they have seen the truth of the gospel, and that they not only think, but know, that the Scripture is the word of God. But if it be so, why do they not take more heed to it? why do they live not only as if they were not certain of it, but as if they were certain of the contrary? If they know that those commands which are in the Bible are the commands of God, then they are worthy of the greatest regard; if they know that those promises and threatenings which are found there, are the promises and threatenings of God, then surely they should be of great weight with us. Why do they seem to be of so little weight with them?

So they may tell how God has manifested his love to their souls, has given his Spirit to witness with their spirit that they are the children of God, and that they have much communion with God. But if God has done such great things for them, and they are admitted to such unspeakable privileges above others, surely they ought to do more than others. They should not appear more carnal, and careless, and unChristian in their temper and walk than

other men who make no such pretences. Thus wicked men's practice is very often inconsistent with their profession, agreeably to [Titus i. 16](#). "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate."

VI. Their practice is inconsistent with their hope of eternal life. Men in general who live in Christian countries, hope to go to heaven, and there to possess eternal glory with God, and Christ, and holy saints and angels, though some of them have a much more confident hope than others. Some of them think that God has already made over this glory to them by firm promises, they look on heaven as their own, they think they belong to that world, and have an inheritance reserved there for them.

But the practice of wicked men is very inconsistent with such a hope, it is very displeasing to that God, and that glorious Redeemer, with whom they hope to spend their eternity in heaven. Though they live wickedly, yet they hope in a little time to go to be with an infinitely holy God, to be received by him with perfect approbation and delight, to be near to him, and to dwell in the courts of his love. They hope to enter into that same holy of holies, into which Christ the forerunner of saints has entered, and there to dwell, there to be as a pillar in the temple of God, to go no more out. Yea, they hope there to sit in that heavenly holy of holies, to be admitted to a higher privilege than the high priests were of old in the earthly holy of holies, who were admitted only to appear in the holy of holies once a year. What holiness was expected of the high priests of old who were admitted to this privilege! What holiness then may well be expected of those who hope to be admitted to a so much greater privilege! Their wicked life is very unsuitable to that state of heaven. Those who are in heaven are all perfectly holy, and so must they become if ever they go to heaven; they will perfectly hate all wickedness, and perfectly delight in the contrary. How disagreeable therefore is the hope of spending eternity in such a heaven, to their wallowing like swine in the filth and mire of sin, and feeding with such eagerness and delight on the loathsome objects of their lusts, as worms feed with pleasure on the loathsome carcass!

Their wicked life is very unfit for the company of heaven, with which they must spend an eternity, if ever they arrive there, even with the holy angels and saints. [Heb. xii. 22, 23](#). "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." How disagreeable is a carnal, worldly, sensual, impure life, to a hope of being one of such an assembly as this to all eternity!

Their wicked life is very disagreeable to the eternal business of heaven, which consists in employing their faculties altogether on holy objects, in employing their understandings in viewing and contemplating the holy perfections of God, and his wonderful works, and their wills and affections in loving God, and delighting themselves in him, and their whole souls in praising and serving him. [Rev. xxii. 3, 4](#). "And there shall be no more curse: but the

throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.” How inconsistent is a life spent in this world in the service of lust and of the devil, to a hope of spending eternity in such a holy manner as this!

Their wicked life is unfitted for the pleasure and entertainment of heaven, which consist in delighting and rejoicing in God, in loving him, and in holy communion with him. How unsuited to a hope of enjoying such a happiness as this throughout eternity, is it to place all one’s delight and happiness here in hoarding up worldly pelf, in gratifying the bodily appetites and sensitive desires, and in those pleasures that are common to the cattle and the swine?

Wicked men hope to spend their eternity in that world, which is a world of perfect peace and love, and to dwell there for ever, where are no jars nor strife, but perfect agreement, harmony, and love for ever. Yet many of them live a life of malice and contention in this world, are very often in one strife or other, and always carry about in their breasts a malice and hatred towards some of their neighbours, and towards some of those same persons with whom they pretend to hope to spend their eternity in such perfect love and amity. If we in our thoughts compare the life that many men actually live in this world, with that life which they hope to live in another world, how ill do they consist together; how disagreeable and shocking is the comparison, or the union of them in our thoughts! How many are there who now are drunkards or unclean persons, or who live in the neglect of secret prayer, and who cast off fear and restrain prayer before God; and how many that are mere earth-worms in covetousness and eagerness after the world; how many proud men whose God is their earthly honour; how many wrathful men who spend their days in hatred of their neighbour; how many such are there who hope in a little time to be with an infinitely holy God, in his glorious presence, in his holy of holies, and with Jesus Christ, and in the arms of his love, and to be of the assembly of holy angels and saints in perfect purity, holiness, and love, loving, contemplating, and admiring God’s glory, and enjoying unspeakable blessedness in communion with God! Thus wicked men’s practice disagrees with their hopes.

VII. The practice of wicked men is inconsistent with itself.

1. Their practice at one time is inconsistent with their practice at another. They are not of a piece with themselves at different times, but are such as the apostle James compares to “a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed;”<sup>651</sup> and such as he called “double-minded.” At one time they are of one mind, with respect to the things of religion; and at another, of another; and so have one mind against another. It is so with false professors of religion; they are not stedfast in God’s covenant, nor in the practice of religion. At one time they may seem to be much affected with the things of religion, and greatly engaged in their spirits about it, as though they could even pluck out their own eyes for God and Christ’s sake, may

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651 [James i. 6](#)

be full of religious conversation, and may seem forward in religious deeds. But, if we observe them, all their goodness is as the morning cloud, all their religiousness is over, and they appear as carnal, and senseless, and as irreligious as ever; their religious affections are all gone, their religious practice is gone, and “it is happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”<sup>652</sup> »

So it is with the hearers, that hear the word of God, and anon with joy receive it, but in time of temptation fall away. So it was with many of Christ’s followers; they followed him for a while, and by and by left him.

There were some who seemed to believe in Christ and followed him for a while; but Christ did not commit himself to them, he knew they were of an unstable mind, and would not be consistent with themselves. Some of them were for a while greatly affected with his preaching and with the miracles that he wrought, and it is said of them that they glorified God who had given such power to men, and said, “Never man spake like this man.” [John vii. 46](#). And it seems as though some of the same Jews who had their affections so raised when Christ was coming into Jerusalem, and who cried, “Hosannah to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;”<sup>653</sup> did presently after cry, “Crucify him, crucify him!” There are many professors like those, and like the Israelites, that sang God’s praise, and soon forgat his works, and waited not for his counsel, that “turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow;”<sup>654</sup> that is, a bow that missed the mark to which it seemed to direct the arrow. The arrow seems to be pointed right, as though it would hit the mark, but yet the bow unexpectedly tends quite another way.

There are many disciples like Judas, who was at one time a disciple, and a traitor at another. It is commonly so that when false professors come to be tried by any remarkable allurements of the world, or by special difficulties which they meet with in the way of duty, that their practice at such times is quite inconsistent with their practice at other times. While times are smooth, and the way plain, and the external practice of religion seems to be consistent with their worldly interests, they are very religious; but when times are changed, and they cannot be religious without seeing them crossed, they appear quite another sort of men.

Thus their practice at one time is inconsistent with their practice at another.

2. Their practice in some things is inconsistent with their practice in others at the same time.

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652 [2 Peter ii. 22](#)

653 [Matthew xxi. 9](#)

654 [Psalms lxxvii. lvii](#)

*First.* Their moral and religious practice in some things does not consist with their irreligious and impure practice in others. False professors are very commonly widely different in this respect from those who are sincere and upright. Sincere Christians are universally holy; they have regard to all God's commands; it is their sincere desire, aim, and endeavour to do their duty in every respect. But it is generally far otherwise with hypocrites; in some things they are like Christians, in others like heathens. Sometimes they appear earnestly religious in duties that immediately respect God, as in attending ordinances, and in appearing devout in external duties of the first table; but in duties that respect their neighbour, there is but little appearance of Christianity. Some behave themselves like saints in God's house, and like devils at home. Some seem to be very religious abroad, in the house of God, and also at the houses of their neighbours, at private meetings, and in religious conferences; but if you follow them into their own families, and observe their carriage there towards those who dwell under the same roof, towards their wives, or husbands, or children, or servants, their behaviour there does not at all consist with the other. So some may carry themselves well in their families, and yet are wretchedly negligent of the religion of the closet. Some seem to be religious men, who are not honest men; some are honest men, and are not religious. They are willing to pay their debts, to speak the truth, and to avoid all knavish actions, all low and underground management; but as to religion, or to seeking God in the religious use of his ordinances, and in reading his holy word, in meditation and prayer, there is but little of this to be seen in them.

Some are honest men with respect to strict commutative justice, but they are not charitable men; they are selfish, covetous, close, and unmerciful. Some seem to be generous and liberal, and yet are very proud and haughty; their honour is their God. Some are very strict and exemplary as to all that can be seen of men, but secretly they live in some abominable practice. So their practice does not consist with itself; it is not of a piece. God complains of this self-inconsistence in Israel of old. [Hosea vii. 8.](#) "Ephraim hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned." "He hath mixed himself among the people;" that is, he was conversant with the heathen nations, and mingled the religion and customs of an Israelite with those of the heathen; so that he was inconsistent with himself, he was partly an Israelite and partly a heathen. "He is a cake not turned," alluding to their custom of baking cakes on the hearth, or in the sun; where, if they were not turned, one side would be baked, and the other raw. So they on one side seemed to appear religious, and like saints, but on the other, wicked and impure. So it was with the Pharisees; in some things they appeared eminently religious, but in others they behaved themselves as some of the vilest of men. [Matt. xxiii. 14, 23.](#) "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence, make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and



faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” A true saint is sanctified throughout, in soul, body, and spirit; he has put off the old man with his deeds, and has put on the new man; he is all over a new creature. He has not only a new hand and head, but he is a new man, all the members are new. But hypocrites are monsters; they have a saint’s tongue, and a devil’s heart. The members do not well consist together. They are inconsistent with themselves as they go about to serve two masters, God and Mammon, which Christ has taught us to be a great inconsistency. They are alike inconsistent as the Samaritans were, who would serve the God of Israel and their own god too. [2 Kings xvii. 28](#), &c. “Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.”

There is the like inconsistency in them as was in Judas, who betrayed Christ with a kiss. How ill did those two things in Judas consist together, his coming to him and kissing him, his seeming to show himself his friend, and at the same time betraying him to death! But it was no greater inconsistency than is commonly found with hypocritical professors, who carry themselves as Christ’s friends, and as though he were very dear to them in some things, and yet act the part of mortal enemies in others, and by their wicked behaviour do indeed betray his cause and interest.

*Secondly.* Their wicked practice in one thing is inconsistent with their wicked practice in others. It is a common thing for wicked men to quarrel with God for permitting those things which they allow themselves, and practise with delight. It is common for wicked men to ascribe the blame of their wickedness to God, therein following their first father, Adam. So men will often lay the blame of their being unconverted, and having lived so wicked a life, so carnal, careless, and evil a life, to God, and especially under conviction, to quarrel with God for it; and yet they approved of those things which they did themselves, with full consent and approbation.

And again. It is common for wicked men to contend with men, and hate their neighbour, for doing the same thing that they do themselves, and allow in themselves. So an unjust man, a backbiter and reviler, a revengeful man, will *condemn* in others the sin which he allows in himself. And so, many other instances might be mentioned. And thus I have showed through all the instances proposed, how wicked men are inconsistent with themselves.

#### APPLICATION.

1. Hence we may see the woeful ruin which sin has brought on the nature of man. Man was not thus in his first estate. If we had nothing but the light of nature, or the light of our own reason, to guide us, that would be sufficient to lead us to conclude that man in his first estate was not made thus by his Creator, who has made other things in such excellent order

and harmony. We see that God hath so made the world, that one thing sweetly harmonizes with another, all things are adapted to each other, the nature of one thing to the nature of another; one thing to be subservient to another; and all things subject to the laws that the Creator has fixed.

We therefore, without the Scripture, should have all reason to conclude that man, the most noble of all the creatures in the visible world, was not made in this state of woeful inconsistency with himself; so that all the faculties of his nature are at war with each other, and at war with themselves; so that now there is nothing but the most dreadful confusion to be seen.

But the Scripture teaches us plainly that God saw all things that he had created and made, and behold, they were very good; and particularly that God made man upright, and that it is himself that has brought ruin on his own nature. In man's first estate all things were in perfect order in his nature. There shone such a light in his understanding as led him to right judgments of things, all the dictates of his understanding were consistent one with another. And then his reason, the superior faculty, kept its place, and bare rule in him over the other faculties, and there was no principle or faculty of his nature but what was subject to its dictates, nothing rose up in rebellion against it. His will then was agreeable to his reason, and agreeable with itself; there was a perfect harmony between his outward appearance and his inward character; his mouth and his heart and his mouth and practice then agreed together, and his practice then was of a piece; until he ate of the forbidden fruit, all was in perfect order, and peace, and decorum, both within and without.

But what was the consequence when man hearkened to the devil, and rebelled against his Maker? We learn, by what has been said under this doctrine, that then the Spirit of God departed from him, and with his influence, God's holy image also, the life, the crown, and glory of his nature left him, and all light, and regularity, and order were gone, and a worse darkness and confusion succeeded than was in the primitive chaos when it was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And such is the woeful confusion of the nature of all men now in their fallen state. Now their reason determines one thing, and their governing practical judgment the reverse of it; and their judgment in some things is utterly inconsistent with their judgment in others. Now the will is in no consistency with the reason, but commonly determines directly contrary to its dictates. Men's wills are in such bondage and slavery to their lusts, that they are not only determined contrary to their own consciences to choose those things which their reason tells them are unjust, and vile, and unbecoming their nature, but also those things which their reason at the same time declares to be exceedingly against their own highest interest, even so as to tend to their everlasting perdition. Yea, their dispositions are not only contrary to their own reason and consciences, but contrary to themselves; there is not only war between faculty and faculty, but the very same faculty is at war with itself, so that they do in some respects choose and

refuse the same things at the same time. There are some things that they seem earnestly to wish for, and yet indeed are at the same time utterly averse to and refuse, and will by no means accept of when offered; yea, they will not have them though they are urged, and entreated, and pleaded with for years together to accept of them. So inconsistent are their dispositions with themselves, that they will not have spiritual and divine things as they are, nor yet will they have them otherwise. They do not like God as he is, they find abundance of fault with him, they are urged to accept of him as their God, but they will by no means comply with it. They reject him, and have an enmity against him; they love to keep at a distance from him, and to have as little as possible to do with him, and will not hearken to him, or submit to him, but are ever maintaining a kind of warfare against him, because they do not like him as he is. And yet they would not like him if he were any otherwise. If it were possible that he could be altered from what he is in any respect whatsoever, they would refuse to accept of him as their God then. They are enemies to him because he is so holy and just a God, and yet they would not like him if he were unholy and unjust; they do not like his almighty power, and yet they would not like him if he were weak. They also dislike his knowing all things, and yet they would dislike him if he were ignorant. They quarrel with God for the exercise of his infinite mercy and grace to others, and the more for its being so great in some instances, in being exercised towards those who are so unworthy; and yet they would not like him if he were not infinitely merciful; they would wish him to be merciful enough to pardon the most unworthy, and yet sometimes quarrel with him because he is no more merciful.

Now there is a similar inconsistency in them with themselves in that they do not like men for being godly; they have an enmity against such sort of men: and at the same time, they do not like those who are godly, they hate men for being wicked, and will have a bitter spirit against them for it. The world in its fallen state cannot agree with the church of God; it has always had a spite against it, and has almost always from the beginning of the world hitherto been persecuting it; and yet neither can they agree among themselves, but are at the same time contending and quarrelling with one another. And as there is no suiting them in this world, so neither is there any suiting them in another; they would neither go to heaven, nor to hell. They do not like heaven because it is holy; and yet they would not like it if it were a world of wickedness. And such is the jarring and confusion that is in their disposition, that those things that they do choose are impossibilities, and self-contradictions, and self-inconsistencies. They would have a sufficient Saviour and not a holy one; they would have one good, and excellent, and holy enough to save them, and yet would not have one with any holiness at all. They have a mind to have salvation from misery, without salvation from sin; when sin is their misery. They have a mind to have light, and yet to keep darkness without light; they would have a light consisting in darkness; and sweet, consisting in bitterness; and good, consisting in evil. They would have such a sort of happiness as is

impossible in its own nature; for they would have happiness with unholiness, which is as much as to say they would be *happy* men, and yet remain *destroyed* and *ruined*. And when life and death are set before them to choose, and they are urged to make their choice, and told that they must certainly have one or the other, that there is no possibility of avoiding it; yet they will come to a deliberate, determinate choice to have neither one nor the other. They are always halting between two opinions, they are always choosing and yet never come to a choice. Instead of those holy principles that man had in his heart at first, that sweetly consented one with another, he has now introduced into his soul a number of vile and hateful lusts, that clash one with another: pride clashing with covetousness, and covetousness thwarting sensuality, and sloth crushing all these: and instead of the purity in body and mind, which man had at first, he is now, if he has any show of purity, become like a whited sepulchre, that is beautifully adorned outside, and within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. Their faces disagree with their hearts, and their mouths disagree with their hearts; they have the visage and show of saints, and the hearts of devils. Their prayers are filled up with thanksgiving, adoration, great honour to God, praise and glory to him, a show of humility before him, a show of repentance for sin, trust, thankfulness, desire of obedience, and trust in Christ alone; when within is nothing but a slight and contempt of God, enmity against God, distrust of God, pride, self-righteousness, obstinacy, and disobedience, without one jot or tittle of honour, or love, or trust, or humility, or repentance, or obedience, or any of those things that there is a show of in their prayers. And now they say and profess one thing, and practise another; they will show one thing to God, and do another, and will live all their days in this world carnally, contentious, and alienated from God, in the indulgence of brutish lusts and filthiness; and yet hope when they die to go to be with him, and in eternal communion with him in perfect holiness, and with holy angels, spending an eternity in holy contemplation and praise, and to have these things for their everlasting happiness. And when they seem to practise well for a time it lasts but a little while, but their practice at one time is utterly inconsistent with that at another. Yea, if they were narrowly observed, their practice at the same time is inconsistent with itself: saints at church, and heathen at home; saints before the world, heathen in secret; with the tongues and faces of the children of God, and with the hearts of the children of the devil.

Such work has the fall made in the nature of man, such a creature as this is man become, instead of shining as at first, in the holy and lovely image of God. Thus has the fall of man ruined God's workmanship. And if the fall has *thus* ruined man, what can be more effectually ruined? Does not this show that it is indeed so, that man is in a lost and undone condition; and can it be expected that any other can ever restore to him the divine image, but only that same God that made him at first? And how vain are the attempts of natural men to rectify their natures in their own strength, wherein is such woeful ruin and confusion! And is there not need of a mighty Saviour in order to this?



2. This subject may be applied in the way of conviction to natural men, in several particulars.

1. Hence you may see your folly. Wisdom is ever consistent with itself, and wise men are not wont to act inconsistently. Self-inconsistency in temporal things is ever looked upon as a note of folly. Those men that talk very inconsistently, are accounted to talk very foolishly; and so those men that act inconsistently with themselves in temporal matters, are looked upon as acting very absurdly and ridiculously, and it is common with men to treat such with derision. Certainly, then, to be so exceedingly self-inconsistent in such great concerns as we have spoken of, is the highest degree of folly.

The inconsistency of the judgment of wicked men shows their folly. It shows the foolishness of those practical judgments they govern themselves by, that they make them contrary to the plain dictates of their own reason. Men oftentimes count the judgments of others very foolish, because they are very inconsistent with other men's reason, though their judgments are formed according to the best light of their own reason; but how much more foolish is it for men, in such things as infinitely concern them, to make such practical judgments of things as are plainly contrary not only to other men's reason, but to their own; so as to determine their will and their practice by those judgments! as for instance, when men's practical judgment and conclusion within themselves, by which they determine their choice and practice, is, that it is best for them for the present, to neglect their souls and seek the vanities of this world, which are but for a moment, more than their eternal welfare.

And how does it show the folly of men's judgment when some of their judgments are inconsistent with others; as when in one thing they will judge that a long-continued eternity is of less importance than this short and fleeting life! So it shows the great folly of men's wills and dispositions, that they are so inconsistent, that in some respects they will both choose and refuse the same things, will wish and pray for them, and take pains for them, and yet will not have them when offered. How madly would a man be looked upon to act, that should so act in temporal concerns, if he was sick and like to perish for want of a certain medicine, and should wish and long for that medicine, and ask others to seek it for him, and yet when it was bought and offered, he should utterly refuse it!

What folly does it argue that men's dispositions are so inconsistent with each other, that there is no suiting them with any thing! they are pleased neither with piping nor mourning, with eating nor fasting; they will not have God, or Christ, or heaven as they are, and yet will not have either any otherwise. How would men, if they manifested such a disposition in temporal things, often be hissed at, as most ridiculous, childish, and foolish; yea, and be accounted to act like madmen! and what folly does it discover, that they will choose and accept of nothing but that which is impossible in its own nature, and a self-contradiction, as when they will have happiness without holiness! If any man should act thus in temporal things; if he would have no house, because he could not build one in the air; if he refused

to go, because he could not go without feet; or to see, because he could not see without eyes; what words would be thought adequate to describe his folly! Yet this is the very folly of sinners with regard to their salvation.

How would men be looked upon if they acted thus in their temporal affairs! If they must inevitably perish in the winter if they did not labour in the summer, and yet spend all the summer in halting between two opinions; or if they were sick with some deadly disease, and were told that they must inevitably die if they did not send for a physician, yet were undetermined, and when the distemper increased upon them, still continued undetermined, and when it was come to extremity, and seemed very near death, still could not come to a conclusion; or if a house should be on fire over their heads, and they could not make up their minds to flee from under it.

And what folly does it argue for men, that their practices are so inconsistent with their hearts, and that they say one thing and do another, and so are unsteady in their practice, and inconsistent with themselves at different times! It is looked upon as great folly, and what persons are much to be ashamed of, to be so unsteady in temporal matters, to undo one day what they did another; and so, in their practice in some things to be inconsistent with their practice in others; in one thing to act like a friend, and in another like an enemy. Persons that do so in temporals are abhorred of men, and looked upon as not fit for human society.

2. You may hereby be convinced of your misery. A man cannot be happy, and cannot but be miserable, with whom it is thus. It shows a man to be undone. He, whose nature is brought into such violation, is evidently brought into a state of ruin. Where there is such self-inconsistency and self-opposition, a man is at war with himself, and therefore must be miserable. It is a calamity for a man not to be at peace with his neighbour, and to live in contention with those that are about him; but certainly it is a much greater calamity for him to be at war with himself; to have his judgment at war with his judgment, and his will at war with his reason and conscience, and his will at war with itself, and one lust thwarting another, and his outward man at war with his inward man; his mouth contradicting his heart, his practice contradicting his profession, and contradicting itself. It is impossible that such a man should enjoy any happiness as long as things are thus within him. Do what you will here, you cannot make him happy; if you take him and place him in a palace, and set him on a throne, and clothe him in the robes of princes, and put a crown of gold on his head, and set before him the richest dainties, feed him and feast him as much as you will, still he that so disagrees with himself, is a miserable wretch. Though he may be stupid, yet it is impossible he should enjoy any true peace or rest. How should he, in whom all things are in such utter confusion and uproar within, and in whom there is so much self-opposition.

This may convince us of the truth, and show us the reason, of [Isa. lvii. 20, 21](#). “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

How should he have any peace, who is his own enemy, who chooses and practises these things which his own conscience condemns, and which his own reason tells him tend to his own ruin? How should he have any peace, that hates his own soul and loves his own death, and that has one lust holding him one way, and another the contrary, so as in some respects to choose and refuse the same thing, to wish for a thing that at the same time he hates and refuses, and so goes on from day to day in warring against himself?

3. This shows your inexcusableness. By this inconsistency with yourself, you are condemned out of your own mouth in that you act contrary to your own conscience. Your own conscience condemns you in your will and practice being contrary to your own reason; your own reason condemns you in acting contrary to your profession; your own profession condemns you in the sense in which the apostle speaks of a heretic as being condemned of himself. [Titus iii. 10, 11](#). “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself:” *i e.* he in departing from his former profession is inconsistent with himself: his present heretical tenets are contrary to his former solemn profession, and therefore that former profession condemns him.

Consider how inexcusable you, who are thus inconsistent with yourself in your wickedness, will appear at the last day; when you come to stand before the judgment-seat of God, when you are by him called to an account for your wicked life, how will your mouth be stopped. When you are called to an account why you have preferred things of such short and uncertain continuance as the things of this vain world, to the great things of the eternal world, what will you have to say for yourself, when it shall appear that herein you acted in direct opposition to the plain dictates of your own reason, and that this choice is inconsistent with the judgment and choice you were wont to make in temporal things? And what will you say for yourself when you are called to give an account why you rejected God, and Christ, and heaven for their holiness; when it so plainly appears that you would not like them, and would not have accepted them, if they had been any other way than holy?

It will then appear that you have voluntarily rejected Christ and his great salvation, and refused to accept of heaven, and that you are condemned of yourself in it, in that at the same time you evinced the great necessity of those things in praying for them, and doing many things in order to the obtaining of them.

When it shall then appear how you had a mind to have impossibilities: as a sufficiently worthy Saviour, and not a holy one; salvation from misery, and not salvation from sin, the source of all misery; and happiness without holiness; it shall from hence most plainly appear, that you did in effect utterly refuse to accept of any Saviour or any salvation at all, and would

not be saved from misery at all, and refused to accept of any happiness at all, because you would have no salvation, no happiness, but such as was impossible in the nature of things, such a salvation as was not and could not be; and then how just will it appear to your own conscience, and to the world, that you should e'en go without salvation!

And when it shall appear how you had life and death set before you, and were told the necessity of coming to a choice, and were so often urged to it, and had so much opportunity for it, and yet refused; how just will it appear that divine justice should make your choice for you, when you refused to make any for yourself!

And how will you appear condemned out of your own mouth, when you shall be called to an account by the Judge, why you so often professed to God in your prayers that he was an infinitely great and holy God, and yet never feared him; and why you so often said to God that he was a sovereign and righteous God, and yet never submitted to him; and why you so often said to him that he was an all-sufficient and faithful God, and yet never would put your trust in him; and why you so often said to him that he was an infinitely glorious, and excellent, and good God, and yet never loved him; and why you so often owned that he was an infinitely gracious and bountiful God, and what you had received abundance of kindness from him, and owned him to be the author of all those good things of your life that you enjoy, and yet never were truly thankful to him, but improved those things that you owned were the gifts of God, against himself who was the giver of them; why you so often owned in your prayers before God that you were a poor sinful, vile creature for your sins, and yet never would forsake your sins; and begged of God to keep you from sin, and yet carelessly and wilfully went on in the commission of sin? What will you say to such interrogations of the Judge of heaven and earth? Will not your mouth be stopped, when it shall appear that what has already so often proceeded out of your own mouth, does so much condemn you? And what will hypocrites and self-pretenders to experiences say, who have told what discoveries they had of the glory of God, of Christ, and of heaven; when the Judge inquires of them, why they set so light by this God, and did so prefer the dust of the earth and the filth of sin, before him? When those who have often told what love they have felt to the Lord Jesus Christ, are asked why they took no more care to please and honour him, and why they rather chose from time to time to reject him than sacrifice their worldly interest.

So when wicked men are inquired of why, when they professed to believe a future state, they took no more pains to prepare for it; why, when they professed to be the followers of Christ the Lamb of God, they were no more like him; why, when they owned him for their head, and expressed such wonderful love to him, they could turn and become his enemies; why, when they lived in hope of a life of such unspeakable glory in heaven, they set their affections wholly on this world; why, seeing they made such a show of regard to God and their duty at one time, they discovered such a total disregard at another; why, when they made such pretences to religion, and had such appearances of it in some things, they were



so irreligious and wicked in others; what will they answer? Wicked men will appear self-condemned every way: their own reason and their own consciences, their own mouths and their own actions, have condemned them: their reason and consciences will still condemn them, and God will condemn them, and men and angels will and must condemn them: so that they will appear universally condemned; they will have nothing to say for themselves, nor will any one have any thing to say for them.

4. If you are so inconsistent with yourself, you need not wonder that God will enter into no friendship with you, or that he does not receive you into his favour. Many natural men are ready to wonder that God will not receive them into favour they do so much in religion.

But if you consider what has been said, you need not wonder at it. A wise man will make no friendship with another who is very inconsistent with himself in those things wherein men are concerned with him. He will not associate himself with him, nor care to have such to communicate with him; for men know that such persons are not to be depended on. One does not know where to find them, nor how to suit them, and if they will be so inconsistent with themselves, certainly they will not be very consistent with others that trust them. God therefore justly refuses to receive such persons into union with him. It is not consistent with his divine wisdom to give himself to them in a covenant relation.

No wonder that Christ will not commit himself to such persons as these; [John ii. 23, 24, 25](#). “Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.” Christ knew that there was no dependence to be had upon them; he knew they would not prove consistent with themselves.

5. How vain and inconsistent is the dependence of wicked men on themselves! If this be the case with natural men, if all natural men are as we have heard, so absurdly inconsistent with themselves, how unreasonable is their high thought of themselves, and their trusting to their own goodness, to their own prayers, and their other performances!

And that they do so, is an evident sign of their woeful ignorance of themselves. If such persons saw themselves as they are, and to be such as we have described them, certainly they would be far from trusting in their own excellency and goodness, but would see themselves to be polluted, wretched, miserable, lost creatures, and would no more say in their hearts, “I am rich, and increased with goods;” but would rather condemn themselves, and cry out with self-abhorrence and amazement, “Unclean, unclean, undone, undone!”



S E R M O N   X I I .

[isaiah xxxii. 2.](#)

And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land

in these words we may observe,

1. The person who is here prophesied of and commended, *viz.* the Lord Jesus Christ, the King spoken of in the preceding verse, who shall reign in righteousness. This King is abundantly prophesied of in the Old Testament, and especially in this prophecy of Isaiah. Glorious predictions were from time to time uttered by the prophets concerning that great King who was to come: there is no subject which is spoken of in so magnificent and exalted a style by the prophets of the Old Testament, as the Messiah. They saw his day and rejoiced, and searched diligently, together with the angels, into those things. [1 Peter i. 11, 12.](#) “Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.”

We are told here that “*a man* shall be a hiding-place from the wind,<sup>655</sup>” &c. There is an emphasis in the words, that “*a man*” should be this. If these things had been said of God, it would not be strange under the Old Testament; for God is frequently called a hiding-place for his people, a refuge in time of trouble, a strong rock, and a high tower. But what is so remarkable is, that they are said of “*a man*.” But this is a prophecy of the Son of God incarnate.

2. The things here foretold of him, and the commendations given him.

“He shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest:<sup>656</sup>” that is, he shall be the safety and defence of his people, to which they shall flee for protection in the time of their danger and trouble. To him they shall flee, as one who is abroad, and sees a terrible storm arising, makes haste to some shelter to secure himself; so that however furious is the tempest, yet he is safe within, and the wind and rain, though they beat never so impetuously upon the roof and walls, are no annoyance unto him.

He shall be as “rivers of water in a dry place.<sup>657</sup>” This is an allusion to the deserts of Arabia, which was an exceedingly hot and dry country. One may travel there many days, and see no sign of a river, brook, or spring, nothing but a dry and parched wilderness; so

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655 [Isa. xxxii. 2.](#)

656 [ibid](#)

657 [ibid](#)

that travelers are ready to be consumed with thirst, as the children of Israel were when they were in this wilderness, when they were faint because there was no water. Now when a man finds Jesus Christ, he is like one that has been traveling in those deserts till he is almost consumed with thirst, and who at last finds a river of cool and clear water. And Christ was typified by the river of water that issued out of the rock for the children of Israel in this desert: he is compared to a river, because there is such a plenty and fulness in him.

He is the “shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”<sup>658</sup> Allusion is still made to the desert of Arabia. It is not said, as the shadow of a tree, because in some places of that country, there is nothing but dry sand and rocks for a vast space together, not a tree to be seen; and the sun beats exceedingly hot upon the sands, and all the shade to be found there, where travelers can rest and shelter themselves from the scorching sun, is under some great rock. They who come to Christ find such rest and refreshment as the weary traveler in that hot and desolate country finds under the shadow of a great rock.

We propose to speak to three propositions that are explicatory of the several parts of the text.

I. There is in Christ Jesus abundant foundation of peace and safety for those who are in fear and danger. “A man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest.”<sup>659</sup>

II. There is in Christ provision for the satisfaction, and full contentment, of the needy and thirsty soul. He shall be “as rivers of water in a dry place.”<sup>660</sup>

III. There are quiet rest and sweet refreshment in Christ Jesus for him who is weary. He shall be “as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”<sup>661</sup>

I. There is in Christ Jesus abundant foundation of peace and safety for those who are in fear and danger.

The fears and dangers to which men are subject, are of two kinds; temporal and eternal. Men are frequently in distress from fear of temporal evils. We live in an evil world, where we are liable to an abundance of sorrows and calamities. A great part of our lives is spent in sorrowing for present or past evils, and in fearing those which are future. What poor, distressed creatures are we, when God is pleased to send his judgments among us! If he visits a place with mortal and prevailing sickness, what terror seizes our hearts! If any person is taken sick, and trembles for his life, or if our near friends are at the point of death, or in many other dangers, how fearful is our condition! Now there is sufficient foundation for peace and safety to those exercised with such fears, and brought into such dangers. But

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658 ibid

659 ibid

660 ibid

661 ibid

Christ is a refuge in all trouble; there is a foundation for rational support and peace in him, whatever threatens us. He, whose heart is fixed, trusting in Christ, need not be afraid of any evil tidings. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so Christ is round about them that fear him.<sup>662</sup>"

But it is the other kind of fear and danger to which we have a principal respect; the fear and danger of God's wrath. The fears of a terrified conscience, the fearful expectation of the dire fruits of sin, and the resentment of an angry God, these are infinitely the most dreadful. If men are in danger of those things, and are not asleep, they will be more terrified than with the fears of any outward evil. Men are in a most deplorable condition, as they are by nature exposed to God's wrath; and if they are sensible how dismal their case is, will be in dreadful fears and dismal expectations.

God is pleased to make some sensible of their true condition. He lets them see the storm that threatens them, how black the clouds are, and how impregnated with thunder, that it is a burning tempest, that they are in danger of being speedily overtaken by it, that they have nothing to shelter themselves from it, and that they are in danger of being taken away by the fierceness of his anger.

It is a fearful condition when one is smitten with a sense of the dreadfulness of God's wrath, when he has his heart impressed with the conviction that the great God is not reconciled to him, that he holds him guilty of these and those sins, and that he is angry enough with him to condemn him for ever. It is dreadful to lie down and rise up, it is dreadful to eat and drink, and to walk about, in God's anger from day to day. One, in such a case, is ready to be afraid of every thing; he is afraid of meeting God's wrath wherever he goes. He has no peace in his mind, but there is a dreadful sound in his ears; his mind is afflicted and tossed with tempest, and not comforted, and courage is ready to fail, and the spirit ready to sink with fear; for how can a poor worm bear the wrath of the great God, and what would not he give for peace of conscience, what would not he give if he could find safety! When such fears exist to a great degree, or are continued a long time, they greatly enfeeble the heart, and bring it to a trembling posture and disposition.

Now for such as these there is abundant foundation for peace and safety in Jesus Christ, and this will appear from the following things:

1. Christ has undertaken to save all such from what they fear, if they come to him. It is his professional business; the work in which he engaged before the foundation of the world. It is what he always had in his thoughts and intentions; he undertook from everlasting to be the refuge of those that are afraid of God's wrath. His wisdom is such, that he would never undertake a work for which he is not sufficient. If there were some in so dreadful a case that he was not able to defend them, or so guilty that it was not fit that he should save

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662 [Psa. cxxv. 2.](#)

them, then he never would have undertaken for them. Those who are in trouble and distressing fear, if they come to Jesus Christ, have this to ease them of their fears, that Christ has promised them that he will protect them; that they come upon his invitation; that Christ has plighted his faith for their security if they will come to him; and that he is engaged by covenant to God the Father that he will save those afflicted and distressed souls that come to him.

Christ, by his own free act, has made himself the surety of such, he has voluntarily put himself in their stead; and if justice has any thing against them, he has undertaken to answer for them. By his own act, he has engaged to be responsible for them; so that if they have exposed themselves to God's wrath, and to the stroke of justice, it is not their concern, but his, how to answer or satisfy for what they have done. Let there be never so much wrath that they have deserved, they are as safe as if they never had deserved any; because he has undertaken to stand for them, let it be more or less. If they are in Christ Jesus, the storm does of course light on him, and not on them; as when we are under a good shelter, the storm, that would otherwise come upon our heads, lights upon the shelter.

2. He is chosen and appointed of the Father to this work. There needs be no fear nor jealousy, whether the Father will approve of this undertaking of Christ Jesus, whether he will accept of him as a surety, or whether he will be willing that his wrath should be poured upon his own dear Son, instead of us miserable sinners. For there was an agreement with him concerning it before the world was; it was a thing much upon God's heart, that his Son Jesus Christ should undertake this work, and it was the Father that sent him into the world. It is as much the act of God the Father as it is of the Son. Therefore, when Christ was near the time of his death, he tells the Father that he had finished the work which he gave him to do. Christ is often called God's elect, or his chosen, because he was chosen by the Father for this work; and God's anointed, for the words *Messiah* and *Christ* signify *anointed*, because he is by God appointed and fitted for this work.

3. If we are in Christ Jesus, justice and the law have its course with respect to our sins, without out hurt. The foundation of the sinner's fear and distress is the justice and the law of God; they are against him, and they are unalterable, they must have their course. Every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, heaven and earth shall be destroyed, rather than justice should not take place; there is no possibility of sin's escaping justice.

But yet if the distressed trembling soul who is afraid of justice, would fly to Christ, he would be a safe hiding-place. Justice and the threatening of the law will have their course as fully, while he is safe and untouched, as if he were to be eternally destroyed. Christ bears the stroke of justice, and the curse of the law falls fully upon him; Christ bears all that vengeance that belongs to the sin that has been committed by him, and there is no need of its being borne twice over. His temporal sufferings, by reason of the infinite dignity of his person, are fully equivalent to the eternal sufferings of a mere creature. And then his suffer-

ings answer for him who flees to him as well as if they were his own, for indeed they are his own by virtue of the union between Christ and him. Christ has made himself one with them; he is the head, and they are the members. Therefore, if Christ suffers for the believer, there is no need of his suffering; and what needs he to be afraid? His safety is not only consistent with absolute justice, but it is consistent with the tenor of the law. The law leaves fair room for such a thing as the answering of a surety. If the end of punishment in maintaining the authority of the law and the majesty of the government is fully secured by the sufferings of Christ as his surely, then the law of God, according to the true and fair interpretation of it, has its course as much in the sufferings of Christ, as it would have in his own sufferings. The threatening, "thou shalt surely die," is properly fulfilled in the death of Christ, as it is fairly to be understood. Therefore if those who are afraid will go to Jesus Christ, they need to fear nothing from the threatening of the law. The threatening of the law has nothing to do with them.

4. Those who come to Christ, need not be afraid of God's wrath for their sins; for God's honour will not suffer by their escaping punishment and being made happy. The wounded soul is sensible that he has affronted the majesty of God, and looks upon God as a vindicator of his honour; as a jealous God that will not be mocked, an infinitely great God that will not bear to be affronted, that will not suffer his authority and majesty to be trampled on, that will not bear that his kindness should be abused. A view of God in this light terrifies awakened souls. They think; how exceedingly they have sinned, how they have sinned against light, against frequent and long-continued calls and warnings; and how they have slighted mercy, and been guilty of turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, taking encouragement from God's mercy to go on in sin against him; and they fear that God is so affronted at the contempt and slight which they have cast upon him, that he, being careful of his honour, will never forgive them, but will punish them. But if they go to Christ, the honour of God's majesty and authority will not be in the least hurt by their being freed and made happy. For what Christ has done has repaired God's honour to the full. It is a greater honour to God's authority and majesty, that, rather than it should be wronged, so glorious a person would suffer what the law required. It is surely a wonderful display of the honour of God's majesty, to see an infinite and eternal person dying for its being; wronged. And then Christ by his obedience, by that obedience which he undertook for our sakes, has honoured God abundantly more than the sins of any of us have dishonoured him, how many soever, and how great soever. How great an honour is it to God's law that so great a person is willing to submit to it, and to obey it! God hates our sins, but not more than he delights in Christ's obedience which he performed on account. This is a sweet savour to him, a savour of rest. God is abundantly compensated, he desires no more; Christ's righteousness is of infinite worthiness and merit.

5. Christ is a person so dear to the Father, that those who are in Christ need not be at all jealous of being accepted upon his account. If Christ is accepted they must of consequence be accepted, for they are in Christ, as members, as parts, as the same. They are the body of Christ, his flesh and his bones. They that are in Christ Jesus, are one spirit; and therefore, if God loves Christ Jesus, he must of necessity accept of those that are in him, and that are of him. But Christ is a person exceedingly dear to the Father, the Father's love to the Son is really infinite. God necessarily loves the Son; God could as soon cease to be, as cease to love the Son. He is God's elect, in whom his soul delighteth; he is his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased; he loved him before the foundation of the world, and had infinite delight in him from all eternity.

A terrified conscience, therefore, may have rest here, and abundant satisfaction that he is safe in Christ, and that there is not the least danger but that he shall be accepted, and that God will be at peace with him in Christ.

6. God has given an open testimony that Christ has done and suffered enough, and that he is satisfied with it, by his raising him from the dead. Christ, when he was in his passion, was in the hands of justice, he was God's prisoner for believers, and it pleased God to bruise him, and put him to grief, and to bring him into a low state; and when he raised him from the dead, he set him at liberty, whereby he declared that it was enough. If God was not satisfied, why did he set Christ at liberty so soon? he was in the hands of justice, why did not God pour out more wrath upon him, and hold him in the chains of darkness longer! God raised him up and opened the prison doors to him, because he desired no more. And now surely there is free admittance for all sinners into God's favour through this risen Saviour, there is enough done, and God is satisfied; as he has declared and sealed to it by the resurrection of Christ, who is alive, and lives forevermore, and is making intercession for poor, distressed souls that come unto him.

7. Christ has the dispensation of safety and deliverance in his own hands, so that we need not fear but that, if we are united to him, we may be safe. God has given him all power in heaven and in earth, to give eternal life to whomsoever comes to him. He is made head over all things to the church, and the work of salvation is left with himself, he may save whom he pleases, and defend those that are in him by his own power. What greater ground of confidence could God have given us than that the Mediator, who died for us, and intercedes for us, should have committed to him the dispensation of the very thing which he died to purchase and for which he intercedes?

8. Christ's love, and compassion, and gracious disposition, are such that we may be sure he is inclined to receive all who come to him. If he should not do it, he would fail of his own undertaking, and also of his promise to the Father, and to us; and his wisdom and faithfulness will not allow of that. But he is so full of love and kindness that he is disposed to nothing but to receive and defend us, if we come to him. Christ is exceedingly ready to pity us, his



arms are open to receive us, he delights to receive distressed souls that come to him, and to protect them; he would gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; it is a work that he exceedingly rejoices in, because he delights in acts of love, and pity, and mercy.

I shall take occasion from what now has been said, to invite those who are afraid of God's wrath, to come to Christ Jesus. You are indeed in a dreadful condition. It is dismal to have God's wrath impending over our heads, and not to know how soon it will fall upon us. And you are in some measure sensible that it is a dreadful condition, you are full of fear and trouble, and you know not where to flee for help; your mind is, as it were, tossed with a tempest. But how lamentable is it, that you should spend your life in such a condition, when Christ would shelter you, as a hen shelters her chickens under her wings, if you were but willing; and that you should live such a fearful, distressed life, when there is so much provision made for your safety in Christ Jesus!

How happy would you be if your hearts were but persuaded to come to Jesus Christ! Then you would be out of all danger: whatever storms and tempests were without, you might rest securely within; you might hear the rushing of the wind, and the thunder roar abroad, while you are safe in this hiding-place. O be persuaded to hide yourself in Christ Jesus! What greater assurance of safety can you desire? He has undertaken to defend and save you, if you will come to him: he looks upon it as his work; he engaged in it before the world was, and he has given his faithful promise which he will not break; and if you will but make your flight there, his life shall be for yours; he will answer for you, you shall have nothing to do but rest quietly in him; you may stand still and see what the Lord will do for you. If there be any thing to suffer, the suffering, is Christ's, you will have nothing to suffer; if there be any thing to be done, the doing of it is Christ's, you will have nothing to do but to stand still and behold it.

You will certainly be accepted of the Father if your soul lays hold of Jesus Christ. Christ is chosen and anointed of the Father, and sent forth for this very end, to save those that are in danger and fear; and he is greatly beloved of God, even infinitely, and he will accept of those that are in him. Justice and the law will not be against you, if you are in Christ; that threatening, "in the day that thou eatest thou shall die,"<sup>663</sup> in the proper sense of it, will not touch you. The majesty and honour of God are not against you. You need not be afraid but that you shall be justified, if you come to him; there is an act of justification already past and declared for all who come to Christ by the resurrection of Christ, and as soon as ever you come, you are by that declared free. If you come to Christ it will be a sure sign that Christ loved you from all eternity, and that he died for you; and you may be sure if he died

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663 [Gen ii. 17.](#)



for you, he will not lose the end of his death, for the dispensation of life is committed unto him.

You need not, therefore, continue in so dangerous a condition; there is help for you. You need not stand out in the storm so long, as there is so good a shelter near you, whose doors are open to receive you. O make haste, therefore, unto that man who is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest!

Let this truth also cause believers more to prize the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider that it is he, and he only, who defends you from wrath, and that he is a safe defence; your defence is a high tower; your city of refuge is impregnable. There is no rock like your rock. There is none like Christ, "the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky; the eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are everlasting arms." He in whom you trust is a buckler to all that trust in him. O prize that Saviour, who keeps your soul in safety, while thousands of others are carried away by the fury of God's anger, and are tossed with raging and burning tempests in hell! O, how much better is your case than theirs! and to whom is it owing but to the Lord Jesus Christ? Remember what was once your case, and what it is now, and prize Jesus Christ.

And let those Christians who are in doubts and fears concerning their condition, renewedly fly to Jesus Christ, who is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. Most Christians are at times afraid whether they shall not miscarry at last. Such doublings are always through some want of the exercise of faith, and the best remedy for them is a renewed resort of the soul to this hiding-place; the same act which at first gave comfort and peace, will give peace again. They that clearly see the sufficiency of Christ, and the safety of committing themselves to him to save them from what they fear, will rest in it that Christ will defend them; be directed therefore at such times to do as the psalmist. [Psal. lvi. 3, 4](#). "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me."

II. There is provision in Christ for the satisfaction and full contentment of the needy and thirsty soul. This is the sense of those words in the text, "as rivers of water in a dry place," in a dry and parched wilderness, where there is a great want of water, and where travelers are ready to be destroyed with thirst, such as was that wilderness in which the children of Israel wandered. This comparison is used elsewhere in the Scriptures. [Psalm lxiii. 1](#). "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." [Ps. cxliii. 6](#). "I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land." Those who travel in such a land, who wander in such a wilderness, are in extreme need of water; they are ready to perish for the want of it; and thus they have a great thirst and longing for it.

It is said that Christ is a river of water, because there is such a fulness in him, so plentiful a provision for the satisfaction of the needy and longing soul. When one is extremely thirsty,

though it is not a small draught of water that will satisfy him, yet when he comes to a river, he finds a fulness, there he may drink full draughts. Christ is like a river, in that he has a sufficiency not only for one thirsty soul, but by supplying him the fountain is not lessened; there is not the less afforded to those who come afterwards. A thirsty man does not sensibly lessen a river by quenching his thirst.

Christ is like a river in another respect. A river is continually flowing, there are fresh supplies of water coming from the fountain-head continually, so that a man may live by it, and be supplied with water all his life. So Christ is an ever-flowing fountain; he is continually supplying his people, and the fountain is not spent. They who live upon Christ, may have fresh supplies from him to all eternity; they may have an increase of blessedness that is new, and new still, and which never will come to an end.

In illustrating this second proposition, I shall inquire,

1. What it is that the soul of every man naturally and necessarily craves.

*First.* The soul of every man necessarily craves happiness. This is an universal appetite of human nature, that is alike in the good and the bad; it is as universal as the very essence of the soul, because it necessarily and immediately flows from that essence. It is not only natural to all mankind, but to the angels; it is universal among all reasonable, intelligent beings, in heaven, earth, or hell, because it flows necessarily from an intelligent nature. There is no rational being, nor can there be any, without a love and desire of happiness. It is impossible that there should be any creature made that should love misery, or not love happiness, since it implies a manifest contradiction; for the very notion of misery is to be in a state that nature abhors, and the notion of happiness, is to be in such a state as is most agreeable to nature.

Therefore, this craving of happiness must be insuperable, and what never can be changed; it never can be overcome, or in any way abated. Young and old love happiness alike, and good and bad, wise and unwise; though there is a great variety as to men's ideas of happiness. Some think it is to be found in one thing, and some in another; yet, as to the desire of happiness in general, there is no variety. There are particular appetites that may be restrained, and kept under, and conquered, but this general appetite for happiness never can be.

*Secondly.* The soul of every man craves a happiness that is equal to the capacity of his nature. The soul of man is like a vessel; the capacity of the soul is as the largeness or contents of the vessel. And therefore, if man has much pleasure and happiness, yet if the vessel is not full, the craving will not cease. Every creature is restless till it enjoys what is equal to the capacity of its nature. Thus we may observe in the brutes; when they have that which is suitable to their nature, and proportional to their capacity, they are contented. Man is of such a nature, that he is capable of an exceedingly great degree of happiness; he is made of a vastly higher nature than the brutes, and therefore he must have vastly higher happiness to satisfy. The pleasures of the outward senses which content the beasts, will not content

man. He has other faculties of a higher nature that stand in need of something to fill them; if the sense be satiated, yet if the faculties of the soul are not filled, man will be in a craving restless slate.

It is more especially by reason of the faculty of understanding that the soul is capable of so great a happiness, and desires so much. The understanding is an exceedingly extensive faculty; it extends itself beyond the limits of earth, beyond the limits of the creation. As we are capable of understanding immensely more than we do understand, who can tell how far the understanding of men is capable of stretching itself? and as the understanding enlarges, the desire will enlarge with it. It must therefore be an incomprehensible object that must satisfy the soul; it will never be contented with that, and that only, to which it can see an end, it will never be satisfied with that happiness to which it can find a bottom.

A man may seem to take contentment for a little while in a finite object, but after he has had a little experience, he finds that he wants something besides. This is very apparent from the experience of this restless craving world. Every one is inquiring, Who will show us any good?

2. Men in their fallen state, are in very great want of this happiness. They were once in the enjoyment of it, but mankind are sunk to a very low estate; we are naturally poor, destitute creatures. We came naked into the world, and our souls as well as our bodies are in a wretched, miserable condition; we are so far from having food to eat suitable to our nature, that we are greedy after the husks which the swine do eat.

The poverty of man in a natural condition, appears in his discontented, craving spirit; it shows that the soul is very empty, when, like the horse-leech, it cries, "Give, give, and saith not, It is enough." We are naturally like the prodigal, for we once were rich, but we departed from our father's house, and have squandered away our wealth, and are become poor, hungry, famishing wretches.

Men in a natural condition may find something to gratify their senses, but there is nothing to feed the soul; that more noble and more essential part perishes for lack of food. They may fare sumptuously every day, they may pamper their bodies, but the soul cannot be fed from a sumptuous table; they may drink wine in bowls, yet the spiritual part is not refreshed. The superior faculties want to be supplied as well as the inferior. True poverty and true misery consist in the want of those things of which our spiritual part stands in need.

3. Those sinners who are thoroughly awakened, are sensible of their great want. Multitudes of men are not sensible of their miserable, needy condition. There are many who are thus poor, and think themselves rich, and increased in goods. Indeed there are no natural men that have true contentment: they are all restless, and crying, "Who will show us any good?" but multitudes are not sensible how exceedingly necessitous is their condition. But the thoroughly awakened soul sees that he is very far from true happiness, that those things

which he possesses will never make him happy; that for all his outward possessions he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. He becomes sensible of the short continuance and uncertainty of those things, and their insufficiency to satisfy a troubled conscience. He wants something else to give him peace and ease. If you would tell him that he might have a kingdom, it would not quiet him; he desires to have his sins pardoned, and to be at peace with his Judge. He is poor, and he becomes as a beggar; becomes and cries for help. He does not thirst, because he as yet sees where true happiness is to be found, but because he sees that he has it not, and cannot find it. He is without comfort, and does not know where to find it, but he longs for it. O, what would he not give, if he could find some satisfying peace and comfort!

Such are those hungry, thirsty souls that Christ so often invites to come to him. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.<sup>664</sup> "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; and he that is athirst, let him come and take of the water of life freely.<sup>665</sup> "

4. There is in Christ Jesus provision for the full satisfaction and contentment of such as these.

*First.* The excellency of Christ is such, that the discovery of it is exceedingly contenting and satisfying to the soul. The inquiry of the soul is after that which is most excellent. The carnal soul imagines that earthly things are excellent; one thinks riches most excellent, another has the highest esteem of honour, and to another carnal pleasure appears the most excellent; but the soul cannot find contentment in any of these things, because it soon finds an end to their excellency.

Worldly men imagine, that there is true excellency and true happiness in those things which they are pursuing. They think that if they could but obtain them, they should be happy; and when they obtain them, and cannot find happiness, they look for happiness in something else, and are still upon the pursuit.

But Christ Jesus has true excellency, and so great excellency, that when they come to see it they look no further, but the mind rests there. It sees a transcendent glory and an ineffable sweetness in him; it sees that till now it has been pursuing shadows, but that now it has found the substance; that before it had been seeking happiness in the stream, but that now it has found the ocean. The excellency of Christ is an object adequate to the natural cravings of the soul, and is sufficient to fill the capacity. It is an infinite excellency, such an

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664 [Isa. lv. 1, 2.](#)

665 [John xii. 37.](#)

one as the mind desires, in which it can find no bounds; and the more the mind is used to it, the more excellent it appears. Every new discovery makes this beauty appear more ravishing, and the mind sees no end; here is room enough for the mind to go deeper and deeper, and never come to the bottom. The soul is exceedingly ravished when it first looks on this beauty, and it is never weary of it. The mind never has any satiety, but Christ's excellency is always fresh and new, and tends as much to delight, after it has been seen a thousand or ten thousand years, as when it was seen the first moment. The excellency of Christ is an object suited to the superior faculties of man, it is suited to entertain the faculty of reason and understanding, and there is nothing so worthy about which the understanding can be employed as this excellency; no other object is so great, noble, and exalted.

This excellency of Jesus Christ is the suitable food of the rational soul. The soul that comes to Christ, feeds upon this, and lives upon it; it is that bread which came down from heaven, of which he that eats shall not die; it is angels' food, it is that wine and milk that is given without money, and without price. This is that fatness in which the believing soul delights itself; here the longing soul may be satisfied, and the hungry soul may be filled with goodness. The delight and contentment that is to be found here, passeth understanding, and is unspeakable and full of glory. It is impossible for those who have tasted of this fountain, and know the sweetness of it, ever to forsake it. The soul has found the river of water of life, and it desires no other drink; it has found the tree of life, and it desires no other fruit.

*Secondly.* The manifestation of the love of Christ gives the soul abundant contentment. This love of Christ is exceedingly sweet and satisfying, it is better than life, because it is the love of a person of such dignity and excellency. The sweetness of his love depends very much upon the greatness of his excellency; so much the more lovely the person, so much the more desirable is his love. How sweet must the love of that person be, who is the eternal Son of God, who is of equal dignity with the Father.! How great a happiness must it be to be the object of the love of him who is the Creator of the world, and by whom all things consist, and who is exalted at God's right hand, and made head over principalities and powers in heavenly places, who has all things put under his feet, and is King of kings and Lord of lords, and is the brightness of the Father's glory! Surely to be beloved by him, is enough to satisfy the soul of a worm of the dust.

This love of Christ is also exceedingly sweet and satisfying from the greatness of it; it is a dying love; such love as never was before seen, and such as no other can parallel. There have been instances of very great love between one earthly friend and another; there was a surpassing love between David and Jonathan. But there never was any such love as Christ has towards believers. The satisfying nature of this love arises also from the sweet fruits of it. Those precious benefits that Christ bestows upon his people, and those precious promises which he has given them, are the fruit of this love; joy and hope are the constant streams that flow from this fountain, from the love of Christ.

*Thirdly.* There is provision for the satisfaction and contentment of the thirsty longing soul in Christ, as he is the way to the Father; not only from the fulness of excellency and grace which he has in his own person, but as by him we may come to God, may be reconciled to him, and may be made happy in his favour and love.

The poverty and want of the soul in its natural state consist in its being separated from God, for God is the riches and the happiness of the creature. But we naturally are alienated from God; and God is alienated from us, our Maker is not at peace with us. But in Christ there is a way for a free communication between God and us; for us to come to God, and for God to communicate himself to us by his Spirit. [John xiv. 6.](#) “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” [Ephes. ii. 13, 18, 19.](#) “But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

Christ by being thus the way to the Father, is the way to true happiness and contentment. [John x. 9.](#) “I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”

Hence I would take occasion to invite needy, thirsty souls to come to Jesus. “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.<sup>666</sup>” You that have not yet come to Christ, are in a poor, necessitous condition; you are in a parched wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land. And if you are thoroughly awakened, you are sensible that you are in distress and ready to faint for want of something to satisfy your souls. Come to him who is “as rivers of water in a dry place.<sup>667</sup>” There is plenty and fulness in him; he is like a river that is always flowing, you may live by it forever, and never be in want. Come to him who has such excellency as is sufficient to give full contentment to your soul, who is a person of transcendent glory, and ineffable beauty, where you may entertain the view of your soul forever without weariness, and without being clothed. Accept of the offered love of him who is the only-begotten Son of God, and his elect, in whom his soul delighteth. Through Christ, come to God the Father, from whom you have departed by sin. He is the way, the truth, and the life; he is the door, by which if any man enters he shall be saved.

III. There are quiet rest and sweet refreshment in Christ Jesus, for those that are weary. He is “as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

The comparison that is used in the text is very beautiful and very significative. The dry, barren, and scorched wilderness of Arabia is a very lively representation of the misery that

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666 [John. vii. 37.](#)

667 [Isa.xxxii. 2.](#)

men have brought upon themselves by sin. It is destitute of any inhabitants but lions and tigers and fiery serpents; it is barren and parched, and without any river or spring; it is a land of drought, wherein there is seldom any rain, a land exceedingly hot and uncomfortable. The scorching sunbeams that are ready to consume the spirits of travellers, are a fit representation of terror of conscience, and the inward sense of God's displeasure.

And there being no other shade in which travellers may rest, but only here and there that of a great rock, it is a fit representation of Jesus Christ, who came to redeem us from our misery. Christ is often compared to a rock, because he is a sure foundation to builders, and because he is a sure bulwark and defense. They who dwell upon the top of a rock, dwell in a most defensible place; we read of those whose habitation is the munitions of rocks. He may also be compared to a rock, as he is everlasting and unchangeable. A great rock remains steadfast, unmoved, and unbroken by winds and storms from age to age; and therefore God chose a rock to be an emblem of Christ in the wilderness, when he caused water to issue forth for the children of Israel; and the shadow of a great rock is a most fit representation of the refreshment given to weary souls by Jesus Christ.

1. There is quiet rest and full refreshment in Christ for sinners that are weary and heavy laden with sin. Sin is the most evil and odious thing, as well as the most mischievous and fatal; it is the most mortal poison; it, above all things, hazards life, and endangers the soul, exposes to the loss of all happiness, and to the suffering of all misery, and brings the wrath of God. All men have this dreadful evil hanging about them, and cleaving fast to the soul, and ruling over it, and keeping it in possession, and under absolute command: it hangs like a viper to the heart, or rather holds it as a lion does its prey.

But yet there are multitudes, who are not sensible of their misery. They are in such a sleep that they are not very unquiet in this condition, it is not very burdensome to them, they are so foolish that they do not know what is their state, and what is like to become of them. But there are others who have their sense so far restored to them that they feel the pain, and see the approaching destruction, and sin lies like a heavy load upon their hearts; it is a load that lies upon them day and night, they cannot lay it down to rest themselves, but it continually oppresses them. It is bound fast unto them, and is ready to sink them down; it is a continual labour of heart, to support itself under this burden. Thus we read of them "that labour, and are heavy laden."

Or rather, it is like the scorching heat in a dry wilderness, where the sun beats and burns all the day long; where they have nothing to defend them; where they can find no shade to refresh themselves. If they lay themselves down to rest, it is like lying down in the hot sands, where there is nothing to keep off the heat.

Here it may be proper to inquire who are weary and heavy laden with sin; and in what sense a sinner may be weary and burdened with sin. Sinners are not wearied with sin from any dislike to it, or dislike of it. There is no sinner that is burdened with sin in the sense in

which a godly man carries his indwelling sin, as his daily and greatest burden, because he loathes it, and longs to get rid of it; he would fain be at a great distance from it, and have nothing more to do with it; he is ready to cry out as Paul did, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"<sup>668</sup> The unregenerate man has nothing of this nature, for sin is yet his delight, he dearly loves it. If he be under convictions, his love to sin in general is not mortified, he loves it as well as ever, he hides it still as a sweet morsel under his tongue.

But there is a difference between being weary and burdened with sin, and being weary of sin. Awakened sinners are weary with sin, but not properly weary of it.

Therefore, they are only weary of the guilt of sin, the guilt that cleaves to their consciences is that great burden. God has put the sense of feeling into their consciences, that were before as seared flesh, and it is guilt that pains them. The filthiness of sin and its evil nature, as it is an offense to a holy, gracious, and glorious God, is not a burden to them. But it is the connection between sin and punishment, between sin and God's wrath, that makes it a burden. Their consciences are heavy laden with guilt, which is an obligation to punishment; they see the threatening and curse of the law joined to their sins, and see that the justice of God and his vengeance are against them. They are burdened with their sins, not because there is any odiousness in them, but because there is hell in them. This is the sting of sin, whereby it stings the conscience, and distresses and wearies the soul.

The guilt of such and such great sins is upon the soul, and the man sees no way to get rid of it, but he has wearisome days and wearisome nights; it makes him ready sometimes to say as the psalmist did, "O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."<sup>669</sup>

But when sinners come to Christ, he takes away that which was their burden, or their sin and guilt, that which was so heavy upon their hearts, that so distressed their minds.

He takes away the guilt of sin, from which the soul before saw no way how it was possible to be freed, and which, if it was not removed, led to eternal destruction. When the sinner comes to Christ, it is all at once taken away, and the soul is left free, it is lightened of its burden, it is delivered from its bondage, and is like a bird escaped from the snare of the fowler. The soul sees in Christ a way to peace with God, and a way by which the law may be answered, and justice satisfied, and yet he may escape; a wonderful way indeed, but yet a certain and a glorious one. And what rest does it give to the weary soul to see itself thus delivered, that the foundation of its anxieties and fears is wholly removed, and that God's

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668 [Rom. vii. 24.](#)

669 [Psa. lv. 6.](#)



wrath ceases, that it is brought into a state of peace with God, and that there is no more occasion to fear hell, but that it is for ever safe!

How refreshing is it to the soul to be at once thus delivered of that which was so much its trouble and terror, and to be eased of that which was so much its burden! This is like coming to a cool shade after one has been travelling in a dry and hot wilderness, and almost fainting under the scorching heat.

And then Christ also takes away sin itself, and mortifies that root of bitterness which is the cause of all the inward tumults and disquietudes that are in the mind, that make it like the troubled sea that cannot rest, and leaves it all calm. When guilt is taken away and sin is mortified, then the foundation of fear, and trouble, and pain is removed, and the soul is left in peace and serenity.

*Secondly.* Christ puts strength and a principle of new life into the weary soul that comes to him. The sinner, before he comes to Christ, is as a sick man that is weakened and brought low, and whose nature is consumed by some strong distemper: he is full of pain, and so weak that he cannot walk nor stand. Therefore, Christ is compared to a physician. “But when Jesus heard that, he saith unto them, They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick.<sup>670</sup>” When he comes and speaks the word, he puts a principle of life into him that was before as dead: he gives a principle of spiritual life and the beginning of eternal life; he invigorates the mind with a communication of his own life and strength, and renews the nature and creates it again, and makes the man to be a new creature.

So that the fainting, sinking spirits are now revived, and this principle of spiritual life is a continual spring of refreshment, like a well of living water. “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.<sup>671</sup>” Christ gives his Spirit, that calms the mind, and is like a refreshing breeze of wind. He gives that strength whereby he lifts up the hands that hang down, and strengthens the feeble knees.

*Thirdly.* Christ gives to those who come to him such comfort and pleasure as are enough to make them forget all their former labour and travail. A little of true peace, a little of the joys of the manifested love of Christ, and a little of the true and holy hope of eternal life, are enough to compensate for all that toil and weariness, and to erase the remembrance of it from the mind. That peace which results from true faith passes understanding, and that joy is joy unspeakable. There is something peculiarly sweet and refreshing in this joy, that is not in other joys; and what can more effectually support the mind, or give a more rational ground of rejoicing, than a prospect of eternal glory in the enjoyment of God from God’s own promise in Christ? If we come to Christ, we may not only be refreshed by resting in

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670 [Matt. ix. 12.](#)

671 [John iv. 14.](#)

his shadow, but by eating his fruit: these things are the fruits of this tree. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."<sup>672</sup>

Before proceeding to the next particular of this proposition, I would apply myself to those that are weary; to move them to repose themselves under Christ's shadow.

The great trouble of such a state, one would think, should be a motive to you to accept of an offer of relief, and remedy. You are weary, and doubtless would be glad to be at rest; but here you are to consider,

1st. That there is no remedy but in Jesus Christ; there is nothing else that will give you true quietness. If you could fly into heaven, you would not find it there; if you should take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, in some solitary place in the wilderness, you could not fly from your burden. So that if you do not come to Christ, you must either continue still weary and burdened, or, which is worse, you must return to your old dead sleep, to a state of stupidity; and not only so, but you must be everlastingly wearied with God's wrath.

2d. Consider that Christ is a remedy at hand. You need not wish for the wings of a dove that you may fly afar off, and be at rest, but Christ is nigh at hand, if you were but sensible of it. [Rom. x. 6, 7, 8.](#) "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise. Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." There is no need of doing any great work to come at this rest; the way is plain to it; it is but going to it, it is but sitting down under Christ's shadow. Christ requires no money to purchase rest of him, he calls to us to come freely, and for nothing. If we are poor and have no money, we may come. Christ sent out his servants to invite the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. Christ does not want to be hired to accept of you, and to give you rest. It is his work as Mediator to give rest to the weary, it is the work that he was anointed for, and in which he delights. [Isa. lxi. 1.](#) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

3d. Christ is not only a remedy for your weariness and trouble, but he will give you an abundance of the contrary, joy and delight. They who come to Christ, do not only come to a resting-place after they have been wandering in a wilderness, but they come to a banqueting-house where they may rest, and where they may feast. They may cease from their former troubles and toils, and they may enter upon a course of delights and spiritual joys.

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<sup>672</sup> [Cant. ii. 3.](#)



Christ not only delivers from fears of hell and of wrath, but he gives hopes of heaven, and the enjoyment of God's love. He delivers from inward tumults and inward pain, from that guilt of conscience which is as a worm gnawing within, and he gives delight and inward glory. He brings us out of a wilderness of pits, and drought, and fiery flying spirits; and he brings us into a pleasant land, a land flowing with milk and honey. He delivers us out of prison, and lifts us off from the dunghill, and he sets us among princes, and causes us to inherit the throne of glory. Wherefore, if any one is weary, if any is in prison, if any one is in captivity, if any one is in the wilderness, let him come to the blessed Jesus, who is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Delay not, arise and come away.

2. There are quiet rest and sweet refreshment in Christ for God's people that are weary.

The saints themselves, while they remain in this imperfect state, and have so much remains of sin in their hearts, are liable still to many troubles and sorrows, and much weariness, and have often need to resort anew unto Jesus Christ for rest. I shall mention three cases wherein Christ is a sufficient remedy.

*First.* There is rest and sweet refreshment in Christ for those that are wearied with persecutions. It has been the lot of God's church in this world for the most part to be persecuted. It has had now and then some lucid intervals of peace and outward prosperity, but generally it has been otherwise. This has accorded with the first prophecy concerning Christ; "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."<sup>673</sup> Those two seeds have been at enmity ever since the time of Abel. Satan has borne great malice against the church of God, and so have those that are his seed. And oftentimes God's people have been persecuted to an extreme degree, have been put to the most exquisite torments that wit or art could devise, and thousands of them have been tormented to death.

But even in such a case there are rest and refreshment to be found in Christ Jesus. When their cruel enemies have given them no rest in this world; when, as oftentimes has been the case, they could not flee, nor in any way avoid the rage of their adversaries, but many of them have been tormented gradually from day to day, that their torments might be lengthened; still rest has been found even thou in Christ. It has been often found by experience; the martyrs have often showed plainly that the peace and calm of their minds were undisturbed in the midst of the greatest bodily torment, and have sometimes rejoiced and sung praises upon the rack and in the fire. If Christ is pleased to send forth his Spirit to manifest his love, and speaks friendly to the soul, it will support it even in the greatest outward torment that man can inflict. Christ is the joy of the soul, and if the soul be but rejoiced and filled with divine light, such joy no man can take away; whatever outward misery there be, the spirit will sustain it.

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673 [Gen. iii. 15.](#)

*Secondly.* There is in Christ rest for God's people, when exercised with afflictions. If a person labour under great bodily weakness, or under some disease that causes frequent and strong pains, such things will tire out so feeble a creature as man. It may to such an one be a comfort and an effectual support to think, that he has a Mediator, who knows by experience what pain is; who by his pain has purchased eternal ease and pleasure for him; and who will make his brief sufferings to work out a far more exceeding delight, to be bestowed when he shall rest from his labours and sorrows.

If a person be brought into great straits as to outward subsistence, and poverty brings abundance of difficulties and extremities; yet it may be a supporting, refreshing consideration to such an one to think, that he has a compassionate Saviour, who when upon earth, was so poor that he had not where to lay his head, and who became poor to make him rich, and purchased for him durable riches, and will make his poverty work out an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

If God in his providence calls his people to mourn over lost relations, and if he repeats his stroke and takes away one after another of those that were dear to him; it is a supporting, refreshing consideration to think, that Christ has declared that he will be in stead of all relations unto those who trust in him. They are as his mother, and sister, and brother; he has taken them into a very near relation to himself: and in every other afflictive providence, it is a great comfort to a believing soul to think that he has an intercessor with God, that by him he can have access with confidence to the throne of grace, and that in Christ we have so many great and precious promises, that all things shall work together for good, and shall issue in eternal blessedness. God's people, whenever they are scorched by afflictions as by hot sun-beams, may resort to him, who is as a shadow of a great rock, and be effectually sheltered, and sweetly refreshed.

*Thirdly.* There is in Christ quiet rest and sweet refreshment for God's people, when wearied with the buffetings of Satan. The devil, that malicious enemy of God and man, does whatever lies in his power to darken and hinder, and tempt God's people, and render their lives uncomfortable. Often he raises needless and groundless scruples, and casts in doubts, and fills the mind with such fear as is tormenting, and tends to hinder them exceedingly in the Christian course; and he often raises mists and clouds of darkness, and stirs up corruption, and thereby fills the mind with concern and anguish, and sometimes wearies out the soul. So that they may say as the psalmist; [Psa. xxii. 12.](#) "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion."

In such a case if the soul flies to Jesus Christ, they may find rest in him, for he came into the world to destroy Satan, and to rescue souls out of his hands. And he has all things put under his feet, whether they be things in heaven, or things on earth, or things in hell, and therefore he can restrain Satan when he pleases. And that he is doubtless ready enough to

pity us under such temptations, we may be assured, for he has been tempted and buffeted by Satan as well as we. He is able to succour those that are tempted, and he has promised that he will subdue Satan under his people's feet. Let God's people therefore, when they are exercised with any of those kinds of weariness, make their resort unto Jesus Christ for refuge and rest.

1. We may here see great reason to admire the goodness and grace of God to us in our low estate, that he has so provided for our help and relief. We are by our own sin against God plunged into all sort of evil, and God has provided a remedy for us against every sort of evil, he has left us helpless in no calamity. We by our sin have exposed ourselves to wrath, to a vindictive justice; but God has done very great things that we might be saved from that wrath; he has been at infinite cost that the law might be answered without our suffering. We by our sins have exposed ourselves to terror of conscience, in expectation of the dreadful storm of God's wrath; but God has provided for us a hiding-place from the storm, he bids us enter into his chambers, and hide ourselves from indignation. We by sin have made ourselves poor, needy creatures; but God has provided for us gold tried in the fire. We by sin have made ourselves naked; and when he passed by, he took notice of our want, and has provided us white raiment that we may be clothed. We have made ourselves blind, and God in mercy to us has provided eye-salve, that we may see. We have deprived ourselves of all spiritual food; we are like the prodigal son that perished with hunger, and would gladly have filled his belly with husks. God has taken notice of this our condition, and has provided for us a feast of fat things, and has sent forth his servants to invite the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. We by sin have brought ourselves into a dry and thirsty wilderness; but God was merciful, and took notice of our condition, and has provided for us rivers of water, water out of the rock. We by sin have brought upon ourselves a miserable slavery and bondage; God has made provision for our liberty. We have exposed ourselves to weariness; God has provided a resting-place for us. We by sin have exposed ourselves to many outward troubles and afflictions; God has pitied us, and in Christ has provided true comfort for us. We have exposed ourselves to our grand enemy, even Satan, to be tempted and buffeted by him; God has pitied, and has provided for us a Saviour and Captain of salvation, who has overcome Satan, and is able to deliver us. Thus God has in Christ provided sufficiently for our help in all kinds of evils.

How ought we to bless God for this abundant provision he has made for us, poor and sinful as we were, who were so undeserving and so ungrateful. He made no such provision for the fallen angels, who are left without remedy in all the woes and miseries into which they are plunged.

2. We should admire the love of Christ to men, that he has thus given himself to be the remedy for all their evil, and a fountain of all good. Christ has given himself to us, to be all things to us that we need. We want clothing, and Christ does not only give us clothing, but



he gives himself to be our clothing, that we might put him on. [Gal. iii. 27.](#) “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” [Rom. xiii. 14.](#) “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

We want food, and Christ has given himself to be our food; he has given his own flesh to be our meat, and his blood to be our drink, to nourish our soul. Thus Christ tells us that he is the bread which came down from heaven, and the bread of life. [John. vi. 48, 49, 50, 51.](#) “I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” In order to our eating of his flesh, it was necessary that he should be slain, as the sacrifices must be slain before they could be eaten; and such was Christ’s love to us, that he consented to be slain, he went as a sheep to the slaughter, that he might give us his flesh to be food for our poor, famishing souls.

We are in need of a habitation; we by sin have, as it were, turned ourselves out of house and home; Christ has given himself to be the habitation of his people. [Ps. xc. 1.](#) “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.” It is promised to God’s people that they should dwell in the temple of God for ever, and should go no more out; and we are told that Christ is the temple of the new Jerusalem.

Christ gives himself to his people to be all things to them that they need, and all things that make for their happiness. [Col. iii. 11.](#) “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but Christ is all, and in all.” And that he might be so, he has refused nothing that is needful to prepare him to be so. When it was needful that he should be incarnate, he refused it not, but became man, and appeared in the form of a servant. When it was needful that he should be slain, he refused it not, but gave himself for us, and gave himself to us upon the cross.

Here is love for us to admire, for us to praise, and for us to rejoice in, with joy that is full of glory for ever.

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## SERMON XIII.

### 1 peter ii. 9.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

the apostle in the preceding verses speaks of the great difference between Christians and unbelievers, on account of their diverse and opposite relations to Jesus Christ. The former have Christ for their foundation, they come to him as a living stone, a stone chosen of God, and precious; and they also as living stones are built up a spiritual house. The Christian church is the temple of God; and particular believers are the stones of which that temple is built. The stones of Solomon's temple, which were so curiously polished and well fitted for their places in that building, were a type of believers. And Christ is the foundation of this building, or the chief corner stone. On the contrary, to the latter, to unbelievers, Christ, instead of being a foundation on which they rest and depend, is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; instead of being a foundation to support them and keep them from falling, he is an occasion of their stumbling and falling.

And again, to believers Christ is a precious stone: "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.<sup>674</sup>" But to unbelievers he is a stone that is disallowed, and rejected, and set at nought. They set light by him, as by the stones of the street; they make no account of him, they disallow him; when they come to build, they cast this stone away as being of no use, not fit for a foundation, not fit for a place in their building. In the eighth verse the apostle tells the Christians to whom he writes, that those unbelievers who thus reject Christ, and to whom he is a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, were appointed to this. "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.<sup>675</sup>" It was appointed that they should stumble at the word that Christ should be an occasion not of their salvation, but of their deeper damnation. And then in our text, he puts the Christians in mind how far otherwise God had dealt with them, than with those reprobates. They were a chosen generation. God had rejected the others in his eternal counsels; but themselves he had chosen from eternity. They were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.

As God distinguished the people of Israel of old from all other nations, so he distinguishes true Christians. It is probable, the apostle had in his mind some expressions that are used in the Old Testament, concerning the people of Israel. Christians are said here to be a chosen generation, according to what was said of Israel of old. [Deut. x. 15.](#) "Only the Lord thy God had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above

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674 [1 Peter ii. 7.](#)

675 [1 Peter ii. 8.](#)

all people, as it is this day.” Christians are here said to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, agreeable to what was said of old of Israel. [Exod. xix. 5, 6.](#) “Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shall speak unto the children of Israel.”

But there is something further said here of Christians than there of Israel. There, it is promised to Israel that, if they obey, they shall be *a kingdom of priests*; but here, Christians are said to be *a priesthood of kings*, or a royal priesthood. They are a priesthood, and they are also kings.

I propose to insist distinctly upon the several propositions contained in the words of the text.

I. True Christians are *a chosen generation*. Two things are here implied.

1. That true Christians are chosen by God from the rest of the world, to be his.
2. That God’s people are of a peculiar descent and pedigree, different from all the world besides.

1. True Christians are chosen by God from the rest of the world.

God does not utterly cast off the world of mankind. Though they are fallen and corrupted, and there is a curse brought upon the world, yet God entertained a design of appropriating a certain number to himself. Indeed all men and all creatures are his, as well since as before the fall; whether they are elected or not, they are his. God does not lose his right to them by the fall, neither does he lose his power to dispose of them; they are still in his hands. Neither does he lose his end in creating them. God hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. It possibly was Satan’s design, in endeavouring the fall of man, to cause that God should lose the creature that he had made, by getting him away from God into his own possession, and to frustrate God of his end in creating man; but this Satan has not obtained.

But yet in a sense the wicked may be said not to belong to God. God doth not own them; he hath rejected them and cast them away; they are not God’s portion, they are Satan’s portion; God hath left them, and they are lost. When man fell, God left and cast off the bulk of mankind; but he was pleased, notwithstanding the universal fall, to choose out a number of them to be his, whom he would still appropriate to himself. Though the world is a fallen world, yet it was the will of God still to have a portion in it, and therefore he chose out some and set them apart for himself. [Psal. iv. 3.](#) “But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him.” God’s portion is his people, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. [Deut. xxxii. 9.](#) Those who are God’s enemies, and to whom he is an enemy, are still his. But those who are his friends, his children, his jewels, that compose his treasure, are his in a very different manner. God has chosen the godly out



of the rest of the world to be nearly related to him, to stand in the relation of children, to have a property in him, that they might not only be his people, but that he might be their God; he has chosen these to bestow himself upon them. He hath chosen them from among others to be gracious to them, to show them his favour; he has chosen them to enjoy him, to see his glory, and to dwell with him for ever. He hath chosen them as his treasure, as a man chooses out gems from a heap of stones, with this difference, the man finds gems very different from other stones, and therefore chooses. But God chooses them, and therefore they become gems, and very different from others. [Mal. iii. 17.](#) "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." [Psal. cxxxv. 4.](#) "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure." God hath chosen them for a most noble and excellent use, and therefore they are called vessels unto honour, and elect vessels. God has different uses for different men. Some are destined to a baser use, and are vessels unto dishonour; others are chosen for the most noble use, for serving and glorifying God, and that God may show the glory of divine grace upon them.

Several things may here be observed concerning this election of God, whereby he chooses truly godly persons.

*First.* This election supposes that the persons chosen are found among others. The word election denotes this, it signifies *a choosing out*. The elect are favoured by electing grace among the rest of mankind, with whom they are found mixed together as the tares and the wheat. They are found among them in the same sinfulness, and in the same misery, and are alike partakers of original corruption. They are among them in being destitute of any thing in them that is good, in enmity against God, in being in bondage to Satan, in condemnation to eternal destruction, and in being without righteousness. So that there is no distinction between them prior to that which the election makes, there is no respect wherein the elect are net among the common multitude of mankind. [1 Cor. iv. 7.](#) "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" [1 Cor. vi. 11.](#) "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." And, therefore,

*Secondly.* No foreseen excellency in the elected is the motive that influences God to choose them. Election is only from his good pleasure. God's election being the first thing that causes any distinction, there can be no distinction already existing, the foresight of which influences God to choose them. It is not the seeing of any amiable-ness in them above others, that causes God to choose them rather than the rest. God does not choose men, because they are excellent; but he makes them excellent, and because he has chosen them. It is not because God considers them as holy that he chooses them; but he chooses them that they might be holy. [Eph. i. 4, 5.](#) "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation

of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." God does not choose them from the foresight of any respect they will have towards him more than others. God does not choose men and set his care upon them because they love him, for he hath first loved us. [1 John iv. 10.](#) "Herein is love, not that we loved *God*, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" [ver. 19.](#) "We love him, because he first loved us."

It is not from any foresight of good works that men do before or after conversion; but on the contrary, men do good works because God hath chosen them. [John xv. 16.](#) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." Nor did God choose men, because he foresaw that they would believe and come to Christ. Faith is the consequence of election, and not the cause of it. [Acts xiii. 48.](#) "And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." It is because God hath chosen men, that he calls them to Christ, and causes them to come to him. To suppose that election is from the foresight of faith, is to place calling before election, which is contrary to the order in which the Scripture represents things. [Rom. viii. 30.](#) "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." It is not from the foresight of any, either moral or natural qualifications, that God chooses men, nor because he sees that some men are of a more amiable make, and better natural temper, or genius, nor because he foresees that some men will have better abilities, and will have more wisdom than others, and so will be able to do more service for God than others; nor because he foresees that they will be great and rich, and so possessed of greater advantages to serve him. [1 Cor i. 27, 28.](#) "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world, and things despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." Nor is it from any foresight of men's endeavours after conversion, because he sees that some whom he chooses will do much more than others to obtain heaven; but God chooses them, and therefore awakens them, and prompts them to strive for conversion. [Rom. ix. 16.](#) "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Election in Scripture is every where referred to God's own good pleasure. [Matt. xi. 26.](#) "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." [2 Tim. i. 9.](#) "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

*Thirdly.* True Christians are chosen of God from all eternity; not only before they were born, but before the world was created. They were foreknown of God, and chosen by him



out of the world. [Eph. i. 4.](#) “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.” [2 Tim. i. 9.](#) “According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.”

*Fourthly.* God in election set his love upon those whom he elected. [Rom. ix. 13.](#) “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” [Jer. xxxi. 3.](#) “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” [1 John iv. 19.](#) “We love him because he first loved us.” A God of infinite goodness and benevolence loves those that have no excellency to move or attract it: the love of men is consequent upon some loveliness in the object, but the love of God is antecedent to, and the cause of it. Believers were from all eternity beloved both by the Father and the Son. The eternal love of the Father appears in that he from all eternity contrived a way for their salvation, and chose Jesus Christ to be their Redeemer, and laid help upon him. It is a fruit of this electing love that God sent his Son into the world to die, it was to redeem those whom he so loved. [1 John iv. 10.](#) “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” It is a fruit of the eternal, electing love of Jesus Christ, that he was willing to come into the world, and die for sinners, and that he actually came and died. [Gal. ii. 20.](#) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” And so conversion, and glorification, and all that is done for a believer from the first to the last, is a fruit of electing love.

*Fifthly.* This electing love of God is singly of every particular person. Some deny a particular election, and say that there is no other election than a general determination, that all that believe and obey shall be saved. Some also own no more than an absolute election of nations. But God did from all eternity singly and distinctly choose, and set his love upon, every particular person that ever believes, as is evident by [Gal. ii. 20.](#) “Who loved me and gave himself for me.” God set his love from eternity upon this and that person, as particularly as it there were no other chosen than he; and therefore it is represented as though they were mentioned by name, that their names are written in the book of life. [Luke x. 20.](#) “Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” [Rev. xiii. 8.](#) “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

*Sixthly.* In election, believers were from all eternity given to Jesus Christ. As believers were chosen from all eternity, so Christ was from eternity chosen and appointed to be their Redeemer, and he undertook the work of redeeming them. There was a covenant respecting it between the Father and Son. Christ, as we have already observed, loved them before the creation of the world; and then he had their names, as it were, written in a book, and

therefore the book of life is called the Lamb's book. [Rev. xxi. 27.](#) "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." And he bears their names upon his heart, as the high priest of old did the names of the tribes of the children of Israel on his breastplate. Christ often calls the elect those whom God had given him. [John xvii. 2.](#) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." In the [9th verse](#), "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." In the 11th verse, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." [John xvii. 11.](#) "

This part of the subject may suggest to us the following reflections.

*First.* God's thus electing a certain definite number from among fallen men from all eternity, is a manifestation of his glory. It shows the glory of the divine sovereignty. God hereby declares himself the absolute disposer of the creature; he shows us how far his sovereignty and dominion extend, in eternally choosing some and passing by others, and leaving them to perish. God here appears in a majesty that is unparalleled. Those who can see no glory of dominion in this act, have not attained to right apprehensions of God, and never have been made sensible of his glorious greatness. And here is especially shown the glory of divine grace, in God's having chosen his people to blessedness and glory long before they are born; in his choosing them out of the mass of mankind, from whom they were not distinguished, and in his love to them being prior to all that they have or do, being uninfluenced by any excellency of theirs, by the light of any labours or endeavours of theirs, or any respect of theirs towards him.

The doctrine of election shows, that if those who are converted have earnestly sought grace and holiness, and in that way have obtained it, their obtaining it is not owing to their endeavours, but that it was the grace and mercy of God that caused them earnestly to seek conversion, that they might obtain it. It shows also that faith itself is the gift of God, and that the saints persevering in a way of holiness unto glory, is also the fruit of electing love. Believers' love to God is the fruit of God's love to them, and the giving of Christ, the preaching of the gospel, the appointing of ordinances, are all fruits of the grace of election. All the grace that is shown to any of mankind, either in this world, or in the world to come, is comprised in the electing love of God.

*Secondly.* If believers are the chosen of God, here is a great argument for their love and gratitude towards him. The consideration of the miserable condition in which God found you, and in which he left others, should move your hearts. How wonderful that God should take such thought of a poor worm from all eternity! God might have left you as well as many others, but it pleased the Lord to set his love upon you. What cause have you for love and

thankfulness, that God should make choice of you, and set you apart for himself rather than so many thousands of others!

God hath chosen you not merely to be his subjects and servants, but to be his children, to be his peculiar treasure; he has chosen you to be blessed for ever in the enjoyment of himself, and to dwell with him in his glory. He has given you from all eternity to his Son, to be united unto him, to become the spouse of Christ. He has chosen you that you might be holy and without blame, that you might have your filth taken away, and that you might have the image of God put upon you, and that your soul might be adorned, to be the bride of his glorious and dear Son. What cause for love is here!

*Thirdly.* If believers are a chosen generation, let all labour earnestly to make their election sure. If true Christians are chosen of God, this should induce all earnestly to inquire whether they are true Christians. [2 Peter i. 5, 6, 7.](#) “And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.”

2. True Christians are a distinct race of men; they are of a peculiar descent or pedigree, different from the rest of the world. This is implied in their being called a generation. There are three significations of the word generation in the Scriptures. Sometimes it means, as is its meaning in common use, *a class of persons among a people, or in the world, that are born together, or so nearly together, that the time of their being in the different stages of the age of man is the same.* They shall be young persons, middle aged, and old together; or they shall be together upon the stage of action. All that are together upon the face of the earth, or the stage of action, are very often accounted as one generation. Thus when God threatened that not one of the Israelites of that generation should see the good land, it is meant, all from twenty years old and upwards.

A second meaning is, *those who are born of a common progenitor.*

A third meaning of the word in Scripture, is, *a certain race of mankind, whose generation and birth agree, not as to time, but as to descent and pedigree, or us to those persons from whom they originally proceeded.* So it is to be understood, [Matt. i. 1.](#) “This is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;” that is, this is the book that gives an account of his pedigree. And this meaning, *viz.* those who are of the same race and descent, must be given to the word in the text. The righteous are often spoken of in Scripture as being a distinct generation. [Psal. xiv. 5.](#) “There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.” [Psal. xxiv. 6.](#) “This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob.” [Psal. lxxiii. 15.](#) “If I say, I will speak thus: behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.”

That the godly are a distinct race appears evident, since they are descended from God, they are a heavenly race, they are derived from above. The heathen were wont to feign that



their heroes and great men were descended from the gods, but God's people are descended from the true and living God, without any fiction. [Psal. xxii. 30.](#) "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." That is, a seed, a posterity, shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for his posterity or offspring.

Now the people of God may be considered as descending from God, and as being his posterity, either remotely or immediately.

*First.* They are *remotely* descended from God. The church is a distinct race, that originally came from God. Other men are of the earth, they are of earthly derivation, they are the posterity of men; but the church is the posterity of God. Thus it is said, [Gen. vi. 2.](#) "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." The sons of God were the children of the church, of the posterity of Seth; the daughters of men were those that were born out of the church, and of the posterity of Cain, and those that adhered to him.

It was God that set up the church in the world, and those, who were the first founders of the church, were of God, and were called specially *the sons of God*. Seth was the seed that God appointed. [Gen. iv. 25.](#) "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth. For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Adam, in Luke's genealogy of Christ, ([Luke iii. 38.](#) "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God,") is called the son of God; possibly, not only because he was immediately created by God, but also because he was from God, and was begotten by him. As he was a good man, and was the founder of the church, of which Christ himself became a son, he was the first in the line of the church, and as such he was from God. When the church was almost extinct God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and afterwards out of Haran. Abraham was one immediately from God, and all God's people in all succeeding ages are accounted as the children of Abraham. God promised Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand on the sea-shore, meaning primarily not his posterity according to the flesh. John the Baptist said., God is able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Those are the seed of Abraham, as we are taught in the New Testament, that are of the faith of Abraham; Christians, as well as Jews, are the seed of Abraham. [Gal. iii. 29.](#) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." So the church is the seed of Jacob, who is called God's son. [Hosea xi. 1.](#) "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called *my son* out of Egypt." All God's people are called Israel; not only his posterity according to the flesh, but proselytes of old, and Gentile Christians now under the gospel. The sincerely godly, and they only, are the true Israel.

So the people of God are descended from God the Father originally, as they are descended from Christ the Son of God. Christians are called *the seed of Christ*. [Gal. iii. 29.](#) "And if ye be Christ's," &c. They are, as it were, his *posterity*; Christ calls them his *children*. [Heb. ii. 13.](#)

“Behold I and the children which thou hast given me.” So that if we trace the pedigree of God’s people up to their original, they will be found to be descended from God: they are of heaven, they are not of this world. Other men are of the earth, and are earthly, but these are heavenly, and are of heaven. The wicked are called the men of this world. [Psal. xvii. 14.](#) “From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.” The first beginnings of the church were from God, the great founder of the church. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and those men, who under him have been founders, were of God, were of him. God chose them, called them, and created them for this purpose. Since which, God’s people are descended one from another; the church is continued and propagated, as it were, by generation. If there were no ordinary and stated means made use of for the continuing and propagating the church, it would not be so; but God’s people are made the instruments of one another’s conversion, by begetting one another’s souls. The church is continued by itself instrumentally through all generations, the people of God are begotten through the education, instruction, and endeavours of those who were God’s people before. Therefore the church is represented in Scripture as being the mother of its members. [Gal. iv. 26.](#) “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Believers are the children of the church, as they are often called. [Isa. xlix. 20.](#) “The children which thou shall have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, the place is too strait for me; give place to me, that I may dwell.” [Isa. liv. 1.](#) “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.” And many other places.

God’s people are often, through their education and instruction, the spiritual parents of those of whom they are the natural parents. The ministers of the word and ordinances are spiritual fathers. The apostle tells the Christian Corinthians, that he had begotten them through the gospel.

*Secondly.* God’s people are *immediately* begotten of God. When they become saints, they are *born again*, they have a new nature given them, they have a new life begun, they are renewed in the whole man by a new generation and birth wherein they are born of God. [John i. 12, 13.](#) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were *born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but *of God.*” They are born of the Spirit of God. [John iii. 8.](#) “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou nearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is *born of the Spirit.*” God is said to have formed the church from the womb. [Isa. xlv. 2.](#) “Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob my servant; and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.”



This truth also may suggest to us a few profitable reflections.

*First.* Christians ought to bear with one another. It appears from what has been said, that they are all of one kindred, that they have a relation to other Christians which they have not to the rest of the world; being of a distinct race from them, but of the same race one with another. They are descended all along from the same progenitors; they are the children of the same universal church of God; they are all the children of Abraham; they are the seed of Jesus Christ; they are the offspring of God. And they are yet much more alike, than their being of the same race originally argues them to be: they are also immediately the children of the same Father. God hath begotten all by the same word and Spirit; they are all of one family, and should therefore love as brethren. **1 Peter iii. 8.** “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.”

It is very unbecoming those who are God’s offspring, to entertain a spirit of hatred and ill will one towards another. It is very unbecoming to be backward in helping and assisting one another, and supplying each other’s wants; much more, to contrive and seek one another’s hurt, to be revengeful one towards another.

*Secondly.* Let Christians take heed so to walk, that they may not dishonour their pedigree. You are of a very honourable race, more honourable by far than if you were the offspring of kings, and had royal blood in your veins; you are a heavenly offspring, the seed of Jesus Christ, the children of God. They that are of noble race are wont to value themselves highly upon the honour of their families, to dwell on their titles, their coats of arms, and their ensigns of honour, and to recount the exploits of their illustrious forefathers. How much more careful should you be of the honour of your descent, that you in nothing behave yourself unworthy of the great God. the eternal and omnipotent King of heaven and earth, whose offspring you are!

There are many things that are very base, and too mean for such as you; such are a giving way to earthly-mindedness, a grovelling like moles in the earth, a suffering your soul to cleave to those earthly things, which ought to be neglected and despised by those who are of heavenly descent; an indulgence of the lusts of the flesh, suffering the soul to be immersed in filth, being taken up with mean and unworthy delights common to the beasts, being intemperate in the gratification of any carnal appetite whatsoever, or a being much concerned about earthly honour. It is surely a disgrace to them, who are accounted to God for a generation, much to care whether they are accounted great upon this dunghill. So it is unworthy of your noble descent to be governed by your passions: you should be guided by higher principles of reason and virtue, and an universal respect to the glory and honour of God.

But Christians should seek after those things which will be to the honour of their birth, after spiritual wisdom, and knowledge of the most worthy and noble truths. They should seek more and more an acquaintance with God, and to be assimilated to him, their great progenitor, and their immediate Father, that they may have the image of his excellent and



divine perfections:. They should endeavour to act like God, wherein they are capable of imitation of him. They should seek heavenly-mindedness, those noble appetites after heavenly and spiritual enjoyments, a noble ambition after heavenly glory, a contempt of the trifles and mean things of this world. They should seek after those delights and satisfactions that can be enjoyed by none but heavenly minds. They should exercise a spirit of true, universal, and disinterested love and confidence, and Christian charity. They should be much in devotion, and divine contemplation.

*Thirdly.* We see here a reason why Christians are of so different a nature and temper from the rest of the world. The truly godly are very different in their disposition from others. “They hate those things that the rest of the world love, and love those things for which the rest of the world have no relish; insomuch that others are ready to wonder that they should place any happiness in a strict observance of the self-denying duties of religion; they wonder what delight they can take in spending so much time in meditation and prayer, and that they do not place happiness in those things which themselves do. [1 Peter iv. 4.](#) “Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot; speaking evil of you.” But the reason is, they are of a different race, and so derive different dispositions.

It is ordinary to see those who are of different families, of a different temper. The natural temper of parents is commonly in some degree transmitted to their posterity. Indeed, all agree in many things, for all are of the same blood originally; all are descended from the same Adam, and the same Noah. But Christians are born again of another stock, different from all the rest of the world; and therefore they are of a temper by themselves, wherein none of the rest of the world agree with them. [Rev. i. 6.](#) “And hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father: to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever.”

#### II. True Christians are a royal priesthood.

The two offices of king and priest were accounted very honourable both among Jews and heathens; but it was a thing not known under the law of Moses, that the same person should sustain both those offices in a stated manner; and while Moses himself is said to have been king in Jeshurun, yet his brother Aaron was the high priest. Those who were kings by divine appointment in Israel, were of another tribe from the priesthood, *viz.* the tribe of Judah. Before the giving the law we have an instance of one who was both king and priest, *viz.* Melchizedek. [Gen. xiv. 18.](#) “And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God.”

Therefore, in some of the prophecies of Christ, it is spoken of as a remarkable thing of him, that he should be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. [Psal. cx. 4.](#) “The Lord hath sworn and will not repent; thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” The same again is prophesied of as a wonderful thing by Zechariah, that he should be a priest upon a throne. [Zech. vi. 13.](#) “Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne;

and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” In this respect the gospel dispensation differs from the legal, that it reveals the compatibleness of the two offices. One person, Jesus Christ, is antitype of both kings and priests, under the law; and as it is the will of Christ, who became in all things like unto us, that his disciples should in many things become like unto him, so it is in this among others. As Christ is the Son of God, so those that are Christ’s are the children of God; as Christ is the heir of God, so, as Christ liveth, it is his will that they should live also. As Christ rose from the dead, so it is the will of Christ that his saints should rise also. As Christ is in heaven in glory, so it is the will of Christ that they should be with him where he is. So, as Christ is both King and Priest, so shall believers be made kings and priests. What is said in the text, is either with respect to what they now are, or what they shall be hereafter. The apostle says, “ye are a royal priesthood; <sup>676</sup>” that is, ye have those honours in reversion. Christians are kings here, as a king who is in his minority; who, though the crown is his right, has not yet Come actually to reign. The; are indeed in an exalted state while here, but not as they will be hereafter. Christians while here are indeed priests, but not as they will be. Christians are called kings, and priests here, in this world. [Rev. i. 6.](#) “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” But in [Rev. v.](#) the saints in heaven speak of this as the consequence of their glory and exaltation. [Rev. v. 9, 10.](#) “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; that we should reign on the earth.”

1. Christians are kings.

When Christians are called kings, the Scriptures include both what they actually have in this world, and what they have in a future state. The reward which our Lord Jesus promised to his disciples, was a kingdom. [Luke xxii. 29.](#) “And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.” Christians, having this promise, are therefore heirs of a kingdom here, which they are hereafter to receive. [James ii. 5.](#) “Hearken, my beloved brethren; hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”

The reward of the saints is represented as a kingdom, because the possession of a kingdom is the height of human advancement in this world, and as it is the common opinion that those who have a kingdom have the greatest possible happiness. The happiness of a kingdom, or royal state, for which it is so much admired by mankind, consists in these things:

*First* The honour of a kingdom.

*Secondly.* The possessions of kings.

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676 [1 Peter ii. 9.](#)

*Thirdly.* The government or authority of kings.

Now with respect to each of these, the happiness of the saints is far greater than that of the kings and greatest potentates in the world.

*First.* True Christians will be advanced to honours far above those of earthly kings, they will have a vastly higher dignity than any princes. If these are nobly descended, it is not so great an honour as to be the sons of God; if they are nobly educated, and have their minds formed for government, and have princely qualifications, these qualifications are not so honourable as those with which God endows his saints, whose minds he fills with divine knowledge, and gives them true and perfect holiness. Princes appear honourable from their outward enjoyment of honour and dignity, their royal robes, their stately palaces, and their splendid equipage. But these are not so honourable as those white robes, those inherent ornaments, with which the saints shall appear in heaven, with which they<sup>677</sup> shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” What is a king’s palace to those mansions in heaven, that Christ prepares for his saints? The honour of the creature consists in likeness and nearness to the Creator in heaven. The saints shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is; they shall be most near to him, shall be admitted to a most intimate fellowship.

*Secondly.* The saints shall have greater and more extensive possessions than any earthly monarch. One reason for which the state of kings is admired, is their wealth; they have the most precious things laid up in their treasures. We read of the peculiar treasure of kings. [Eccles. ii. 8.](#) “I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts;” that is, the peculiar treasure of other kings. David conquered and subdued many kings, and spoiled their peculiar treasure, which fell to his son Solomon.

But the precious treasures of kings are not to be compared to those precious things which Christ will give his saints in another world; the gold tried in the fire that Christ has purchased with his own blood, those precious jewel?, those graces and joys of his Spirit, and that beauty of mind with which he will endow them. King’s possessions are very extensive; especially were they thus, when kings were generally absolute, and their whole dominions, their subjects and their fortunes, were looked upon as their possessions. But these fall short of the extensive possessions of the saints, who possess all things; they are the heirs of God, and all that is God’s is theirs so far as it can contribute to their happiness. [Rev. xxi. 7.](#) “He that over-cometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” [1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.](#) “Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.”

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677 [Matt. xiii. 43.](#)

*Thirdly.* The saints shall also be advanced to the authority of kings. Christ has appointed to them a kingdom, and in that kingdom they shall reign. It is promised concerning the saints, that they shall reign. [Rev. v. 10.](#) “And hath made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” [Rev. xxii. 5.](#) “And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” It is evident that they shall have a kingdom with respect to rule and government, as appears, [Rev. ii. 26, 27.](#) “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over all nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.” But we must see that we rightly understand this. They shall not be appointed by God as sovereigns of the world, without any superior to direct them; neither shall they be properly deputies or viceroys, as king Agrippa and some other kings were the deputies of the Roman emperors; but they shall reign in fellowship with Christ as joint heirs; they shall reign in the same kingdom with him, and shall have the happiness of having things done according to their will as much as if their own wills were paramount. Christ wills their will. All things will be disposed in the best manner for them, and to promote their happiness. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”<sup>678</sup>”

The reigning of the saints will consist partly in *judging*; for the saints shall judge the world, angels and men with Christ. [Matt. xix. 28.](#) “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, he also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” [1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.](#) “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life!” How earnestly do men seek a kingdom! What fatigues, what dangers, what bloodshed, will they not encounter! In seeking conversion, you seek a kingdom. You who are poor, you who are children, have opportunity to obtain a kingdom; to advance yourselves to higher dignity, to more substantial honours, to greater possessions, to more precious treasures, to be clothed in robes of richer splendour, and to fill a loftier throne, than those enjoyed by the greatest earthly monarchs. It is a crown that you are to run for, an incorruptible crown, to be given you by the Great King of heaven, and to be worn by you as long as his throne shall endure. What encouragement is here afforded to the saints under afflictions and reproaches; what are they, to the worth and honour of a heavenly kingdom? When you shall have a crown of glory placed on your head, and be seated on Christ’s throne, and shine forth as the light, and are seated at his royal banquet, then you will suffer no more for ever; all trouble, all re-

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678 [Rev. iii. 21.](#)

proach, shall be driven away; you will be too high to be reached by the malice of men and devils, and shall soon forget all your sorrows.

2. True Christians are priests of God. The priesthood under the law was a very honourable and sacred office. [Heb. v. 4](#). “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” It was on account of this honour that those proud men, Korah and his company, envied Aaron; and God asserted and vindicated Aaron’s right to it, by causing his rod to bud.

It was an honour which, before the giving of the law, when every particular family was wont to offer sacrifices for themselves, that the first-born used to claim, and therefore the birthright was so much esteemed and valued. Therefore Jacob had such a desire of having the birthright of his brother Esau, and Esau’s despising of it is spoken of as a great instance of his profaneness. A priest is said to be a chief man among his people. [Lev. xxi. 4](#). “But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself.” Because the office of the priesthood was so honourable, it is noticed as a wicked contempt of it in several wicked kings, that they made of the meanest of the people priests. The office was so honourable, that a king, Uzziah, coveted the honour of it, and it is mentioned as an instance of his pride that he did so. [2 Chron. xxvi. 16](#). “But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.” And it was a very sacred office, and that above all other offices; and therefore those things were forbidden the priest that were lawful for all others; such as to be defiled for the dead, or to take to wife one that is put away from her husband: and the reason is given, [Levit. xxi. 6](#). “They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God, for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer; therefore they shall be holy. They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane, neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband; for he is holy unto his God. Thou shall sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God, he shall be holy unto thee: for I, the Lord, which sanctify you, am holy.”

Jesus Christ is the only proper priest that is to offer sacrifices, and make atonement for sin, under the New Testament. He was the priest of whom all the priests of old were typical. But yet all believers are herein in a measure conformed to their head, and assimilated to him. The priesthood now is no longer confined to one family, to Aaron and his sons, but all the true Israel are priests. Every true Christian hath a work and office that is as sacred as that of the priests was under the law, and every one is advanced to a like honour, and indeed to a greater. But how every true Christian is a priest of God will appear in the following things.

*First.* Every true Christian is allowed as near an access to God, and as free a use of the sacred things, as the priests were of old. God under the law dwelt in the tabernacle and temple, that were the symbol of his presence, and those places were holy. The seed of Aaron

might go into the holy place to minister before the Lord, but if any other came nigh, he was to be put to death. [Numb. iii. 10.](#) “And thou shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest’s office: and the stranger that cometh nigh, shall be put to death.”

But now all are allowed to come nigh, we are all allowed a free access to God, to come with boldness and confidence. God’s people are not kept at such a distance now as they were under the law. The church then was in its minority, and the heir, while a child, differs nothing from a servant. The servant is not allowed the free access of a child, he is kept more at a distance with fear and dread. Agreeably to the nature of that dispensation, there were not those special discoveries of the grace and love of God that are now made, and which invite rather than forbid near access.

When God was wont to appear to the children of Israel, it was more with terror and manifestations of awful majesty, and not so much with the discoveries of grace as now. When God appeared on mount Sinai, it was in flaming fire, and with thunder, and lightning, and earthquakes; but in how different a manner did he appear, when he appeared in the person of Christ, with mildness, and gentleness, and love! There is much the same difference between us and them with respect to the liberty of access to God, as there was between the liberty of access of the children of Israel at mount Sinai, and the liberty which Christ’s disciples had of approach to him when he was upon earth. At mount Sinai, only Moses and Aaron, and Na-dab and Abihu, were allowed to come up into the mount, and none but Moses was to approach nigh. [Exod. xxiv. 1.](#) “And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.” But if any other presumed to touch the mount, God would break forth upon him. But Christ’s disciples used daily to converse with him, as an intimate friend. [Heb. xii. 18.](#) “For ye are not come unto the mount that might *not* be touched, and that burneth with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest.” Yea, Christians are now allowed as near an approach unto God, as the high priest himself, who was allowed a much nearer approach than any of the other priests. God’s dwelling-place was the temple, but more especially was it in the holy of holies, in the mercy-seat between the cherubim. There was a veil which separated that part of the temple from the rest, and no one might ever enter that veil but the high priest, and that but once a year; not oftener, upon pain of death. [Lev. xvi. 2.](#) “And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place, within the veil before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.” The way into the holiest of all was not as yet made manifest, but now it is. [Heb. ix. 7, 8.](#) “But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as yet the first tabernacle was standing.”

But now we are all allowed as near an access to God as the high priest only was under the law, and with more freedom, for he might approach but once a year; but Christians may approach boldly at all times, through the blood of Christ, without any danger of dying. [Heb. iv. 16.](#) "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." The throne of grace and the mercy-seat are the same thing. Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." That access into the holiest of all was allowed to all under the gospel, and at any time: it was signified by the rending of the veil upon the death of Christ, for then was that blood shed by which we have access. [Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.](#) "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."

But especially will the access of saints in another world be much more near and familiar than that of the high priest. They shall not only enter into the holy of holies, but shall dwell with God in it, for heaven is the holiest of all. They shall then dwell in God's presence, they shall see his face, which no man can see and live.

In this world, though there is greater liberty of access than there was of old, yet still Christians are kept at a great distance from God in comparison of what they will be in heaven, where they shall be admitted even to higher privileges than Moses in the mount, when he besought God to show him his glory. They shall then see with open face, and shall know as they are known.

*Secondly.* Christians are a priesthood with respect to their offerings to God. The principal part of the work of the priests of old was to offer sacrifice, and to burn incense. As the priests of old offered sacrifice, so the work of Christians is to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. [1 Pet. ii. 5.](#) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And here,

1st. Christians offer up their own hearts to God in sacrifice: they dedicate themselves to God. [Rom. vi. 13.](#) "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." The Christian gives himself to God freely as of mere choice; he does it heartily; he desires to be God's, and to belong to no other; he gives all the faculties of his soul to God. He gives God his heart, and it is offered to God as a sacrifice in two ways.

Of these, the first is, when the heart is broken for sin. A sacrifice, before it can be offered, must be wounded and slain. The heart of a true Christian is first wounded by a sense of sin,

of the great evil and danger of it, and is slain with godly sorrow and true repentance. When the heart truly repents, it dies unto sin. Repentance is compared unto a death in the word of God. *Rom. vi. 6, 7, 8.* “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Gal. ii. 20.* “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” As Christ, when he was offered, was offered broken upon the cross; so there is some likeness to this, when a soul is converted; the heart is offered to God slain and broken. *Ps. li. 17.* “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

The second way is, when a Christian offers his heart to God, flaming with love. The sacrifice of old was not only to be slain, but to be burnt upon the altar; it was to ascend in flame and smoke, and so to be a sweet savour to God.

That fire upon the altar was a type of two things; it was a type of the fire of the wrath of God, and it was also a type of the fire of the Spirit of God, or of divine love. The Holy Ghost is often compared to fire. With respect to the former, Christ alone is the sacrifice offered in the flame of God’s wrath; but with regard to the latter, the hearts of the children of men are offered in the flame of divine love, and ascend up to God in that flame. This divine love is fire from heaven, as the fire upon the altar of old was. When a soul is drawn to God in true conversion, fire comes down from God out of heaven, in which the heart is offered in sacrifice, and the soul is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

In many of the sacrifices that were offered, only the fat about the inwards was burnt upon the altar; which fat of the inwards thus rising in flame, represented the offering of the soul. It is that which God looks at; it is that which must be offered in sacrifice to God. Especially hereafter, when the saints will be made priests in a more glorious manner than at present, will they offer up their hearts wholly to God in the flame of love. They shall, as it were, all be transformed into love, as burning oil is transformed into flame; and so, in that flame, shall they ascend up to God. Their souls will be as the angels, who are as a flame of fire not only for activity in God’s service, but for love too. They shall be a flame ever burning, which shall burn longer than the fire upon the altar in Israel, that never went out, from the time that fire came down out of heaven in the wilderness, till the carrying away into Babylon.

2d. This spiritual priesthood offers to God the sacrifice of praise. Many of their sacrifices under the law were sacrifices of peace-offerings, which were mostly for thanksgiving and praise. But the spiritual sacrifice of the hearty and sincere praises of a saint, are more acceptable to God than all the bulls, and rams, and he-goats that they offered. The heartfelt praises of one true Christian, are of more account with God than all those two and twenty thousand



oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep, which Solomon offered to God at the dedication of the temple, as a sacrifice of peace-offerings. Praise is called a sacrifice. [Heb. xiii. 15.](#) "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." [Ps. l. 13, 14.](#) "Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High;" [ver. 23.](#) "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God;" [Ps. lxix. 30, 31.](#) "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs." Praises are therefore in Hosea called *calves of our lips*, because they are like *calves offered in sacrifice*; [Hosea xiv. 2.](#) "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips." Only true Christians offer those sacrifices. However hypocrites pretend to praise God, and to offer thanksgiving to him, yet they, being insincere, offer not sacrifices with which God is well pleased; they offer not spiritual sacrifices, and therefore they are not of the spiritual priesthood. In heaven especially are the saints a holy priesthood upon this account; whose work it is for ever to offer these sacrifices to God, who cease not day nor night to praise God and sing forth their ardent joyful hallelujahs. They sing a new song, a song that never will end, and never will grow old.

3d. The next sacrifice which is offered by this spiritual priesthood, is obedience, sincere obedience. The sacrifices under the law did not only represent Christ's *satisfying for sin* by suffering, but they also represented Christ's *obeying* in suffering; for the sacrifices under the law were not only for propitiation, but they were for purchasing benefits, and so typified not only the satisfaction, but merit, which was by obedience. [Ps. xl. 6, 7, 8.](#) "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight *to do thy will*, O my God; yea, *thy law* is within my heart." And though the obedience of saints has no merit, yet it is pleasing and acceptable to God; it is as a sweet-smelling savour, and is compared to sacrifices, and preferred before them. [1 Sam. xv. 22.](#) "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Christians, by offering obedience to God in their lives and conversation, do what the apostle calls offering their bodies to be a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, as their reasonable service. They offer their bodies, that is, they dedicate their bodies, to holy uses and purposes; they yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness. The soul, while here, acts externally by the body. And in this Christians serve God; they yield their eyes, their ears, their tongues, their hands, and feet, as servants to God, to be obedient to the dictates of his word, and of his Holy Spirit in the soul.

4th. Another sacrifice which we shall mention as offered by this spiritual priesthood, is charity, or expressions of Christian love in gifts to others. If the gift flows from a spirit of Christian love, although it be but a cup of cold water, it is an acceptable sacrifice to God. And indeed whatsoever is given for a pious use, if it be to promote religion, and uphold the public worship of God, or to benefit a particular person, if it be done from a good spirit, it is a Christian sacrifice. [Heb. xiii. 16.](#) "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

But sacrifices of this kind may principally be ranked under two heads; of which the first is,

Liberality to ministers of the gospel. The priests of old lived upon the sacrifices that were offered to God, and what is now offered to ministers for their comfortable and honourable support Christ looks upon as offered to himself. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." [Matt. x. 40.](#) Thus Paul says of those things that were sent him by his hearers, that it was a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God. [Phil. iv. 14,](#) &c. "Notwithstanding ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because that I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."

The second is bounty to the poor. Christ accepts what is done to them as being done to himself. [Matt. xxv. 40.](#) "And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." This God prefers before the legal sacrifices. [Hosea vi. 6.](#) "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings."

5th. Another offering of this spiritual priesthood to God, is the prayer of faith. Though this is rather compared to *incense* in Scripture than to a *sacrifice*, yet it is equally an evidence of their priesthood. Incense was that sweet confection which we read of. [Exod. xxx. 34.](#) "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices, with pure frankincense; of each shall there be a like weight." These they were wont to burn upon the censer as they offered it, which made a most fragrant smell. That incense is a type of the merits of Jesus Christ, and seems also to be a type of the prayers of God's people in faith of the former. It was the custom, when the priest in the temple was burning incense, for the people to be praying without. [Luke i. 10.](#) "And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense." And gracious prayer is compared to incense. [Psal. cxli. 2.](#) "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up

of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” The prayer of faith is as a fragrant savour to God, through the merits of him towards whom that faith is exercised.

### REFLECTIONS.

1. Here are great motives for all earnestly to seek that they may become true Christians. It is a great honour to be priests of God. It was a great honour of old to be a priest under the law; it was a greater in some respects than to be a king; because they were nearer to God, and they in their work were more immediately concerned with him; it was a more holy and divine office. But more honourable is it to be of the spiritual priesthood. The access to God is nearer, and an infinitely greater privilege. Especially is the access to God which they will have in another world, where they shall see God, and shall converse with Christ as a man with his friend. If ever a king was ambitious of the honour of the legal priesthood, surely you may well desire the spiritual, which is an eternal priesthood.

Consider that you are capable of receiving this priesthood. Of old, those who were not of the posterity of Aaron, were incapable of the priesthood; it was in vain for them to seek it; but it is not in vain for you to seek this spiritual priesthood. Consider also that you have a call to it, you have warrant sufficient. It would be a dreadful presumption for you to seek this honour if you had not a call to it. [Heb. v. 4.](#) “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” But you are called; and now it would be presumption and profane contempt in you to refuse it; to refuse such an honour as God offers you. Take heed, therefore, that there be not among you any profane person as Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright, and sold the, priesthood that belonged to it. Take heed that you do not sell this spiritual priesthood for a morsel of meat, or for the trifles of this world, that you are not more concerned about a little worldly pelf or vain glory, than about that which is so sacred and honourable.

For direction, that you may be one of this spiritual priesthood, seek of God his holy anointing; that is, that God would pour out his Spirit in his sanctifying influences upon you. The priests of old were consecrated by the holy anointing oil. [Exod. xxix. 7.](#) “Then shall thou’ take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him.” [Exod. xxx. 30.](#) “And thou shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office.” If you are here separated for this holy station and service, you must have that holy anointing of the Spirit of God, typified by the oil that was poured upon Aaron’s head; the holy anointing oil of God must be upon you.

2. Let all who profess themselves Christians take heed that they do not defile themselves and profane their sacred character. There was great strictness required of old of the priests, lest they should defile themselves and profane their office, and it was regarded as a dreadful thing to profane it. So holy a God hath threatened in the New Testament, that “if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.” [Cor. iii. 17.](#) As Christians are here called

the *temple of God*, so it is said, in the fifth verse, “Ye are a *spiritual house*, an holy priesthood.” Avoid the commission of all immoralities, or things that have a horrid filthiness in them, things that will dreadfully profane the sacred name by which you are called, and the sacred station wherein you are set.

Take heed especially of lascivious impurities. Such things were looked upon as defiling the holy office of the priesthood of old, insomuch, that if but a daughter of a priest was guilty of whoredom, she was to be burnt. Remember Hophni and Phineas, how sorely God dealt with them for profaning their office by their impurities; and with good Eli, that he was no more thorough to restrain them. God brought a curse upon the whole family which never was removed. God took away the priesthood from him, and took away the ark of the covenant from him and from Israel, and delivered it into captivity, and fulfilled his threatening, that there should not be an old man of his house for ever.

Take heed of every sin: an allowing any sin whatever is a dreadful presumption of your holy character.

3. See that you well execute your office. Offer up your heart in sacrifice. Get and keep a near access to God. Come with boldness; offer up a heart broken for sin; offer it up flaming with love to God; offer praise to God; praise God for his glorious excellency; for his love and mercy. Consider what great things you have to praise God for; the redemption of Jesus Christ, his sufferings, his obedience, and the gift of that holiness, which makes you like unto God.

Be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, and do good; consider it as part of your office thus to do, to which you are called and anointed, and as a sacrifice well-pleasing to God; pity others in distress; be ready to help one another; God will have mercy and not sacrifice.

And be much in offering up your prayers to God; and see that all your offerings are offered upon the right altar, otherwise they will be abominable to God. Offer your hearts to God through Jesus Christ. In his name present the sacrifice of praise, obedience, charity: of prayer on the golden altar perfumed with the incense of Christ’s merits. Your reward will be to have this honour in heaven, to be exalted to that glorious priesthood, to be made a priest unto God for ever and ever.

III. True Christians are a holy nation. And here I shall briefly show,

1. How they are a distinct nation.
2. How they are holy.
1. Christians are a distinct nation.

*First*, The saints are all of the same native country. Heaven is the native country of the church. They are born from above; their Father, of whom they are begotten, is in heaven. The principles that govern their hearts are drawn from heaven, since the Holy Ghost, whose immediate fruits those principles are, is from heaven. The word of God, which is the seed

by which they are begotten, is from heaven. The Bible is a book, as it were, sent down from heaven. The saints in this world are not in their native country, but are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, they are near akin to the inhabitants of the heavenly world, and are properly of that society. [Heb. xii. 22, 23.](#) “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.” Heaven is a country that much better suits their natures than this earth, because it is their native climate. When they are in heaven, they breathe their native air; in heaven is their inheritance. Heaven is the proper country of the church, where the greater part of the church is, and where they all will be, and where is their settled abode; from thence all that are now upon earth are derived, and thither they will return again. Though they are for a little while dwelling at a distance from their native country, yet they are of the same nation with those who now dwell there.

*Secondly.* All Christians speak the same language. They all “profess the same fundamental doctrine; they hold fast the form of sounds that was once delivered to the saints. [2 Tim. i. 13.](#) “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” They all use the same language to God in prayer and praise; they express the same humility and repentance in confessing their sins, the same adoration and admiring sense of God’s glory and excellency, the same humble submission and resignation, and the same thankfulness. In like manner do they show forth God’s praises, expressing the same faith and humble dependence in the mercy of God. and the same love and longing desires after God. The saints in all ages speak the same language with David and the saints of old. The Spirit of God teaches the saints the same language in their prayers; their prayers are the breathings of the same Spirit.

Indeed the saints while in this world are but learning the heavenly language, and therefore speak it but imperfectly, and with a stammering tongue, and with a pronunciation that in many things resembles their old language. The tongues of the saints are renewed in their conversion. Thus the conversion of the Gentiles is represented by their having a new language. [Zeph. iii. 9.](#) “For then will I turn to the people of a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” And in this sense is that also to be understood, [Isa. xix. 18.](#) “In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts: one shall be called, The city of destruction.” As it is said of the new song which the saints sing, that no man could learn that song but those that are redeemed from the earth, so no man can learn that language but those who are of this holy nation.

*Thirdly.* They are under the same government. The Christians are one society, one body politic; and therefore, as here the church is represented by a nation, so oftentimes is it called a city. They are subject to the same King, Jesus Christ. He is the head of the church, he is



the head of this body politic. Indeed all men are subject to the power and providence of this King; but those who are in his kingdom of grace, all acknowledge the same King, own his rightful sovereignty over them, are willing to be subject to him, to submit to his will, and yield obedience to his commands. *Ps. cx. 3.* “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

They are all governed by the same laws, and all subject themselves to the same rules. The commands of God that are obeyed by the saints, are the same all over the world. There is the same method of government, there are the same means of government, the same outward and visible means, the same officers, gospel, and gospel ministers, in like manner appointed and sent forth by the head of the church, the same visible order and discipline appointed for all. And there are the same inward and special means of government. Christ governs his people in a peculiar manner. He immediately influences their wills and inclinations, and powerfully brings them to a compliance with God’s commands and rules. They are a society united in the same public interest and concerns. It is by the same covenant and promises that they have their inheritance, and that they hold their title to their enjoyments, as a people of the same nation hold their temporal rights by the same rule, and citizens hold their rights by the same municipal laws. The prosperity of this society tends to the advantage of the interests of the particular parts. A Christian has the same reason to be concerned for the flourishing of the church, and the advancement of religion, as a particular subject has for the flourishing of the nation or kingdom. When the church is in flourishing circumstances, the souls of particular saints are like to be flourishing; and when the church is in low languishing circumstances, particular souls are generally the same. When iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. As it is the interest of every subject to have the nation flourish, so it is the interest of every Christian to have the church to flourish. So Christians have the same common enemies that seek their hurt and overthrow. He that is an enemy to one saint as a saint, is an enemy to all. They are jointly called to resist the same powers of darkness; the church here upon earth is as an army that goes forth under Jesus Christ, the Captain of their salvation, to resist the common adversary.

### **REFLECTIONS.**

Be exhorted to join yourself to this nation. As it was of old, those who were of other nations, if they were brought to the acknowledgment of the God of Israel, and to the true religion, and were circumcised, were received as being of the nation of Israel, and were accounted as those that were descended from Abraham and Jacob; so now is there free liberty to any to come and join themselves to this nation, and they shall be received and admitted to the same rights and privileges, and be in all respects treated as the same people. And especially those now under the gospel are invited to come. Let them be who they will, they

may come and join this people and be welcome. There is no wall of partition to separate this people from others, to exclude those of other nations. The gates of the new Jerusalem are always open to receive all whose hearts incline them to come. And here consider,

*First.* There is no nation under so happy a government as this. The Lord Jesus Christ is their King, and he is a most glorious King. He is the eternal and infinitely glorious Son of God. He is a most wise prince, he knows how to govern, he perfectly understands how best to promote the interest of his people. He is a most merciful and gracious King, who greatly loves his people, and most earnestly and faithfully seeks their interest. His people are redeemed with his own blood, and he will surely seek their welfare. And he is a most powerful prince. He is able to defend his people against all their enemies.

This nation is governed by most wise and righteous laws. As it was said of Israel of old, [Deut. iv. 8.](#) "What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?" so and more eminent is it true of the spiritual Israel, since the law of God has been set forth to us in a far more clear and lovely light, by the rules and precepts of the gospel. The manner of Christ's government in me kingdom of his grace is most excellent, and different from that of all other kings; for he governs by the powerful influence of his Spirit upon the heart, whereby he sweetly inclines them to a willing and chosen subjection to him.

This nation is a free people The happy government under which they live, is most consistent with freedom; it does not in the least infringe upon the liberty of the subject, there is nothing like slavery in the kingdom of God. The law of this nation is a law of liberty. Those that are sinners, are slaves; they are slaves to their lusts, slaves to Satan, slaves to the cruellest of masters. But they whom the Son makes free, are free indeed. The subjects of the heavenly King are all as free under his government as a man's children are in their father's house. The government is a paternal government; the King looks upon all his subjects as children.

Under so happy a government are this nation. Be persuaded therefore to join yourself to them, and be of them. [Ps. cxliv. 15.](#) "Happy is that people that is in such a case. Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." [Ps. xxxiii. 12.](#) "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

*Secondly.* There is no nation that dwell in such love and peace as this holy nation enjoys. The happiness of a people very much consists in its peace: a nation is never more miserable than when it is rent by civil wars, or disturbed by intestine broils. Nothing tends more to the happiness of the people than when they are all united as brethren, and with one heart seek the good of one another, and the community.

But no nation enjoys so much happiness of this kind as this holy nation. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the King of this people, is the Prince of peace; his kingdom is a kingdom of peace. Every member of this society has in his heart a principle of peace and love. Love is

the bond of perfectness that unites the members of this society together. They all have a disposition heartily to seek and promote each other's good.

*Thirdly.* This nation have for their settled abode a most glorious land. The heavenly Canaan is *their* land, it is a land that God hath desired, and that he hath blessed above all lands. There is no land so fertile of excellent fruits, so full of delights. There grows the tree of life in plenty, there flows the river of the water of life. There is no curse, nothing that hurts or offends. This is a delightful garden, this is the paradise of God. Harken, therefore, consider of the blessedness of this people; is it not well to be one of them? I would now invite you in the name of Christ, as Moses invited his father-in-law to join himself to that nation. [Numb. x. 29.](#) "And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses's father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you: come thou with us and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

2. Christians, as a nation, are holy. Their holiness is relative, and it is also inherent.

*First.* Christians are a holy nation by a relative holiness, as they are set apart by God for a divine and holy use. So things are often called holy in Scripture. The utensils of the tabernacle and temple are in this sense called holy; the priests' garments are called holy, the places of worship appointed of God in the Old Testament are called holy, because they were set apart by him for a holy use and service.

Things thus set apart are said to be sanctified. Thus Jeremiah is said to have been sanctified, before he came forth out of the womb. [Jer. i. 5.](#) "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou earnest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." God sanctified, that is, God set him apart for this holy use and service, to be a prophet to the nations, as Paul says of himself, [Gal. i. 15.](#) "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." So the people of Israel of old seem to be called a holy nation. [Deut. vii. 6.](#) "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon me face of the earth." Not that they were a holy people by inherent holiness, for God often tells them that they are a stiff-necked people. But God had called and separated them from other nations to be the keepers of the sacred oracles, and for other purposes.

So the saints are a nation that God has set apart for a sacred use. He hath set them apart to serve and glorify him, and to show forth his praise; to be vessels for their Master's use, to see the manifestations of God's glory, and eternally to ascribe the glory due to his name.

*Secondly.* They are holy by inherent holiness.

1. By holiness of heart. <sup>679</sup>

2. By holiness of life. <sup>680</sup>

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679 These two heads are not filled up.

680 These two heads are not filled up.



IV. True Christians are God's peculiar people.

1. True Christians are God's peculiar people with respect to the value which he sets upon them. He values one true Christian more than all the wicked in the world. God puts a high value upon his saints; they are his jewels. God's high value of them appears in all the ways wherein persons are wont to show the great regard which they have for any possession. God keeps them as the apple of his eye, he will by no means lose one of his saints, not one of all the number shall fail, he will suffer no one to do them harm, his almighty power is thoroughly engaged for them to defend them.

The life, the happiness, and the welfare of the saints are precious in God's sight. He shows the higher value that he sets upon the godly than others, by giving the wicked for them, making them subservient to them, and destroying them when they stand in the way of the welfare of the godly. [Prov. xxi. 18.](#) "The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright."

Whenever the life or welfare of the wicked stands in the way of the welfare of the righteous, God is wont to procure the welfare of his people, though it be at the expense of the lives and welfare of never so many. [Prov. xi. 8.](#) "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead." Thus God manifested how much he valued the patriarchs. Though there were but very few of them, yet even kings were rebuked for their sakes. [Ps. cv. 12, 13, 14, 15.](#) "When they were but a few men in number: yea, very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." So he showed how he valued the children of Israel, in that he gave nations for them. [Isa. xliii. 3, 4.](#) "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."

When the Egyptians stood in the way of the welfare of the church, God brought plagues upon them one after another, wherein he sorely distressed them. When their lives stood in the way, God destroyed all the first-born of Egypt; and when Pharaoh and his host sought their destruction, he drowned them in the Red sea, and when the nations of Canaan stood in their way, God destroyed them; he destroyed many of them miraculously, by sending hail-stones from heaven upon them. God will sooner at one blow destroy' all the wicked of the world than that one of his saints should be lost. There are many great men of the world, kings and princes, men of great power and policy, men of noble blood and honourable descent, men of great wealth, men of vast learning and knowledge in the world, that are honoured, and make a great figure, and great account is made of them in the world, who are wicked men and reprobates, and they all are not of so great value in God's sight as one

true Christian, however humble his birth and low his standing; however poor, or ignorant, or unknown.

God has shown how highly he values his saints by several remarkable providences. He has often changed and intercepted the course of nature for their sakes. Nothing except God himself is more constant and unchangeable than the course and laws of nature; but yet so much doth God value his saints, that he did not think the procuring of their welfare too slight an occasion for stopping the sun in his course.

But above all hath God shown how great a value he sets upon his saints, by the great price which he has paid for them, the blood of his own Son. God values every saint so highly that he bought him with the blood of his own dear Son. There is no price of gold or silver that can be compared with the price of the blood of Christ.

2. They are his peculiar people with respect to the mercy that he bestows upon them. God bestows many mercies upon ungodly men; he is kind to the evil and the good, to the just and the unjust. He is good to wicked men in preserving their lives, in providing for their subsistence, and in giving them many comforts. Wicked men receive a great deal of goodness from God which they have cause to admire, and be thankful for every day, and but few live any considerable time who are not the subjects of special influences of God's goodness to them in deliverance from trouble and danger. He heaps temporal good things upon them, he gives them wealth, and ease, and honour, and great prosperity. He distributes the world among them, and they show their great ingratitude in that, notwithstanding all God's bounty to them, they will not learn righteousness. [Isa. xxvi. 10.](#) "Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." Thus Samuel reproves Saul for his great ingratitude, that he took no more notice of the great kindness of God to him. [1 Sam. xv. 17.](#) "And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast not thou made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?" So there are many other wicked men that are advanced to the state of princes and nobles.

But God bestows more goodness upon one godly man than upon all the ungodly in the world. Put all their preservations, all their deliverances, all their wealth, all their comforts that have been heaped upon them by providence together, those things are but trifles that God bestows on ungodly men; but they are peculiar blessings which he bestows on the righteous, they are precious things that God has in reserve for his own favourites, in comparison of which all earthly treasure is but dirt and dross. As for the saints, Christ has died for them, they have all their sins pardoned, they are delivered from a hell of eternal misery, they have a title to eternal life bestowed upon them, they have God's own image conferred on them, they are received into favour, and will enjoy God's everlasting love.

3. They are God's peculiar people with respect to the interest which he has in them. God has a peculiar interest in godly men; they are his peculiar property, they are his as they are



redeemed by him, and as they have given themselves to him. God has an interest in godly men's hearts, they have a true love and respect to him; they have true honour to him. God has a greater interest in their hearts than any thing else, greater than the dearest friend on earth, greater than the world or any earthly enjoyment. They prefer God before all other things, they preserve the throne of their hearts for God, they are of a spirit to exalt him as the greatest and highest, to love him as the most excellent, to praise him as the most gracious and merciful.

God has no interest in the hearts of natural men. Many of them seem to show respect to him outwardly. The Pharisees of old pretended to an extraordinary devotion, to a great love to God. And many hypocrites in these times come before God as his people come, they seem as though they delighted to draw near to God, and make a high profession of religion; but God has indeed no interest in their hearts. They give him the outward appearance, they give him the words of their lips, but their hearts are far from him. It is from respect to something else, and not to him; they have not the least love to God.

But God has an interest in the hearts of true Christians: however small and inconsiderable it is in comparison of what it ought to be, yet they are of a spirit to prefer God above all. He has an interest in them, and they offer up their bodies a living sacrifice to him; they serve and actively glorify him, with their bodies and with their spirits. God is glorified in wicked men, as they are occasions of the manifestations of his glory, or as he glorifies himself in them; but Christians devote themselves to serve and glorify God. Though it is but a small interest that God has in the hearts of Christians in this world in comparison of what ought to be, yet he hath a greater interest in one godly man than in all the ungodly and hypocrites that are in the world.

4. They are God's peculiar people, with respect to the complacency which he hath in them. God takes delight in his saints. [Psal. xi. 7.](#) "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright." God doth as it were rejoice over a convert, he delights in beholding that beauty and those ornaments of mind which he hath given him; God takes delight in the graces of a godly man's heart, and he delights in the good works and religion of the Christian. [Psal. xxxvii. 23.](#) "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighted in his way." God takes delight in the godly man's prayers. [. xv. 8.](#) "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight." He takes more delight in the sincere humble devotion of one true saint, than in all the moral virtue and outward religion of all the natural men in the world. If the wicked that are rich should offer to God ten thousand sacrifices, or if they should devote ever so much of their substance to religious uses, if they should give all their goods to feed the poor; it would not be so acceptable to God, as one cup of cold water given by a saint with a spirit of true charity. Ungodly kings may do much in many respects for religion; they may build stately churches for the worship of God, they may encourage religion in their dominions

by their power and influence. Cyrus, a heathen prince, restored the people of God from captivity, and restored the state of the Jews. But God has a greater delight in the sincere worship and love of one poor, obscure Christian, than in all that is done throughout the globe by irreligious kings and princes.

### REFLECTIONS.

Hence it may well be expected of such as profess hopes of their being true Christians, that they should live after a peculiar manner, and be devoted to God for his use. There should be a great difference between their way of living and that of other men. Godly men should not be hurried away by the general example. If any evil practice is become a common custom, it may well be expected of those who profess themselves godly, that they should stem the stream of common custom and example, though they are despised for it.

Men are ready often to plead for their neglect of such and such duties, and the commission of such evils, that it is a *common custom*." Who is there," say they, "but what does so? I should be singular if I did otherwise." But if evil things are common, God may well expect of them that their way should be singular and peculiar, for Christians are a peculiar people. There should be a difference, and a great difference, between them and the generality of the world; if their neighbours, and relations, and companions, fall in with the common custom, that is evil, yet they should be peculiar, and stand alone.

It may well be expected that they should go further than other men in doing their duty, and practising the Christian religion. For instance, it is a common thing for men when they are affronted, or injured by their neighbours, to entertain a spirit of revenge, to drink in a spirit of ill will against their neighbour, and to wish him hurt. But Christians should be peculiar; they should forgive those that injure them, and not entertain any spirit of ill will to them upon that account.

It is common for men when injured, to endeavour to retaliate upon those that injure them in some way or other, either by acting or talking against them; but those who call themselves godly, should choose no kind of revenge, [Matt. v. 38, 39](#). "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." The generality of men will love their friends, and hate their enemies; it is very rare that it is otherwise. Men pretend that they do not hate their enemies, but they really do in their hearts. But Christians should be peculiar in this matter, their way should be different from the way of the world; for they are a peculiar people, and they should love their enemies from their hearts, and do good to them that hate them. However rare it is that there is any such thing, yet such a rare thing very well becomes God's peculiar people. [Matt. v. 43, 44, 45](#). "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and

pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

It is a rare thing for persons to accustom themselves to great self-denial. Many will indeed deny themselves something for the sake of their duty, but if it very much crosses their interest, there are few that will be steadfast in their duty. But it may well be expected, that you should greatly deny yourself for the sake of God and Christ, and so be peculiar in this matter.

Self-interest governs the generality of men; they will mind their own interest rather than any thing else. But it may well be expected of those who profess godliness, that they should show themselves peculiar in this matter, and that they should sacrifice their private, separate interest to the glory and honour of God, and to the public good. Most men will content themselves and quiet their consciences by avoiding the more gross acts of sin, by avoiding an outward gratification of lusts; but it becomes Christians to distinguish themselves here, and avoid sinning so much as in their thoughts, not to indulge any lust so much as in their imagination.

It is a shame to professors of godliness that their light shines no brighter before men, that there is no more appearing in them of an amiable Christian spirit, that they do not seem to shine any brighter in their outward conversation than many other men that do not make the profession that they do. Many such men seem to be as exact, and as careful to avoid sin, and to deny themselves, as they; yea, many, perhaps, that, for the outward practice of some particular virtues, shine brighter than they, are more liberal and kind, more courteous and obliging in their behaviour.

It is expected of those that are of this peculiar people that they should do more than others. [Matt. v. 46, 47](#). “For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?” let me then apply this subject immediately to those who are present.

1. Here is a powerful argument to persuade those of you. who are impenitent to become godly, that if you will forsake your sins, and with all your heart turn to God, you shall become of the number of God’s peculiar people. You shall have the same privileges with those that have been mentioned, you will immediately upon your conversion become one of those that God sets such a high value upon. If you are assured of your conversion, you may withal be assured that God, the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, sets a higher value on you than upon all the reprobates in the world, that God has set so high a value upon you that he has given the blood of his own Son for your ransom.

If you do savingly turn to God, you will receive from God mercies and blessings greater in value than all the wealth and outward prosperity of all the ungodly men in the world-. Put all the honour and all the wealth of the great men of the world together; put all that the

kings of the earth possess, their treasures and revenues, their dominions and power, their stately seats and palaces, their costly robes and dainties, together, and they will not amount to so great things as God will bestow upon you.

If you will turn from your sins and come to Christ, the great God will accept of you, and delight in you: you then will have those spiritual ornaments that will be more amiable in the sight of God, than all the learning, and knowledge, and morality of all the ungodly men in the world.

If you continue in a natural condition, God will make no account of you; instead of being as his jewels, you will be esteemed as vile and refuse, and fit for nothing but to be trampled under-foot; instead of being told, you will be esteemed as dross, [Jer. vi. 30](#). "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." Hereafter you will be thrown away as being good for nothing, you will be esteemed nothing worth, as is represented in that parable, [Matt. xiii. 47](#), &c. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Yea, you shall not only be cast away as good for nothing, but shall be cast out as filth into the great receptacle of the filth of the world; you will be cast into a furnace of fire, as barren branches are gathered up and burnt. [John xv. 6](#). "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." Or as barren trees are cut down and cast into the fire. [Matt. iii. 10](#). "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." As the tares were gathered together in bundles and burnt, you will be looked upon as fit for nothing else but to be destroyed. [2 Peter ii 12](#). "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption."

Instead of bestowing such peculiar mercies upon you, you in a little time will be stripped of all mercy. God will not have mercy on you, but your miseries will be as dreadful as those mercies that God bestows on his saints are valuable. They are but trifles that wicked men have bestowed upon them while in this world, in comparison of what the righteous shall have. The blessings of one righteous are more in value than the enjoyments of all the wicked. But hereafter wicked men will not have those; they will have nothing but the fiery wrath and indignation of God for their portion.

While you are in a natural condition, instead of your being God's peculiar ones with respect to the interest which God hath in your heart, the devil has the greatest interest in your heart. He has the government and possession there, and therefore you are, and will be, the devil's people, those that he claims, and those that will certainly fall to his share, at least

if you continue in such a condition. Instead of being one in whom God has peculiar complacency, he has no pleasure in you; when you pretend to worship him, he has no delight in your hypocritical prayers and services, but they are an abomination to him.

II. If you are true Christians, then let God be peculiar with you.

1. Let God be your peculiar portion. If you are one of his peculiar people, he is so. All who are God's people have chosen him for their God and portion. Do this more, and more, and more. Let all other things be lightly set by, and treated by you with neglect, in comparison of God.

Let God be the object of your peculiar value and esteem. If God has made you one of those on whom he sets a peculiar value, you who are a poor worthless worm, if he has set such a value upon you, as to purchase you with the price of the blood of his Son, who are in yourself a filthy, despicable creature, how much more reason is there that you should peculiarly value God, who is so great and glorious! It is fitting that this value should be mutual; and it is fitting that it should be in an answerable degree.

It will be but a little thing for you to esteem God above all in comparison of what it is for God so to prize his saints. See to it therefore, that there be nothing that stands in any competition with God in your esteem; value him more than all riches; value his honour and glory more than all the world; be ready at all times to part with all things else, and cleave to God. Let God be your peculiar friend, and value his friendship more than the respect and love of all the world. When you lose other enjoyments, when you lose earthly friends, let this be a supporting, satisfying comfort to you, that you have not lost God.

2. Let God be your peculiar confidence. There is great encouragement in this doctrine for you to make him so, and reason to enforce it as your duty. God expects that those who are his peculiar people should put their trust in him, and well they may do so, for God has a peculiar favour for them, and is peculiarly careful and tender of them. Be sensible, therefore, that it is unbecoming any, but especially those who are so near to God, and so favoured by him, to trust in their own righteousness, or in any arm of flesh. The peculiar people of God should not trust in themselves, they should not trust in friends, they should not trust in great men, they should not trust in their estates, or in any worldly enjoyment as expecting happiness from it, but alone in the Lord God. He ought to be their refuge and hiding-place: in time of trouble they should hide themselves under the shadow of his wings.

3. Make God the peculiar object of your praises. The doctrine shows what great reason you have so to do. If God so values you, sets so much by you, has bestowed greater mercies upon you than on all the ungodly in the world; is it too little a requital for you to make God the peculiar object of your praise and thankfulness? If God so distinguishes you with his mercy, you ought to distinguish yourself in his praises; you should make it your great care and study how to glorify that God who has been so peculiarly merciful to you. And the rather because there was nothing; peculiar in you, distinguishing you from any other person,

that moved God to deal thus peculiarly by you. You were as unworthy to be set by as thousands of others that are not regarded of God, and Are cast away by him for ever.



S E R M O N   X I V .   6 8 1

[hebrews xiii. 8.](#)

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

the exhortation, which the apostle gives the Christian Hebrews in the verse preceding this, is to remember and follow the good instructions and examples of their ministers, “Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”<sup>682</sup> The last part of this exhortation is to follow their faith. By following their faith, the apostle seems to intend adhering to the Christian faith, and those wholesome doctrine which their pastors taught them, and not depart from them, as many in that day had done, to heretical tenets. And the enforcement of the doctrine is in these words, “Considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”<sup>683</sup> Christ is the end of their conversation, he is the end of their conversation in their office, the end of the doctrine which they taught, and the end of all their administrations, and all their labours in all their work. And as he was so, they ought to follow their faith, or cleave stedfastly to the doctrine they had taught them, and not depart to other doctrine; for Jesus Christ was the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

If they still professed to be Christians or the followers of Jesus Christ, then they should still cleave to the same doctrine that they were taught in their first conversion; they should still follow the faith of them, who had first indoctrinated them in Christianity; for Jesus Christ was the same now that he was then, and therefore, Christianity was obviously the same thing. It was not one thing now and another when they were first converted, or even like to any other thing than it always had been. Surely therefore, when Christ and Christianity were thus unchangeable, he would therefore have them not fickle and changeable in their faith, not depart from their former faith, nor be carried about with divers and strange doctrine, as it follows in the next verse.

When it is said that Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, by *yesterday* is meant *all time past*; by *today*, *the time present*; and by *for ever*, *all that is future*, from the present time to eternity.

*Doctrine.* Jesus Christ is the same now that he ever has been and ever will be.

Christ is thus unchangeable in two respects.

I. In his divine nature. As Christ is one of the persons of the Trinity, he is God, and so hath the divine nature, or the Godhead dwelling in him, and all the divine attributes belong

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682   [Heb. xiii. 7.](#)

683   [Heb. xiii. 7, 8.](#)

to him, of which immutability or unchangeableness is one. Christ in his human nature was not absolutely unchangeable, though his human nature, by reason of its union with the divine, was not liable to those changes to which it was liable, as a mere creature; as for instance, it was indestructible and imperishable. Having the divine nature to uphold it, it was not liable to fall and commit sin, as Adam and the fallen angels did, but yet the human nature of Christ, when he was upon earth, was subject to many changes. It had a beginning; it was conceived in the womb of the Virgin; it was in a state of infancy, and afterwards changed from that state to a state of manhood, and this was attended not only with a change on his body, by his increasing in stature, but also on his mind; for we read that he not only increased in stature but also in wisdom. [Luke ii. 52](#). And the human nature of Christ was subject to sorrowful changes, though not to sinful ones. He suffered hunger, and thirst, and cold; and at last he suffered dreadful changes by having his body tortured and destroyed, and his soul poured out unto death; and afterwards became subject to a glorious change at his resurrection and ascension. And that his human nature was not liable to sinful changes, as Adam's or the angels', was not owing to any thing in his human nature, but to its relation to the divine nature which upheld it. But the divine nature of Christ is absolutely unchangeable, and not liable to the least alteration or variation in any respect. It is the same now as it was before the world was created. It was the same after Christ's incarnation as before, when Christ was born in a stable, and laid in a manger, and underwent many changes on earth, and at last suffered that dreadful agony in the garden, and suffered on the cross; it made no real alteration in the divine nature; and afterwards when Christ was glorified, and sat on the right hand of the Majesty on high, it made no alteration in his divine nature.

II. Christ is unchangeable in his office. He is unchangeable as the Mediator and Saviour of his church and people. That unchangeableness of Christ in his office of Mediator, appears in several things.

1. This office never ceases to give place to any other to come in his room: Christ is the only Mediator between God and man, that ever has been or ever shall be. He is an everlasting Saviour. There have been typical mediators many, that have continued but a little while, and then have passed away, and others have come in their room; but the great antitype continues for ever. There have been prophets, that have been raised up, and these have died, and others have succeeded them. Moses was not suffered to continue by reason of death; and the dispensation which he introduced was abolished, to give place to another which Christ should introduce. Moses gives place to Christ, but Christ never gives place to any other. John the Baptist was a great prophet. He was Christ's forerunner; like the morning star, the forerunner of the sun, he shone bright a little while, but his ministry by degrees ceased, and gave way to the ministry of Christ, as the morning star by little and little goes out as the sun rises. [John iii. 30](#). John the Baptist says, "He must increase, but I must decrease." But Christ's ministry never ceases. So the ancient legal priests, they had but a

changeable and short lived priesthood. Aaron died, and his son Eleazar succeeded in his room; and so there were many priests, one after another; but Christ continues a priest for ever. [Heb. vii. 23, 24](#). “And they truly were many priests; and they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but Christ, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.” These legal priests succeeded one another by inheritance; the father died and the son succeeded him, and then he died and his son succeeded him; but it is observed that Christ, in his priesthood, ” is without father and without mother, without descent.” He had no ancestor that went before him in his priesthood, or any posterity that should succeed him in it. In that respect, Melchizedek is a type of Christ, of whom the Scriptures give us an account, that he was a priest, but seems not to have been a priest by inheritance, as the sons of Aaron were: as [Heb. vii. 3](#). “without father, and without mother, and without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually:” and therefore it is said of Christ, [Psal. cx. 4](#). “The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Those things that appertain to Christ’s priesthood are everlasting. The tabernacle at which the priests of old officiated, was a tabernacle that men pitched, and therefore a tabernacle that was taken down. It was the holy of holies of old; but Christ is a minister of the true tabernacle and the true sanctuary, which the Lord hath built, and not man. [Heb. v. 2](#). The holy of holies he entered into was *heaven*; he is priest in a tabernacle which shall never be taken down, and in a temple that shall never be demolished. So the altar on which he offers incense, the priestly garments or robes in which he officiates, are not of a corruptible nature. And so Christ is everlasting with reference to his kingly office. David and Solomon were great kings, and eminent types of Christ: but death put an end to their kingdom and greatness. Earthly monarchies that ever have been, those that have ruled over the bigger part of the known world, as particularly the Grecian and Roman monarchies, they have come to an end, but Christ’s is an everlasting kingdom, his throne is for ever and ever; [Heb. i. 8](#). “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” Though all other kingdoms shall be demolished, Christ’s kingdom shall stand for ever. [Dan. vii. 13, 14](#).

2. Christ is at all times equally sufficient for the office he hath undertaken. He undertook the office from eternity, and he was sufficient for it from eternity. He has been in the exercise of his office from the fall of man, and remains equally sufficient throughout all ages. His power and his wisdom, his love, his excellency, and worthiness, is at all times equally sufficient for the salvation of sinners, and for the upholding and glorifying of believers. He is for ever able to save, because he lives for ever. His life is an endless and unchangeable life. He is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. [Heb. vii. 16](#). He is at all times equally accepted as a Mediator in the sight of the Father, who is ever well pleased in him. He is always equally worthy and lovely in his eyes. He is daily



his delight, rejoicing always before him. The sacrifice that he has offered, and the righteousness that he has performed, is at all times equally sufficient. His blood is as sufficient to cleanse away sin now, as when it was warm from his wounds.

3. He is now, and ever will be, the same that he ever has been, in the disposition and will which he exercises in his office. He is not changeable in his disposition, as men are that are called to any office or business, which causes them to appear and act very differently in their offices at some times, from what they do at others. But Jesus Christ is, in this respect, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is ever disposed to execute his office in a holy manner. He ever has been, still is, and ever will be, disposed to execute it so as to glorify his Father, to discountenance sin, and to encourage holiness. He ever exercised the same grace and mercy in his office. He undertook the office of a Mediator from eternity with delight. He then delighted in the thoughts of saving sinners, and he still delights in it; he never has altered from the disposition to accomplish it. When man actually fell and became a rebel and an enemy, an enemy to his Father and himself; still it was his delight to do the part of a Mediator for him. And when he came into the world, and came to his last agony; when the bitter cup that he was to drink was set before him. and he had an extraordinary view of it, so that the sight of it made "his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and caused him to "sweat as it were great drops of blood;" still he retained his disposition to do the part of a Mediator for sinners, and delighted in the thoughts of it; so, even when he was enduring the cross, the salvation of sinners was a joy set before him. [Heb. xii. 2.](#) And he never alters from his readiness to receive and embrace all that do in faith come to him; he is always equally willing to receive such. His love is unchangeable; he loved from eternity: [Jer. xxxi. 3.](#) he loved with an everlasting love; and it will be to eternity. [John xiii. 1.](#) "Having loved his own he loved them unto the end."

4. Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, as to the end which he aims at in his office. His supreme end in it is the glory of God; as particularly in vindicating the honour of his majesty, justice, and holiness, and the honour of his holy law. For this end did he undertake to stand as a Mediator between God and man, and to suffer for men, *viz.* that the honour of God's justice, majesty, and law may be vindicated in his sufferings. And he also undertook the office to glorify the free grace of God; and his special end in his undertaking was the salvation and happiness of the elect. These two ends he has in his eye in all parts of the work of his office; and these two ends he unchangeably aims at. These he sought on entering into covenant with the Father from eternity. These he has sought from the beginning of the world to this time, and these he ever will seek. He does not sometimes pursue one end, and then alter his mind and pursue another; but he ever pursues the same ends.

5. Christ ever acts by the same rules in the execution of his mediatorial office.

The rules that Christ acts by, in the execution of his office, are contained in a twofold covenant.

(1.) The covenant of redemption, or the eternal covenant that was between the Father and the Son, wherein Christ undertook to stand as Mediator with fallen man, and was appointed thereto of the Father. In that covenant, all things concerning Christ's execution of his mediatorial office, were agreed between Christ and his Father, and established by them. And this covenant or eternal agreement, is the highest rule that Christ acts by in his office; and it is a rule that he never in the least departs from. He never does any thing, more or less, than is contained in that eternal covenant. Christ does the work that God gave him to do in that covenant, and no other: he saves those, and those only, that the Father gave him in that covenant to save; and he brings them to such a degree of happiness as was therein agreed. To this rule Christ is unchangeable in his regard; it stands good with Christ in every article of it, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

(2.) Another covenant that Christ has regard to in the execution of his mediatorial office, is that covenant of grace which God established with man. Though indeed this be less properly the rule by which Christ acts as Mediator, than the covenant of redemption, yet it may be called a rule. God does, as it were, make his promises which he makes to his creatures, his rule to act by: *i.e.* all his actions are in an exact conformity to his promises, and he never departs in the least degree from them, as is the case with men with regard to what they make the rule of their actions. Yet it is not a rule to God in the same sense as a rule is to a created agent, which must be considered as something antecedent to the purposes of the agent, and that by which his purposes are regulated. But God's promises are consequent on his purposes, and are no other than the expressions of them. And the covenant of grace is not essentially different from the covenant of redemption: it is but an expression of it: it is only that covenant of redemption partly revealed to mankind for their encouragement, faith, and comfort. And therefore the fact that Christ never departs from the covenant of redemption, infers that he will never depart from the covenant of grace; for all that was promised to men in the covenant of grace, was agreed on between the Father and the Son in the covenant of redemption. However, there is one thing wherein Christ's unchangeableness in his office appears: that he never departs from the promises that he hath made to man. There is the same covenant of grace in all ages of the world. The covenant is not essentially different now from what it was under the Old Testament", and even before the flood; and it always will remain the same. It is therefore called an everlasting covenant, [Isa. lv. 3](#).

And as Christ does not alter his covenant, so he unchangeably fulfils it: he never departs in the least jot or tittle. Though he has given exceedingly great and precious promises to those that believe in him, he ever fulfils them all. Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one jot or one tittle of his promises shall fail, till all be fulfilled. It is especially on account of his unchangeable-ness with respect to his promises, that he styles himself, " *I am that I am*," and is called " *Jehovah*," [Exod. iii. 14](#). and [vi.3](#). Christ revealed himself to the children

of Israel, in their Egyptian bondage, by this name, to encourage the people that he would fulfil his promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

5. He is in many respects unchangeable in the acts which he exercises in his office. He is unchangeable in his acceptance of those that believe in him, and never will reject them; and he is unchangeable in his complacency and delight in them. He is unchangeable in his intercession for his church and people. He ever lives to make intercession. [Heb. vii. 25](#). His intercession before God in heaven is a continual intercession. It is a constant presentation of his will before the Father for the salvation and happiness of those that are his in the virtue of his blood. And as Christ is unchangeable in his intercession, so he is unchangeable in upholding and preserving those that are his, and ordering all things for their good, until they are brought to his heavenly glory. He is constant and unchangeable in taking care of them in all respects, and will hereafter receive them to a constant and unchangeable enjoyment of himself.

#### **APPLICATION.**

I. We learn from the truth taught in the text, how fit Christ was to be appointed as the surety of fallen man. Adam, the first surety of mankind, failed in his work, because he was a mere creature, and so a mutable being. Though he had so great a trust committed to him, as the care of the eternal welfare of all his posterity, yet, not being unchangeable, he failed, and transgressed God's holy covenant. He was led aside, and drawn away by the subtle temptation of the devil. He being a changeable being, his subtle adversary found means to turn him aside, and so he fell, and all his posterity fell with him. It appeared, therefore, that we stood in need of a surety that was unchangeable, and could not fail in his work. Christ, whom God appointed to this work, to be to us a second Adam, is such an one that is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and therefore was not liable to fail in his undertaking. He was sufficient to be depended on as one that would certainly stand all trials, and go through all difficulties, until he had finished the work that he had undertaken, and actually wrought out eternal redemption for us.

II. This truth may be well applied to the awakening of those who profess to be Christians, and this on several accounts. You may be hence assured that Christ will fulfil his threatenings that he has denounced against unbelievers. There are many awful threatenings which Christ has denounced against wicked men. Christ has threatened woe to this wicked world; [Matt. xviii. 17.](#); and has declared concerning all, that do not believe, that they shall be damned. This is that which Christ gave in charge to his disciples before his ascension, when he sent them forth to preach, and teach all nations. [Mark xvi. 15, 16.](#) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." So Christ declares that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire. [Matt. vii. 18.](#) And he has especially threatened

an awful punishment to gospel sinners. He has declared that every branch in him that beareth not fruit shall be cut off, and cast forth, and gathered up and burnt; and that, however wicked men and false Christians may dwell among the godly, as tares grow among wheat, yet when the harvest comes, and the wheat is gathered into the barn, the tares shall be gathered into bundles, and burnt. [Matt. xiii. 30](#). And in the explication of the parable, he says, that, at the day of judgment, the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth,” [ver. 41, 42](#). So he declares in [Matt. viii. 21](#). concerning those visible Christians that say to him, “Lord, Lord,” and that do not do the will of his Father which is in heaven, that he will hereafter profess unto them, that he never knew them, and that he will say unto them, ” Depart from me, ye that work iniquity; ” and that those that build their house on the sand shall fall, and that great shall be their fall; and that such as these shall see many coming from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out; and he teaches in his parables that unprofitable servants, and those that as professing Christians come to the gospel feast without the wedding garment, shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He often denounces woe on hypocrites; and threatens concerning such as begin a life of religion and do not finish, and are not thorough and persevering in it, that they shall come to shame; that those who are foolish virgins, that take their lamps and take no oil with them, shall at last be shut from the marriage when others enter in with the bridegroom, and that when they come to the door they shall find it shut, and shall cry, “Lord, Lord, open to us,” in vain; and that, at the day of judgment, Christ shall separate the righteous from the wicked, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, setting the righteous on the right hand, and the wicked on the left; and that he shall say to the wicked, ” Depart, accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” and that the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment. And particularly he has threatened concerning them that have not a spirit of self-denial, that do not cut off a right hand or a right foot, nor pluck out a right eye, that they shall go with two hands, or two feet, or two eyes, into hell-fire, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And that those that have not a spirit to sell all for his sake, and that do not in comparison of him hate father, and mother, and wife, and every earthly relative and earthly possession, shall not be acknowledged of him as his disciples. And concerning those that are ashamed of religion before men, that of them will he be ashamed before his Father and before the angels: and concerning those that are of a revengeful spirit, and not of a spirit of forgiveness, that they shall not be forgiven: and concerning all that are of a malicious spirit, and not of a spirit of Christian love and meekness, that are of an angry, wrathful, and scornful disposition, that say to their brother, “Raca,” or “Thou fool;” that they shall be in

danger of everlasting punishment proportioned to the heinousness of their crimes. And concerning worldly-minded men he has declared, that 'tis impossible for those that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. Concerning such he has said, "Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation; and woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger;" and concerning such as are addicted to carnal mirth and jollity, he says, "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep." And he has abundantly declared concerning gospel sinners, that their punishment shall be far more dreadful than that of the worst of the heathen; that it shall be more tolerable even for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for them; and he has declared that those, that are once cast into hell, shall in no wise come out thence, until they have paid the uttermost farthing.

Such things as these did Christ threaten against the ungodly when he was here upon earth. And by the doctrine of the text you learn, that he now is and ever will be the same that he was then. He has not at all altered, no, nor ever will; but these dreadful things, that he has threatened, he will surely fulfil. Christ was no more disposed to threaten, than to fulfil his threatenings. Christ is as holy, and his nature and will is as averse to sin now as ever it was; and he is as strictly just now as he was then.

Therefore, let no Christless person flatter himself, that, continuing such, he shall by any means escape punishment. Christ's threatenings are the threatenings of one, that is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and what he has threatened with his mouth he will fulfil with his hands. When Christ appears at the day of judgment, and you shall stand at his bar to be judged, you will find him in judging, just what he was, and just what you find him in your Bibles, in threatening.

III. The truth in the text may be applied by way of reproof.

1. To those that have been heretofore under awakenings, but have now become senseless and careless. This doctrine shows your folly. You act as if Christ were altered, as though he were not now so dreadful a Judge, and his displeasure not so much to be feared, as heretofore. Time was, when you were afraid of the displeasure and wrath of Christ. You were afraid of the dreadful sentence from his mouth, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." And why is it so much otherwise with you now? Is not the wrath of this Judge as much to be dreaded now, as ever it was? Time was, when those threatenings, that Christ has denounced against sinners, were terrible things to you; and why do you make so light of them now? Is this your great Judge grown weaker than he was, and less able to fulfil his threatening? Are you less in his hands than you were; or do you imagine that Christ is become more reconciled to sin, and has not such a disposition to execute vengeance for it as he had?

Time was, that you seemed to feel yourself to be in lamentable circumstances that you had not an interest in Christ, and to have a great mind to get an interest in him. You sought it, and prayed to God daily for it, and took considerable pains, and went and asked others, what you should do to obtain an interest in Christ. Why is it that you are so much more





careless about it now? Is Christ altered; is an interest in him less valuable, or less necessary, now, than it was then? Was acceptance with him worth earnestly seeking, and praying, and striving for then, and is it good for nothing now? Did you stand in great need of it then, and can you do well enough without it now?

Time was when you seemed to be much concerned about your having been guilty of so much sin against God and Christ, and, it may be, wept about it in your prayers. But now, you are not concerned about it. The thought of your having so often and so greatly offended him, does not so much trouble you, but that you can be easy and quiet, and have your heart taken up about one vanity or another, without being very much disturbed with the thoughts of your sins. Then you used to be careful to avoid sin; you were watchful to avoid those things that were forbidden in God's holy word; you were careful that you did not sin by profaning the sabbath, or by unsuitably spending the time in God's house, or by neglecting the duties of reading and prayer. You were careful of your behaviour among men, lest you should transgress. If you suspected any thing to be sinful then, you dared not do it. But now there is no such care upon your spirit, there is no such watch maintained, you have no such guard upon you. But when you are tempted to do or omit any thing, it is not a thought coming with weight upon your heart, "Is this sinful or not?" "Is this contrary to the mind and will of God, or not?" You do not dwell long on such kind of thoughts as these; you are grown very bold, and live in neglects and practices that are sinful, and that you have light enough to know to be so: just as if you thought that Christ's disposition, with respect to sin, was altered; and that he was less an enemy to sin now than he was then. Instead of being less an enemy to sin than you then thought he was, and instead of being a less dreadful Judge of ungodly men than you then imagined, or had a sense of in your heart, he is a thousand times more so: for then, when you was most awakened and convinced, you conceived out very little of what is in reality; you apprehended very imperfectly the enmity of Christ's nature against sin, and the dreadfulness of his wrath against the ungodly. It was but a little sense you had of it. His wrath is infinitely more dreadful than ever you have yet had any conception of.

And though Christ be unchangeable, yet you are not. You are changed for the worse, since the time when you were awakened. Christ is equally an enemy of sin, and you are become more sinful than you then were. Christ's wrath is in itself equally dreadful as it then was; but you have far more reason to dread it than you had then, for you are in much greater danger of it; and, if you do not repent, are much nearer to the execution of it. And not only so, but you are now exposed to much more of that wrath. Christ's wrath hung over your head then, and so it does now, but with this difference, that now much more of that wrath hangs over you than did then. You hung over the pit of hell then, and so you do now; but with this difference, that you have ever since been kindling and enraging the flames of that fiery gulf over which you hang, so that they are vastly fiercer than they were then; and

the moth of time has been nibbling at that slender thread ever since, and has much nearer gnawed it off than it had then. And your heart is far more hardened than it was; and the devil has faster hold of you, and the way to escape is more blocked up; and your case upon many accounts is inexpressibly more doleful, however much more careless and unconcerned you are about your own circumstances.

2. This doctrine reproveth all that have entered into the bonds of the Christian covenant, and have proved false to it. If Christ be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and is always the same towards us in fulfilling as he is in promising, then surely we ought to be so towards him. If he never breaks covenant with his people, then they are greatly to be reproveth who are false and treacherous in their dealings with him. Therefore this reproveth a covenant people that depart from Christ, and break covenant with him; as we in this land have done, having greatly revolted and degenerated both from the pure profession and religious practice of the first times of the country. Though Christ and his doctrine, and the religion that he taught, are always the same, yet this country has great multitudes in it that are driven to and fro by every wind of doctrine, and has now for a long time been exceedingly corrupted by the prevalency of many evil customs and practices.

And by this doctrine is every particular person reproveth, that does not take care to keep covenant with Christ. We are in general under the solemn bonds of our baptismal covenant; and that covenant, that was sealed in our baptism, most of us have explicitly owned, and expressly and solemnly promised to walk in, in a way of obedience to all the commands of God, as long as we live; and have, time after time, in the most solemn manner, sealed this covenant anew, by taking the body and blood of Christ upon it at the Lord's supper. They bring dreadful guilt on themselves who are not careful to fulfil such vows; they that have solemnly vowed to obey Christ in all his commandments as long as they live, and have sealed these vows by eating and drinking at the Lord's supper with far greater solemnity than if they sealed it with as many solemn oaths, yet live in ways of sin, live in the neglect of several commanded duties, and in the commission of forbidden sin; or at least do not make it the care of their lives strictly to keep Christ's commands; surely such persons render themselves very guilty.

3. This doctrine reproveth those that have been seemingly pious, and have fallen away to ways of sin. Who these persons are, their own consciences are better able to judge than those that are about them. There are many here present, that in times past have been seemingly pious; and let every one inquire at the mouth of his own conscience, whether his seeming piety holds on; whether it be not come to an end. If you find reason, by a serious and strict examination, to conclude that you are one of them, consider how vile is your treatment of him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and who never is false to any to whom he once manifests his favour. How greatly doth God complain of such short-lived religion in the Scriptures! [Hos. vi. 4.](#) "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah,

what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.” [Psal. lxxviii. 57.](#) “They tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies, but turned back and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers; they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.”

4. Hereby the truly godly are greatly to be reproved for their declension. There are many such here, as I charitably hope, and many of them I fear have been guilty of great declension in religion. Formerly they were lively and animated in religion, now they are dull and indifferent; formerly their hearts went up on high after God, but now after the world; they carried themselves for a while very exemplarily, but have since behaved in such a manner as to wound religion. Why will you be guilty of such a departure from your Redeemer, who changes not with regard to you? His love he formerly manifested towards you, but it does not change; it has ever held up to the same height; his faithfulness never has failed to you; why then does your love so languish towards him, and why are you so unfaithful to him? He keeps up the same care and watchfulness towards you, to preserve you, to provide for you, to defend you from your enemies, and why will you suffer your care and strictness to serve and please Christ, and honour him, to fail in any measure?

When you were first converted, your heart seemed to be wrapt up in love to Christ, and delight in him and his praises. You were then continually meditating on Christ and the things of Christ, and your meditations on him were sweet; and you were then much in speaking of those things, and you delighted to speak of them. And why is it so much otherwise with you now? Is Christ less excellent than he was then? is he less worthy of your love?

5. This doctrine affords matter of reproof to us of this town, for our declining is much from what we have lately been. That we have exceedingly declined in religion, is most manifest, and what all confess. A little while ago Christ was the great object of regard among us. The hearts of the people in general were greatly engaged about Christ; as though Christ had been all, and the world nothing. There was then a great deal of conversation among all sorts of persons, and in all companies, of Christ. They who thought they had no interest in Christ, were full of concern how to obtain an interest in him; and they were almost ready to neglect their worldly concerns, as though Christ was all they needed. And with regard to those that thought they had obtained an interest in Christ, their thoughts and their conversation seemed also to be very much taken up about Christ. They were much engaged in talking of the excellency of Christ, and seemed to be full of the grace and dying love of Christ. And one and another of you expressed the strong sense you had of one perfection and excellency and another of Christ, and of the glory of the works that he has done, and of the sweetness of the words that he speaks. The town seemed to be full of the praises of Christ. You expressed to one another how you earnestly longed to praise him and bless his name for ever and ever, and how you desired that others should help you to praise him. The benefits procured by Christ were then greatly valued in the town, and both Christ and his benefits

were then precious among us. And multitudes seemed to be concerned, what they should do for the honour of Christ, how they should live to his glory, and do something for the advancement of his kingdom in the world. But now, how much otherwise is it; how little is Christ set by, in comparison of what he has been; how much is he neglected, how much is he dropped out of people's common discourse and conversation! How have many of you left off earnestly following after Christ, to pursue after the world; one to pursue after riches, another to be engrossed by amusement and diversion, another by fine clothes and gay apparel; and all sorts, young and old, have gone their way wandering in a great measure from Christ: as though Christ was not as excellent now as he was then: as though his grace and dying love were not as wonderful now as they were then; as though Christ were not now as much preferable to the world, as worthy to be loved, and to be praised, to be thought of, and talked of; and as though he was not as worthy that we should be concerned to honour him, and live to his praise, as ever he was. If Christ be as much altered as the town is altered, he is altered very much indeed. Are we so foolish as to think that he, that is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, is so much altered from what he was three years ago?

IV. The truth taught in the text may be applied by way of encouragement.

1. To sinners, whose minds are burdened and exercised with concern about the state of their souls, to come to Christ, and put their trust in him for salvation. If Christ is now and ever will be the same that he ever was, then here is great encouragement for you to come to him; as will appear by considering two things.

*First.* How Christ has invited you to come to him, with promises that he will accept of you, if you do so. Christ in his word often invites those that are in your circumstances; whether we consider your circumstances as a lost sinner, or as a sinner under anxiety and concern about your condition. If we consider your circumstances merely as a lost sinner, Christ invites you; for he is often inviting and calling on sinners to come to him. [Prov. viii. 4.](#) "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." And [chap. ix. 4, 5.](#) "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; and ye that want understanding, come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled." [Rev. iii. 20.](#) "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." [Rev. xxii. 17.](#) "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Or if we consider your circumstances as a sinner burdened in your soul with concern about your condition; such are especially invited by Christ. [Matt. xi. 28.](#) "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And [Isa. iv. 1.](#) "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" and [John vii. 37.](#) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." That Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, shows what a joint encouragement these invitations are for you to come to Christ in two ways:

(1.) It shows that as Christ invited such sinners, when these invitations were spoken and penned, so he does now, for he is the same now that he was then; so that you are to look on the invitations that you find in your Bible, not only as invitations that were made then

when they were first spoken or written, but that are made now. Christ makes them now as much as he made them then. Those invitations which proceeded out of Christ's mouth when he was on earth, are made to you now as much as if they now this moment proceeded from Christ's mouth; for there is no alteration in Christ; he is the same as ever he has been; so that when you read or hear any of the invitations of Christ, you may look upon them as if they now came from his blessed lips.

(2.) It shows that if you come to Christ, he will surely prove to be the same in accepting that he is in inviting. Christ will be consistent with himself. He will not appear one way in calling and inviting you, and then another way in his treatment of you when you come to accept of his invitation. Christ will not appear with two faces, with a pleasant winning face in inviting, and with a frowning countenance in his treatment of persons that come at his call; for he is ever the same. You see that Christ is exceedingly gracious and sweet in his invitations; and he surely will be as gracious and sweet in his acceptance of you; if you close with his call. And then Christ does not merely *invite*, he also *promises*, that if you accept of his invitation, he will not reject you. [John vi. 37](#). "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He that is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, will be found the same in fulfilling that he is in promising.

*Secondly*. How Christ has treated those that have come to him heretofore. Christ in times past has graciously received those that have come to him; he has made them welcome; he has embraced them in the arms of his love; he has admitted them to a blessed and eternal union with himself, and has given them a right to all the privileges of the sons of God; and he is the same still that he has been heretofore. We have an account in Scripture of many that came to him; we have an account in the history of Christ's life of many that accepted his calls, and we have an account in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, of multitudes that believed in him; but we read of none that ever were rejected by him. And we ourselves have seen many that we have reason to think Christ has accepted on their coming to him, many that have been great sinners, many that have been old hardened sinners, many that had been backsliders, and many that had been guilty of quenching the Spirit of God. And he is the same still; he is as ready to receive such sinners now as he was then. Christ never yet rejected any that came to him: he has always been the same in this respect; he is so now; and so he surely will be still.

2. There is in this doctrine great encouragement to all persons to look to Christ under all manner of difficulties and afflictions; and that especially from what appeared in Christ when he was here. We have an account, in the history of Christ, of great numbers under a great variety of afflictions and difficulties, resorting to him for help; and we have no account of his rejecting one person who came to him in a friendly manner for help, under any difficulty whatever. But on the contrary, the history of his life is principally filled up with miracles that he wrought for the relief of such. When they came to him, he presently relieved them,



and always did it freely without money or price. We never read of his doing any thing for any person as hired to it, by any reward that was offered him. And he helped persons fully, he completely delivered them from those difficulties under which they laboured. And by the doctrine of the text we learn that though he is not now upon earth, but in heaven, yet he is the same that he was then. He is as able to help, and he is as ready to help under every kind of difficulty. Here is great encouragement for persons who are sick to look to Christ for healing, and for their near friends to carry their case to Christ; for how ready was Christ, when on earth, to help those that looked to him under such difficulties! and how sufficient did he appear to be for it; commonly healing by laying on his hand, or by speaking a word! And we read of his healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. Persons under the most terrible and inveterate diseases were often healed. And Christ is the same still. And here is great encouragement for mourners to look to Christ for comfort; we read of Christ's pitying such; as in the case of the widow of Nain, [Luke vii. 12, 13, &c.](#) "And so he wept with those that wept, and groaned in spirit, and wept with compassion for Martha and Mary, when he saw their sorrow for the loss of their brother Lazarus, [John xi. 32, &c.](#) And he is the same still; he is as ready to pity those that are in affliction now as he was then.

And here is great encouragement for those that are exercised with the temptations of Satan; for how often do we read of Christ casting out Satan from those of whom he had the strongest possession! and Christ is the same still. And whoever are under spiritual darkness, from the consideration of their own sinfulness, have encouragement hence to look to Christ for comfort; for if they do so, he will be ready to say to them, as he did to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee;" for he is still the same that he was then.

V. The truth taught in the text may be applied by way of consolation to the godly. You may consider that you have in him an unchangeable Saviour, who, as he has loved you and undertaken for you from eternity, and in time has died for you before you were born, and has since converted you by his grace, and brought you out of a blind, guilty, and undone condition, savingly home to himself; so he will carry on his work in your heart; he will perfect what is yet lacking in you, in order to your complete deliverance from sin, and death, and all evil, and to your establishment in complete and unalterable blessedness. From the unchangeableness of your Saviour, you may see how he thinks of that chain in [Rom. viii. 29, 30.](#) "For whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate, and whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." The Saviour has promised you very great and precious blessings in this world; and things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, in the world to come; and from his unchangeableness you may be assured that the things which he has promised he will also perform.

You may from this doctrine see the unchangeableness of his love; and therefore, when you consider how great love he seemed to manifest, when he yielded himself up to God a sacrifice for you, in his agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and when he went out to the place of his crucifixion bearing his own cross, you may rejoice that his love now is the same that it was then.

And so when you think of past discoveries which Christ has made of himself in his glory, and in his love to your soul, you may comfort yourself that he is as glorious, and his love to you is as great, as it was in the time of these discoveries.

You may greatly comfort yourself that you have an unchangeable friend in Christ Jesus. Constancy is justly looked upon as a most necessary and most desirable qualification in a friend; that he be not fickle, and so that his friendship cannot be depended on as that of a steady sure friend. How excellent his friendship is, you may learn from his manner of treating his disciples on earth, whom he graciously treated as a tender father his children; meekly instructing them, most friendlily conversing with them, and being ready to pity them, and help them, and forgive their infirmities. And then you may consider this doctrine, and how it thence appears that he is the same still that he was then, and ever will be the same.

From the unchangeableness of your Saviour, you may be assured of your continuance in a state of grace. As to yourself, you are so changeable, that, if left to yourself, you would soon fall utterly away; there is no dependence on your unchangeableness; but Christ is the same, and therefore, when he has begun a good work in you he will finish it; as he has been the author, he will be the finisher of your faith. Your love to Christ is in itself changeable; but his to you is unchangeable, and therefore he will never suffer your love to him utterly to fail. The apostle gives this reason why the saints' love to Christ cannot fail, *viz.* that his love to them never can fail.

From the unchangeableness of Christ you may learn the unchangeableness of his intercession, how he will never cease to intercede for you. And from this you may learn the unalterableness of your heavenly happiness. When once you have entered on the happiness of heaven, it never shall be taken from you, because Christ, your Saviour and friend, who bestows it on you, and in whom you have it, is unchangeable. He will be the same for ever and ever, and therefore so will be your happiness in heaven. As Christ is an unchangeable Saviour, so he is your unchangeable portion. That may be your rejoicing, that however your earthly enjoyments may be removed, Christ can never fail. Your dear friends may be taken away and you suffer many losses; and at last you must part with all those things. Yet you have a portion, a precious treasure, more worth, ten thousand times, than all these things. That portion cannot fail you, for you have it in him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

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S E R M O N   X V .

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THE TRUE EXCELLENCY OF A GOSPEL MINISTER.

[john v. 35.](#)

He was a burning and a shining light.

that discourse of our blessed Saviour we have an account of in this [chapter from the 17th verse to the end.](#), was occasioned by the Jews' murmuring against him, and persecuting him for his healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and bidding him to take up his bed and walk on the sabbath day. Christ largely vindicates himself in this discourse, by asserting his fellowship with God the Father in nature and operations, and thereby implicitly showing himself to be Lord of the sabbath, and by declaring to the Jews that God the Father, and he with him, did *work hitherto*, or even to this time; *i. e.* although it be said that God rested on the seventh day from all his works, yet indeed God continues to work hitherto, even to this very day, with respect to his greatest work, the work of redemption, or new creation, which he carries on by Jesus Christ, his Son. Pursuant to the designs of which work was his showing mercy to fallen men by healing their diseases, and delivering them from the calamities they brought on themselves by sin. This great work of redemption God carries on from the beginning of the world to this time; and his rest from it will not come till the resurrection, which Christ speaks of in the [21st and following verses.](#) the finishing of this redemption as to its procurement, being in his own resurrection; and as to the application, in the general resurrection and eternal judgment, spoken of from [ver. 20 to ver. 30.](#) So that notwithstanding both the rest on the seventh day, and also the rest that Joshua gave the children of Israel in Canaan; yet the great rest of the Redeemer from his work, and so of his people with him and in him, yet remains, as the apostle observes, [Heb. chap. iv.](#) This will be at the resurrection and general judgment; which Christ here teaches the Jews was to be brought to pass by the Son of God by the Father's appointment, and so the works of God to be finished by him.

And inasmuch as this vindication was so far from satisfying the Jews, that it did but further enrage them, because hereby he made himself equal with God, Christ therefore refers them to the witness of John the Baptist; whose testimony they must acquiesce in, or else be inconsistent with themselves; because they had generally acknowledged John to be a great prophet, and seemed for a while mightily affected and taken with it, that God after so long



a withholding the spirit of prophecy, had raised up so great a prophet among them and it is concerning him that Christ speaks in this verse wherein is the text: “He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. <sup>685</sup>”

In order to a right understanding and improvement of the words of the text, we may observe,

1. What Christ here takes notice of in John, and declares concerning him, *viz.* that *he was a burning and a shining light*. He was a light to the church of Israel, to reveal the mind and will of God to them, after a long-continued dark season, and after they had been destitute of any prophet to instruct them for some ages; he arose on Israel, as the morning star, the forerunner of the Sun of righteousness, to introduce the day-spring, or dawning of the gospel day, to give light to them that till then had sat in the darkness of perfect night, which was the shadow of death; to give them the knowledge of salvation; as Zacharias his father declares at his circumcision, [Luke i. 76-79](#). “And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

And he was a burning light, as he was full of a spirit of fervent piety and holiness, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb, having his heart warmed and inflamed with a great love to Christ, being that *friend of the bridegroom that stood and heard him, and rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice*; and was glad that Christ increased, though he decreased, [John iii. 29, 30](#). and was animated with a holy zeal in the work of the ministry: he came, in this respect, in the spirit and power of Elias: as Elias was zealous in bearing testimony against the corruption, apostacies, and idolatries of Israel in his day, so was John the Baptist in testifying against the wickedness of the Jews in his day: as Elias zealously reprov’d the sins of all sorts of persons in Israel, not only the sins of the common people, but of their great ones, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jezebel, and their false prophets; with what zeal did John the Baptist reprove all sorts of persons, not only the publicans and soldiers, but the Pharisees and Sadducees, telling them plainly that they were a generation of vipers, and rebuked the wickedness of Herod in his most beloved lust, though Herod sought his life for it, as Ahab and Ahaziah did Elijah’s! As Elias was much in warning the people of God’s approaching judgments, denouncing God’s awful wrath against Ahab, Jezebel, and Ahaziah, and the prophets of Baal, and the people in general; so was John the Baptist much in warning the people to fly from the wrath to come, telling them in the most awakening manner, that the “axe was laid at the root of the tree, and that every tree that brought not forth good fruit should be hewn down and cast into the fire; and that he that came after him

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685 [John v. 35](#).

had his fan in his hand, and that he would thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. <sup>686</sup> »

John the Baptist was not only a burning but a shining light: he was so in his doctrine, having more of the gospel in his preaching than the former prophets, or at least the gospel exhibited with greater light and clearness, more plainly pointing forth the person that was to be the great Redeemer, and declaring his errand into the world, to take away the sin of the world, as a lamb offered in sacrifice to God, and the necessity that all, even the most strictly moral and religious, stood in of him, being by nature a generation of vipers; and the spiritual nature of his kingdom, consisting not in circumcision, or outward baptism, or any other external performance or privileges, but in the powerful influences of the Holy Ghost in their hearts, a being *baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*.

In this clearness with which he gave knowledge of salvation to God's people, John was a bright light, *and among them that had been born of women there had not arisen a greater than he*. In this brightness this harbinger of the gospel day excelled all the other prophets, as the morning star reflects more of the light of the sun than any other star, and is the brightest of all the stars.

He also shone bright in his conversation, and his eminent mortification and renunciation of the enjoyments of the world; his great diligence and laboriousness in his work, his impartiality in it, declaring the mind and will of God to all sorts without distinction; his great humility, rejoicing in the increase of the honour of Christ, though his honour was diminished, as the brightness of the morning star diminishes as the light of the sun increases; and in his faithfulness and courage, still declaring the mind and will of God, though it cost him his own life. Thus his light shone before men.

2. We may observe to what purpose Christ declares these things of John in the text, *viz.* to show how great and excellent a person he was, and worthy that the Jews should regard his testimony: great are the things which Christ elsewhere says of John the Baptist, as in [Matt. xi. 7-14](#). He speaks of him as a *prophet; and more than a prophet; and one, than whom, there had not risen a greater among them that had been born of women*. He observes how great and excellent a light he was in the text, to show the Jews how inexcusable they were in not receiving the testimony he had given of him; as you may see [ver. 31, 32, 33](#).

Therefore that which I would observe from the text to be the subject of my present discourse is this:

It is the excellency of a minister of the gospel to be both a burning and a shining light.

Thus we see it is in Christ's esteem, the great Prophet of God, and Light of the world, Head of the church, and Lord of the harvest, and the great Lord and Master, whose messengers all ministers of the gospel are.

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686 [Matthew iii. 10-12](#).

John the Baptist was a minister of the gospel; and he was so more eminently than the ancient prophets; for though God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake the gospel by them; yet John the Baptist was a great minister of the gospel in a manner distinguished from them. He is reckoned in Scripture the first that introduced the gospel day, after the law and the prophets, [Luke vi. 16](#). “The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached.” And his preaching is called the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, [Mark i. 1](#). He came on that errand, to give knowledge of salvation to God’s people, through the remission of their sins, (as his father Zacharias observes, [Luke i. 77](#).) and to preach these glad tidings that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

John being thus eminently a minister of the gospel, and a burning and shining light, being taken notice of by Christ as his great excellency, we may justly hence observe, that herein consists the proper excellency of ministers of the gospel.

I would, by divine assistance, handle the subject in the following method.

I. I would show that Christ’s design in the appointment of the order and office of ministers of the gospel is, that they may be lights to the souls of men.

II. I would show what is implied in their being burning lights.

III. I would show what is implied in their being shining lights.

IV. I would show that it is the proper excellency of ministers of the gospel to have these things united in them, to be both burning and shining lights.

V. I would apply these things to all that Christ has called to the work of the gospel ministry, showing how much it concerns them earnestly to endeavour that they may be burning and shining lights.

VI. Show what ministers of the gospel ought to do that they may be so.

VII. Say something briefly concerning the duty of a people that are under the care of a gospel minister, correspondent to those things that Christ has taught us concerning the end and excellency of a gospel minister.

I. I would observe that Christ’s design in the appointment of the order and office of ministers of the gospel was, that they might be lights to the souls of men.

Satan’s kingdom is a kingdom of darkness; the devils are the rulers of the darkness of this world. But Christ’s kingdom is a kingdom of light; the designs of his kingdom are carried on by light; his people *are not of the night, nor of darkness*, but are *the children of the light*, as they are the children of God, who is *the father of lights*, and as it were a boundless fountain of infinite pure and bright light. [1 John i. 5](#). [James i. 17](#).

Man by the fall extinguished that divine light that shone in this world in its first estate. The Scripture represents the wickedness of man as reducing the world to that state wherein it was when it was yet without form and void, and darkness filled it. [Jer. iv. 22, 23](#). “For my people is foolish, they have not known me: they are sottish children; and they have none

understanding: they are wise to do evil; but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.” But God in infinite mercy has made glorious provision for the restoration of light to this fallen dark world: he has sent him who is the brightness of his own glory into the world, to be the light of the world. “He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,<sup>687</sup>” *i. e.* every man in the world that ever has any true light. But in his wisdom and mercy, he is pleased to convey his light to men by means and instruments; and has sent forth his messengers, and appointed ministers in his church to be subordinate lights, and to shine with the communications of his light, and to reflect the beams of his glory on the souls of men.

There is an analogy between the divine constitution and disposition of things in the natural and in the spiritual world. The wise Creator has not left the natural world without light; but in this our solar system has set one great light, immensely exceeding all the rest, shining perpetually with a transcendent fulness and strength, to enlighten the whole; and he hath appointed other lesser, subordinate, or dependent lights, that shine with the communications and reflections of something of his brightness. So it is in the spiritual world; there God hath appointed Jesus Christ as the Sun of righteousness: the church of God has not the sun to be her light by day, nor for brightness does the moon give light to her, but the Lord is her everlasting light, and her God her glory. The new Jerusalem has no need of the sun, nor the moon; for the Lamb is the light thereof. And the ministers of Christ are, as it were, the stars that encompass this glorious fountain of light, to receive and reflect his beams, and give light to the souls of men. As Christ therefore is in Scripture called the Sun, so are his ministers called stars. So are the twelve apostles, the chief ministers of the Christian church, called, [Rev. xii. 1](#). “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” And so are the ordinary ministers of the gospel called, [Rev. i. 16](#). “And he had in his right hand seven stars.” And [ver. 20](#). “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks; the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.” Here also ministers of the gospel are implicitly compared to those lamps that enlightened the temple at Jerusalem, upon the tops of the golden candlesticks: and more expressly in [Zech. iv. 2](#). “I have looked, and behold a candlestick, all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon.”

These lamps have all their oil from Christ, and are enkindled by his flame, and shine by his beams; and being thus dependent on him, they are near to him, and held in his right hand, that they may receive light from him, to communicate to others.

The use of a light is threefold; to discover, to refresh, and to direct.

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687 [John i. 9](#).

The first use of a light is to discover things, or make them manifest. Without light nothing is to be seen. [Eph. v. 13](#). “Whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” Ministers are set to be lights to the souls of men in this respect, as they are to be the means of imparting divine truth to them, and bringing into their view the most glorious and excellent objects, and of leading them to and assisting them in the contemplation of those things that angels desire to look into: the means of their obtaining that knowledge is infinitely more important, and more excellent and useful, than that of the greatest statesmen or philosophers, even that which is spiritual and divine: they are set to be the means of bringing men out of darkness into God’s marvellous light, and of bringing them to the infinite fountain of light, that in his light they may see light: they are set to instruct men, and impart to them that knowledge by which they may know God and Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

Another use of light is to refresh and delight the beholders. Darkness is dismal: the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun. Light is refreshing to those who have long sat in darkness: they therefore that watch and keep awake through a dark night, long and wait for the light of the morning; and the wise man observes, [Prov. xv. 30](#). “That the light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart.” Spiritual light is especially refreshing and joyful. [Psalm xcvi. 11](#). “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.” They that see the light of Christ, the star that hath arisen out of Jacob, are refreshed and do rejoice, as the wise men that saw the star that showed them where Christ was, [Matt. ii. 10](#). “And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”

Ministers are set in the church of God to be the instruments of this comfort and refreshment to the souls of men, to be the instruments of leading souls to the God of all consolation, and fountain of their happiness: they are sent as Christ was, and as co-workers with him, to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to comfort all that mourn: they are to lead those that “labour and are heavy laden”<sup>688</sup> to their true rest, and to speak a word in season to him that is weary: they are set to be ministers of the consolation and joy of the saints. [2 Cor. i. 24](#). “We have not dominion over your faith; but are helpers of your joy.”

The third use of light is to direct. ‘Tis by light that we see where to go: “He that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes,”<sup>689</sup> and is in danger of stumbling and falling into mischief. ‘Tis by light that men see what to do, and are enabled to work; in the night, Christ tells us, no man can work. Ministers are set to be lights to men’s souls in this respect also; as Zacharias observes of John the Baptist, [Luke 1. 79](#). “To guide our feet in the way of peace.” Ministers have the record of God committed to them that they may hold that forth, which

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688 [Matthew xi. 28](#).

689 [John xii. 35](#).

God has given to be to man as a light shining in a dark place, to guide them in the way through this dark world, to regions of eternal light. Ministers are set to be instruments of conveying to men that true wisdom spoken of [Job xxviii](#). “Which cannot be gotten for gold, nor shall silver be weighed for the price thereof; which cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.”

I proceed now to the

II. Thing proposed, *viz.* to show what is implied in a minister of the gospel’s being a burning light.

There are these two things that seem naturally to be understood by this expression, *viz.* that his heart be filled with much of the holy ardour of a spirit of true piety; and that he be fervent and zealous in his administrations.

1. That his heart be full of much of the holy ardour of a spirit of true piety. We read of the power of godliness. True grace is no dull, inactive, ineffectual principle; it is a powerful thing; there is an exceeding energy in it; and the reason is, that God is in it; it is a divine principle, a participation of the divine nature, and a communication of divine life, of the life of a risen Saviour, who exerts himself in the hearts of the saints, after the power of an endless life. They that have true grace in them, *they live*; but not by their own life; *but Christ lives in them*: his Holy Spirit becomes in them a living principle and spring of divine life; the energy and power of which is in Scripture compared to fire. [Matt. iii. 11](#). “I indeed baptize you with water; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” True piety is not a thing remaining only in the head, or consisting in any speculative knowledge or opinions, or outward morality, or forms of religion; it reaches the heart, is chiefly seated there, and burns there. There is a holy ardour in every thing that belongs to true grace: true faith is an ardent thing, and so is true repentance; there is a holy power and ardour in true spiritual comfort and joy; yea, even in true Christian humility, submission, and meekness. The reason is, that divine love or charity is the sum of all true grace, which is a holy flame enkindled in the soul: it is by this therefore especially, that a minister of the gospel is a *burning light*; a minister that is so has his soul enkindled with the heavenly flame; his heart burns with love to Christ, and fervent desires of the advancement of his kingdom and glory: and also with ardent love to the souls of men, and desires for their salvation.

2. The inward holy ardour of his soul is exercised and manifested in his being *zealous and fervent in his administrations*; for, he is a *burning light*: which implies that his spiritual heat and holy ardour is not for himself only, but is communicative and for the benefit of others: he is ardent, as he is a *light*, or in the performance of the duties of that office wherein he is set to be a light in the church of Christ. His fervent zeal, which has its foundation and spring in that holy and powerful flame of love to God and man, that is in his heart, appears in the fervency of his prayers to God, for and with his people; and in the earnestness and

power with which he preaches the word of God, declares to sinners their misery, and warns them to fly from the wrath to come, and reproveth and testifies against all ungodliness; and the unfeigned earnestness and compassion with which he invites the weary and heavy laden to their Saviour; and the fervent love with which he counsels and comforts the saints; and the holy zeal, courage, and steadfastness, with which he maintains the exercise of discipline in the house of God, notwithstanding all the opposition he meets with in that difficult part of the ministerial work; and in the diligence and earnestness with which he attends every duty of his ministerial function, whether public or private.

But I hasten to the

III. Thing proposed in the handling of this subject, *viz.* To show what is implied in a minister's being a *shining light*.

There are three things that seem to be naturally signified by it.

1. That he be *pure, clear, and full in his doctrine*. A minister is set to be a light to men's souls, by teaching, or doctrine: and if he be a shining light in this respect, the light of his doctrine must be bright and full; it must be pure without mixtures of darkness, and therefore he must be sound in the faith, not one that is of a reprobate mind; in doctrine he must show uncorruptness; otherwise his *light* will be darkness: he must not lead his people into errors, but teach them the truth only, guiding their feet into the way of peace, and leading them in the right ways of the Lord.

He must be one that is *able to teach*; not one that is raw, ignorant, or unlearned, and but little versed in the things that he is to teach others; *not a novice*, or one that is *unskilful in the word of righteousness*; he must be one that is well studied in divinity, well acquainted with the written word of God, mighty in the Scriptures, and able to instruct and convince gainsayers.

And in order to be a *shining light* he must be one that really knows what religion is; one that is truly acquainted with that Saviour and way of salvation, that he is to teach to others, that he may *speak the things that he knows, and testify the things that he has seen*, and not be a blind leader of the blind: he must be one that is acquainted with experimental religion, and not ignorant of the inward operations of the Spirit of God, nor of Satan's devices; able to guide souls under their particular difficulties. Thus he must be *a scribe well instructed in things that pertain to the kingdom of God; one that brings forth, out of his treasures things new and old*.

And in order to his being a *shining light*, his doctrine must be *full*, he must not only be able to teach, but apt to teach, ready to instruct the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, and diligent in teaching in public and private; and careful and faithful to declare the whole counsel of God, and not keep back any thing that may be profitable to his hearers.

Also his being a *shining light* implies that his instructions are clear and plain, accommodated to the capacity of his hearers, and tending to convey light to their understandings.

2. Another thing requisite in order to a minister's being a *shining light*, is that he be *discreet in all his administrations*. The fervent zeal that thus should animate and actuate him in his administrations should be regulated by discretion: he should not only be knowing, and able to communicate knowledge and formed to do it; but also wise, and know how to conduct himself in the house of God, as a wise builder, and a wise steward. And as he is one that God hath sent forth to labour in his field, and committed the care of his vineyard to, so he should conduct himself there as one *whom his God doth instruct to discretion*: he should not only be as *harmless as a dove*, but as *wise as a serpent*; showing himself a *workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*; and one that *knows how to govern the church of God*, and to *walk in wisdom towards those that are without*.

3. Another thing implied in a minister's being a *shining light*, is that he *shines in his conversation*: if he shines never so much in his doctrine and administrations in the house of God, yet if there be not an answerable brightness in his conversation, it will have a tendency to render all ineffectual. Christ, in [Matthew v. 14, 15, 16](#). says to his disciples, (having undoubtedly a special respect to those of them that were to be sent forth to preach the gospel,) "Ye are the light of the world: Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." And how does Christ direct them to give light to others? "Let your light," says he, "so shine before men, that others, seeing your *good works*, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." And he tells the same disciples again, [John xv. 8](#). "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." And how should they bring forth fruit? Christ tells them, [verse 10](#). "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," and [verse 14](#). "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

God sent his Son into the world to be the light of the world these two ways, *viz.* By revealing his mind and will to the world, and also by setting the world a perfect example. So ministers are set to be lights, not only as teachers, but as ensamples to the flock, [1 Peter v. 3](#).

The same things that ministers recommend to their hearers in their doctrine, they should also show them an example of in their practice. Thus the apostle says to Timothy, [1 Timothy iv. 11](#). "These things command and teach;" and then adds in the next verse, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." So he directs Titus, in his teaching, to recommend sobriety, gravity, temperance, patience, and other virtues, in the [beginning of the 2d chapter of Titus](#). But then adds in the [7th verse](#), "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works."

We see in natural bodies, that when heat is raised in them to a high degree, at length they begin to shine: and, as I observed before, a principle of true grace in the soul is like an inward heat, a holy ardour of a heavenly fire enkindled in the soul: this in ministers of the gospel ought to be to that degree, as to shine forth brightly in all their conversation; and





there should as it were be a light about them wherever they go, exhibiting to all that behold them, the amiable, delightful image of the beauty and brightness of their glorious Master.

I proceed to the

IV. Thing proposed, which is to show that the excellency of a minister of the gospel consists in his being thus *both a burning and a shining light*.

This is manifest in two things:

1. Herein his ministry is acceptable and amiable in the sight of God and men.

When light and heat are thus united in a minister of the gospel, it shows that each is genuine, and of a right kind, and that both are divine. Divine light is attended with heat; and so, on the other hand, a truly divine and holy heat and ardour is ever accompanied with light.

It is the glory of the sun that such a bright and glorious light, and such a powerful, refreshing, vivifying heat, are both together diffused from that luminary. When there is light in a minister, consisting in human learning, great speculative knowledge, and the wisdom of this world, without a spiritual warmth and ardour in his heart, and a holy zeal in his ministrations, his light is like the light of an *ignis fatuus*, and some kinds of putrifying carcasses that shine in the dark, though they are of a stinking savour. And if on the other hand a minister has warmth and zeal, without light, his heat has nothing excellent in it, but is rather to be abhorred; being like the heat of the bottomless pit; where, though the fire be great, yet there is no light. To be hot in this manner, and not lightsome, is to be like an angel of darkness. But ministers by having light and heat united in them, will be like the angels of light; which for their light and brightness are called morning stars. [Job xxviii. 7.](#) “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” And because of that holy ardour of divine love and zeal with which they burn, they are compared to a flaming fire. [Psalms civ. 4.](#) “Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire,” and are therefore called seraphims, which is a word that is derived from a root that signifies *to burn*. So that by ministers of the gospel being *burning and shining lights*, the *angels of the churches* will become like the *angels of heaven*, and those stars held in the right hand of Christ here below, will be like those morning stars above, and which is much more, hereby ministers will be like their glorious Lord and Master; who is not only the Master of ministers of the gospel, but is the Head and Lord of the glorious angels, whom they adore, and who communicates to them the brightness in which they shine, and the flame with which they burn, and is the glorious luminary and sun of the heavenly world, from whence all the inhabitants of that world have their light and life, and all their glory. In this Sun of righteousness is that light, whose brightness is such that the light of the sun in the firmament in comparison of it is as darkness, yea, *black as sackcloth of hair*: for he is the infinite brightness of God’s glory; and of him it is said, [Isaiah xxiv. 23.](#) “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before

his ancients, gloriously.” And accompanying this bright light in him, is the infinitely intense flame of love. There is no love to be compared to his; nor ever was love both to God and man so manifested, as has been in what Christ has done and suffered; for *herein was love!* Ministers, by being burning and shining lights, become the sons of God, of whom we read that he *is light*, and that he *is love*. [1 John i. 5](#). “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that *God is light*, and in him is no darkness at all.” And [chap. iv. 16](#). “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us: *God is love*, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

Therefore it must needs be that ministers, by being burning and shining lights, are acceptable and amiable in the sight of God, as he delights in his own image and in the image of his Son: and hereby also they will be honourable and amiable in the sight of men, all such as have any sense of that which is truly excellent and beautiful; and it is the way to have their ministry pleasant and delightful to those of this character that sit under it.

2. Herein a minister of the gospel will be likely to answer the ends of his ministry: by this means his ministry will not only be amiable, but profitable. If a minister has light without heat, and entertains his auditory with learned discourses, without a savour of the power of godliness, or any appearance of fervency of spirit, and zeal for God and the good of souls, he may gratify itching ears, and fill the heads of his people with empty notions; but it will not be very likely to reach their hearts, or save their souls. And if, on the other hand, he be driven on with a fierce and intemperate zeal, and vehement heat, without light, he will be likely to kindle the like unhallowed flame in his people, and to fire their corrupt passions and affections; but will make them never the better, nor lead them a step towards heaven, but drive them apace the other way.

But if he approves himself in his ministry, as both a burning and a shining light, this will be the way to promote true Christianity amongst his people, and to make them both wise, good, and cause religion to flourish among them in the purity and beauty of it.

When divine light and heat attend each other in ministers of the gospel, their light will be like the beams of the sun, that do not only convey light, but give life; and converts will be likely to spring up under their ministry, as the grass and the plants of the field under the influences of the sun; and the souls of the saints will be likely to grow, and appear beautiful *us the lily*, and to *revive as the corn*, and *grow as the vine*, and *their scent to be as the wine of Lebanon*; and their light will be like the light of Christ, which is the light of life, [John viii. 12](#).

If the sun should shine upon the earth with the same brightness that it doth now, yet if it were without any heat, it would give life to nothing; the world would be a desolate wilderness, with nothing growing in it; the death of every living thing must be the consequence; and the sun’s light could be of no service to us, but to cause us to see our own and others’ misery, without being able to help ourselves or them. On the other hand, if the sun diffused

the same heat that now it does, but the world was destitute at the same time of any light, it would be equally unserviceable: mankind having no light to guide them in their business, in tilling the field, or gathering the produce of the earth, we should be like the Egyptians in the three days' darkness, who saw not one another, nor rose from their place: and thus also death would be the unavoidable consequence. But by light and heat accompanying one another, the whole face of the earth becomes fruitful, and is adorned, and all things are quickened and flourish, and mankind enjoy both life and comfort.

I proceed to the

V. Thing proposed in handling the doctrine, to apply these things to all here present, that Christ has called to the work of the gospel ministry, observing how much it concerns such to endeavour to be burning and shining lights.

Our office and work is most honourable, in that we are set by Christ to be lights or luminaries in the spiritual world. Light is the most glorious thing in the material world, and there are, it may be, no parts of the natural world that have so great an image of the goodness of God, as the lights or luminaries of heaven; and especially the sun, who is constantly communicating his benign influence to enlighten, quicken, and refresh the world by his beams; which is probably the reason that the worship of the sun was (as is supposed) the first idolatry that mankind fell into. But so are ministers honoured by their great Lord and Master, that they are set to be that to men's souls, that the lights of heaven are to their bodies; and that they might be the instruments and vehicles of God's greatest goodness, and the most precious fruits of his eternal love to them, and means of that life, and refreshment, and joy, that are spiritual and eternal, and infinitely more precious than any benefit received by the benign beams of the sun in the firmament. And we shall be likely indeed to be the instruments of those unspeakable benefits to the souls of our fellow-creatures, if we have those qualifications, which have been shown to be the true and proper excellency of ministers of the gospel. Herein our glory will answer the honourable station Christ has set us in. And hereby our ministry will be likely to be as beneficial as our office is honourable: we shall be like Christ, and shall shine with his beams; Christ will live in us, and be seen in his life and beauty in our ministry, and in our conversation, and we shall be most likely to be the means of bringing others to him, and of their receiving of his light, and being made partakers of his life, and having his joy fulfilled in them. And this will be the way for us hereafter to be as much advanced and distinguished in our reward, as we are honoured in the office and business we are called to here. In this way, those whom Christ has set to be lights in his church, and to be stars in the spiritual world here, shall be lights also in the church triumphant, and shine as stars for ever in heaven. [Dan. xii. 3.](#) "And they that be wise, shall *shine* as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

But if we fail of the proper excellency of ministers of the gospel, we shall not be in the sight of God the more worthy or honourable for our high office, but the more abominable and inexcusable; our wickedness being aggravated by God's great goodness and condescension to us, and the peculiar obligations that he laid upon us; and instead of being eminently beneficial and great blessings, as lights to reflect the beams of Christ's glory and love, we shall be so much the more hurtful and pernicious, for our being in such a station; and so shall be likely hereafter to suffer a so much more dreadful punishment. The devils in hell are so much the more odious to God, and more the objects of his wrath, because he set them in the dignity and glory of angels, the excellency of which state they are fallen from. And it is likely that those in hell that will be nearest to the fallen angels, in their state of misery, will be those that Christ once set to be angels of the churches, but through their unfaithfulness, failed of their proper excellency and end.

Here I would apply myself in a few words to the person whose intended ordination, this day, to the great work of the gospel ministry, is the occasion of this discourse.

You have now, dear sir, heard something of the nature and design of that office to which you are this day, in the name of Christ, to be solemnly set apart. You are therein called to be a light to the souls of men, a lamp in God's temple, and a star in the spiritual world. And you have heard wherein, in Christ's esteem, consists the proper excellency of one in that office, and how in this a minister of the gospel becomes like his glorious Master, and glorifies him, and is likely to be the instrument of the salvation and happiness of the souls of men, and to receive a glorious reward from the hands of God.

These, sir, are the motives that you are to be influenced by, to endeavour to be a burning and a shining light in the work of the ministry. As to the things of this world, you are not to expect outward ease, pleasure, and plenty; nor are you to depend on the friendship and respect of men; but should prepare to endure hardness, as one that is going forth as a soldier to war. But they are higher things than these, more excellent benefits than the world can afford, that Christ offers to those that approve themselves to him in this work.

God in his providence has brought you far from your native land, and from your friends and acquaintance there; but you will have reason, notwithstanding, to acknowledge the good hand of his providence towards you, if he is pleased to make you a burning and shining light in this part of his church, and by the influence of your light and heat (or rather by his divine influence with your ministry) to cause this wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose, and give it the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, and to cause you to shine in the midst of this people with warm and lightsome, quickening and comforting, beams, causing their souls to flourish, rejoice, and bear fruit like a garden of pleasant fruits, under the beams of the sun.

By this means you will be to their souls the vehicle of the influences and blessings of the heavenly world, which is a world of light and love, shall be ever held in Christ's right hand,

and shall be terrible to the powers of darkness; and shall see more and more of the light of Christ's glory and grace in this place, with you and this people, and shall hereafter not only shine yourself, as the brightness of the firmament, but shall meet with them in glory also, who shall shine there around you, as a bright constellation in the highest heaven; where they shall be your everlasting crown of rejoicing.

But I hasten to the

VI. Thing proposed, which was to show what course ministers of the gospel ought to take, or what things they should do, that they may be burning and shining lights.

And here I shall but just mention things, without enlarging.

And in order to this, ministers should be diligent in their studies, and in the work of the ministry to which they are called; giving themselves wholly to it; taking heed to themselves that their hearts be not engaged, and their minds swallowed up, and their time consumed, in pursuits after the profits and vain glory of the world.

And particularly, ministers should be very conversant with the Holy Scriptures; making it very much their business, with the utmost diligence and strictness, to search those holy writings: for they are as it were the beams of the light of the Sun of righteousness; they are the light by which ministers must be enlightened, and the light they are to hold forth to their hearers; and they are the fire whence their hearts and the hearts of their hearers must be enkindled.

They should earnestly seek after much of the spiritual knowledge of Christ, and that they may live in the clear views of his glory. For by this means they will be changed into the image of the same glory and brightness, and will come to their people as Moses came down to the congregation of Israel, after he had seen God's back parts in the mount, with his face shining. If the light of Christ's glory shines upon them, it will be the way for them to shine with the same kind of light on their hearers, and to reflect the same beams, which have heat, as well as brightness. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, is the treasure the apostle speaks of, that ministers have, as in earthen vessels: [2 Cor. iv. 6, 7](#). "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." This was probably typified of old, by the burning lights and lamps which Gideon's soldiers had in one hand in earthen pitchers, while they held a trumpet in the other, with which they sounded (typifying the preaching of the gospel). And thus with the sound of these trumpets, and these burning lights or earthen vessels, they overcame the enemies of God and his people.

Ministers, in order to their being burning and shining lights, should walk closely with God, and keep near to Christ; that they may ever be enlightened and enkindled by him. And they should be much in seeking God, and conversing with him by prayer, who is the fountain of light and love: and knowing their own emptiness and helplessness, should be ever depend-

ent on Christ; being sensible with Jeremiah that they are children, should sit as children at Christ's feet to hear his word, and be instructed by him; and being sensible with Isaiah that they are men of unclean lips, should seek that their lips may be, as it were, touched with a live coal from the altar, as it were by the bright and burning seraphim.

I come now to the

VII. And last thing proposed, to say something very briefly concerning the duties of a people that are under the care of a minister, corresponding with these things that Christ has taught us concerning the nature and end of this sacred office. And here I would have a special respect to the people of God in this place, who are about to have the care of their souls committed to him, that is now solemnly to be set apart to the work of the ministry.

If it be, as you have heard, the proper excellency of a minister of the gospel to be a burning and a shining light, then it is your duty earnestly to pray for your minister, that he may be filled with divine light, and with the power of the Holy Ghost, to make him so. For herein you will but pray for the greatest benefit to yourselves; for if your minister burns and shines, it will be for your light and life. That which has been spoken of, as it is the chief excellency of a minister, so it renders a minister the greatest blessing of any thing in the world that ever God bestows on a people.

And as it is your duty, to pray that your minister may by this mean become such a blessing to you, so you should do your part to make him so, by supporting him, and putting him under the best advantage, with a mind free from worldly cares, and the pressure of outward wants and difficulties, to give himself wholly to his work; and by all proper acts of respect, and kindness, and assistance, to encourage his heart, and strengthen his hands: and to take heed that instead of this you do not take a course to obscure and extinguish the light that would shine among you, and to smother and suppress the flame, by casting dirt upon it; by necessitating your minister by your penuriousness towards him, to be involved in worldly care; and by discouraging his heart by disrespect and unkindness. And particularly when your minister shows himself to be a burning light, by burning with a proper zeal against any wickedness that may be breaking out amongst his people, and manifests it by bearing a proper testimony against it in the preaching of the word, or by a faithful exercise of the discipline of God's house, instead of taking it thankfully, and yielding to him in it, as you ought, does not raise another fire of a contrary nature against it, *viz.* the fire of your unhallowed passions, reflecting upon and reproaching him for his faithfulness. Herein you will act very unbecoming a Christian people, and show yourselves very ungrateful to your minister, and to Christ, who has bestowed upon you so faithful a minister, and will also, while you fight against him, and against Christ, fight most effectually against your own souls. If Christ gives you a minister that is a burning and shining light, take heed that you do not hate the light, because your deeds are reprov'd by it; but love and rejoice in his light; and that not only for a season, like John the Baptist's apostatizing hearers: and come to the

light. Let your frequent resort be to your minister for instruction in soul cases, and under all spiritual difficulties; and be open to the light and willing to receive it; and be obedient to it. And thus walk as the children of light, and follow your minister wherein he is a follower of Christ, *i. e.* wherein he is as a burning and shining light. If you continue so to do, your path will be the path of the just, which shines more and more to the perfect day, and the end of your course shall be in those blissful regions of everlasting light above, where you shall shine forth with your minister, and both with Christ, *as the sun, in the kingdom of the heavenly Father.*

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S E R M O N   X V I .   6 9 0

CHRIST THE EXAMPLE OF MINISTERS.

[john xiii. 15, 16.](#)

*For I have given you an example, that he should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

we have in the context an account of one of the many very remarkable things that passed that night wherein Christ was betrayed, (which was on many accounts the most remarkable night that ever was,) viz. Christ's washing his disciples' feet; which action, as it was exceeding wonderful in itself, so it manifestly was symbolical, and represented something else far more important and more wonderful, even that greatest and most wonderful of all things that ever came to pass, which was accomplished the next day in his last sufferings. There were three symbolical representations given of that great event this evening; one in the passover, which Christ now partook of with his disciples; another in the Lord's supper, which he instituted at this time; and another in this remarkable action of his washing his disciples' feet. Washing the feet of guests was the office of servants, and one of their meanest offices: and therefore was fitly chosen by our Saviour to represent that great abasement which he was to be the subject of in the form of a servant, in becoming obedient unto death, even that ignominious and accursed death of the cross, that he might cleanse the souls of his disciples from their guilt and spiritual pollution.

This spiritual washing and cleansing of believers was the end for which Christ so abased himself for them. [Tit. ii. 14.](#) "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people." [Eph. v. 25, 26.](#) "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water." That Christ's washing his disciples' feet signified this spiritual washing of the soul, is manifest by his own words in the [8th verse.](#) of the context. "Peter saith unto him, Thou shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him. If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Christ, in being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, not only did the part of a servant unto God, but in some respects also of a servant unto us. And this is not the only place where his so abasing himself for our sakes is compared to the doing of the part of a servant to guests. We have the like representation made in [Luke xxii. 27.](#) "For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not ho that sitteth at meat? But I am among you





as he that serveth.” And wherein Christ was among the disciples as he that did serve, is explained in [Matt. xx. 28.](#) namely, in *his giving his life a ransom for them.*

When Christ had finished washing his disciples feet, he solemnly requires their attention to what he had done, and commands them to follow his example therein. [verses 12-17.](#) “So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet: for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

When our Saviour calls on his disciples to imitate the example he had given them in what he had done, we are to understand him, not merely by the example he gave in the emblematical action, in washing his disciples’ feet, in itself considered; but more especially, of that much greater act of his that was signified by it, in abasing himself so low, and suffering so much, for the spiritual cleansing and salvation of his people.

This is what is chiefly insisted on as the great example Christ has given us to follow: so it is once and again afterwards, in the discourse Christ had with his disciples, this same night, [verse 34.](#) of the chapter wherein is the text: <sup>691</sup> ” A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” [Chap. xv. 12, 13.](#) “This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And so in [1 John iii. 16.](#) “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Christ, in the words of the text, does not only intend to recommend this example of his to the disciples as Christians, or some of his professing people, but especially as his ministers. This is evident by those words he uses to enforce this counsel, <sup>692</sup> “Neither he that is sent, is greater than he that sent him.” In which words he manifestly has respect to that great errand on which he had sent them, when he bid them *go and preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* [Matt. x. 5, 6.](#) and on which they were to be sent after his resurrection, when he said to them, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” <sup>693</sup> ” The same errand that Christ has respect to [John xx. 21.](#) “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”

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691 [John xiii. 12-17](#)

692 [John xiii. 16.](#)

693 [Mark xvi. 15](#)

And what confirms this is, that Christ elsewhere recommends to officers in his church, that are in that respect chief among his followers, the example which he set in his abasing himself to be as a servant that ministers to guests at a table, in his giving his life for us; [Matt. xx. 27, 28](#). “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Compare [Luke xxii. 25-23](#).

The work and business of ministers of the gospel is as it were that of servants, to wash and cleanse the souls of men: for this is done by the preaching of the word, which is their main business, [Eph. v. 26](#). “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”

The words of the text thus considered, do undoubtedly lead us to this conclusion, and teach us this doctrine, *viz.* That it is the duty of ministers of the gospel, in the work of their ministry, to follow the example of their great Lord and Master.

And this is what I would by divine assistance make the subject of my present discourse.

And I propose to handle this subject in the following method.

I. I would observe wherein ministers of the gospel ought to follow the example of Christ.

II. Give some reasons why they should follow his example.

III. I would endeavour to make a proper application of those things to myself, and others that are called to this work of the ministry.

IV. Show what improvement should be made of them by the people of this church and congregation.

I. Then, I would show wherein ministers of the gospel ought, by the work of their ministry, to follow the example of their great Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

And here,

1. In general, ministers should follow their Lord and Master in all those excellent virtues, and in that universal and eminent holiness of life, which he set an example of in this human nature.

The ministers of Christ should be persons of the same spirit that their Lord was of: the same spirit of humility and lowliness of heart; for the servant is not greater than his Lord. They should be of the same spirit of heavenly-mindedness, and contempt of the glory, wealth, and pleasures of this world: they should be of the same spirit of devotion and fervent love to God: they should follow the example of his prayerfulness; of whom we read from time to time of his retiring from the world, away from the noise and applauses of the multitudes, into mountains and solitary places, for secret prayer, and holy converse with his Father; and once of his rising up in the morning a great while before day, and going and departing into a solitary place to pray, [Mark i. 35](#). and another time, of his going out into a mountain to pray, and continuing all night in prayer to God, [Luke vi. 12](#). Ministers should follow Christ's example, in his strict, constant, and inflexible observance of the commands

which God had given him, touching what he should do and what he should say; he spake nothing of himself, but those things which the Father had commanded him, those he spake, and always did those things that pleased him, and continued in thorough obedience in the greatest trials, and through the greatest opposition that ever there was any instance of. Ministers should be persons of the same quiet, lamb-like spirit that Christ was of, the same spirit of submission to God's will, and patience under afflictions, and meekness towards men; of the same calmness and composure of spirit under reproaches and sufferings from the malignity of evil men; of the same spirit of forgiveness of injuries; of the same spirit of charity, of fervent love and extensive benevolence; the same disposition to pity the miserable, to weep with those that weep, to help men under their calamities of both soul and body, to hear and grant the requests of the needy, and relieve the afflicted; the same spirit of condescension to the poor and mean, tenderness and gentleness towards the weak, and great and effectual love to enemies. They should also be of the same spirit of zeal, diligence, and self-denial for the glory of God, and advancement of his kingdom, and for the good of mankind; for which things' sake Christ went through the greatest labours, and endured the most extreme sufferings.

2. More particularly should ministers of the gospel follow the example of their great Master, in the manner in which they seek the salvation and happiness of the souls of men. They should follow his example of love to souls: though it be impossible that they should love them to so great a degree, yet they should have the same spirit of love to them, and concern for their salvation, according to their capacity. Love to men's souls in Christ was far above any regard he had to his temporal interest, his ease, his honour, his meat and drink; and so it should be with his ministers. They should have the same spirit of compassion to men under their spiritual calamities and miseries that he had, of whom we read, [Mark vi. 34](#). "That when he came out and saw much people, he was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." The word translated *moved with compassion*, signifies, that he was most sensibly affected, and his inmost bowels moved with pity. And again we read, [Luke xix](#). that when Christ was riding to Jerusalem, that wicked city, but a few days before his crucifixion, and was come to the descent of the Mount of Olives, where he had a fair view of the city, when he beheld it, he wept over it, on account of the misery and ruin they had brought themselves into danger of by their sin; although the sin by which especially they had made themselves thus miserable, was their vile treatment of him; (for Jerusalem was a city that had been peculiarly injurious to him;) and though Christ knew how cruelly he should be treated in that city before that week was past, how he there should be set at nought, and with great malignity bound, falsely accused and condemned, reviled, spit upon, scourged, and crucified: yet all does not prevent his most affectionate tears of compassion towards them. "When he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst



known, even thou, (thou, as wicked as thou art, and as vile as thou hast been in thy treatment of me; even thou,) the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.<sup>694</sup> » (Compare [Matt. xxiii. 37.](#) and [Luke xiii. 34.](#)) One would have thought he would have been more concerned for himself than Jerusalem, who had such a dreadful cup to drink, and was to suffer such extreme things by the cruelty of Jerusalem that week. But he, as it were, forgets his own sorrow and death, and weeps over the misery of his cruel enemies.

Ministers should imitate their great Master in his fervent prayers for the good of the souls of men. We find it to be Christ's manner, whenever he undertook any thing of special importance in the work of his ministry, first to retire and pour out his soul in extraordinary prayer to his Father. Thus when he was about to enter on a journey, and go a circuit throughout all Galilee, to preach in their synagogues, "he rose up a great while before day, and went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." [Mark i. 35-39.](#) And when he was about to choose his twelve apostles, and send them out to preach the gospel, he first *went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* [Luke vi. 12., &c.](#) And the night before his crucifixion, wherein he offered up himself a sacrifice for the souls of men, he pours out his soul in extraordinary prayer, for those he was about to die for, as we have an account in [John xvii.](#) That wonderful and most affecting prayer of his, was not so much for himself as for his people. Although he knew what amazing sufferings he was to undergo the next day, yet he seems as it were to be unmindful of himself, and to have his heart all taken up with concern about his disciples; which he manifests in his spending so much time in comforting and counselling them, and praying for them with great affection, compassion, earnest care, and fatherly tenderness. And the prayers that he made in the garden of Gethsemane, under the amazing view of the cup he was to drink the next day, seem to be intercessory; especially the last of the three prayers which he there made,<sup>695</sup> *when being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground: when he did not pray that the cup might pass from him, as he had done before, but that God's will might be done.* (Compare [Luke xxii. 44.](#) with [Matt. xxvi. 42.](#)) That prayer, as the apostle teaches us, [Heb. v. 6, 7.](#) was a prayer that lie put up as our High Priest; and therefore must be a prayer of intercession for us, a prayer offered up with his blood which he sweat in his agony; as prayers were wont to be offered up with the blood of the sacrifices in the temple. His prayer at that time, *Thy will be done,* was not only an expression of submission, but had the form of a petition, as it is in the Lord's prayer. he prayed that God's will might be done in *his* being enabled *to do the will of God,* persevering in obedience unto death; and in the success of his sufferings; which might in an eminent

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694 [Luke xix. 41, 42.](#)

695 [Luke xxii. 44](#)

manner be called the will of God, as it is in [Psal. xl. 7, 8.](#) “Then said I, Lo, I come I delight to do thy will, O my God.”

Ministers should follow the example of Christ in his diligence and laboriousness in his work. “He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” [Acts x. 38.](#) So abundant was he in labours, that oftentimes he scarcely allowed himself time to eat or drink; insomuch that his friends sometimes went out to lay hold of him, saying, “He is beside himself.” [Mark iii. 20, 21.](#) That three years and a half of his public ministry was so filled with action and labour, that one of his disciples that constantly attended him, and was an eyewitness of his activity, tells us that if *all that he did should be written, the world would not contain the books.*

Ministers should follow the example of Christ, in his readiness not only to labour, but suffer, for the salvation of souls, to spend and be spent for them. In this respect the apostle Paul imitated his Lord and Master. [Philip. ii. 17.](#) “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.” [Col. i. 24.](#) “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body’s sake, which is the church.” [2 Cor. xii. 15.](#) “And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.” Christ, in his prayers, labours, and sufferings for the souls of men, is represented as travailing in birth with them. [Isa. liii. 11.](#) “He shall see of the travail of his soul.” In like manner should ministers travail for the conversion and salvation of their hearers. They should imitate the faithfulness of Christ in his ministry, in speaking whatsoever God had commanded him, and declaring the whole counsel of God. They should imitate him in the manner of his preaching; who taught not as the scribes, but with authority, boldly, zealously, and fervently; insisting chiefly on the most important things in religion, being much in warning men of the danger of damnation, setting forth the greatness of the future misery of the ungodly; insisting not only on the outward, but also the inward and spiritual, duties of religion; being much in declaring the great provocation and danger of spiritual pride, and a self-righteous disposition; yet much insisting on the necessity and importance of inherent holiness, and the practice of piety. Behaving himself with admirable wisdom in all that he said and did in his ministry, amidst the many difficulties, enemies, and temptations he was surrounded with, wonderfully adapting his discourses to persons, seasons, and occasions. [Isa. 1. 4.](#) “The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.”

Ministers should follow their Master in his zeal, so wonderfully mixed and tempered with gentleness and condescension in his dealing with souls; preaching the gospel to the poor, and taking a gracious notice from time to time of little children. And they should imitate their Lord in his following the work of the ministry, not from mercenary views, or for the sake of worldly advantages, but for God’s glory, and men’s salvation; and in having his heart engaged in his work; it being his great delight, and his meat, to do the will of his

Father, and finish his work, [John iv. 34.](#) and having his heart set on the success of his great undertaking in the salvation of souls; this being the jay that was set before him, for which he run his race, endured the cross, and despised the shame; his delight in the prospect of the eternal salvation of souls more than countervailing the dread he had of his extreme sufferings. Many waters could not quench his love, neither could the floods drown it, for his love was stronger than death; yea, than the mighty pains and torments of such a death.

I now proceed to the

II. Thing proposed in the handling of this subject, which was to give some reasons why ministers of the gospel should follow the example of “their great Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

1. They should follow his example, because he is their Lord and Master. Christ, as he is a divine person, is the Lord of heaven and earth, and so one of infinite dignity, to whom our supreme respect is due; and on that account he is infinitely worthy that we should regard, not only his precepts but example. The infinite honourableness of his person recommends his virtues, and a conformity to them as our greatest dignity and honour.

Christ is more especially the Lord of Christians; who are therefore under special obligations to follow him. He is their shepherd, and surely the flock should follow their shepherd. He is the captain of their salvation; and it becomes soldiers to follow their captain and leader. He is their head; not only their head of rule and authority, but their head of influence and communication, their vital head; and Christians are members of his body; but members, as partakers of the life and spirit of the head, are conformed to the head.

But Christ is still in a more peculiar manner the Lord and Master of ministers of the gospel, as they are not only members of his church, but the officers of his kingdom, and the dignified servants of his family. It is the manner of a people to imitate their prince, but especially the ministers of his kingdom, and officers of his household. It is the duty of the whole army to follow their general, but especially of those officers that have a commission under him.

2. Ministers of the gospel are in some respects called and devoted to the same work and business that Christ himself was appointed to. Ministers are not men’s mediators; for there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus: they are not our priests to make atonement and work out righteousness for us; for Christ by one offering has perfected for ever them that are sanctified: they are not lords over God’s heritage; for one is their Master, even Christ. But yet ministers of the gospel, as Christ’s servants and officers under him, are appointed to promote the designs of that great work of Christ, the work of salvation. It is the work that ministers are devoted to; and therefore they are represented as co-workers with Christ. [2 Cor. vi. 1.](#) “We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” Christ is the Saviour of the souls of men: ministers, also, are spoken of in Scripture as saving men’s souls. [1 Tim. iv. 16.](#) “In doing this, thou shall



both save thyself and them that hear thee.” Rom. xi. 14. “If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.” 1 Cor. ix. 22. “That I might by all means save some.” And whereas it is said, Obad. 21. “Saviours shall come upon mount Zion;” ministers of the gospel are supposed to be there intended.

The work of ministers is in many respects like the work that Christ himself was appointed to, as the Saviour of men; and especially the same with the work which Christ does in his prophetic office; only with this difference, that ministers are to speak and act wholly under Christ, as taught of him, as holding forth his word, and by light and strength communicated from him. Christ himself, after his baptism, followed the work of the ministry: he was a minister of the true sanctuary, (Heb. viii. 2.) he spake and acted as his Father’s minister; was a minister of the gospel, and as such preached and administered sacraments.

Pastors of churches are ministers of the same gospel; but in their ministry they act as the ministers of Christ. Jesus Christ is the great Bishop of souls; ministers are also bishops under him. Christ came into the world *that he might be the light of the world*; ministers are set to be lights unto the churches, and are also set to be *the light of the world*. Matt. v. 14. Christ is the *bright and morning star*; ministers are *stars in Christ’s hand*. Christ is the *messenger of the covenant*; ministers are called *messengers of the Lord of hosts*. Christ is his people’s *shepherd, the good shepherd, the great shepherd of his sheep*. Ministers are also frequently called shepherds, and are directed to feed the flock of Christ, which he purchased with his own blood.

Seeing therefore it is thus, that the work that ministers are called and devoted to, is no other than the work of Christ, or the work that Christ does, certainly they ought to do his work; which they do not do unless they imitate him, and do as he does, or as he hath set them an example.

3. The example of Christ is most worthy of ministers’ imitation. His example was perfect, without error, blemish, or defect; and therefore worthy to be made our rule, and to be regarded and followed without exception, limitation, or reserve; unless in those things which he did that were proper to his peculiar office. Christ’s virtue was not only perfect, but was exercised in those circumstances, and under those trials, that rendered his virtuous acts vastly the most amiable of any that ever appeared in any creature whether man or angel. If we consider the perfection of the virtue that Christ exercised, his virtue did exceed that of the most eminent saints, more than the purest gold exceeds the meanest and foulest ore: and if we consider the manner of its exercise, and the trials under which it was exercised, and the blessed fruits it has brought forth, so his virtue exceeds that of all other perfectly innocent creatures, and even of the brightest angel, as the sun in its glory exceeds the stars.

And this example was set us in our own nature, and so is especially fitted for our imitation. There was in the man Christ Jesus, who was one of us, and dwelt among us, such exercises of virtue as became our state and circumstances in the world, as those who dwell in

frail flesh and blood, and as members of human society, and dwellers in such a world of sorrow and death.

And then these amiable exercises of virtue in Christ were exhibited chiefly in the things which he did in that work wherein ministers are called to act as co-workers with him. The bright and glorious example of Christ that is set before us, is chiefly in what he did during the three years and a half of his public ministry; and in the devotion, heavenly-mindedness, humility, patience, meekness, forgiveness, self-denial, and charity, which he exercised in the labours and sufferings he went through for the good of the souls of men: and therefore is especially set for the imitation of those who are set apart that they may make it the whole business of their lives to seek the same good of souls.

4. Ministers should follow that example of Christ which has been spoken of, because if they are fit for ministers, and are such as have any right to take that work upon themselves, Christ has set them this example in what he has done for their souls. "I have given you an example (says Christ in the text) that you should do as I have done to you." Ministers should be animated in this work by a great love to the souls of men, and should be ready to spend and be spent for them; for Christ loved them, and gave himself for them: he loved them with a love stronger than death. They should have compassion to men under their spiritual miseries, as Christ had pity on them. They should be much in prayer for the people of their flock, considering how Christ prayed and agonized for them, in tears of blood. They should travail in birth with the souls that are committed to their care, seeing their own salvation is the fruit of the travail of Christ's soul. They should exercise a meek and condescending spirit to the mean and weak and poor, and should as it were wash the feet of Christ's disciples; considering how Christ condescended to them, when they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and abased himself to wash their feet.

The chief trials of Christ's virtue, and so their most bright and eminent exercises, were in the abasement, labour, and suffering that he was the subject of for our salvation. Which certainly may well endear those virtues to us, and greatly engage us to imitate that example: so the things whereof this example consists, were things by which we have infinite benefit, without which we should have been unspeakably miserable for ever and ever, and by virtue of which we have the glorious privilege of the children of God, and have a full title to the crown of exceeding glory, and pleasures for evermore, at God's right hand.

III. I now proceed, as was proposed, in the third place, to apply what has been said to myself, and others that are employed in this sacred work of the gospel ministry, and to such as are about to undertake it, or are candidates for it; and particularly to him that is now to be solemnly set apart to this work in this place.

We are those to whom these things especially belong: we may hear Christ saying to us this day, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done."<sup>696</sup> For the words

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696 [John xiii. 15.](#)



of Christ in the text were not only spoken to the twelve, but are also spoken unto us. We have now had represented to us, though in a very imperfect manner, the example that Christ has set, and what reasons there are that we, above all others, should imitate it.

It is not only our great duty, but will be our greatest honour, to imitate Christ, and do the work that he has done, and so act as co-workers with him.

There are two kinds of persons that are given to Christ, and appointed and devoted of God to be his servants, to be employed with Christ, and under him, in his great work of the salvation of the souls of men; and they are angels and ministers. The angels are all of them, even the most exalted of them, subjected of God the Father to our Redeemer, and given to him as his servants, to be subservient to the great designs of his saving and glorifying his elect. [Heb. i. 14.](#) “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” And doubtless they were created for this very end; God made them for his Son, to be subservient to him in this great work; which seems to be the chief design of all God’s works. And the employment of ministers of the gospel in this respect, is like that of the glorious angels. The principalities and powers in heavenly places, esteem it not any debasement, but their great honour, to be employed as Christ’s ministers in this work; for therein they are employed as the ministers of God, in the greatest and most honourable of all God’s works; that work of God wherein his glory is chiefly displayed, and which his heart was chiefly upon from eternity. It is the honour of the Son of God himself, that he is appointed to this work. It was because God the Father infinitely loved his Son, and delighted to put honour upon him, that he appointed him to be the author of that glorious work of the salvation of men. And when we consider the greatness, importance, and excellency of it, we have reason to be astonished at the condescension of God, that he would ever improve mere creatures as co-workers and ministers of Christ in this affair; *for who is sufficient for these things?* [2 Cor. ii. 6.](#) “Who is fit, or worthy? Who is equal to a work of such dignity, and vast importance?” Especially have we reason to wonder that God will employ, not only holy and glorious angels, but feeble, frail, sinful worms of the dust in this work, who need redemption themselves: and yet the honour that is put upon faithful ministers is, in some respects, greater than that of the angels: they seem to be that kind of servants that are the most dignified of the two. For Christ makes his angels to be ministering spirits unto them, unto the faithful ministers; and the angels are their angels: as faithful ministers of the gospel are not only ministers to the church, but dignified members of the church, that spouse of the King of glory, on whom the most glorious angels, the highest ministers in the court of heaven, are appointed to attend. And then Christ seems especially to delight to carry on his work of the salvation of souls, through the ministrations of men, who have that nature that Christ is united to, and that are of those sons of men with whom he had his delight before the world was made. So it is by the ministration of men, that the Scriptures are given; they were the penmen of the Holy Bible; and by them the gospel is preached to

the world: by them ordinances are administered, and, through their ministrations, especially, souls are converted. When Christ himself was employed in the work of the ministry, in the time of his humiliation, but few, comparatively, were brought home to him, immediately by his ministrations: it pleased Christ to reserve this honour for his disciples and ministers, after his ascension, to whom he promised that they should, in this respect, do greater works than he, [Job xiv. 12.](#) and accordingly it was by their preaching that the Gentile world was converted, and Satan's kingdom overthrown.

Thus God delights [Psalms viii. 2.](#) "to perfect praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, that he may still the enemy and the avenger."

It will be our great honour that we are called to this work of Christ, if therein we follow him: for therein we shall be like the Son of God: but if we are unfaithful in this office, and do not imitate our Master, our offence will be heinous in proportion to the dignity of our office, and our final and everlasting disgrace and ignominy proportionally great; and we, who in honour are exalted up to heaven, shall be cast down proportionally low in hell.

Let us further consider, that our following the example of Christ in the work of the ministry, is the way to enjoy the sensible joyful presence of Christ with us. The disciples had the comfort of Christ's presence and conversation by following him, and going where he went. When we cease to follow him, he will go from us, and we shall soon lose sight of him.

Our being conformed to Christ's example, will also be the way for us to be conformed to him, and partake with him in his privileges: it is the way for us to have his joy fulfilled in us. Christ, in doing the work to which the Father appointed him, obtained a glorious victory over his enemies, and having spoiled principalities and powers, triumphed over them. If we imitate his example, it will be the way for us in like manner to conquer the principalities and powers, yea, to be much more than conquerors: it will be the way for us always to triumph in Jesus Christ. It will be the way for us to obtain success in our ministry, and actually to be made the happy instruments of the eternal salvation of souls. Christ has not only *told* us, but *shown* us, the way to success in our business, and the way to victory over all that oppose us in it. And our imitating Christ in our ministry, will be the way for us to be partakers with him in his glory; the way for us in like manner to be approved, and openly honoured and rewarded by God; the way to be brought to sit with Christ on his throne, as he is set down with the Father on his throne. And as Christ is now exalted to shine as the bright luminary and glory of heaven, so our following his example, will be the way for us to be exalted, to *shine* with him, as the stars for ever and ever. [Daniel xii. 3.](#) And as Christ in heaven rejoices in his success, and will receive his church, presented to him without spot, as his everlasting crown; so our imitating Christ in our work, will be the way to partake with Christ in this joy, and have the souls whose salvation we are the instruments of, to be our crown of rejoicing for ever. Thus Christ and we shall rejoice together in that world of glory and joy where there

is no more labour or sorrow. And we must enter into that joy and glory, in the way of following Christ in our work; there is no other way for ministers to enter there.

And that we may thus follow Christ's example, and be partakers with him in his glory, we have need to be much in prayer for his Spirit. Christ himself, though the eternal Son of God, obtained the Holy Spirit for himself in a way of prayer. [Luke iii. 21, 22.](#) "Jesus being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended like a dove upon him." If we have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, we shall have Christ himself thereby living in us, and then we shall undoubtedly live like him. if that fountain of light dwells richly in us, we shall shine like him, and so shall be burning and shining lights.

That we may *be* and *behave* like Christ, we should earnestly seek much acquaintance with him, and much love to him, and be much in secret converse with him. It is natural, and as it were necessary, for us to imitate those whom we are much acquainted and conversant with, and have a strong affection for.

And in order to our imitating Christ in the work of the ministry, in any tolerable degree, we had need not to have our hearts overcharged, and time filled up with worldly affections, cares, and pursuits. The duties of a minister that have been recommended, are absolutely inconsistent with a mind much taken up with worldly profit, glory, amusements, and entertainments.

And another thing that is of very great importance, in order to our doing the work that Christ did, is, that we take heed that the religion we promote, be that same religion that Christ taught and promoted, and not any of its counterfeits and delusive appearances, or any thing substituted by the subtle devices of Satan, or vain imaginations of men, in lieu of it. If we are zealous and very diligent to promote religion, but do not take good care to distinguish true from false religion, we shall be in danger of doing much more hurt than good with all our zeal and activity.

I come now to the

IV. And last thing at first proposed, *viz.* to show what improvement should be made of what has been said, by the people of this church and congregation, who are now about solemnly to commit their souls to the charge of him whom they have chosen to be their pastor, and who is now about to be set apart to that office.

And you, my brethren, as all of you have immortal souls to save, if you have considered the things that have been spoken, cannot but be sensible, that it not only greatly concerns your elect pastor to take heed how he behaves himself in his great work, wherein he is to act as a co-worker with Christ for your salvation; but that it infinitely concerns you how you receive him, and behave towards him. Seeing that it is for your eternal salvation that he is appointed to watch and labour; and seeing his business is to do the work of Christ for you, it is natural and easy to infer, that your reception and entertainment of him should in some respect imitate the church's reception of Jesus Christ. [Gal. iv. 14.](#) "My temptation



which was in my flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." Christ, in the text, commands those whom he sends to follow his example, and then in the 20th verse following, he directs those to whom he sends them, how to treat them. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." Seeing the work of your minister is in some respects the same with the work of Christ, and he is to be appointed and devoted to do this work for your souls in particular, surely you should esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake, and do all that is in your power to help him, and put him under the best advantages to imitate his great Master *in* this work, to give himself wholly *to* his work, as Christ did during the time of his ministry, and to be successful in his work. And as it was observed before, that it is impossible that ministers should in any tolerable degree imitate the example of Christ in their work, if their minds are overcharged with worldly cares and concerns, you ought so to provide for him and support him, that he shall have no need to entangle himself with these things; otherwise you will not only bring a great temptation upon him, which will vastly tend to hinder him in the work of Christ among you, but will, for the sake of sparing a little of your worldly substance to yourselves, foolishly and miserably starve your own souls and the souls of your children, and will but cheat yourselves; for you will not be in the way to prosper either in your spiritual or temporal concerns. The way to have your houses filled with plenty, is to "honour the Lord with your substance, and with the first-fruits of all your increase," [Prov. lii. 9.](#)

And as it is your duty and interest well to support your minister, so it concerns you to pray earnestly for him, and each one to do what in him lies in all respects to encourage and help him, and strengthen his hands, by attending diligently to his ministry, receiving the truth in love, treating him with the honour due to a messenger of Christ, carefully avoiding all contention with him, and one with another. And take heed in particular, that you do not forsake him to follow those, who under pretence of extraordinary purity, are doubtless doing the devil's work, in separating themselves, and endeavouring to draw off others from the ministers and churches in the land in general.

If you think I have spoken something freely to you, I hope it will be considered, that this is probably the last time you will ever hear me speak from the pulpit, and that I shall never see you again, till we see one another in the invisible and eternal world, where these things will open to us all in their just importance.

And now nothing is left but to express my sincerest wishes and prayers, that the God of all grace would be with you and your elect pastor, and that he would give you in him a great and long-lasting blessing, that you may enjoy much of the presence of Christ with you "in him"; that in him may be made up the great loss you sustained by the death of your former faithful and eminent pastor, whose praise was in all the churches; and that you may receive him as you ought to receive a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and may be a great

comfort to him, and may receive great spiritual and eternal benefit by his means; and that you may be each other's crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

S E R M O N   X V I I .   6 9 7

THE SORROWS OF THE BEREAVED SPREAD BEFORE JESUS.

[matthew xiv. 12.](#)

And his disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

concerning these words I would observe three things.

1. On what occasion that was, that we have an account of in the text. It was on occasion of the death of John the Baptist, who was a person whose business it had been to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God. He was a minister of Jesus Christ, and had been improved to do great service, was an instrument of much good to many in Judea and Jerusalem, in his life-time. He was cruelly murdered by Herod, at the instigation of Herodias, having exposed himself to her malice by faithfully reproving them for their incestuous wickedness.

2. We may observe who the persons were spoken of in the text; they were those that had been the disciples of John the Baptist, that had sat at his feet to hear him preach the gospel, that were his constant followers, that were with him as those that received great benefit by his ministry, and were as it were his children.

3. We may observe their behaviour on this occasion, consisting in two things.

(1.) That whereby they showed their regard to the remains of the deceased, *They took up the body and buried it*: it had been used in a barbarous manner, by others, that had also been his hearers, and were under special obligations to have treated him with honour. They cruelly murdered him, by severing his head from his body; and his head was carried in a charger to Herodias, that she, instead of paying that respect that was due to the remains of so venerable a person, might have her malice and cruelty gratified by such a spectacle, and that she might thence take occasion to insult the dead. While that part of the dead body was thus used by Herodias, his disciples, out of respect and honour to their master and teacher, decently interred the rest.

(2.) That which they did, consequent on this, for God's glory and their own good, *They went and told Jesus*. Him they knew to be one that their master John, while he lived, had testified a great regard to. Jesus was he whose forerunner John was; whom he had preached, and of whom he had said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world: <sup>698</sup>" And, "This is he, of whom I said, After me cometh one that is preferred before me; <sup>699</sup>



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698   [John i. 29.](#)

699   [John i. 30.](#)

” and whom he saw, and bare record that *this is the Son of God*. And probably they knew that Christ was one that had put great honour upon John their teacher in his life-time. For he, though he was the Son of God, and John’s Maker and Saviour, yet came to him to be baptized of him, and had said of him, that “Among those that were born of women, there had not risen a greater than John the Baptist.”<sup>700</sup> ”

It was now a sorrowful time with John’s disciples; when they were thus bereaved of him whose teachings they had sat under. And the manner of his death was doubtless very grievous to them. They were like a company of sorrowful, distressed, bereaved children; and what do they do in their sorrows, but go to Jesus with their complaint. The first thing that they do, after paying proper regards to the remains of their dear master, is to go to Christ, to spread their case before him, seeking comfort and help from him. Thus they sought their own benefit.

And probably one end of their immediately going and telling Jesus was, that he, being informed of it, might conduct himself accordingly, as his wisdom should direct, for the interest of his own kingdom. When so great a person as John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was thus martyred, it was a great event, in which the common cause, in which both Christ and he were engaged, was greatly concerned: it was therefore fit that he that was at the head of the whole affair should be informed of it, for his future conduct in the affairs of his kingdom. And accordingly we find that Jesus seems immediately to be influenced in his conduct by these tidings; as you may see in the next verse: “When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by a ship into a desert place apart.”<sup>701</sup> ” Thus John’s disciples sought God’s glory.

The observation from the words that I would make the subject of my discourse at this time, is this:

*When any one is taken away by death, that has been eminent in the work of the gospel ministry, such as are thereby bereaved, should go and spread their calamity before Jesus.*

Though in handling this subject I might particularly speak to several propositions that are contained in this observation, and many things might profitably be insisted on under it, if there were room for it within the compass of a sermon; yet I shall only give the *reasons of the doctrine*, and then hasten to the application.

The following reasons may be given why, in case of such an awful dispensation of Providence, those that are concerned in it, and bereaved by it, should go and spread their sorrows before Jesus:

1. Christ is one that is ready to pity the afflicted. It is natural for persons that are bereaved of any that are dear to them, and for all under deep sorrow, to seek some that they may declare

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700 [Matt. xi. 11.](#)

701 [Matt. xiv. 13.](#)

and lay open their griefs to, that they have good reason to think will pity them, and have a fellow-feeling with them of their distress. The heart that is full of grief wants vent, and desires to pour out its complaint; but it seeks a compassionate friend to pour it out before.

Christ is such an one, above all others. He of old, before his incarnation, manifested himself full of compassion towards his people; for that is Jesus that is spoken of, [Isa. lxiii. 9](#). “In all their affliction he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” And when he was upon earth in his state of humiliation, he was the most wonderful instance of a tender, pitiful, compassionate spirit, that ever appeared in the world. How often are we told of his having compassion on one and another! So [Matt. xv. 32](#). “Then Jesus called his disciples, and said unto them, I have compassion on the multitude.” So he had compassion on the man possessed with devils. [Mark v. 19](#). “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done to thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” So we read of his pitying the mother, that was bereaved of her son. [Luke vii. 13](#). There we have an account, when Christ went into the city of Nain, and met the people carrying out a dead man, the only son of his mother, that was a widow, that when he saw her, he had compassion on her. So when the two blind men that sat by the way side cried to Jesus, as he passed by, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David,<sup>702</sup>” we read that Jesus had compassion on them. [Matt. xx. 39](#)<sup>703</sup>. So we read of his being moved with compassion. [Matt. xiv. 14](#). “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and when he saw them he was moved with compassion.” His speeches to his disciples were full of compassion; especially those that he uttered a little before his death, of which we have an account in the [13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John](#). His miracles were almost universally deeds of pity to persons under affliction.

And seeing such a pitiful heart appeared in him on all occasions, no wonder that John’s disciples, when bereaved of their dear guide and teacher, and their hearts were full of sorrow, came to him for pity: which likewise induced Mary and Martha to come and fall down, pouring out their tears at Jesus’s feet, when their dear brother Lazarus was dead: other Jews came to comfort them, before Jesus came, whom they little regarded, but when they heard that Jesus was come, they soon go and spread their sorrows before him; they were assured that he would pity them; and their expectation was not frustrated; for he was most tenderly affected and moved at their tears: we are told that on that occasion he groaned in spirit and was troubled. [John xi. 33](#). And when he came to the grave, it is observed, and a special note seems to be set upon it, that he wept, [verse 35](#).

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702 [Matt. xx. 30](#).

703 The reference in the original text is incorrect. This refers to [Matthew xx. 30](#).



He was one that wept with those that wept: and indeed it was mere pity that brought him into the world, and induced him not only to shed tears but to shed his blood: he poured out his blood as water on the earth, out of compassion to the poor, miserable children of men. And when do we ever read of any one person coming to him when on earth, with a heavy heart, or under any kind of sorrow or distress for pity or help, but what met with a kind and compassionate reception?

And he has the *same compassion* now he is *ascended into glory*: there is still the same encouragement for bereaved ones to go and spread their sorrows before him.

Afflicted persons love to speak of their sorrows to them that have had experience of affliction, and know what sorrow is: but there is none on earth or in heaven that ever had so much experience of sorrow as Christ: therefore he knows how to pity the sorrowful, and especially may we be confident that he is ready to pity those that are bereaved of a faithful minister, because such a bereavement is a calamity that concerns the *souls of men*; and Christ hath especially shown his pity to men's souls; for it was chiefly for them that he died: to relieve the miseries of the soul especially, is it that he hath provided; and it was from pity to the souls of men that he made that provision for them that he hath done, in appointing such an order of men as gospel ministers, and in sending them forth to preach the gospel: it was because he had compassion on men's souls, that he hath appointed ministers to watch for souls.

2. Christ *has purchased all that persons need under such a bereavement*. He has purchased all that miserable men stand in need of under all their calamities, and comfort under every sort of affliction; and therefore that his invitation to those that [Matt. xi. 28](#) "Labour and are heavy laden," to come to him for rest, may be understood in the most extensive sense, to extend to those that are "heavy laden" with either natural or moral evil: he has purchased divine cordials and supports for those hearts that are ready to sink: he has purchased all needed comfort and help for the widow and the fatherless: he has purchased a sanctified improvement and fruit of affliction, for all such as come to him, and spread their sorrows before him. He has purchased those things that are sufficient to make up their loss, that are bereaved of a great blessing in an eminent minister of the gospel: it is he that has purchased those divine blessings, those influences and fruits of the Spirit of God, that the work of the ministry is appointed to be the means of. Faithful ministers themselves are the fruits of his purchase; and he has purchased all those gifts and graces whereby ministers do become faithful, eminent, and successful; and therefore when he "ascended up on high, he received such gifts for men." [Eph. iv. 8.](#) &c. So that he has purchased all that is needed to make up for the loss that is sustained by the death of an eminent minister.

3. Christ is able to afford all that help that is needed in such a case. His power and his wisdom are as sufficient as his purpose, and answerable to his compassions. By the bowels of his mercies, the love and tenderness of his heart, he is disposed to help those that are in

affliction; and his ability is answerable to his disposition. He is able to support the heart under the heaviest sorrows, and to give light in the greatest darkness: he can divide the thickest cloud with beams of heavenly light and comfort: he is one that gives songs in the night, and turns the shadow of death into the morning: he has power to make up the loss of those that are bereaved by the death of the most eminent minister. His own presence with the bereaved is sufficient; if the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls be present, how much more is this than enough to supply the want of any under shepherd! And then he is able to furnish others with like gifts and graces for that work.

Persons under sorrowful bereavements are ready to go and lay open their sorrows to them that they think will be ready to pity them, though they know they can but pity them, and cannot help them. How much more is here in such a case to induce us to go to Jesus, who is not only so ready to pity, but so able to help, able abundantly more than to fill up the breach, and able to turn all our sorrows into joy!

4. The consideration of the special office of Christ, and the work that he has undertaken for his people, should engage them to go and spread such a calamity, as the bereavement of a faithful and eminent minister, before him: for he is the *Head of the body*, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and Lord of the harvest; that has undertaken the care of the whole church, and has the absolute government of it in his hands, and the supreme disposal and management of all ecclesiastical affairs; to whom belongs the care of the universal church, and every part of it, with respect to its supply with such guides, officers, and ordinances, as it stands in need of. In case of bereavement of an eminent minister, it was he that sent forth such a minister, appointed him his charge, and furnished him for his work, continued and assisted him in it, and in his own time removed him; and it is he that, in such a case, by his office, has the care of filling up the vacancy, and furnishing, establishing, and assisting successors, and supplying all the wants of bereaved churches. It is surely therefore suitable and natural to go to him in such a case, and spread such a calamity before him.

#### APPLICATION.

I come now to apply what has been said to the sorrowful occasion of our being thus assembled at this time, even the death of that aged servant of God, who has long been eminent in the work of the gospel ministry in this place.

There are many that may well look on themselves as nearly concerned in this awful providence, and sharers in the bereavement; all of whom should be directed by this doctrine, to go and spread their affliction before Jesus, that compassionate, all-sufficient Head of the church, and Saviour of the body, that merciful and faithful High Priest, that knows how to pity the afflicted.

And particularly it now becomes and concerns you, that belong to this *church and congregation*, that are bereaved of your aged and eminent pastor and father, that has so long been a great blessing to you, now to go and tell Jesus.

The disciples of John, spoken of in the text, were those that were ordinarily under his instruction, and were his constant hearers, as it has been with you with respect to your aged pastor, that is now taken from you. Therefore be exhorted to do as they did. Do not think that you have finished your duty, when you have taken up his body and buried it, and have shown respect to his memory and remains at his funeral: this is the least part of your duty: that which mainly concerns you under this awful providence, is between Christ and your own souls.

God has now taken away from you an able and faithful minister of the New Testament, one that had long been a father to you, and a father in our Israel, a person of uncommon natural abilities and distinguished learning, a great divine, of very comprehensive knowledge, and of a solid, accurate judgment. Judiciousness and wisdom were eminently his character. He was one of eminent gifts, qualifying him for all parts of the work of the ministry; and there appeared a savour of holiness in his exercise of those gifts in public and private: so that he improved them as a servant of Christ, and a man of God. He was not negligent of the talents which his Lord had committed to him; you need not be told with what constant diligence he improved them, how studious at home, and how laborious in his public work: he ever devoted himself to the work to which he is called: the ministry which he had received of the Lord, he took heed to fulfil, and pursued it with a constant and stedfast, even mind, through all its difficulties.

You know his manner of addressing heaven in his public prayers with you and for you, with what sanctity, humility, faith, and fervency, he seemed to apply himself to the father of lights, from time to time, when he stood in this desk as your mouth to God, and interceding for you, pleading with God through the grace and merits of a glorious mediator. And you know his manner of applying himself to you, when he came to you, from time to time, in the name of the Lord.

In his public ministry, he mainly insisted on the most weighty and important things of religion; he was eminently an evangelical preacher; evangelical subjects seemed to be his delight: Christ was the great subject of his preaching; and he much insisted on those things that did nearly concern the essence and power of religion; and had a peculiar faculty of judiciously and clearly handling the Doctrine he insisted on, and treating properly whatever subject he took in hand; and of selecting the most weighty arguments and motives to enforce and set home those things that concern Christian experience and practice. His subjects were always weighty, and his manner of treating them peculiarly happy, showing the strength and accuracy of his judgment, and ever breathing forth the spirit of piety, and a deep sense

of the things he delivered, on his heart. His sermons were none of them mean, but were all solid, wise compositions. His words were none of them vain, but all were weighty.

And you need not be told with what weight the welfare of your souls seemed to lie on his heart, and how he instructed, and reprov'd, and warn'd, and exhorted you, with all authority, and with a fatherly tender concern for your eternal good. And with what wisdom he presided in the house of God, and guided its affairs; and also counselled and directed you in private, under your particular soul exercises and difficulties. You know how he has brought you up, (for most of you have been trained up from your childhood under his ministry,) with what authority, and with what judgment, prudence, and steadiness, he has conducted you, as well as meekness and gentleness. You know his manner of going in and out among you, how exemplary his walk and conversation has been, with what gravity, judgment, and savour of holiness, he has walked before you, as a man of God.

You have enjoyed great advantages for your souls' good, under his ministry: that you had such a minister was your privilege and your honour; he has been an ornament to the town of Hatfield; and his presence and conversation amongst you has been both profitable and pleasant; for though it was such as did peculiarly command awe and respect, yet it was, at the same time, humble and condescending: it tended both to instruct and entertain those that he conversed with: as a wise man, and endued with knowledge, he *showed out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom*.

But now it hath pleased a holy God to take him away from you: you will see his face and hear his voice no more in the land of the living: you will no more have the comfort and benefits of his presence with you, and the exercise of his ministry among you.

Therefore now go to Jesus, the Supreme Head of the church, and *Bishop of souls*. Your pastor is dead, and will not live again till the last day: but Christ, the *chief Shepherd*, though *he was dead, is now alive! And behold, he lives for evermore. He ever lives* to provide for his church, and to guide and feed his flock. Go to that Jesus whom your deceased pastor preached, and to whom he earnestly invited you while he lived, and give thanks for the many blessings you enjoyed in him. Remember how you have *received and heard, and hold fast*, that no man take your crown; <sup>704</sup> and go and *humble yourselves also before him*, that you made no better improvement of the ministry of your pastor while he lived; and beg of him a sanctified improvement of his awful hand in taking him away, and that he would help you to remember his warnings and counsels that you too much slighted whilst you had them, lest those warnings and counsels cry against you, and rise up in judgment against you another day, lest you see your pastor, that so affectionately, and earnestly, and so often, and for so long a time, continued to exhort you, and earnestly prayed for you, while he lived,

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704 Particularly, remember his late affectionate farewell, at the table of the Lord, not expecting such another opportunity with you. Exhorting you to follow peace and holiness and to edify one another.

rising up in judgment, and bearing testimony against you, declaring how constantly and laboriously he entreated and called upon you, and how obstinately some of you slighted his counsels; and lest you see him sitting with Christ to judge and condemn you, and adoring his awful justice on your aggravated punishment.

All you that have an interest in Jesus, now go to him on this occasion, and tell him of your bereavement, and beg of him that he would not depart from you; but that he would make up his loss in his own immediate presence. Go to him for your surviving pastor, that he would be with him, and furnish him more and more for, and assist him in, that great work that is now wholly devolved upon him, and make him also a *burning and shining light* amongst you; and that you may have of the presence and blessing of Jesus with you, and him.

And now, since I am called to speak in the name of Christ on this solemn occasion, I would apply myself to the near relations of the deceased, who are especially to be looked upon as the bereaved.

God in his holy providence has taken from you one that has been a great blessing, comfort, and honour to you, and deservedly very dear to you, and honoured of you. The doctrine we are upon directs you what to do in your present circumstances, *viz.* to go to Jesus, to go and spread your affliction before an all-sufficient Redeemer.

And particularly I would apply myself to the honoured relict, who stood in the nearest relation of any to the deceased, whom God by this awful providence has made a sorrowful widow. Suffer me, honoured madam, in your great affliction, to exhibit to you a compassionate Redeemer. God has now taken from you that servant of his, that was the nearest and best friend you had in this world, that was your wise and prudent guide, your affectionate and pleasant companion, who was so great a blessing while he lived, to you and your family, and, under Christ, was so much the comfort and support of your life. You see, madam, where your resort must be: your earthly friends can condole your loss, but cannot make it up to you; we must all confess ourselves to be but miserable comforters: but you may go and tell Jesus, and there you may have both support and reparation: his love and his presence is far beyond that of the nearest and most affectionate earthly friend. Now you are bereaved of your earthly consort, you may go to a spiritual husband, and seek his compassion and his company: he is the fountain of all that wisdom and prudence, that piety, that tender affection and faithful care, that you enjoyed in your departed consort; in him is an infinite fountain of all these things, and of all good; in him you may have light in your darkness, comfort in your sorrow, and fulness of joy and glory in another world, in an everlasting union with your dear, deceased relative, in the glorious presence of the same *Redeemer, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

This doctrine also directs the bereaved, afflicted children, that are, with hearts full of grief, now mourning over a dear departed father, where to go and what to do. You will no

longer have your father's wisdom to guide you, his tender love to comfort and delight you, and his affectionate care to guard you and assist you, and his pious and judicious counsels to direct you, and his holy examples set before you, and his fervent, humble, believing prayers with you and for you.

But in the blessed Jesus, your father's Lord and Redeemer, you may have much more than all those things: your father's virtues that made him so great a blessing to you, were but the image of what is in Christ.

Therefore go to him in your mourning; go and tell Jesus; tell a compassionate Saviour what has befallen you. Heretofore you have had an earthly father to go to, whose heart was full of tenderness to you; but the heart of his Redeemer is much more tender; his wisdom and his love is infinitely beyond that of any earthly parent. Go to him, and then you will surely find comfort. Go to him, and you will find that, though you are bereaved, yet you are not left in any want; you will find that all your wants are supplied, and all your loss made up, and much more than so.

But here I would particularly, in humility, address myself to my honoured fathers, the sons of the deceased, that are improved in the same great work of the gospel ministry, or in other public business for the service of their generation. Honoured sirs, though it might be more proper for me to come to you for instruction and counsel, than to take it upon me to exhort you, yet as I am one that ought to have a fellow-feeling of your affliction, and to look on myself as a sharer in it, and as you have desired me to speak in the name of Christ, on this occasion, suffer me to mention to you that source of comfort, that infinite fountain of good, one of the larger streams of which has failed by the death of an earthly father, even the blessed Jesus. You will doubtless acknowledge it as an instance of his great goodness to you, that you have been the sons of such a father; being sensible that your reputation and serviceable-ness in your generation, have been, under Christ, very much owing to the great advantages you have been under, by his instructions, counsels, and education. And is it not fit that children that have *learned of such a faithful servant of Christ*, and been brought up at his feet, now he is dead, should do as John the Baptist's disciples did, *go and tell Jesus?* from whom you may receive comfort under your bereavement, and from whom you may receive more of that Spirit that dwelt in him, and greater degrees of those virtues he derived from Christ, to cause you to shine brighter, and to make you still greater blessings in your generation. Now death has veiled and hid from sight a *star* that shone with *reflected light*, our text and doctrine leads you to the Sun, that hath *light in himself*, and shines with infinite, unfailling brightness. And while you go to Jesus, honoured sirs, on this occasion for yourselves, I humbly desire your requests to him for us the surviving ministers of this county, that he would be with us, now he has taken from us him that was a father amongst us.

I next would address myself to the surviving pastor of this church. We may well look upon you, reverend sir, as one in an especial manner concerned in this awful providence,

and that has a large share in the bereavement. You doubtless are sensible what reason you have to bless God for the advantage you have had, in serving in the gospel of Christ, so long as you have done, with the venerable person deceased, as a son with a father, enjoying the benefit of his instructions, counsels, and example. And particularly, you will often recollect the affectionate and fatherly counsels he gave you, to diligence and faithfulness in your Lord's work, with encouragement of his protection and assistance to carry you through all difficulties, the last evening of his life. And now, dear sir, God has taken him from you, as he took Elijah from Elisha, and as he took John the Baptist, the New-Testament Elijah, from his disciples: therefore now you are directed what to do, *viz. go and tell Jesus*; as those disciples did. You have now a great work devolved upon you; you have him no more, who, while he lived, was as a father to you, to guide and assist you, and take the burthen of your great work from you. Therefore you have no where else to go, but to your great Lord and Master, that has sent you to labour in that part of his vineyard, where his aged, and now departed, servant was employed, to seek strength and wisdom, and divine influence and assistance from him, and a double portion of that Spirit that dwelt in your predecessor.

And lastly, The text I am upon may be of direction to us the surviving ministers of this county, what to do on this sorrowful occasion. God has now taken our father and master from our head: he has removed him that has heretofore, under Christ, been very much *our strength*, that we have been wont to resort to it in difficult cases for instruction and direction, and that used to be amongst us from time to time, in our associations, and that we were wont to behold as the head and ornament of those conventions.<sup>705</sup> Where else can we now go but to Jesus, the ever-living Head of the whole church, and Lord of the whole harvest, the Fountain of light, our great Lord and Master, that sends all gospel ministers, and on whom they universally depend? Let this awful providence bring us to look to Christ, to seek more of his presence with us; and that in he would preside as head in our associations: let it bring us to a more immediate and entire dependence upon him, for instruction and direction, in all our difficulties.

Let us on this occasion consider what God has done in this county of late years: it was not many years ago that the county was filled with aged ministers, that were our fathers: *but our fathers, where are they?* What a great alteration is made in a little time, in the churches in this part of the land<sup>706</sup> How frequent of late have been the warnings of this kind that

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705 Very worthy of our notice was that his farewell message, sent us by one of our beloved brethren (the Rev. Mr. Williams of Springfield) after he returned from such a meeting, where he also preached. "I do not expect," said he, "to be with you another Association Meeting; but I give you this advice, Love your Master, love your work, and love one another." How very expressive of his own spirit! Like John the beloved disciple.

706 The Rev. Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Williams of Deerfield, Mr. Brewer, and lately have died, Mr. Bull of Westfield, and Mr. Devotion of Suffield.

God has given us to prepare to give up our account! Let us go to Jesus, and seek grace of him that we may be faithful while we live, and that he would assist us in our great work, that when we also are called hence, we may *give up our account with joy and not with grief*, and that hereafter we may meet those our fathers, that have gone before us in the faithful labours of the gospel, and that we may shine forth with them, *as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.*

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